

Paul and Empire

Patronage in the Pauline Rhetoric of
1 Corinthians 4:14-21

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Jer. 9:24: “but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.” (RSV)

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ABSTRACT

In reading the letters of Paul to the community in Corinth, it becomes apparent that Paul communicated from a position of authority. Given the existence of the mighty Roman Empire at the time of Paul's writings, it raises questions regarding the ways such Empire would have affected Paul. This study assesses the possibility that Paul was influenced, not only by the material Roman world, but also by the socio-political and social-cultural dynamics of the Roman order. Paul may have utilised such order, but as spiritual leader, he could also have opposed it to his own ends and aims. The purpose of this study is to investigate such dynamism.

The point of departure is, firstly to briefly discuss the nature of the Roman Empire that filled the ancient Roman world with coinage, statues, temples, poetry, song and public rhetoric. The ubiquitous Roman Empire enforced itself through power dynamics constituted in physical force, rhetoric, the patronage system and the Imperial Cult. Patronage operated in tandem with other aspects of the imperial system as a means of social control. It leads, therefore, to a more focussed investigation of patronage as one of the significant dimensions of Empire. Honour, prestige and status disparity governed social relations through complex, reciprocal relationships. No one was immune to the social tug-of-war, and within this context, Paul engaged in his Corinthian correspondence.

Paul's first Corinthian correspondence, specifically 1 Cor 4:14-21, is then comparatively investigated in the light of patronage as dimension of Empire. Paul integrated values such as honour and shame, and used the system of patronage in order to achieve his objectives with the Corinthian community. The socio-rhetorical analysis of this section of Paul's correspondence investigates socio-cultural, intertextual and ideological aspects of the text. 1 Cor 4:14-21 is the culmination of the first part of Paul's argument for *ὁμόνια* (concord), and he empowers his deliberation through patronage. He positions himself uniquely as father of the community, which empowers him with *patria potestas* (absolute authority). He also describes the way the Corinthians should bestow honour upon themselves. Paul's use of a *challenge-riposte* and *encomium* brings all the weight of his argument to bear, upon his mimetic command to μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε (be imitators of me).

The findings of this study indicate that Paul also opposes Empire in various ways. He opposes patronage, when he champions allegiance to an alternative Κύριος (Lord) that represents an alternative kingdom. He acts as a broker between Christ and the community, but the reciprocal relationship consists of shameful behaviour. Paul's application of patronage does not serve to enhance his social position and poses a significant challenge to the norms of patronage in the Empire. The patent and unresolved tension within his rhetoric stretches between liberal use of patronage, and his opposition of aspects of the imperial order, such as patronage and the abuse of power. This leads to the conclusion that Paul still subjected the attributes of Empire to his own objectives. He had more than a purely political or merely spiritual agenda in mind and ultimately this remains the power and mystery of his argument.

OPSOMMING

By die lees van die sendbriewe van Paulus aan die jong Christelike gemeente in Korinte val dit op dat Paulus, hoewel in herderlike trant, vanuit 'n gesagsposisie tot die gemeente spreek. Gesien die tyd waarin Paulus geleef het, 'n tydperk van die bestaan van die magtige Romeinse Ryk, rys die vraag onwillekeurig of Paulus as geestelike leier van opkomende gemeentes nie enigermate deur die heersende Romeinse maatskaplike orde beïnvloed is nie. In die onderhawige studie word die moontlikheid van nader betrag dat die sosiaal-politieke en sosiaal-kulturele aspekte van die Romeinse bestel Paulus wel kon beïnvloed het. Die wyse waarop Paulus sodanige orde sou kon aanwend of moontlik teëstaan word ondersoek.

Die vertrekpunt is dus om allereers die aard van die Romeinse Ryk - gekenmerk deur 'n eie muntstelsel, tallose standbeelde, tempels, digkuns, sang en openbare retoriek - in hooftrekke uiteen te sit. Die uitgebreide Ryk het sy mag gevestig en gehandhaaf deur middel van kragdadigheid, retoriek, weldoenerskap en die Keiserkultus.

Ter verdieping van die ondersoek word weldoenerskap as onderdeel van die Romeinse sosiaal-politieke orde in fyner besonderhede beskou. Daaruit blyk dat beskermheerskap ter ondersteuning gedien het ten einde doeltreffender maatskaplike beheer uit te oefen. 'n Verfynde wisselwerking het - deur middel van die dinamiek van eer, aansien en mag - sosiale verhoudings en gedrag beheer: niemand was teen die woelinge van die sosiale stryd gevrywaar nie. Dit was teen hierdie agtergrond van die werklikheid van die magtige Romeinse imperium dat Paulus met die Korintiërs gekorrespondeer het.

Paulus word daarna vergelykenderwys ondersoek aan die hand van die gedeelte uit sy brief aan die Korintiërs soos gevind in 1 Kor 4:14-21. Daarin beroep hy hom op waardes soos eer en skaamte, terwyl hy die stelsel van weldoenerskap aanwend ten einde sy oogmerke met die gemeente te bereik. Die sosio-retoriese analise van hierdie gedeelte van Paulus se sendbrief ondersoek sosiaal-kulturele, intertekstuele en ideologiese aspekte van die brief. 1 Kor 4:14-21 is die hoogtepunt van die eerste gedeelte van Paulus se betoog vir *ὁμόνια* (eenheid) en hy versterk sy argument deur middel van weldoenerskap. Op uitsonderlike wyse posisioneer hy hom as vader van die gemeente: in sy betoog beklee hy hom met *patria potestas* (absolute gesag). Paulus se gebruik van 'n *challenge-riposte* en van 'n inkomium verleen groter seggenskrag aan sy direktief om hom na te volg; *μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε* (volg my na).

Die uitkoms van hierdie studie is dat Paulus die imperiale orde ook op verskeie wyses sterk teëstaan. Wat Paulus verkondig het te make met 'n alternatiewe *Κύριος* (Heer) en 'n gans andersoortige koninkryk. Hy tree op as 'n bemiddelaar (*broker*) tussen Christus en die gemeenskap, maar poog nie om sosiale bevordering te bewerkstellig, soos bepaal deur die norme van die imperial orde nie. Daar is dus 'n aanwesige spanning in Paulus se retoriek wat dui daarop dat Paulus dimensies van die Ryk, soos weldoenerskap, ondergeskik gestel het aan sy eie doelwitte. Die slotsom waartoe geraak word, is dat by Paulus meer as suiwer politieke motivering enersyds, of bloot geestelike motivering andersyds, aanwesig was. Hierin is sowel die krag as die misterie van sy betoog geleë.

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1 INTRODUCTION

When reading the letters from Paul to the Corinthian community, one cannot help but notice that he operates from a position of assumed authority. Although it seems reasonably clear that the material setting of the Roman Empire would have influenced Paul, it leads to questions regarding the impact of the social dynamics of Empire in Pauline writings. Paul's striking use of the language of honour and shame, his reference to political terminology, and his assumed role of father of the community, indicate the image of someone deeply entrenched in the social structure of Empire. Investigation of such social structure should, therefore, offer insight into Paul's correspondence. When some aspect of Paul's correspondence is viewed against the social system, it should help to clarify some of his convictions and intentions; it should prove valuable for the interpretation of Paul's Corinthian correspondence.

During the introduction of this study, comments are firstly made that reflect on the relevance of Empire in the study of the New Testament as a collection of ancient writings. A brief assessment of current scholarship will follow, which should indicate that this is a worthy pursuit. Since the interest of the present study lies primarily with the social dynamics of Empire, a brief introduction to patronage is considered an appropriate springboard for further social analysis. Ultimately the study requires a thorough assessment of a section of the Corinthian correspondence against the social aspects of Empire. In order to achieve this, the socio-rhetorical method used in the investigation, will be presented briefly. Lastly a brief synopsis of expected findings will be presented.

1.1 THE RELEVANCE OF EMPIRE IN BIBLICAL STUDIES

The ubiquity of the Roman Empire in ancient Mediterranean society is becoming increasingly obvious, but it has largely been ignored in scholarship. The seemingly invincible Roman Empire was pervasive in the first century Mediterranean society, but due to the multidimensional nature of Empire, deceptively difficult to qualify. Although the Roman Empire is no longer in existence, the presence of other forms of empire remains evident today¹. The ancient Roman Empire is more than a purely historical fact, and it contains several interwoven social dimensions that operate in tandem. The relevance of Empire in biblical studies and as it relates to the apostle Paul is apparent when one recognises that the influences and consequences of Empire in its various forms found its way into the letters of the New Testament. The presence of empires following the Roman Empire promotes an awareness of the fundamental hermeneutical

¹ Throughout this study Empire (upper case) refers to the Roman Empire and empire (lower case) to other empires such as those that succeeded the Roman Empire, including modern empires.

implications of empire (and Empire)². Empire affected the development of theologies, even a significant theology such as the “satisfaction” theory of Anselm, and an increasing number of modern scholars are heeding their own contexts in post-colonial readings.

In this study, the disagreement amongst scholars as to the role of Empire in the interpretation of the New Testament primarily highlights various ideological aspects of the Roman Empire. Scholars describe the Roman Empire as a confluence of military conquest and physical power (including institutions such as slavery) and the alleged “three-legged stool” (Wire, 2000:127) of Empire consisting of rhetoric, the patronage system and the Imperial Cult. The metaphor should be carefully applied by addressing each of these aspects (legs) as clearly identifiable and simultaneously intertwined. Aspects of Empire such as the Imperial Cult manifesting in the priestly role of the emperor should not be viewed in isolation from patronage (Gordon, 1997:129). It is evident that the Roman Empire was too vast to be held together by sheer force of administration. Patronage was one of the significant methods of social control that solved this problem, but operated in conjunction with the Empire Cult. If the ideology of the Roman Empire had its sights firmly set on addressing the hearts and minds of conquered people across a widely dispersed geographic society, how can patronage provide us some valuable insight into the world within and behind the New Testament? What is the effect of this world on one's understanding of the letters of Paul? Although this study will specifically consider Paul's use of patronage within 1 Corinthians, it should be recognised that all the dimensions of Empire operate cohesively. Paul's correspondence is read with acknowledgement of a multidimensional, pervading power which can be viewed from different perspectives. Patronage does not function in isolation, but in confluence with the dynamics of Empire. It leaves the impression of a tapestry where one bundle of threads could be tugged to effect change in another part of the whole.

Living in post-apartheid South Africa should provoke an understanding of the fundamental ideological impact of empire on a society³. This study maintains the claims by contemporary authors that the Roman Empire, as both “a material backdrop and hermeneutical grid” (Punt,

²This awareness is highlighted in a discussion on the publications of various authors, by Brueggemann (2009:48-50).

³ Smit (2008) explores various dimensions of the apartheid ideology and its impact on biblical interpretation and public life in pre-and post apartheid South Africa. In the evaluation of an ad-hoc sample of literature by modern authors, Brueggemann (2009:48-49) states that it has become very difficult to ignore the ideological force of Empire in New Testament texts.

2010), is indispensable for a responsible reading of the New Testament. The patronage system in conjunction with other parts of the Roman Empire affected the daily lives of people and their thoughts. It becomes a valuable tool for understanding Paul's rhetorical intentions. Interpreters are convinced of the importance and indispensability of the "reality of empire ... an omnipresent, inescapable and overwhelming socio-political reality." (Elliott, 2008:7).

Since interpreters acknowledge that the understanding of power relations and the different modes of operation in an ancient Empire are complicated, the objective is not to boil the ocean, but to lift the lid on the world of Paul by assessing the effects of patronage on his thought. Where does Paul get the authority to demand imitation from the community in Corinth? How can he undertake to test the power of his opponents, and is there a non-spiritualised reality in action that supports his position? What does Paul's claim to representation of his Κύριος effect in the minds of ancient hearers, and what does Paul utilise as instruments in order to deliberate effectively with opponents and hearers? Patronage as a mode of the Roman Empire in Paul's deliberations with his opponents and those whom he viewed as τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ (my beloved children) should help to illuminate his rhetoric, the challenges to his opponents and communication with his hearers. The hypothesis that patronage is relevant as part of the imperial system and its effects on Pauline thought will be tested during a brief analysis of his Corinthian correspondence. It is, however, prudent to briefly summarise the outcome of leading, contemporary scholarship on the usefulness of Empire in New Testament interpretation.

1.2 CURRENT SCHOLARSHIP ON EMPIRE

Works combining the efforts of scholars from all over the world offer insight into the growing interest in social power dynamics embedded in the Roman Empire and the implications on biblical scholarship⁴. Collaboration amongst scholars has emerged through various groups who endeavour to study the Bible in the socio-historical context⁵. Social-scientific works argue that patronage as a social institution has a valuable contribution to make in achieving a better contextual understanding of the New Testament today. Such interpretation of the New Testament can be divided into core values, social institutions and social dynamics (Rohrbaugh,

⁴ Various leading scholars offer insight into the political nature of Pauline literature as works edited by Horsley (1997, 2000, 2004) indicate. It has, thus, become increasingly difficult to ignore the political effects of Empire that stretches beyond terminological overlaps. For a more elaborate discussion regarding scholarship, see the next chapter of this study.

⁵ The Context Group (Programme unit of the Society of Biblical Literature) consists of biblical scholars who have committed themselves to the use of social sciences in biblical interpretation.

1996). Patronage is a social institution, but it should be viewed in conjunction with other values and social dynamics since it cannot be disentangled from the broader constellation that constitutes the reality of first-century life. Paul's Corinthian correspondence integrates values such as honour and shame into patronage, and it influenced his rhetoric. Values, social institutions and social dynamics are, therefore, viewed together. The force of Paul's argumentation comes to the fore when various aspects of Empire operate cohesively. According to John Elliott, patronage as a social institution can be confirmed by the "abundant epigraphic and literary witnesses" to this ancient form of Empire and "with the possibility of cross-cultural comparison with traces of its existence and operation today provide the incentive for a systematic and less culturally biased analysis" (Elliott, 2003:144) of the New Testament. The contention in this study is that reading Paul's deliberation with the Corinthian community, where he makes use of language reminiscent of the household, in light of patronage will illuminate both the spiritual and socio-political force of his discourse. Before summarising the approach to this analysis, patronage as dimension of Empire is briefly introduced.

1.3 INTRODUCTION TO PATRONAGE

John Elliott describes patronage as deceptively difficult to qualify and containing (Elliott, 2003:144):

Issues of unequal power relations, pyramids of power, power brokers, protection, privilege, prestige, payoffs and tradeoffs, influence...networks, reciprocal grants and obligations, values associated with friendship, loyalty and generosity and the various strands that link this institution to the social system at large.

In essence, it is a complex web of interrelated strands associated with the social structure and Empire at large. A useful and simplified definition describes the relationship between a patron and a client essentially as "an asymmetric exchange relationship" (Chow, 1997:105) and it originated with the gods of the Roman Empire. Since the gods had ordained both the emperor and the Empire, this enabled the emperor to act as representative of the gods on the earth. The gods had bestowed upon the emperor the gift of power, and as the main patron of Empire, he had direct access to the gods. This meant that proximity and access to the emperor dictated the amount of social power available to a person.

Officials and local elites were able to act as clients of the emperor, on the one hand, and brokers or patrons to the populace on the other. Social relations consisted of a complex, reciprocal relationship where honour, prestige and power dynamics governed behaviour. No one was immune to the dynamics of the social tug-of-war. The relationship between freed persons (former slaves) and their masters can be compared to that between a son and a father. The patron continued to wield power over the freed person, and legislation reminded freed

persons that they owed their “new lives” to the patron. It established an obligation to honour the patron and forbade certain practices such as legal recourse in court for any injustice suffered by the manumitted slave. A slave was under the power of his patron, just as the son was under the power of the father. Legislation thus managed the unequal power relationship in conjunction with honour and shame values and manifested the actual outworking of a dyadic contract, even beyond manumission (Chow, 1997). Fathers were the patrons of their households and possessed *patria potestas* (absolute authority) over children, who owed their lives to parents. A value system containing ethical codes governed the reciprocal relationship between fathers and sons. Patronage even governed civil societies such as burial societies. The association of the Lares of the imperial house was an example of such a society that existed in Corinth (Chow, 1997:118). The reality of the existence of patronage is well attested, but how is patronage, as dimension of Empire, related to the understanding of the New Testament? This question requires some brief introductory comments.

1.4 PATRONAGE AND THE INTERPRETATION OF 1 CORINTHIANS

Through the application of the ideology of patronage to a New Testament text such as 1 Corinthians 4:14-21, this study attempts to unravel the way that patronage affected Paul's argument. Paul references the Corinthians as his children (4:14), himself as their father (4:15) and the gospel as the benefit that the Corinthians (children) received (4:15). There is love and admonishing (4:14), reference to God's kingdom of power (4:19-20) and the rod (4:21). Paul appeals to them to imitate him (4:16) and assumes that he can wield and discern true power (4:19-21). Behind these statements, lurks the ever-present social dynamics of patronage. His innovative use of epideictic elements in a deliberative rhetoric introduces considerable force into his argument (Mitchell, 1991:20; Schüssler Fiorenza, 1999:122; Horsley, 2000b:73). Paul attempts to realise his objectives by mustering all the ideological impact of patronage, but in his campaign for unity with the Corinthian community, retains a tension-filled, anti-imperial rhetoric.

An analysis of 1 Cor 4:14-21 will be best served by an interdisciplinary method, due to the complex nature of the social system⁶. Elliott believes that the political interpretation of Pauline literary texts such as Romans is the “absolute horizon of all reading and all interpretation” (Elliott, 2008:11). The hypothesis of the presence of patronage in Pauline texts agrees with interpreters who argue for the importance and indispensability of the “reality of empire....an

⁶ Elliott (2003:147) comments that an interdisciplinary method which had not yet been fully developed was required in order to address the “what, how and why” of patronage in relation to the greater social system.

omnipresent, inescapable and overwhelming socio-political reality” (Segovia in Elliott, 2008:7)⁷. It is, therefore, advisable to utilise a method in this study that will elucidate various components of such a socio-political reality by addressing textual, social and cultural, and ideological aspects in the interpretation of Paul’s Corinthian letter.

1.5 INTRODUCING THE METHOD

Wittgenstein commented that “the meaning of a question is the method of answering it. Tell me how you are searching, and I will tell you what you are searching for” (Wittgenstein in Sisson, 2003:242). Socio-rhetorical analysis focuses on the interplay between various aspects, referred to as textures, of texts (cf Robbins, 1996b)⁸. According to Robbins (1996b:1) “one of the most notable contributions of socio-rhetorical criticism is to bring literary criticism, social-scientific criticism, rhetorical criticism, postmodern criticism and theological criticism together into an integrated approach to interpretation”. Watson (2003:281), who initially focused on utilizing Greco-Roman rhetoric for the interpretation of biblical texts found the use of this method alone helpful but wanting. He illustrates through a socio-rhetorical analysis of the *Exordium* and *Peroratio* of 1 John that this analysis is more comprehensive, broader in scope and can provide valuable new insight into the interpretation of the New Testament. The approach offers a confluence of practices of interpretation, which have evolved over the last decades of the 20th century, continues in the 21st century and “seeks to balance the predominantly historical orientation of biblical studies” (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1987:386) with recent insights and methods.

In his guide to socio-rhetorical criticism Robbins (1996b) states that an interpreter will employ more than a single texture, but also that the textures are not monolithic, independent categorizations, rather aspects that allow various practices to dialogue and will ultimately render (yet again) partial meaning (cf Robbins, 1996a). If the multi-textural method of socio-rhetorical criticism provides a sensible approach for an analysis of the Corinthian correspondence in view, the question then becomes which range of textures will provide the most value for investigation of Pauline letters with the Roman Empire and patronage in mind? It seems reasonable that aspects of text should always be included in a sound analysis. Intertexture (Robbins, 1996b:7)

⁷ In order to take Empire seriously the interpreter is required to look in two directions, towards his/her own context and towards the ancient Roman Empire (Segovia in Elliott, 2008:7). This point is also made by Rieger (2007) and Elliott (2008) in their acknowledgement of subsequent empires that succeeded the Roman Empire. See also Robbins (1996a).

⁸ For a compelling argument regarding the usefulness of socio-rhetorical criticism, see the collection of essays by numerous authors that make use of this method in Gowler, Bloomquist and Watson (2003).

will explore various textual components such as a cursory glance at Paul's use of rhetoric and language. Patronage associates closely with social power dynamics and demands social and cultural awareness; therefore, social and cultural texture (Robbins, 1996b:71) will also be scrutinized. Finally, the analysis of 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 will include an ideological reading (Robbins, 1996b:95) to gain a better understanding of Empire, patronage and its impact on Paul. Intertexture and ideology compliment an investigation where the former originates with the text and the latter with the person. A brief overview of each texture will be provided in order to justify its inclusion.

1.5.1 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL TEXTURE

Social and cultural investigations are valuable tools in the study of ancient Mediterranean society, particularly since the values system was so far removed from what one encounters in modern western society. In order to appreciate ancient documents produced in such a pre-enlightenment, collectivist society, values such as honour and shame, kinship, ancient personality and the purity system will help to elucidate Paul's thinking. Social and cultural texture will inspect the location of the language in light of social and cultural elements, and the "social and cultural world the language evokes or creates" (Robbins, 1996b:71). It keeps track of social structures and values that are utterly foreign to modern readers. Gowler (2003:89) demonstrates, for example, the usefulness of social and cultural texture by showing how Luke 7:1-10 utilises and reconfigures patronage within a limited good society. He elaborates both the subversive and contiguous (condoning the status quo) elements of patron-client relationships and shows how Luke utilizes the concept of patronage by depicting Jesus as the "broker of God's blessings" (Gowler, 2003:120) and the Centurion the recipient (client) of a healing (benefit). The analysis of social and cultural texture clarifies this reconfiguration, and it takes the interpreter into a world of sociological and anthropological models and theory.

In 1 Cor 4:14-21, Paul makes use of language such as ἐντρέπων, τέκνα, νουθετώ, παιδαγωγούς, πατέρας, μιμηταί and δύναμις which echoes a world filled with social and cultural elements embedded in Paul's thinking. Paul's comment that he does not intend to shame (Οὐκ ἐντρέπων) them indicates that such values are fundamental to Paul's communication and argument. In 4:14 Paul's reference to Οὐκ ἐντρέπων ὑμᾶς γράφω ταῦτα is reflecting back on the section between 1:10 and 4:13 where "these things" specifically relate to behaviour that would be considered shameful in Mediterranean society. Shameful behaviour can easily be misconstrued as contemporary embarrassment instead of a fundamental and ancient societal value. Honour and shame governed social interactions, was available in limited quantities and was consistently contested. This rings warning bells that in order for Paul to convince the community to imitate him (a shameful figure) would require powerful deliberation. It begs the question; how a

household metaphor could serve as such a compelling argument? The following social and cultural analysis attempts to shed some light on this question.

Honour (and shame) is closely related to kinship which was the dominant social institution of society. Paul makes full use of the household metaphor with its inherent power dynamics in a society where “the family is truly everything” (Malina, 2001:29) and everything revolved around a sense of belonging to a family. Paul fills this gap creatively by associating himself with a community as father, based on birth that takes place through the gospel. The authority that Paul assumes is a symbolic reality embedded in patronage and should not be confused with physical subjugation. His use of language such as τέκνος and πατέρ makes a “household” available where non-elites typically associated with the household and elites with the polis. Admonishing his “children” would provide a household to non-elites, with the power-dynamics included and could be perceived as a challenge by elites, indicating that a dyadic alliance is at stake. Paul’s use of the patron-father metaphor at the apogee of the first argument for unity serves to empower his argument substantially.

Success in life is related to arranging appropriate interpersonal connections with those who can help a person navigate the complexities around social status and belonging to the appropriate kinship group. Paul uses this dynamic in his campaign for concord within the Corinthian community. It allows him to assume authority that facilitates his argument that he should be imitated and such imitation constitutes honourable behaviour. The father of the household possessed *patria potestas* (absolute authority) over his family, and the law, honour and shame governed the reciprocal behaviour of children. His use of the household metaphor is significant both in the strategic location of these verses within the overall argument and in light of the power that underpins the metaphor. The mimetic command of 4:16 contains the intention of Paul’s first proof in 1:10-4:21 and patronage provides the power behind his argument. In Aristotelian logic justice (δικαιοσύνη) consisted of piety (εὐσέβεια) and loyalty (πίστις) and Philo considered πίστις the “queen of virtues” (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:44). This is Paul’s focus when he commends Timothy for his honourable conduct in 4:17.

In light of the probability that both social equals and those of lower status existed within the community of Corinth, Paul’s communication can also be understood as a challenge-riposte, aimed at shaming his opponents and convincing others of honourable behaviour. The community in Corinth must have consisted of lower classes as indicated by the questions relating to slavery, but also those considering themselves of at least equal social standing to Paul. The latter would have been brazen enough to challenge Paul for honour. In a challenge-

riposte, Paul intends to defeat his opponents through a combination of positive rejection and acceptance of the challenge with a counter-challenge. Paul's riposte ends in 4:21 with another negative challenge by threatening and promising to execute the threat. The entire challenge-riposte contains the typical elements of a battle for honour in the honour-shame Mediterranean world. Paul, in return, responds just as one would expect from an honourable person being challenged. Paul's argument is complex due to his resolve to convince his audience of their need for unity and his address of the challenge to his authority.

Social-scientific models have been criticized for a variety of reasons, including the inability to cross boundaries between cultures. Social and cultural analysis is thus helpful, but when used in conjunction with other textures, it offers a better opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Paul's thinking. The use of intertexture, which moves from the world behind the text to the way the text reconfigures external phenomena, is a texture that can combine powerfully with social and cultural analysis. The following section briefly outlines the benefit of this combination.

1.5.2 INTERTEXTURE

Intertexture refers to the relationship between the text and its interaction with the world outside the text. It includes the use of any external text (Robbins 1996b:40) by an author. The value of rhetorical analysis has been proven by elaborate scholarship such as the landmark rhetorical⁹ study by Margaret Mitchell (1991). She was able to show how Paul made use of rhetorical methods and ancient texts. The current investigation continues with the proposed parallel between Paul's rhetoric and ancient texts. It seems that Paul made full use of the material at his disposal and importantly was familiar with ancient writings. It seems that he made use of Aristotelian (Rhet.1.9.39) logic, which determines that in an encomium or harsh censure, illustrious examples were used in order to make comparisons. Rhetorical analysis does not imply that Paul implemented rhetorical structures verbatim, but that Paul utilised rhetoric in order to articulate his views and convince his audience to make the appropriate decisions. Paul is deliberating with his audience in response to questions regarding real life situations. A proposed rhetorical structure positions Paul's deliberative rhetoric in 1:18-4:21 as one of four

⁹ Mitchell (1991) performs an exegetical investigation with detailed rhetorical analysis on Paul's first letter to the Corinthians and makes elaborate use of ancient writings to prove her argument for the unity of the letter. Strictly speaking rhetorical analysis would be classified as historical-critical and part of "inner texture" (Robbins 1996b:7), in socio-rhetorical criticism. The current analysis does however also take into account Paul's use of ancient sources and other devices such as amplification and encomiastic elements. For this reason the analysis is reflected as "intertexture", however, strictly speaking the lines between inner texture and intertexture have been blurred.

proofs within an epistolary body (Neyrey, 2003:135). The coherence of 1:10-4:21 is well supported by scholars (Smit, 2002:231) and the text of 4:14-21 forms the culmination of the first proof that deals with factionalism.

Throughout the argument of 1:18 to 4:21 traces of epideictic elements are visible as described in the rhetorical handbooks. Ancient rhetorical manuscripts (Mitchell, 1991:213) cater for the use of epideictic elements such as praise and blame, as part of deliberative rhetoric. Paul also seems to apply Aristotelian (Rhet. Her. 3.8.15) logic in his language of 4:14 (οὐκ ἐντρέπων...ἀλλ'... νοουθετῶν). His intention in 4:14 can be better understood in light of the comments by Isocrates (Paneg. 4.130) where he denounces his intention to shame and confirms his intention to νοουθετῶν (admonish). The epideictic elements in the section leading to 4:14, Paul's stated intention to admonish and the expectation to find epideictic elements in deliberative and judicial rhetoric indicate the feasibility of utilising epideictic elements such as those of an encomium to understand Paul's address better.

Paul is no stranger to the use of encomiastic elements in his rhetoric. His use of an encomium in 2 Cor 11-12 was aimed at comparing him to his rivals by ascribing and achieving honour (Neyrey, 2003:143). In a piece of deliberative rhetoric, epideictic elements strengthen the force of the argument. The challenge-riposte with encomiastic pattern within 1 Cor 4:14-17 attempts to describe the way the Corinthians should function within an honour and shame society. This can be accomplished if they follow Timothy's example and Paul's petition for imitation (4:16). In 4:14-17, Paul has completed a section of progymnastic genre of comparison by proposing Timothy as a prime example of faithfulness. Lurking behind Paul's creative use of rhetoric, lurk the values of honour and shame and the new fictive kinship group.

In the final *peroratio* of 4:18-20 Paul is addressing one of the consequences of factionalism - the arrogance (4:18) of some of the guides (Witherington III, 1995:147). Paul concludes his argument with the maxim of 4:18 and the final verses of 4:19-21 lead to several conclusions that can be deduced. All the deductions relate to Paul being the authentic representative of the Kingdom, acting as broker of the Κύριος of this Kingdom and he is coming with authority (power). His ultimate objective is not primarily concerned with his physical presence, but to use this as instrument in order to censure the behaviour of those who are ἐφουσιώθησάν (puffed up). Paul's authority is related to his right to act as broker and his utilisation of the dynamics of patronage. It is therefore deemed helpful to assess the ideological force of his argument in the following brief introduction to ideological texture.

1.5.3 IDEOLOGICAL TEXTURE

Ideological texture finds itself on the opposite side of the spectrum from the analysis of the text itself. It relates to people first and then to the text. Robbins maintains that “a person’s ideology concerns her or his conscious or unconscious enactment of presuppositions, dispositions, and values held in common with other people” (Robbins, 1996b:95). The presuppositions, dispositions and values of Paul will significantly affect his views of life and his approach to the correspondence with his Corinthian community. It would have affected the way that he solved problems and achieved his objectives. Paul was functioning within an imperial, ideological context that provided a partial framework for his thinking. An assessment of the ideology of Empire will assist in understanding Paul’s rhetoric and his interpretation of symbols. Patronage, specifically, was a significant part of the ideology of Empire and will serve to elucidate this argument.

Ideological texture contributes to Paul’s deliberation and New Testament interpretation in a way that compliments other textures, and offers insight that other methods tend to obscure. As noted before, social-scientific approaches and models from anthropology and sociology contain shortcomings when used on its own¹⁰. Paul did not have access to physical power; ideology was the most powerful tool at his disposal “for creating his relationships of power with his communities” (Castelli, 1991:123). Purely social-scientific readings, for example, of Paul’s letter to the Romans suggest that tensions within the various ethnic groups largely shaped the situation within the Roman assemblies. An ideological-critical analysis of the letter to the Romans leads to the conclusion that “larger themes and perceptions” seated within “the ideology and culture of the Augustan and post-Augustan age” (Elliott, 2008:11-13) are at play. The recognition of larger powers of ideology at work within the letters of Paul should, therefore, enrich the interpretation¹¹.

¹⁰ Debates regarding social-scientific approaches have been ongoing of which an example can be found in the debate between Horrell (2000) and Esler (2000). Regardless of the ongoing debates, it is clear that social-scientific approaches do offer insight into the ancient world. No single method provides all the answers and it seems obvious that a hybrid approach that includes various methods would render a reasonable outcome in textual analysis.

¹¹ Robbins (1996b:99) refers to this as social and cultural ‘catchment’ in his discussion of the ideological texture of text. He believes that he associates with this method due to his multi-cultural background of rural and city life. It seems prudent to the author of this study to nurture this same awareness of ideological influences in nations such as pre and post-apartheid South Africa where society was greatly influenced by ideology and should warn against the neglect of ideological texture.

Robbins mentions different ways of analyzing the ideological texture of text, which include (Robbins, 1996b:110)¹²:

Analyzing the social and cultural location of the implied author of the text; analyzing the ideology of power in the discourse of the text; and analyzing the ideology in the mode of intellectual discourse both in the text and the interpretation of the text.

It “concerns the way the text itself and interpreters of the text position themselves in relation to other individuals and groups” (Robbins, 1996b:111), and champions the personal convictions and interests of people. In the study of Paul’s letters, it is essential to understand the position, and personal convictions of the apostle which governed his attitude and approach towards the people. The culmination of Paul’s first proof will, therefore, be viewed against the backdrop of patronage. Paul’s statement in 4:19 that he would find out οὐ τὸν λόγον ... ἀλλὰ τὴν δύναμιν (not the word...but the power) cannot be implemented or interpreted as physical force. The study will show that the language of the household; Paul’s assumption as an authority figure; his demands to be imitated (4:16); his ability to punish (4:21); use of political language, and his role as both a broker and a father will make much more sense within the context of ideology. A brief summary of preliminary comments related to patronage will be made prior to turning the attention to the relationship between aspects of the Roman Empire and Paul’s first Corinthian letter.

1.6 SUMMARY INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Paul was probably considerably influenced by both the material setting and patronage as a dimension of the Roman Empire. This should become apparent from the following multidimensional analysis. Conducting a socio-rhetorical interpretation of Paul’s first Corinthian letter, specifically through social-cultural texture, intertexture and ideological texture, will show how patronage affected his correspondence. The contention is that patronage as a dimension of Empire affected and influenced Paul, and it provides a backdrop to his argumentation. These textures will elucidate the polysemy¹³ of meaning found in language and offer insight into Paul’s deliberation. Throughout the letter, Paul offers four different proofs¹⁴ that develop the plea for

¹² Eagleton (in Robbins, 1996b:110-111) outlines the three approaches listed here.

¹³ Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:46) comments that “language creates a polysemy of meaning” and it “also transmits values”. Her contention is that it “re-inscribes social systems and semantic patterns of behaviour”, and this is why she believes that what is called for is “a socio-political interpretation of the Bible” (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1999:46).

¹⁴ For a more detailed investigation into the differences between the proofs of deliberative discourse versus proof offered in judicial discourse, see Mitchell (1991:202). The former, as used by Paul in the Corinthian letter, is more concerned to convince the audience of a course of action.

unity, stated in 1:10. The aim is to focus on the culmination of his first proof in 4:14-21, where the social dynamics of patronage are evident. Here, Paul makes use of the household metaphor, setting himself up as a broker of the Lord, engaging in a challenge-riposte with his opponents and assuming a position of authority.

Patronage elucidates the power dynamics at work in his correspondence and his struggle for unity in Corinth. Paul sets himself up in a way reminiscent of a local official in relation to the emperor, acting as a broker for Christ and expecting reciprocal behaviour. In Paul's correspondence, he replaces the Roman emperor at the top of the power-pyramid with the Lord (Jesus), to whom Paul also claims direct access (1 Cor 1:1). Empire portrayed Caesar as the "regulator of the world and father of the earth" (Gordon, 1997:129), but Paul becomes patron-father of the community. In presenting himself as a broker and father, Paul is creating some tensions that cause him to expect and seize power, on the one hand, yet present shameful and humiliating behaviour, on the other.

Addressing Paul's ideological concerns or lack thereof sheds light on his deliberation with those in opposition to him as well as the balance of the community, which probably consisted of both social equals and a majority of lower status. While utilising the dynamics of patronage, however, he often finds himself at odds with Empire. Paul's primary concern, though, was not to undermine Empire directly; it was to ensure unity in the Corinthian community. Paul utilizes the power of patronage as a dimension of Empire when he requires it to empower his argument, but when it is at odds with his intentions he does not shy away from opposing such imperial aspects. His argument is multifaceted, multidimensional and always ready to surprise.

2 A BRIEF SURVEY OF EMPIRE AND 1 CORINTHIANS

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO DISCUSSIONS REGARDING EMPIRE

The relevance of the Roman imperial system to the interpretation of Paul and the New Testament is disputed. All interpreters agree that the Roman Empire existed, but not all agree as to how this information should be used in interpreting biblical texts. It is not the relevance of Empire as historical reality that is controversial but the way that learning about it should be applied. With the pervasive nature of Empire becoming more apparent, it has become particularly difficult to ignore the ideological force of the Roman imperial system (Brueggemann, 2009:48). A cursory glance at a variety of leading scholars globally regarding the relationship and influence of the Roman Empire in Pauline studies should confirm this thesis. The study will focus its efforts on scholarship produced from the latter half of the 20th century and the most current productions of the 21st century. An assessment of the broader framework of Empire, which maintains that it is much more than a purely historical reality, must be made in order to establish a point of departure for the application within Pauline thought. Empire is often described as the complex network consisting of patronage, the Empire Cult, physical and military power, and rhetoric. Scholars and authors, however, have varying opinions on the effects of Empire on Pauline thought and the way it manifests in Paul's letters. Authors who study the role of Empire in the New Testament can, broadly¹⁵, be separated in their approaches. Some reason to varying degrees for an anti-imperial message in Pauline literature and others find no semblance of an anti-imperial message. Anti-imperial authors believe to varying degrees that Pauline literature is subversive in its nature and, therefore, in opposition to the Roman imperial order, where others are critical of this position. Authors who argue for subversive Pauline thought prefer to read the New Testament through the lens of imperial ideology. The following study attempts, briefly, to assess the current status of research into the influence of Empire in Pauline literature. It attempts to peg the author's position based on relevant scholarship. This survey does not exhaust all avenues of research, but presents a case for investigating Empire as a topic in the study of Pauline literature. Following a survey of the relevance of Empire in the study of New Testament literature it is necessary, briefly, to investigate the influence of Empire on the societies within which Paul wrote his letters. This will provide the necessary background for an assessment of the relevance of Empire in the Corinthian correspondence. Some comments on this dynamic will also be made before focussing on the application of patronage within the Corinthian correspondence. The analysis

¹⁵ This categorization should be applied carefully rather as a spectrum of thought than as a clear separation, since authors are much more ambiguous in their interpretations than what is initially evident.

now turns to the first question that needs to be addressed; whether the study of Empire is applicable within contemporary scholarship.

2.2 THE RELEVANCE OF EMPIRE IN MODERN LITERATURE

Although a growing number, of scholars¹⁶ are acknowledging the effects of the Roman Empire on the New Testament, authors are not entirely in agreement with the way Paul positions himself with regards to Empire. Some authors are of the opinion that there is no apparent anti-imperial message in Paul's letters (Kim, 2008) where others believe that the anti-imperial message is clear. Kim (2008:xv) briefly outlines the recent scholarship that investigates the anti-imperial message of Paul. Horsley (1997a, 2000a, 2004) edited three volumes that focus on the anti-imperial gospel of Paul. Others have made use of exegesis and archaeology to represent a historical Paul that opposed the Roman Empire with a Christ that stood opposed to Caesar (Crossan & Reed in Kim, 2008) and the influential Wright (2009) proposes that the "fresh perspective" on Paul must include an anti-imperial component. A group of scholars also devoted an entire issue (*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 2005 referred to in Kim, 2008:xv) to the topic of the New Testament and the Empire Cult. Elliott (2008) uses an ideological approach that offers a powerful, anti-imperial argument in his study on the book of Romans and Rieger (2007) teased out the threads of conformance and resistance to empire from the time of the inception of Christianity.

The argument of these authors is, primarily, that purely historical criticism, which dominated exegesis, for centuries, has been ignoring the ideological and contextual aspects of the New Testament. Authors are producing literature "that will challenge interpreters who have been committed to old-style historical criticism that screens out ideological force and context" (Brueggemann, 2009:48). In various ways, several contemporary works reflect on the Roman Empire as a backdrop to the New Testament. Some argue persuasively that postcolonial criticism in biblical studies has been catalyzed by the recognition that Empire must be taken seriously. The contention is that Paul and the recipients of his letters were "inescapably caught up in the swirl of empire" (Elliott, 2008:7). Segovia (in Elliott, 2008:7), one of the leading forces behind postcolonial criticism, insists that a fully contextualised understanding of the New

¹⁶ This list is not by any means exhaustive as indicated by the host of scholars contributing to the material edited by Horsley (1997, 2003, 2004). In this literature authors offer insight by responding to each other and reflect on scholarship. Although the objective is to explore the anti-imperial or political nature of Pauline thought, the responses offer alternative interpretations that are helpful in providing a more balanced view.

Testament must address Empire as ideological reality. Postcolonial criticism takes cognisance of the imposition of power or the assumption that the reader's context legitimises the imposition of meaning on lesser communities. The massive exploitation of the masses by a ruling minority and the way this manifested through imperial rule, specifically the ideological manifestation of the role of the emperor in maintaining a thoroughly oppressive economic system, have been ably documented (Elliott, 2008).

As mentioned before, the three volumes edited by Horsley (1997a, 2000a, 2004), all deal with the issue of Paul and the Roman imperial order. Horsley has been a champion of the study of Empire in the New Testament and collaborating with authors that view Paul's gospel as distinctly political and anti-imperial. He maintains that the hand of Luther's discovery of "justification by faith" and subsequent interpretation of Paul's gospel as a message of individual faith primarily in opposition to Judaism retains its grip on contemporary interpreters. According to him the dominating approach to Pauline literature has been due to the modern Western view that Paul is concerned with religion which has been severed "from political-economic life" (Horsley, 2000a:2). He believes that there have been two paradigmatic theological shifts by New Testament scholars after the holocaust. The first was not the clear opposition between Christianity and Judaism long thought to be the case, but personal faith of the apostle Paul. According to this view Paul believed that one entered the Abrahamic covenant through birth and remained there through works. In this view, Paul remains within the covenantal theology of his Jewish background, but he also remains within the realm of personal religion. Secondly there was a significant shift with the publications of Krister Stendahl (in Horsley, 2000a:3) challenging the status quo. Stendahl maintained that Paul was not attempting to found a new religion as the Western ethnocentric approach with its introspective conscience would dictate, but as someone embedded in Israel, he brought the gospel to the Gentiles. This caused a self-inflicted crisis that created considerable difficulty in understanding the roles of Jews and Gentiles in God's comprehensive plan of salvation (Rom 1-11). Horsley (2000a:3) maintains that this crisis still left the framework within which Paul is understood, intact – the fundamental problem of Paul and Judaism. Many interpreters have a problem with this framework and believe that the overall framework should be the Roman Empire. The contention is that the context of the Roman Empire contained both Jews and Gentiles, where Paul was proclaiming a resurrected *kyrios*, whom had been vindicated by God and to whom Paul ascribed Caesar's imperial titles. According to this view, the larger framework of Empire should provide the backdrop to understanding Paul's correspondence with his communities. In order to establish a position with regards to Empire, a brief analysis of how the Roman Empire functioned prior to and during the time of Paul, is performed. This analysis initiates an investigation into the way that the Roman imperial order manifested within society.

2.3 THE INFLUENCE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE ON ANCIENT SOCIETY

During 44 B.C.E. Julius Caesar (b. 100) was assassinated¹⁷. His grandnephew and adopted son Octavius, who took the name Octavian (63 B.C.E.-14 C.E.), vowed to avenge him. The decades of turmoil during Roman civil war culminated in Octavian's victory over Anthony at the battle of Actium. After Octavian's defeat of Marc Anthony's forces, he returned to Rome and was hailed as "sacred figure (Augustus)". The adaptive Roman ideological system was at work, and Octavian was honoured for the "supreme peace throughout the empire, the *pax Romana*". The Senate awarded him with a golden shield and celebrated him as the epitome of "valour (*virtus*: in Greek, *aretē*), mercy (*clementia*: *epeikeia*), justice (*iustitia*: *dikaïosynē*), and dutiful devotion to the gods, his ancestors, and his posterity (*pietas*: *eusebeia*)" (Elliott, 2008:29). It was through the Roman emperor that "a large number...of nations experienced the good faith of the Roman people" (Elliott, 2008:29) and through him that "the Roman people themselves came into their divinely ordained destiny, to rule the world" (Elliott, 2008:29). The Roman ideology dictated that vanquished nations and people were inferior and destined to be subjugated by the superior Roman imperial order. Cicero (in Elliott, 2008:29) had "labelled Judeans and Syrians" as "peoples born for slavery". The judicial system offered "tribunals and courts of law answerable ultimately, to the emperor himself" (Wright, 2009:64). The cross was the unmistakable symbolic representation of imperial power and as far as the Roman world was concerned, the divinity of the all-conquering emperor was evident.

Greek cities in the west had traditionally acknowledged and honoured Rome, but following Actium, this changed. Greek cities rapidly recognized that the emperor was the most influential power that determined their lives and, therefore, needed to be acknowledged and celebrated. It was not long before the Empire Cult had been established in both Rome and the western areas of the Empire, weaving the political-economic structure and religion together. Shortly following the battle of Actium and in rapid succession, the Greek cities were being transformed on various levels of society. The existing "Greek civil-religious institutions and practices" (Horsley, 2003:99), began embedding within them "significant new components" (Horsley, 2003:99). The emperor became embedded in the cities, in various ways, such as the statues (cf Perry, 2001) of the emperor that were placed next to those of existing traditional gods, within the sanctuaries of the temples. The public square, the agora, was the main centre of city life, and it was here that shrines to the emperor were installed. New temples were also constructed in the city centres. Existing organized games were utilized in order to promote imperial power by renaming

¹⁷ Refer to the outline in Appendix A for an overview of the historical background and succession of emperors considered relevant to the current discussion.

them in honour of the emperor and initiating and funding new games. This created competition amongst cities and provincial counsels competing for “the most elaborate and impressive honours offered to the emperor and his family members, judged by who could divinize him the most” (Horsley, 2003:99). Significant for the study of the New Testament was the way that the emperor pervaded the public space even in cities where he had never and would never visit. The language used to honour the emperor publicly was the celebration of him as “lord” and “saviour”, whose “gospel” of “salvation” and “peace and security” was publicly proclaimed. The “very pattern of civic and economic life was restructured with its focus on Caesar as the divine source of life and saviour of society and images and symbols of his gospel inscribed on public monuments” (Horsley, 2003:100). One could expect to find the imperial themes of “freedom, justice, peace and salvation ...in the mass media of the ancient world” (Wright, 2009:63). It manifested on statues, on coins, in poetry and song and public rhetoric (speeches). The emperor guaranteed and announced these themes in society and such proclamation was known as εὐαγγέλιον (good news). The Augustan poets proclaimed the favour of the gods whom had brought Rome and the world to this point in history. Rome was evident everywhere and in no uncertain terms proclaimed her greatness, justice and peace to the world.

Once the “world” had been conquered a more creative means for control became necessary. By utilising the socio-political order, the emperor was able to penetrate the cities even distant from Rome. “The cults of the Roman emperor performed by the Greek cities of Asia Minor during the first three centuries C.E. confound our expectations about the relationship between religion, politics and power” (Price, 1997:47) and the way that rituals were enacted can be reconstructed based on the rich evidence that survived, especially the various texts inscribed on stone. The practices of the Greek cities including images, rituals and events such as the regional games were reformatted to bestow divine honours upon the emperor. The “imperial festivals became the high point of the year, when the people could experience a sense of community with their whole city” (Horsley, 2003:101). People would stream to the city from neighbouring towns and afar as the festivals constituted a highlight in the life of the poor. It created a sense of identity and excitement where people took pride in their city. While the emperor stayed in Rome, rituals were institutionalised and performed on a regular basis. Prominent citizens were afforded the opportunity to boast their status and “by sponsoring all these rituals, shrines, temples, and festivals the city and provincial elite embodied and consolidated their positions at the top of the Roman imperial order” (Horsley, 2003:102). The Imperial Cult was a tool in the hands of the regime, and it is noteworthy that the “imperial cult was only superficially a religious phenomenon” (Price, 1997:51). The prominent officials and local notables such as Memmius Regulus also filled several priestly positions that crossed economic, political and social boundaries (cf Rieger, 2007). Civil-religious ceremonies thus provided a setting where the

general populace was coming together and were expressing gratitude to the patrons and the emperor. It solidified and re-inscribed the hierarchy with political-economic impact. The wealth of the powerful patrons “was almost certainly derived from their dominating roles in reproducing the very social relations that their sponsorship of the festivals served to veil” (Horsley, 2003:102). Imperial priests became brokers between the divine and humans by sponsoring the society that was filled with imperial images and rituals. Through their wealth, powerful patrons such as Babius Philinus in Corinth and others in the cities took responsibility for the gods and the community through sponsorship. This in turn allowed the urban communities to become dependent upon them for the appropriate *pietas* expressed to the gods and the emperor. In general people worshiped and acknowledged the preeminent power in their lives through “the symbols, rituals and ceremonies in which the imperial power relations were constituted” (Horsley, 2005:105).

Following Julius Caesar’s decree for the rebuilding of Corinth in 44 B.C.E., the city of Corinth rose in prominence and became a major trade and economic centre for the ancient Empire. Claudius (41 C.E. to 54 C.E.) removed a large population of Jewish Christians from Rome in 49 C.E. and many of these people would probably have relocated to cities such as Corinth. Essentially the city was populated with manumitted slaves, those considered faithful to Caesar and also included Greeks (*incolae*) whom had been living amongst the ruins prior to the rebuilding of the city. Manumitted slaves were of great significance within Corinth, where they were able to gain honour and act as local notables. During the reign of Caligula, the importance of broker relations with the emperor was evident when Memmius Regulus escorted his wife to be taken by the emperor Caligula. This remarkable level of faithfulness to the emperor, which was considered a virtue, continued in Corinth with manumitted slaves gaining prominence, for example Erastus who financed the pavement outside the theatre in Corinth. The city represented an agonistic culture with many manumitted slaves acting as local notables and sponsoring the substantial number of cults¹⁸. It is likely that this power-differential and local representation of the emperor would have offered a perfect seedbed for conflict, power struggles and challenges in Paul’s Corinthian community (cf Witherington III, 1995).

¹⁸ Dieties and temples such as Apollo, Asklepios, Hera, Aphrodite, Tyche, Demeter and Kore were all celebrated in Corinth. The association of deities with the emperor and Empire meant that these celebrations and constructions with their concomitant social implications represented a visible manifestation of the presence of the emperor. Manumitted slaves could hold priestly offices and in return displayed loyalty to Caesar.

Acknowledgement of the powerful dynamics of the Roman imperial system with all its complexities leaves many unanswered questions. How can this be brought to bear upon a reading of the New Testament and how were authors such as Paul affected by it? Is it merely valuable as historical backdrop or does it also involve a complex socio-political interpretive grid? Did Paul specifically address the imperial order with his communication, did he reformat his theology based on imperial influences or was he entirely unaffected by the Roman system? Authors have variegated views on how socio-political dynamics of the imperial order affected Paul. A brief investigation of the arguments by authors who ignore anti-imperialism follows. Authors such as Kim (2008) and White (1999) accept the material reality and impact of the Roman Empire on Paul, however, do not believe that Paul purposefully or inadvertently opposed the Roman Empire in his communication with communities. Authors who ignore anti-imperialism in their interpretation of Paul thus ignore the ideological aspects of the Roman Empire and the effect of such ideology on a person. Arguments by these authors will be addressed next.

2.4 ARGUMENTS THAT IGNORE ANTI-IMPERIALISM

Authors differ in their approach to addressing anti-imperialism. Where Kim (2008) vehemently opposes an anti-imperial hermeneutic, White (1999) explores only the material influence of the Roman Empire. Although White does not interpret Paul in direct opposition to Empire, he acknowledges Paul's reinterpretation of Christ's rule as not identical to Jewish and pagan ideas. Authorship under this heading thus refers to authors who are either opposed to anti-imperial interpretations or unaware of the ideological aspects of Empire. White (1999) explores the premise that Paul is operating with a theology that relates to God primarily as creator and not as redeemer. His argument builds on the contextual impact of Empire on Paul and addresses the way Paul's *modus operandi* conforms to his imperial setting. He elaborates, for example, the way Paul modeled his image of Christ on the Roman emperor. The "turning point in the redefinition of imperial rule" (White, 1999:111), the Augustan programme "of cultural renewal" (White, 1999:111) and the "imperial cult in the Greek east" (White, 1999:111) affected Paul, in his understanding of the extent of "God's empire" (White, 1999:111) and of Christ as the ruler of this empire. Although "Paul was born, was reared, and spent all but the end of his life in the Greek-speaking East, his picture of Christ as ruler is more like the image of Augustus than like Greek or Jewish kings" (White, 1999:110). Octavian became the epitome of piety in his restoration ideal of the values of the Roman republic. His pious act of surrendering his authority to the senate in 27 B.C. allowed him to stay in power much longer, but it presented an image of the ruler primarily as *princeps* and not king. His priestly role, close association with the gods (specifically Apollo) and tremendous effort in revitalising the traditional colleges of priests and restoration of many temples reflects the image of Augustus (Octavian) as primary overseer of the temples and priesthood.

According to White (1999:133), Paul's presentation of Christ is reminiscent of the Augustus who positioned him as saviour and a broker between the god(s) and humans. He is interpreting the messianic expectation of a ruler that would "restore a golden-age harmony" (White, 1999:133) as being fulfilled in Jesus. White (1999:133-134) believes that Paul's image of Christ was clearly influenced in at least three ways. Firstly both Augustus and Jesus acted as brokers between the gods (God) and humans and performed a priestly role. Secondly "because of their acts of patronage they "had the right to be regarded as divine and deserving of elevation to divinity" (White, 1999:134). This status of Augustus was something equally problematic for the early church in terms of the divinity and humanity of Jesus. Thirdly both Augustus and Jesus were viewed as god who had become a man in order to "secure human salvation" (White, 1999:134). The outworking of this can be found in the threefold Pauline theology of God as Father, Christ as Lord and the community as God's family. White (1999) does not attempt to address anti-imperial arguments but explores the way Empire served as a backdrop and influencer of Paul's theology. He acknowledges that Paul's theology is a modified theology, but seeks to find alignment between imperial ideology and Paul. He does this successfully and makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of the contextual complexity within which Paul functioned. His argument does, however, not attempt to dismantle anti-imperial interpretations.

A much more forceful case against anti-imperial sentiments can be found in the work of Seyoon Kim (2008). In his attempt to dismantle anti-imperial arguments of scholars, Kim (2008) addresses what he views as the problems with the (flawed) methodology of modern scholarship. According to him the method followed is a logical sequence that postulates anti-imperial, subversive theories through the proof-texting that follows the establishment of corresponding Roman imperial terms, interpreted in conjunction with a number of assumptions. If this approach fails, the proponents of Paul's anti-imperial message resort to messages of "coding" (Kim, 2008:31). He is critical of scholars who find subversive language, apocalyptic thinking and imperial ideology in Paul's letters. According to him, authors who operate according to a number of assumptions use deductive reasoning that naturally leads to Paul's preaching as having an "anti-imperial character" (Kim, 2008:31). He compares the proof-texting that modern interpreters apply to "the method that dogmatists employed to construct doctrines, and dispensationalists used to construct elaborate eschatological scenarios" (Kim, 2008:32). Anti-imperial messages are, therefore, read from passages with underlying assumptions, and Roman imperial terminology and assumptions are proved by stringing passages together. Lastly upon failure of these attempts and in a desperate attempt to prove counter-imperial messages, some exegetes will "appeal to the device of coding" (Kim, 2008:32) and maintain "that Paul hid his counter-

imperial message by coding it in his attack on the Jews or politically innocuous language in order to protect himself and his readers from the charge of treason” (Kim, 2008:32-33).

Scholars widely recognise the existence of imperial language, but the issue seems to be related to Paul’s intentions with such language. The identification of Roman terminology used in the letters of Paul leads to variegated interpretations. In his analysis of Pauline epistles, Kim (2008) does not find any apparent anti-imperial message. He believes that this form of exegesis is incorrect and driven by “parallelomania” (Kim, 2008:28)¹⁹. Kim is not alone in his concerns regarding parallelomania. Wright (2000), who does find anti-imperial undertones in Paul’s writings, also warns that not all interpreters who search for an anti-imperial message in the letters of Paul have abandoned this exegetical approach, and calls it a “misleading method of study” (Wright, 2000:162). Combing the classical world or the Jewish world for parallels, meant to “explain” Paul, is not dynamic enough for a person who “innovated radically from within the Jewish tradition” (Wright, 2000:162) whilst maintaining “head-on confrontation with other traditions” (Wright, 2000:162). The warnings from scholars against simplistic interpretation of the use of parallel terms begs the thought-provoking question as to how these scholars can sound the same warning, yet arrive at such different conclusion as to the influence of Empire. Despite the warning, of Wright (2000), he remains convinced of the serious anti-Empire elements in Pauline literature and his comments will be addressed as part of the following sections. Categorising advocates of an anti-imperial interpretation can be misleading, since this only acknowledges that authors are in agreement that anti-imperial elements exist in Pauline communication. The caveat remains that Paul’s theology must not be misconstrued as only anti-imperial. With this in mind, a brief overview of anti-imperial advocates follows.

2.5 ADVOCATES OF AN ANTI-IMPERIAL INTERPRETATION

Fundamental to an understanding of Paul’s resistance, subversion or endorsement of the Roman imperial order, is the lack of separation between the political, the economic, the cultural and the religious worlds. “Even in modern interpretations of Paul there is little awareness of Paul’s broader challenges. Paul is often viewed as the creator of a universal and spiritual religion, sometimes couched in opposition of the parochial spirit of Judaism” (Rieger, 2007:23). The emperor was “not only the object” of the Empire Cult, but also the subject – “people saw him as the saviour who had healing powers” (Rieger, 2007:26) and who sustained the formulaic introduction following Augustus’s victory at Actium of “peace and security” (εἰρήνη καὶ ἀσφάλεια) and “good news” (εὐαγγέλιον). While mass crucifixions and violence were commonplace in

¹⁹ Wright (2000:162) believes that “similar protests should be lodged against the Hellenistic equivalents”.

Judea, there were limited military personnel in Asia Minor where much of Paul's work took place and cities in this area were self-governing. Importantly Paul opposes the Roman order in a political²⁰ fashion, not by directly resisting the administrative and official offices as one would imagine, rather, by opposing the Empire Cult, the patronage system and the "prominent empire themes", Paul was "resisting three of the most powerful mechanisms of control of the Roman Empire" (Rieger, 2007:30).

How was the Empire held together once military conquest had subjugated foreign city-states, peoples and kingdoms? Cities such as Ephesus and Corinth where Paul carried out his work required no military presence in order to maintain the Pax Romana. The Roman imperial rule did also not maintain a large bureaucracy such as other empires, and the household staff of the emperor with managerial slaves dealt with administrative affairs. The assumed separation between politics and religion is a modern phenomenon and veils the role of the Imperial Cult and patronage in maintaining cohesion of the Roman imperial order. "Scholars of religion, working with modern western, Christian understanding of religion as individual faith, found it impossible to imagine that the ancients could have had personal faith in the distant figure of Caesar" (Horsley, 2003:97). In light of this contemporary view, when honours were bequeathed to the emperor, it constituted "polite diplomacy in otherwise empty rituals" (Horsley, 2003:97). This was clearly not the case and following "the conventional distinction between religion and politics" (Price, 1997:52) will not permit a proper understanding of the political power constituted in something such as the Empire Cult. In this way, the power of Empire was maintained through ritual and image – essentially the Empire Cult with "urban and provincial elites" who "stood at the apex of a whole system of patronage headed by the emperor himself" (Horsley, 2005:98).

The pressing and overpowering nature of Empire causes "that those living under their rule cannot remain neutral." Resistance to Empire is evident "in the lives of Jesus, of Paul and in parts of the early church" (Rieger, 2007:4). Empire constitutes more than culture and includes aspects of economics and politics as well as the complex relationships between them. The theological issue at hand is that Christ has throughout history been viewed in terms of the ruling

²⁰ Authors that maintain political readings of Paul contend that religion and politics could not be separated in ancient society. Where references are made to anti-imperial authors as "political", this reflects an ancient society where religion and politics were woven together in a complex fabric. The Empire Cult was both "religious" and "political". It is equally dangerous to interpret the Jewish aspect of society as purely religious and Roman imperial aspect of society as political, creating a false divide. It is this complex relationship that should be considered in Paul's letters as he communicates with ancient communities.

Empires, which would include the views of the apostle Paul. This view persists today where Christ is seen to be on the side of those who are successful and powerful and can even be found in Christ who associates with the downtrodden and marginalised of society (Rieger, 2007:4). In such a context, Christ pulls them up into society where they can participate in the success and powers of Empire. Through an ideological investigation of Empire, the powers, which influence thinking, consciously and unconsciously become visible and one can press beyond the status quo (Rieger, 2007).

Neil Elliott (2008:44) has also been arguing for a εὐαγγέλιον that is at odds with the Roman imperial order. In his ideological-critical reading of Romans, he argues against a surface-reading of the letter to the Romans, rather reading “beneath and behind it” (Elliott, 2008:11). He believes that the broader context, within which this letter is situated, is the environment that was shaped and constrained by disparities of power. He argues that a political reading of Romans is necessary and that Paul makes use of “recognizable themes from imperial propaganda, usually in such a way as implicitly to challenge them” (Elliott, 2008:14). He opposes the social-scientific tendency to suggest that tensions within the community to which the Roman letter was addressed stemmed primarily from “the proximity of different ethnic groups” (Elliott, 2008:14). Elliott acknowledges that his position in earlier writings was describing Paul’s gospel message as anti-imperial and “his theology as subversive of some of the claims of imperial propaganda” (Elliott, 2008:14), but that this would over-simplify the writings of Paul. He acknowledges the criticism that he has received from scholars such as Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Elliott, 2008:15) and recognises that Paul never directly provides a systematic critique of the Roman emperor and never names the emperor specifically. As such Elliott believes that the Empire is never directly the target, rather that Paul’s “goal is to lay claim on the allegiance of his listeners with which the rival claims of empire inevitably interfered” (Elliott, 2008:15). With this statement, Elliott locates himself in a similar position as Horsley, although slightly more radical in anti-imperial sentiments. Paul was thus shaped “by the ideological constraints of his age” (Elliott, 2008:15) and his letter to the Romans (and other letters) was “one expression of the range of Judean response to the Roman empire” (Elliott, 2008:15). Elliott is in agreement with Horsley that his reading is “not as a Christian critique of Judaism, or a defence of Gentile Christianity, but as a Judean critique of an incipient non-Judean Christianity in which the pressures of imperial ideology were a decisive factor” (Elliott, 2008:15). He comments that:

Only rarely has rhetorical criticism led interpreters to question the assumptions, inherited from Reformation dogmatics, that the letter is fundamentally Paul’s presentation of a doctrine of salvation, and that this doctrine is fundamentally incompatible with, and opposed to, the Judaism of his contemporaries (Elliott, 2008: 17).

The Roman ideology dictated that vanquished nations and people were inferior and destined to be subjugated by the superior Roman imperial order. As previously mentioned, “Cicero had labelled Judeans and Syrians” as “peoples born for slavery” (Elliott, 2008:29). With subjugation come resistance, and this resistance can either be openly visible or it can be hidden. A background of tensions and visible exploitation of the masses provides a perfect breeding ground for resistance. The common reference to the terminology used by Paul in his letters that “resonated with imperial overtones” (Elliott, 2008:44) is, however, not enough. Titles for Christ such as “lord” (Κυρίος), son of God (υἱοῦ Θεοῦ) claimed by the Roman emperors were also the terms that Paul was using to describe his mission, such as his “gospel” or “good news” (εὐαγγέλιον) and “preach the gospel” (εὐαγγέλιζεσθαι). In Paul’s world, these terms were used to describe “announcements of the emperor’s victories and accession” (Elliott, 2008:44). However, for Elliott the identification of terminology has to be combined with the question regarding the “rhetorical thrust of the letter” (Elliott, 2008:44). The overall courteous tone, for example, the reference to mutual encouragement (Rom 1:12), of the letter “should not distract us from the force of his rhetoric” (Elliott, 2008:45). Diplomatic language was the preferred mode for issuing commands in Paul’s day. The letter to the Romans then does not become a description of Paul’s gospel, but “Paul’s effective proclamation of an alternative lordship” (Elliott, 2008:45) that opposed the Roman imperial system and would have been understood clearly by his listeners.

Horsley also maintains that the modern, individualistic point of departure leads to an assumption that people have a choice regarding their religion, however, where people are socialized into “institutionalized festivals of their villages, cities and society” (Horsley, 2003:97) this was not the case. There would not be much choice regarding participation and people would be “swept along in the cultural stream” (Horsley, 2003:85). He describes a context that he believes to be a perfect seedbed for the development of Paul’s letter-writing where he proposes an alternative kingdom, one ruled by the Lord Jesus and clearly opposed to the Roman imperial system. Although his gospel was in conflict with the Roman Empire and not Judaism, Horsley (2004:3) does not see Paul as a revolutionary, opposing the Roman Empire openly. He argues that Romans 13:1-7 is almost antipodal to active revolution and Paul’s preaching does not include direct reference to how Rome oppressed people or speech opposing the Roman emperor openly. Even in the local representatives of Rome this open opposition cannot be found, rather a letter such as 1 Thess 4:11 insists that they “strive eagerly [to be] quiet and [to] practice [their] own things” (Horsley, 2004:3). How then did Paul oppose the Roman imperial order? Opposition came in the same way that the Roman imperial system was brought to bear on society. Paul represents a gospel of Christ and establishes new communities that are in opposition to the imperial order through the same complex structures of the entire Roman imperial system. At the apex of the system, stood the imperial ruler dominating through a complex socio-political fabric

that contained unequal power relations, hierarchical values and an ideology of peace and security. Horsley believes that in “Paul’s Letters, Christ and Gospel stand opposed to Caesar and the Roman imperial order” (Horsley, 2004:3). In investigating what he calls “the principal facets and key terms of his [Paul’s] gospel” (Horsley, 2004:3), Horsley argues that it provides ample evidence that Paul’s gospel is anti-imperial Roman order and not anti-Judaism.

A brief response to various proponents and opponents of anti-imperial readings is necessary, in order to position the current investigation. Only some of the principal themes will be highlighted briefly, due to the lack of space and the complexity of the topic, starting with a response to those scholars that only address Empire as historical reality. This does not indicate that other categorisations ignore the historicity of Empire, but it refers to authors that ignore ideological readings.

2.6 A BRIEF RESPONSE TO ADVOCATES AND OPPONENTS OF ANTI-IMPERIAL INTERPRETATIONS

2.6.1 ADDRESSING EMPIRE AS PURELY HISTORICAL BACKDROP

If there is agreement and acknowledgement of the antiquity of history-of-religion models, how do some authors arrive at an anti-imperial meaning and others not? The warnings by Elliott (2008:44) and Wright (2000:162), that the existence of parallel terms cannot be read simplistically as anti-imperial, lead to the conclusion that the construction of anti-imperial arguments is more complex than originally anticipated. Warnings that the mere existence of parallel political terms are not enough to assume an anti-imperial gospel are valid, valuable and should be heeded. More pertinent to note, however, is not the mere existence of parallel terms, but in light of the evidence for Paul’s political²¹ language (Mitchell, 1991:68) and deliberative rhetoric²² (Mitchell, 1991:20), but that his whole method of argumentation is utilising imperial tools. Addressing the assembly in Corinth in the same fashion that a politician would address factionalism in the public assembly as attested by ancient speeches and letters (Mitchell, 1991:60) should at least warn that powerful imperial elements are at play. Kim’s (2008:30) criticism of the methodology of anti-imperial exegetes hinges on a list of assumptions that he ascribes to these scholars. The “assumptions” are, however, arguably well attested, for

²¹ See also the contributions of Welborn (in Mitchell, 1991:63 n 207).

²² Mitchell (1991:20-60) argues convincingly for 1 Corinthians as deliberative rhetoric in light of the timeframe, the appeal to advantage, use of examples in deliberative rhetoric and lastly the use of deliberative rhetoric to arrest factionalism in ancient society.

example, the effects of the integration between religion and politics that existed in Greek and Asian cities are more than a mere “assumption” (Kim, 2008:30) as ably documented by several authors (Horsley, 1997b:4). Kim states that although “Caesar was worshipped as the saviour of the world” (Kim, 2008:32), this does not lead “to the conclusion that the proclamation and worship of Jesus as Lord and Saviour necessarily were subversive to the imperial cult” (Kim, 2008:32). This conclusion, however, is probably only possible by ignoring the ideology of Empire and remains contentious. Paul never launches a direct attack on Empire, but his “rhetoric ...was shaped by the ideological constraints of his age” and he was determined to lay claim to “the allegiance of his listeners with which the rival claims of empire inevitably interfered” (Elliott, 2008:15). In Pauline writings there are “clear signs that Paul’s gospel of Jesus the Messiah claims to be the reality of which the Empire, with all its trappings, is simply a parody” (Wright, 2009:56). The thought that Paul modifies “Jewish models and ruler cult ideology” (White, 1999:205) but he still presents a lordship that only exceeds Augustan claims and ultimately does not stand in opposition to Empire is, therefore, questionable. How is it possible for Paul to convey in powerful rhetoric a gospel that is so different to Roman ideology and conclude that it does not end with at least an element of subversion, especially, given the dynamics of an Empire that demanded total allegiance to its lord? Although parallel terminology does not necessarily lead to subversion or opposition, a fact acknowledged by most, ignoring the subversive elements of Paul’s message is probably only possible when severing the religious bone from the political marrow.

Paul’s thinking was conformed to the Roman Empire, specifically the view of Augustus, and the Augustan age directly affected Paul’s theology (White, 1999). The way Octavian’s cultural reforms in terms of the Empire Cult, his act of piety in resigning his power to the senate (27 B.C.), temple restoration programmes, close association with Apollo and priestly role can easily be misunderstood by only reflecting on the conformance that this introduced into Paul’s theology. Ultimately this still reflected the power-play of the Roman system. The reforms still reflected the creative, political jibe of a shrewd politician that extended the power-base of the Roman system to areas where the emperor would never be able to reach. It transformed society, but one can be assured that it also intentionally extended Octavian’s term of power. His positioning as a broker between the god(s) and the population was not merely spiritually motivated and would have been an abomination to a Jewish monotheist with a reinterpreted messianic expectation (Wright, 2009). In such a depoliticised reading, Paul is presenting Christ as someone much like Augustus, instead of Κυρίου ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ (1 Cor 1:2), who is the community’s Lord, the (true) Messiah.

The prospect of not reflecting on Paul's opposition to Empire is an untenable and depoliticised Paul, who just flows along with the ebbs and tides of Empire. Although White (1999) touches on the way Empire influenced Pauline theology, he does not elucidate the way Paul rethinks and reformats his theology regarding God, Christ, God's people and the future, contesting the false representations of Empire. The lordship, that "effects a restoration and harmony that exceeds even the Augustan peace" (White, 1999:205), creates the false impression that Paul's Christ is a type of Caesar. Scholars such as Horsley (1997b, 2000a, 2000b, 2003, 2004) and Elliott (1994, 2008), who believe that Paul strongly opposed Empire, appropriately address this impression.

2.6.2 ADDRESSING STRONG ANTI-IMPERIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Although one would agree with Horsley (2004:3) that Paul's approach is not revolutionary in the violent sense, the possibility remains to interpret Paul as only passively anti-imperial through his establishment of alternative communities. It does not bring the Roman, Jewish and Hellenistic worlds together into Paul's criticism and intentions. Although Paul's opposition is portrayed as passive resistance through alternative communities and liberating in the case of Elliott (1994, 2008), Paul is equally critical of anyone, including his fellow Jews, opposing his reinterpreted value system (Wright, 2009). This tension is not always clear from radical anti-imperialists although the intention is probably to highlight the anti-imperial components instead of managing balance. Regardless, it is useful to observe that Elliott writes from the context of contemporary American imperial power that bullies smaller nations into submission through military power and economically induced control in order to further its (empire's) own objectives. With the recent history of the US involvement in Central America (Elliott, 1994:7) and abroad such as the Gulf, it is not difficult to see the ideology of a modern liberation theologian. Scholars are not immune to cultural agendas, and Wright (2009:16) notes that:

It is certainly no accident that Richard Horsley has pioneered the new political readings of Paul from a below-the-tracks university in Boston where it is taken for granted that today's monolithic American empire is, if not the source of all evil, at least one of its major current conduits.

Although Elliott (2008:15) has also modified his views and now acknowledges (as does Horsley) that Paul did not directly attack the Roman emperor or Empire, Elliott's strong views on the anti-imperial elements remain and are probably slightly more radical than those of Horsley. Regardless of which scholars are considered more radical, anti-imperial scholars provide a valuable contribution in reminding exegetes to take ideology seriously, and serve to remind that Paul was not only responding to communities but also to the Empire.

A more sophisticated model proposes that Paul's theology was reformatted with regards to Jewish themes of eschatology, election and monotheism "around the twin poles of Messiah and

Spirit” (Wright, 2009:153). This has led Paul to “retell the great stories which his fellow Jews told, both as now fulfilled through Jesus the Messiah and as looking for their final fulfilment at the day of Christ” (Wright, 2009:153). While Paul was influenced by Empire, he was also opposing it by postulating a lordship and community that opposed the false pretensions of Empire. Christ opposed Empire by being depicted as the reality of which Empire is the spoof. This tension between conformance and opposition in Paul’s reformatted theology should be maintained and is categorised in this study as “moderated”. Such scholarship highlights bigger themes and objectives behind Paul’s communication with ancient communities and attempts to maintain the tension between the influence of Empire and anti-imperial critique. It does not ignore the radical anti-imperial elements, but it subjects them to a larger tapestry. The existence of anti-imperialism, not as the primary objective but the necessary outcome, will be addressed as “moderated anti-imperial scholarship”. This approach will include both imperial and anti-imperial elements in addressing Pauline thought of which Wright (2000, 2009) and Rieger (2007) are good examples.

2.6.3 ADDRESSING MODERATED ANTI-IMPERIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Moderated anti-imperial scholarship refers in this study to the existence of both imperial and anti-imperial elements in Paul’s writing. This does not claim that radical anti-imperial scholars do not also acknowledge Paul’s use of imperial ideological force. As noted before, Horsley acknowledges the passive resistance and Paul’s theology of Romans 13:1-7 and does not render him as a left-wing, violent radical. The intention, however, seems to be different, even in the case where there is agreement that Paul is intentionally anti-imperial, anti-imperialism is not the primary objective. Wright concludes that Paul’s use of imperial terminology indicates that Empire is an underlying “theme” (Wright, 2009) in conjunction with other themes that constitute an interpretive grid for Paul’s reinterpretation of his theology and his views on life. Paul must be seen as operating dynamically within a distinctly Jewish tradition with “radical innovation” (Wright, 2000:162) that must press beyond criticism of the Lutheran model of Paul. In this view of Pauline literature, Paul’s self-description as a Jewish apostle to the Gentiles is taken seriously. He was the person who found himself “in the Messiah”, whom he believed was the crucified and risen person of Jesus of Nazareth (Wright, 2000:162). Paul’s anti-Jewish sentiments are, therefore, not replaced with anti-imperial sentiments; both occur wherever there is a conflict with Paul’s message. On the one hand, Paul can be interpreted without recognition of his anti-imperial comments and, on the other hand, without recognition of his challenge to fellow Jews. Seating Paul within the Greco-Roman world needs to reflect, however, more than merely historical context, but continue to reflect the “confrontation between Paul and the pagan world” (Wright, 2000:163). In this interpretation, Paul is confronting the pagan world, whether this world is Roman or Greek or Jewish or anything else. Paul’s gospel message opposes anything that is contrary to his reinterpreted symbolic world (Wright, 2008). This Paul reminds

us that there are larger forces at play, and he will use or oppose Empire depending on how it creates an opportunity to serve his larger purpose.

Rieger (2007) investigates the imperial influences and anti-imperial themes in Christology in order to render what he refers to as “surplus” (Rieger, 2007:9). He explores the implications of a Christ that is rendered through Deutero-Pauline interpretations and “would be used to consolidate the imperial order” (Horsley in Rieger, 2007:36). Texts such as Roman 13:1-7 and 1 Cor 15:24-25, the origins of the term *kyrios* and usage in the eastern Empire as “absolute monarch”, serve to explain why this Christ would be modelled on Caesar. Surplus, however, refers to a Christ that never quite fits in. Ultimately the resistance of Paul’s message can be found in a “messianic trait in Jesus’ lordship that refuses to legitimize” (Rieger, 2007:53) the top-down power of the status quo. It diametrically opposes the ideological view that the gods had poured out favour on only the privileged and powerful. It can hardly be more pronounced than in Paul’s epistolary prescript of his Corinthian correspondence: χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ Θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1 Cor 3). The favour and peace claimed by the imperial order originated with God and the lordship of Caesar was replaced by the lordship of Jesus, the Messiah. This resistance is bold, because any ideology that contradicts the legitimisation of the status quo has to steel itself against the powers in control, and subtle, because it does not condone the status quo of violent oppression either. Rieger does not deny the existence of the material reality of Empire, “after all, the Empire was like the air they breathed”, but finds it remarkable that some “were able to recognise the ambivalence of empire and to develop resistance” (Rieger, 2007:28).

Some brief concluding comments on Empire will help to locate the investigation regarding Empire in Paul’s Corinthian letter.

2.6.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Most anti-imperial interpreters would view Paul’s reinterpretation of symbols such as the cross²³, reversal of social power dynamics and his Christology from below as a form of passive resistance based on an apocalyptic and eschatological view of future glory. This depiction of power was clearly portrayed and evidenced by Paul’s own life and others with him (“us” in Phil 3:17). Kim’s allegation that “the Pauline Epistles make no specific criticism of the despotism of the imperial rule, the violence of its military, or the enslavement and economic exploitation of the

²³ See Addendum A for some comments on apocalyptic thinking in Paul’s reinterpretation of symbols such as the cross.

nations” (Kim, 2008:34) only makes sense when one ignores Paul’s radical reinterpretation of symbols. Interpretations of purely historical nature offer much insight into the Pauline context but are not helpful in exploring the differences (White, 1999) and it is precisely in the differences where opposition to Empire is visible. The claims that Paul does not directly address the Roman Empire, that it makes no reference to the Imperial Cult and reference to Romans 13:1-7 as justification for an apolitical, purely spiritualised reading of Paul’s letters are only tenable in the absence of ideology. Paul’s criticism of those considered “enemies of the cross” (Phil 3:18) illustrate the ideology behind his radical symbolic reinterpretation of the Empire’s might (see addendum A). Since such a message opposes the precise methods that are imposed (such as violence and military power), it becomes increasingly difficult to understand outright rejection of an anti-imperial message by some authors. It would constitute a contradiction if Paul’s anti-imperial message condoned violence, since violent resistance would in one sense not be anti-imperial anymore. When Paul proposes that Jesus represents what is true and of which Empire is the spoof, he brings his Jewish apocalyptic and messianic themes to bear upon a radically reinterpreted theology and symbolic word.

As the discussion narrows to Paul’s letter to the Corinthian community, it should be evident, that it is hardly possible to ignore the significance of Empire, whatever the extent of one’s anti-imperial interpretation. Recognising the way that Empire affected society as a whole inevitably leads to the question of how this should affect the interpretation of ancient documents such as the New Testament, which evolved within this context. For anti-imperial interpreters, Empire will prescribe at least a somewhat ideological reading with understanding and application of Empire as more than merely historical but also as “interpretive grid” (Punt, 2010). Interpreters maintaining no anti-imperial sentiments, will primarily focus on Empire as the “material backdrop” (Punt, 2010) in traditional historical-critical fashion. In spite of the existence of parallel terms, some authors maintain the petition that Paul’s reference to Jesus as κύριος or υἱοῦ Θεοῦ and other Roman imperial terminology, was politically innocuous. These authors contend that there were no anti-imperial or subversive intentions in his letters. De-politicising Paul, in this way, leads to a dangerous interpretation of Paul fully in accord with Empire. “The purpose of interpreting Paul’s Christology in light of the politics of Empire is not to politicise Paul, but to save him from being depoliticised” (Rieger, 2007:45). Paul cannot be read “in a political vacuum” (Rieger, 2007:44) and should be seen as a person affected by and operating within the “powers of his time” (Rieger, 2007:44) and someone who makes use of the tools of his imperial context (Mitchell, 1991). The complexity of Paul is not an either-or matter. It is an interpretation that takes cognizance of both his opposition to Empire and the acknowledgement that Empire affected him deeply. Modern readings should not replace the anti-Judaism of previous centuries with an anti-imperial sentiment but rather recognize that all these powers operate in tandem.

Paul was driven by his primary objective, which was to tell people about a radically reinterpreted Christ, and he makes use of everything at his disposal in order to achieve this. Sometimes this opposes Empire dramatically, but at other times, it makes use of the social dynamics of the imperial system. This tension will always remain and become apparent when specifically addressing the interpretation of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. The objective is to read from an imperial (purely historical) and anti-imperial perspective and then to make some brief comments in order to clarify the position of this study.

2.7 READING 1 CORINTHIANS WITHOUT ANTI-IMPERIAL SENTIMENTS

Historical interpreters²⁴ follow approximately²⁵ two approaches. Firstly by questioning the methods of anti-imperial interpreters (Kim, 2008) and secondly by pointing out the way Paul utilises or reinforces dimensions of Empire, such as patronage (Kittredge, 2000; White, 1999; Wire, 2000). Reading Paul's first letter to the Corinthian assembly without anti-imperial sentiments requires at least some spiritualisation of passages such as "the rulers of this age" and "every rule and every authority and power" (1 Cor 2:6-8). In such an interpretation, Paul explicitly refers to death as the "last enemy" (15:26) and in "his song of Christ's triumph over death, sin, and the law (15:54-57), Paul himself signals that those terms refer to evil forces broader than human rulers and enemies" (Kim, 2008:24). It is also possible that Paul is referring to a common tradition shared with the community (Wire, 2000:125). Kim does not believe that Paul only has in mind the "handful of Roman officials who were involved in the crucifixion of Jesus and the extended circle of their direct superiors" (Kim, 2008:24) in 2:8. It seems in Paul's use of language such as his references to "Satan" (5:5; 7:5), "demons" (10:20-21) and the "god of this age" in his second letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor 4:4) that these are the dark forces that,

²⁴ The references to "historical interpreters" refer to authors such as Kim (2008) and White (1999), who focus purely on finding the historical influence of Empire in 1 Corinthians. It does not indicate that anti-imperial authors ignore the material reality of Empire, purely that they are much more aware of the ideological dimensions of Empire and that they explore Pauline opposition of Empire much more aggressively.

²⁵ It is roughly the way anti-imperial interpreters are refuted, because sometimes authors will simply refute an interpretation by denying that it is accurate, for example regarding Horsley's interpretation of the idol meat in 1 Cor 8-10 Kim states that Horsley's "interpretation ... must also be judged as a gross exaggeration" (Kim, 2008:26). The second way of refuting anti-imperial interpretations – to point out similarities between Empire dimensions and Paul – is significant for this study, because the intention is to acknowledge both anti-imperial sentiments and agreement with imperial dimensions in 1 Corinthians. It is apparent that both exist and that as much as Paul opposed Empire in some of his thinking, he also did not shy away from utilising the dimensions of Empire such as patronage in order to achieve his objectives. This study attempts to highlight such tension.

according to him, rule the world. The spiritual dynamic included in this reading does not ignore the physical manifestation of the Roman Empire in its totality; it offers a comprehensive reading that takes cognisance of both spiritual and physical power. Kim briefly acknowledges that Paul also has the Empire in mind in 2:6-8 when he comments that “it is better to ask whether among the evil forces Paul has also the Roman rulers in view” (Kim, 2008:24). According to Kim, Paul is therefore aiming criticism at aspects of the Roman Empire that oppose “God’s wisdom embodied in the crucified Christ” (Kim, 2008:25). Kim agrees with Horsley that it even includes “the pretentious elit[ism] questing after power, wealth, wisdom, noble birth, and honorific public office” (Kim, 2008:25)²⁶. This reading necessitates that in chapters 5-6 Paul is aiming his criticism at “immorality and injustice” (Kim, 2008:25) that do not only pertain to the Roman imperial system and does not encourage hearers to subvert or oppose the system. These criticisms should be read as general attacks on the “state of this world and this age, applicable even to the Corinthian church” (Kim, 2008:25). When Paul is addressing the issue of idol meat in 1 Cor 8-10 it appears to Kim as if he is merely addressing the “religious dimension of idolatry” (Kim, 2008:26) and there is no indication that he embarks on a discussion regarding the socio-political dimensions. Kim continues that it “is noteworthy that there is no mention of the imperial cult at all” (Kim, 2008:26).

In 1 Cor 9 Paul outlines his refusal to accept financial support from the Corinthians. Interpreters seeking alignment with Empire, believe this could be falsely interpreted as opposition to the patronage system and attempt to show how Paul utilised the system. Although the alternative society does embody alternative values and lifestyles, Paul is “exhorting the believers to build up an *ekklesiā* that proleptically materializes the coming Kingdom of God” (Kim, 2008:25). Even Horsley agrees that “Paul did not come up with any vision of an alternative political economy for his alternative society” (Kim, 2008:25). According to this interpretation, the help that Paul received from various people for his missions should provide convincing proof that Paul was not attempting to repudiate the Roman patronage system, but benefiting from it. When Paul is insisting on an order of subjection (11:3) he is reinforcing the pattern of subordination expected within the patronage system. Kittredge (2000:108) warns that the emphasis of anti-imperial interpretations can cause one to be blinded to such reinforcement. “Those who seek to interpret Paul in an imperial context have restricted themselves to emphasising Paul’s radical stance and underplaying the ways in which Paul’s language replicates and reinscribes imperial power relationships” (Kittredge, 2000:108).

²⁶ Horsley’s (in Kim, 2008:25) interpretation agrees with Kim on this point, but not in his overall anti-imperial approach of which Kim is critical.

In his reading of 1 Cor 15, Kim also does not find any subversive elements and that “Paul does not address any particular problems of the Roman Empire at all” (Kim, 2008:25). According to Kim (2008:26) it would also be a gross exaggeration to interpret the significance of Paul’s efforts to collect funds from his Gentile churches to pour into the coffers of the struggling Jerusalem church as “opposition to the Roman imperial economic system”. Paul’s effort to “vindicate his messianic mission to the Gentiles in the eyes of, as he puts it, ‘the saints in Judea’ (messianic Jews) and ‘unbelievers’ (non-messianic Jews)” (Wire, 2000:224) can indicate the significance of the collection. Wire (2000) believes that Paul incited competition between Greek cities and Roman provinces. Wire concludes from 1 Cor 16:1-4 that he “assures them a representative in the entourage to Jerusalem” and from her interpretation of Galatians that “I have not yet been convinced that Paul’s collection is anti-imperial except in the broadest sense that Jewish hopes and claims ultimately conflict with imperial claims” (Wire, 2000:225). Ultimately Paul is attempting to create an integrated world, and the Jerusalem church is the axle around which this system rotates. In this way, Paul was assimilating the gentile assemblies such as those in Corinth into the “Israel of God” (Gal 6:16) represented by the Jerusalem church. According to Kim, the relationships were certainly not reciprocal, and Paul does not document anywhere that the “Jerusalem church sent financial aid to Gentile churches” (Kim, 2000:26).

According to Kittredge, “the verb *hypotassesthai*...is one element in the field of political terminology that recurs within 1 Corinthians” (Kittredge, 2000:106). The political language such as the “be subject” (14:33, 15:23-28) phrases and other political language is reminiscent of unequal power relationships where “one of superior strength rules over another” (Kittredge, 2000:106) and serves to enforce typical patronage. Throughout Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, there are elements that reflect hierarchical thinking reminiscent of patronage. “Paul constructs a series of linked elements in an implied linked hierarchy in which the element in the middle position is essential to mediate between the other two: in 3:22, you-Christ-God; in 4:14 children-father-Christ; and in 11:3, woman-man-Christ-God” (Kittredge, 2000:207). Paul utilises the “be subject” term to reflect on the relationships between members of the community and *ekklēsia* and between Christ, God and all things. This hierarchical thinking throughout his letter leads one to believe that Paul’s thinking and rhetoric are distinctly imperial and a clear implementation of the “asymmetrical exchange relationship” (Chow, 1997:107).

Having addressed briefly some of the comments by interpretations that acknowledge imperial alignment, the focus shifts to some of the anti-imperial interpretations of 1 Corinthians. How can anti-imperial readings be legitimised and how are these readings validated within the socio-political setting of the Corinthian correspondence? Reflecting on 1 Corinthians from an anti-

imperial perspective will assist some of the answers to these questions. In the interest of space, only a few brief comments will be made.

2.8 AN ANTI-IMPERIAL READING OF 1 CORINTHIANS

2.8.1 OVERVIEW

Paul seems to have believed that the history as God was bringing it to fulfilment (Rom 10:4), was not through Rome, but through Israel and now Christ “has become the means by which fulfilment has come in history....In Paul’s letters, Christ and Gospel events stand opposed to Caesar and the Roman imperial order” (Horsley, 2004:4). The New Testament evidence suggests that wherever there were assemblies that proclaimed Christ as Lord according to Paul’s message, the imperial local representatives opposed Paul and his assemblies. Paul was mistreated in Philippi (1 Thess 2:2), and the accusation made against Paul (and fellow workers) was that he proclaimed “customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans” (Acts 16:21). In Thessalonica the church “received the word in much tribulation” (1 Thess 1:6), and they “endured the same sufferings” from their “countrymen” (2:14). This was due to their acting “contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus” (Acts 17:7). After eighteen months in Corinth, the proconsul Gallio (Acts 18:12), apparently forced Paul to leave the city. While preaching in Ephesus, Paul was imprisoned “perhaps so seriously that he was anticipating his martyrdom (Phil 1:7, 14; 2:17; 1 Cor 15:32; 2 Cor 1:8)” (Horsley, 2004:5).

Anti-imperial readings of Paul’s first Corinthian correspondence suggest that his gospel opposed the Roman rulers. In this reading, 1 Corinthians is referring to the fulfilment of history in the apocalyptic plan of God, where God has outlasted and outwitted “the rulers of this age” (2:6). The rulers who “crucified the Lord of glory” (2:8) are “doomed to perish” (2:6). Paul opposes the things chosen by God, which are the foolish and weak of the world, on the one hand, and the other the powerful, nobly born, wealthy and wise elite, who dominate the imperial order (1:26-27; 4:8-10). God has chosen the saints, the so-called weak of the world, who will soon participate in the judgement of the world order. Paul clearly has the Roman imperial order in view when he states that “the form of this world is passing away” (7:31). Meanwhile, Jesus Christ, the resurrected, is enthroned in heaven, preparing to destroy “every ruler and every authority and power” (15:24).

2.8.2 ANTI-IMPERIAL RHETORIC AND TERMINOLOGY

The notion of 1 Corinthians as a deliberative letter aligns with rhetorical practices in antiquity, where “deliberative rhetoric was commonly employed within epistolary frameworks” (Mitchell, 1991:20). In his discussion on the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians Horsley (2000b:72) elaborates on the use of rhetoric in the Roman Empire in his attempt to show how Paul’s letter to the Corinthians utilised deliberative rhetoric in opposition to Empire²⁷. Roman leaders understood that “fear and consent” (Horsley, 2000b:77) drove conformity. They imposed fear through force and coercion, and consent “was evoked by persuasion” (Horsley, 2000b:77). The function of rhetoric in the Greek cities of the Roman Empire indicates that there was a network of power relations involved behind the scenes of the Corinthian correspondence. The Corinthian situation was embedded in this network, which was “maintained by public oratory, in close collaboration with the emperor cult, both of which were sponsored by the urban elite as clients of the imperial house” (Horsley, 2000a:82). Utilising this as a point of departure for the interpretation of 1 Corinthians renders anti-imperial sentiments in Paul’s correspondence.

Paul’s use of political rhetoric is in opposition to Empire when he reformats the content of political terminology. Although Paul is using standard rhetorical, literary devices and techniques throughout, by offering himself as an example during argumentation (4:16, 11:1), he proposes values in himself that are antipodal to those values of “aristocratic virtue and values standard in Greco-Roman rhetoric” (Horsley, 2000a:90). Paul thus presents himself as the opposite of the Greco-Roman model by proposing that he is (Horsley, 2000a:90):

Weak, foolish, poor (and working with one’s own hands for a living), lowly, and despised, rather than powerful, wise, wealthy (living from others’ labour), noble, and honoured (4:8-13), and compelled by necessity rather than living by one’s own free will (9:15-19).

An orator would “hardly boast about being a ‘fool’ or the ‘dregs of all things’” (Horsley, 2000a:90). Paul is, therefore, opposed to “the function of standard Greco-Roman rhetoric and the Roman imperial order it served” (Horsley, 2000a:90). A cursory examination of the terminology that Paul employs renders a distinctly anti-imperial sentiment. Within the Greek city-state, the assembly was referred to as the ἐκκλησία. Paul’s deliberation with the community in order to achieve ὁμόνεια is reminiscent of the politics of the polis (Mitchell, 1991:69). Ordinarily

²⁷ His assessment of 1 Corinthians as deliberative rhetoric agrees with Mitchell (1991) and Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:122). Horsley believes however that one should recognise a “far more complicated set of problems than is usually assumed in rhetorical criticism” (Horsley, 2000a:84) in two ways. Firstly Paul had very little in common culturally with the Corinthians and secondly “rhetorical criticism has been used to reconstruct the multiple voices involved in the newly founded community” (Horsley, 2000a:85) in Corinth. The current study will therefore employ a multi-faceted approach that incorporates social and cultural as well as ideological textures into the textual aspects.

the political rhetoric of concord would have addressed this assembly, but in Paul's case, he is addressing the assembly of the believers of Corinth. When concord within the community is the objective, but the community is subjected to a *kyrios* represented by Paul and not the emperor, it is quite feasible that this could imply discord with the assembly of the polis. Paul insisted that the Corinthian community avoids the civil courts, and they resolve matters amongst themselves (6:1-11). He forbade the "participation in the sacrificial temple banquets by which the overlapping networks of social relations that constituted the body politic were ritually constituted" (Horsley, 2000a:91). Paul is, therefore, setting up a separate assembly to the public assembly of Corinth. "Insofar as he insisted on the solidarity of his assembly in Corinth, therefore, he was subverting the unity and concord advocated in public oratory that formed the very basis of the Pax Romana in the Greek cities" (Horsley, 2000a:91).

Paul's use of the term εὐαγγέλιον would have been recognised in Greek cities such as Corinth recognised the term as the "gospel" established by the imperial (divine) "saviour" Augustus, who proclaimed "peace and security" to the people. In Paul's world, these terms described "announcements of the emperor's victories and accession" (Elliott, 2008:44). Paul's gospel is announcing an alternative order to the imperial order and maintains the crucified Christ as leader. This message swears allegiance to the person of Jesus who had been crucified in opposition to the Roman imperial order. "Such a gospel of the crucified was not only foolishness, as the opposite of the dominant aristocratic values affirmed in every public speech" (Horsley, 2000a:92; Elliott, 1994:93-138), but it was also politically suicidal. It would certainly provoke the violence of the Roman overlords when persuasion and intimidation through other means did not suffice. Paul continues his anti-imperial gospel by confirming that God had authenticated Jesus by raising him from the dead (15:3-4) and exalting him as the Lord of glory (2:8). The political rulers had "doomed themselves to destruction" (Horsley, 2000a:92) by crucifying Christ (2:6-8). Seating this language within its imperial context will unveil Paul's intention "of Christ to destroy all earthly rulers" (Kittredge, 2000:104). The "rulers of this age" could be broadened to mean "every rule and authority and power" (Elliott, 1994:111). When reading 2:6-8 in the light of Paul's messianic and apocalyptic understanding, the passage in view "involves Jesus in God's battle against the 'rulers of this age'" (Wright, 2009:45). Paul's thought and viewpoint of both 1 Corinthians 2 and 15 are "genuinely apocalyptic" (Elliott, 1994:114). It is, therefore, also required to take cognisance of the apocalyptic tradition in interpreting the letter. Although 1 Corinthians conveys the "rhetoric of reconciliation" (Mitchell, 1994), the letter has been "framed within an apocalyptic indictment of the 'rulers of this age' who crucified Jesus (2:6-8) and who will be defeated by Jesus' messianic triumph in the near future (15:23-28)" (Elliott, 1994:208). How then will the recognition of Pauline expectations related to the Messiah and apocalyptic affect the interpretation of the Corinthian correspondence?

2.8.3 ANTI-IMPERIAL RHETORIC AND APOCALYPTICISM

Several interrelated future events pertain to apocalyptic literature. There will be a final intervention by God during which:

- (1) the oppressive rulers would be judged or destroyed, (2) the people would be delivered and/or restored, and (3) those who had been martyred for their persistence in the traditional way of life and resistance to oppression would be vindicated and/or be resurrected in order to join in the finally restored life of the people (Horsley, 2000a:98).

The underlying apocalyptic theme can be found throughout 1 Corinthians as the underlying structure of Paul's arguments (Horsley, 2000a:98; Wright, 2009:40-58). In light of this Paul saw the Christ event in his first coming as the initiation of God's act of deliverance, where God vindicated Jesus through the resurrection. Christ had also initiated the general resurrection by being the ἀπαρχή (first-fruits). The overall argument is pressing for unity²⁸ and specifically in the first four chapters where Paul opposes the achievement of an exalted status and boasting in the possession of wisdom. Horsley believes that Paul is in favour of the humiliated and foolishness of the crucified Christ as well as the "humiliated status of those who are called". A key, for Horsley, is Paul's reference to a μυστήριον (secret, mystery) in apposition to σοφία (wisdom) in 2:7, and in "Paul's Judean apocalyptic background" (Horsley, 2000a:98), these terms were virtually synonymous. Paul argues that God has doomed those imperial rulers to destruction and begun the redemption of his people. This is because the crucified one has turned out to be the "Lord of glory" (2:8), "vindicated by God in resurrection and exaltation" (Horsley, 2000a:99). There is an implicit final judgement of the "rulers of this age" in 2:6-10, which becomes explicit, in 3:5-23 and 4:1-21. At the very end, God's plan is a restored human society called "the kingdom of God" (Horsley, 2000a: 98-99). All three apocalyptic elements listed above are present in 1 Corinthians 15 where Paul builds his argument on the "crucifixion-resurrection creed" (Horsley, 2000a:99) with further elaboration of the subjugation of rulers and the renewal of people inaugurated by the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. The argument revolves around 15:20-24 where a "full world-historical apocalyptic scheme of God's anti-imperial fulfilment of history in the renewal of humanity" (Horsley, 2000a:99) takes place. The substance of the argument references the fulfilment of history for the humanity begun in Adam and a new humanity inaugurated by Christ. "It is the inauguration of God's new world, the new creation which has already begun to take over the present creation with the unstoppable power of the

²⁸ Horsley refers to the first four chapters as arguing for unity (Horsley, 2000a:98), however Mitchell (1991) argues convincingly for the entire letter as a consistent argument against factionalism and encouraging concord as stated by Paul in his πρόθεσις of 1 Cor 1:10 (Mitchell, 1991:68). This does, however, not affect the viewpoint maintained here that the association with the lowered status of Christ stands in stark contrast with the "exalted status attained by possession of Sophia" (Horsley, 2000a: 98).

creator God” (Wright, 2009:70). The resurrection of Christ is the proof of the resurrection for humankind to follow and then the end will come. This imminent end will include an alternative kingdom and the abolition of “all rule and all authority and power” (Horsley, 2000a:100). The entire argument of 1 Corinthians, with the possible exception of chapters 12-14, is so woven against an apocalyptic fabric, with Paul regularly alluding to the “crucified and resurrected Lord or Christ (e.g., 5:7; 6:13-14; 20; 7:12, 22; 8:11; 9:1, 12; 11:23-26; 12:3)” (Horsley, 2000a:100).

Within other chapters of the Corinthian correspondence, the theme of divine judgement is clearly visible, and this finds application in the life of the Corinthian community as alternative society throughout. In 6:1-11 this is evident where the “saints will judge the world” and “shall judge angels” (6:2-3). Although chapter 7 is dealing with sex and marriage, Paul still refers to the “present distress” (7:26), which Horsley links, to “the time has been shortened” (7:29) and “the form of this world is passing away” (7:31) in an apocalyptic grid (Horsley, 2000a:100).

Horsley (2000b:101) maintains that:

In order to understand the arguments of 1 Corinthians and probably other Pauline letters, in their broader historical context, rhetorical criticism must expand its repertoire to include the rhetoric of Judean apocalyptic literature and the way Paul draws on that tradition.

The content of Paul’s value system that he articulates with precision in the first Corinthian letter contains clear apocalyptic elements, cannot be depoliticised and portrays a value system exemplified by Paul’s own life that convince scholars of Paul’s anti-imperial intentions. His gospel was antipodal in many ways to the Pax Romana and proposed an alternative kingdom to the Roman imperial order that challenged the status quo in no uncertain terms.

2.9 COMMENTS ON EMPIRE IN THE CORINTHIAN CORRESPONDENCE

2.9.1 THE POLITICS OF 1 CORINTHIANS

Right from the outset of his letter, Paul is positioning himself in similar fashion as a typical broker. In 1:1 he proposes to be sent by Jesus Christ according to the will of God. The association of Jesus and God and his offering of χάρις ... καὶ εἰρήνη already sets the scene for Paul’s petition that the Corinthian community must be faithful to an alternative *kyrios*. Moving quickly from associating Jesus the messiah with God, he presents in true Roman fashion a grace and peace of Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. This grace and peace is offered by an alternative *kyrios* and will unfold throughout the letter to be antipodal to the peace and favour offered by Empire (cf Crossan, 1997:146-149).

The entire first letter to the Corinthians should be read in subjection to the πρόθεσις of 1:10 as convincingly argued by Mitchell (1991:68). Paul is utilising deliberative rhetoric in an attempt to

convince his audience of a future course of action that will be beneficial (τὸ συμφέρον ὑμῶν) to them. He does this through exemplifying himself and utilising various proofs in addressing the main argument against σχίσματα and condoning ὁμονοία. This is significant for the present study and the interpretation of Paul's letter in many ways of which two essential points can be briefly highlighted. Firstly the thesis of 1:10 contains four distinctly political phrases that argue for unity: In order that you say the same thing; be no divisions among you; joined together in the same mind; in the same opinion, each of these in full conformity with other ancient texts which discuss factionalism and concord (Mitchell, 1991:68). Paul used a variety of terms to describe factionalism. Mitchell notes that “we can even be certain that Paul himself associated these terms with one another, as they appear together elsewhere in his writings” (Mitchell, 1991:80). Paul deliberates with his audience throughout the Corinthian letter by making use of political language and political concepts. The audience would have readily recognised such concepts. This fact alone does make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to argue for a depoliticised Paul. Secondly, considering the lack of separation between ancient religion and politics, it makes perfect sense that Paul is utilising political tools in order to deliberate with his community of believers. If Paul's entire argument is read in light of the subject of his thesis statement (1:10), the letter remains a single unit with politics and spirituality woven together while Paul is arguing for ὁμόνοια (concord). In other words, the politicised Paul is still not a supporter of imperialism, on the one hand, (due to his use of the tools) or anti-imperialism on the other (due to his use of the same tools), rather his argument must still be subjected to his thesis statement as well as the topic at hand and whether this will resist or support Empire.

2.9.2 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The claim that anti-imperial elements cannot be found in Paul's letters, and that the Roman imperial system only influenced him in a material sense, can hardly be maintained when one interprets 1 Corinthians, not only against the backdrop of Empire, but also as interpretive grid (Punt, 2010). Paul and his letters were soaked in the socio-political context, not necessarily as it is reflected directly in the text. In order to produce an appropriate, current understanding of the context of the Roman world, it is necessary to “read against the grain” (Elliott, 2008:22). This helps to uncover the “coercive, fear-inspiring dominion” (Elliott, 2008:22) of Empire that “controlled by terror” (Elliott, 2008:22) and is especially necessary when attempting to understand the world of the underclass, overwhelmed with propaganda and documentation that consist of elite sources²⁹. The apparent “lack of evidence” (Kim, 2008:35) necessitates the recognition of only elite sources and a method that allows the muffled voices of the non-elite an

²⁹ Michael Parenti (in Elliott, 2008:22).

opportunity to speak. Evidence is not only contained in that which has been documented; it must also be sought in silence.³⁰

Fusion of the imperial Cult and patronage veiled the imperial network of domination (Rieger, 2007:31; Gordon, 1997), and it would be impossible for a first century Mediterranean person such as Paul to escape from its influence. In Paul's correspondence with various communities, he had to live under the influence of this domination. Passages, such as those found in 1 Corinthians 4:14-21, suggest that Paul did not shy away from utilising the control of imperial authority to dictate to his clients in the same way that a patron would broker the imperial power of Caesar. Utilising the rhetoric of Empire, while deliberating with his audience, he made full use of the power-differential within patronage to command certain conduct (4:16). Simultaneously though, Paul defied the imperial system by brokering an alternative *κύριος*, that represented an alternative kingdom. In this kingdom, the cross as supreme symbol of imperial violence turned into a symbol of freedom and hope, and honourable behaviour was entirely reformatted. Ultimately this is the complexity of Paul, his vehement opposition of a sometimes abusive system, whilst utilising the tools of the same system in order to accomplish his objectives. Patronage was indispensable to Paul as one of the significant, identifiable means of social control (Horsley, 1997b:10) and he utilised it creatively both in opposition to Empire and as an instrument of power. These aspects of Paul's communication will be explored in the following sections by firstly casting a cursory glance over patronage and finally narrowing the analysis to the application of patronage as it pertains to the text of 1 Corinthians 4:14-21.

³⁰ We are indebted to many feminist scholars such as (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1999) who point out that the non-existence of voices requires a reading that takes cognisance of silence and that literature produced by elite males should be read against the grain in order to unearth the silent voices of the minorities, underprivileged and marginalised of society. See also Newsom and Ringe (1998) for Bible commentary from a feminine perspective.

3 PATRONAGE AS DIMENSION OF EMPIRE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following sections briefly outline some of the main societal areas where patronage was functional, and how Paul potentially applied it in his first Corinthian letter. Patronage operated throughout society and can be better understood by assessing societies and associations as institutions. The codes of patronage operated throughout society and within the intimacy of the household. It was into this context that Paul wrote his letter, and it provides the necessary foundational elements for an analysis of Paul's intentions in 1 Cor 4:14-21. As noted before, patronage constituted both horizontal and vertical relationships. In vertical relationships, brokers acted on behalf of patrons such as those who operated as intermediary between the people and Caesar. Brokers did not only serve the purpose of intermediary, but were able to construct their own powerful network of relations with clients. Clients in turn showered honour on their patrons and this dynamic reinforced the power differential of dyadic contracts between brokers and clients. Brokers were able to operate from a position of power and authority due to their association with their patron. In local cities such as Corinth, local notables and Roman officials operated with on authority of Caesar and acted as the broker between Caesar and the people. This dynamic formed the basis of the system that needed to maintain social cohesion across the Empire.

The Roman Empire was vast, widely dispersed and required mechanisms to wield its impressive power. Once military conquest and violence had subjected the people, the Roman Empire required alternative mechanisms to achieve social control. The vast range of Empire and lack of development of an administrative system "commensurate with the complexity of their empire" (Horsley, 1997a:88) begs the question as to how this was achieved. Not only was the Roman Empire widely dispersed, but its administrative system was relatively small. The answer is partly provided by the existence of a sophisticated network of patron-client relationships, which was intimately associated with the Imperial Cult and the use of rhetoric. As previously mentioned, Chow comments that the "institution of patronage has also helped to explain how the Roman rulers were able to rule such an enormous empire with the minimal number of officials" (Chow, 1997:105).

Generations of violence and notably the battle of Actium (31 B.C.E.) preceded for nearly three generations Paul's missions to Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth and Ephesus, where those areas had been pacified by the Roman Empire. "In fact, the imperial order in areas such as the provinces of Achaia, Macedonia and Asia did not even require an administrative bureaucracy,

let alone military presence” (Horsley, 1997b:11). Recently conquered areas such as Judea required military presence but the somewhat unified and areas that were more civilized, such as Greece and Asia Minor necessitated a different political and religious management style. Augustus stated that following Actium, he “excelled in all *auctoritas*” (Res Gestae 34:3). “The quintessentially Roman and untranslatable term *auctoritas* goes well beyond material and political aspects to the intellectual and ultimately overriding moral authority” (Horsley, 1997b:15). The *auctoritas* of a patron would then imply “an active concern” for the welfare of his clients and importantly was closely related to other Roman terms such as *fides* (faith), where a “*statesman-auctor*” was “a guarantor of the trust that must be operative at all levels of the *res publica* [commonwealth]” (Horsley, 1997b:15). Augustus was also extremely wealthy, a prerequisite for being the greatest statesman and benefactor to Rome. He did, however, operate beyond economics and politics by calling for moral reform in the dedication to the traditional values, virtues, ideals and ideas of the republic. Of the traditional virtues, piety reigned supreme, and Augustus carefully described himself in terms of these virtues. Piety included obligations to others that manifested in appropriate behaviour to family, the gods and country. It also involved some sentimentality and paternalism as depicted by Aeneas³¹. This entailed fathering people by caring for them and it also “evoked reciprocity from others preferably in unselfish efforts for the common good” (Horsley, 1997b:17). It represented the restoration of the ancient Roman ideal of social responsibility and was antipodal to *virtus* (virtue). The former speaks of cooperation and the latter more of competition. *Pietas* and imperial patronage were related with a reciprocal bond of faithfulness between ruler and people.

The patron-client relations that structured ancient Roman society prior to Empire were, however, represented a Roman flavour of patronage and it would be incorrect to assume that similar patron-client relations existed elsewhere in Mediterranean society. Patron-client relations related to a particular social context and location. This can be seen from the Athenian democracy’s opposition to the development of patronage. It is also necessary to take cognisance of the effect of patronage on the peasantry. Patronage consisted of both vertical and horizontal dimensions, where the vertical dimension related to dyadic contracts that entailed the exchange of goods, services and honour. This certainly caused strain on the limited goods horizontal amongst peasants because it undermined solidarity between them. Patronage was a form of social rule where the objective was to hold the disparate people distributed across the

³¹ For a more detailed treatment of piety and virtue in the context of the Roman Empire see Elliott (2008:121-166). *Pietas* had a temple in Rome from 181 B.C.E. and there was an extensive range of associations with *Pietas*. Aeneas was a symbol of piety depicted as carrying his old father and leading his son. Piety as ancient virtue was restored by Augustus.

Roman Empire together. A crucial transformation took place under Augustus and the Principate as they enhanced a substantial web of patronage that managed the Empire. Caesar became the focal point where previously distributed pyramids of power converged.

The emperor wielded patronal power by fulfilling both a sacrificial and a benefactor role, and it is essential to see how the system of patronage was interwoven with the political-religious system of sacrifices and the Empire Cult (Gordon, 1997:126). The sacrificial activity of the emperor was a necessity in order to maintain relationships with the gods. It should, however, not be viewed in isolation, “it is inextricably linked with his *philantropia* (benevolence), his *liberalitas* (generosity), and so with his accumulation of symbolic capital” (Gordon, 1997:130). There is a link between the political structure of the Empire, the use of disparate wealth distribution to “perpetuate structures of dependence” and the sacrificial system that finds its expression in a “particular kind of civic priesthood” (Gordon, 1997:131). Although politics and religion were inextricably intertwined, it is also true that the “abolition of politics” would cause a breakdown in the “Republican-religious synthesis” (Gordon, 1997:131). Ultimately things changed with the institution of the Principate, and generosity of the priesthood was no longer explicitly political as in the Republic; it served a specific social purpose. In the Republic, it was customary for a priest upon election to sponsor public entertainment and a feast to his new colleagues. In a sophisticated euergetic³² system, the emperor and the senatorial order gave to a non-political good (the priesthood) that indicates the goodness of the system towards the *hoi polloi*. They, in turn, responded with gratitude that bestowed honour upon the benefactors. With political authority becoming more concentrated in the emperor, it became increasingly vital to maintain power in the provinces through patronage and the Empire Cult. Wealthy urban and provincial patrons financed the Imperial Cult, making clear allegiance to Rome and ensuring a local manifestation of Rome’s ubiquitous power. “One of the reasons that the patronage system became central to imperial power relations was that provincial and urban elites used their wealth to sponsor the Cult, as one of the principal means of securing Rome’s favour” (Agosto, 2004:104). The Imperial Cult was physically visible by locating it strategically in the civic space and hosting frequent festivals. In this way, the provinces ensured the visual inclusion of the emperor through a local manifestation. Gordon notes importantly, however, that the intention of the system is not primarily about honour, but for the elite “to maintain power and wealth” (Gordon, 1997:132). It is difficult to ignore the ability of the Roman Empire to maintain control in a pre-industrial society that was less violent than other “more violently extractive, and unstable, pre-industrial empires”. This capability was primarily due to “the extension of the euergetic

³² Euergetism is derived from the Greek *εὐεργετέω* which means “I do good things”.

system of unequal exchange very widely through the Empire” (Gordon, 1997:132). The Cult was a visible demonstration of support for Rome and more notably, the opposition of cultic practices would in effect be opposing Rome, because Rome relied on the ability of the priests and patrons to realise values and power throughout the Empire.

With an understanding that the emperor fulfilled several roles and that the relationship between benefactor and his priestly role cannot be neatly separated (Gordon, 1997:126), it becomes prudent to apply this understanding when reading Paul’s letters. The all-pervasive Imperial Cult in the Roman East becomes much more than merely an assumption. Understanding of the intertwined Cult and patronage in the context of an euergetic system provides the backdrop to understanding the maintenance of power³³.

3.2 PATRONAGE IN SOCIETY

Seneca summarised the benefits that patrons should confer on their clients as financial, credit, influence, as well as advice and sound precepts to others (*De Beneficiis* 1.2.4-5).

Whatever may have been the result of your former benefits, persevere in bestowing others upon other men; they will be all the better placed in the hands of the ungrateful, whom shame, or a favourable opportunity, or imitation of others may some day cause to be grateful. Do not grow weary, perform your duty, and act as becomes a good man. Help one man with money, another with credit, another with your favour; this man with good advice, that one with sound maxims.

He also referred to the importance of reciprocal relationships and the fundamental understanding of reciprocity contained within the Roman imperial system. At some point in time, a patron was going to require a client to return conferred benefits. Both patrons and clients benefitted from the system throughout the elite classes within the Empire by building their reputations. The more clients a patron attached to himself the greater his status and clients benefitted from the benefactions of such patrons. It was also evident that “friendly relations were

³³ For a detail discussion of two specific examples, first that of Cleanax and secondly Menodora, that explicate the euergetism and the priesthood amongst the elite, see Gordon (1997:133-136). The inseparability of religious and civic functions are clear when Cleanax sacrifices to the gods as he comes into office and there are feasts, meat-eating and wine distribution that express his generosity and is advantageous to his fellow-citizens. The second illustration relays the story of Menodora, an exceptionally wealthy woman, daughter of Megacles from Sillyon in Pamphylia, that clarifies philanthropy as partly enabling the naturalization of inequalities (not poverty alleviation), distributing goods that insert the elite “surreptitiously into the communication” (Gordon, 1997:136) between the Roman world and the realm of the gods. The community becomes dependent upon the elite to be able to “worship piously” (Gordon, 1997:136).

critical in the exchange of gifts, power and benefits” (Agosto, 2004:105). A service or favour provided to a social equal demanded some reciprocal benefits by the benefactor. The recipient of benefaction as client in a patron-client relationship would advocate his benefactor’s generosity and power. The objective was to honour the patron, and it served to reinforce the power-inequality. At the top of the pyramid, was the emperor-patron elaborating his benefaction to the Roman people (*Res Gestae*). The chasm between the emperor and people was great, and reciprocal activity would manifest in reverence and faithfulness by the people (Garnsey & Saller, 1997:96-97). These unequal relationships were naturalised through “routines of highly theatrical reciprocity” (Elliott, 2008:29) thus providing patronage with the uncanny ability to mask the exploitation that was so prevalent in society and executed efficiently by the rapacious ruling class. For those who were fortunate enough to have access to the emperor, a wide range of benefits was available, but in a particularistic fashion. Benefits in the form of offices, financial assistance, citizenship, water tapping rights, etc. were not bestowed upon people randomly, but individually, with a clear expectation of devoted service and gratitude in return. In the role of benefactor to the plebs, the emperor provided financial handouts, equivalent to several months’ rent for the poor, public shows, food and water, housing, etc. The emperors encouraged aristocratic houses in Rome to reward clients and provided some of the resources that aristocrats could utilise to such ends.

Patronage reached the outer edges of the Empire as evidenced in the relationship between Pliny the Younger and the emperor Trajan. The relationships of Pliny with the emperor and Pliny’s client Geminus serve as an illustration of the reciprocal relationships and complex web of patronage. Pliny was provincial governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor during the early second century. At this time, the system of patronage in operation had already undergone the significant shift brought about by the Principate, and it accurately reflects the social power-relations in action during the time of Paul. Agosto (2004) points out that there are several elements in Pliny’s letter to the emperor Trajan that petitions the emperor for the advancement of Geminus. “Such patronal relations spread rapidly among the Greek elite in the late Republican and early imperial periods, coming virtually to constitute the web of power by which the Roman imperial order held together” (Agosto, 2004:106). The operation of patronage amongst the non-elite and poor in the provinces lacks documentation, since documentation was primarily the privilege of the literate elite. This can be seen in the ideological approach and propagandistic content of elite documentation such as the *Res Gestae*.

Crowding at the door of a patron for the morning *salutatio*, or providing public acclaim in the form of applause for public speeches, served to enhance the social status of patrons. In return patrons would hand out food or “sportulae (small sums of money)” (Garnsey & Saller, 1997:99)

and could include invitations to dinner. Therefore, the imperial aristocrats implemented traditional patron-client relations and maintained their own highly exalted social status, helped along by the successful emperors. In this power-play, both emperor and aristocrat benefitted and to some extent the plebs too; the aim was mainly to keep the latter in subjugation. The web of patronage thus included the emperor with links to aristocratic houses and these in turn contained webs of patronage to the plebs of society. “Modern ideologies of administration” (Garnsey & Saller, 1997:100) differ vastly from ancient ideologies where it was common for officials to receive gifts that would constitute bribes in modern society. This was all part of acceptance of the *quid pro quo* mentality of patronage and evidenced by the public announcement of details regarding such activity on monuments. The influence of patronage also manifested in institutions through various types of associations relevant to the investigation of patronage in Corinth.

3.3 PATRONAGE AND INSTITUTIONS

It was likely that the system of patronage reached the non-elites through *collegia*, trade or cultic associations with membership fees, as well as certain benefits such as burial and meals associated with it (Agosto, 2004:107). Tacitus (in Garnsey & Saller, 1997:100) divides the common people of the city into “good” and “bad”, with the former attached to the great houses and the latter without attachment, either due to a lack of anything to offer or reluctance to submit to the humiliating experience of dependence. The recorded institutional manifestations of informal relationships between plebs were the *collegia*. The *collegia* consisted of a few hundred members of humble men and exhibited the hierarchical tendencies of Roman society. Societies, such as those in Corinth, were arranged into deities, patrons or leaders and finally the members. *Collegia* often organised around “cults to patron deities” (Chow, 1997:118) or by those who had the same occupation and often patronised by the wealthy. The tendency to arrange organisations around deities can be ascribed to the law that allowed people to “form associations for the sake of religion” (Chow, 1997:118).

For a small membership fee, the moderately prosperous men who could afford the fees were ensured of “proper burial, club dinners with a menu of good wine, two asses worth of bread and four sardines per member” (Garnsey & Saller, 1997:100). With the advent of the Principate, respectable *collegia*, which had stood the test of time, “were allowed a continued and even privileged existence” (Garnsey & Saller, 1997:100). Rome, however, was very suspicious of any clubs or associations. An imperial rule such as that issued by Pliny, the special envoy of Trajan in Bithynia/Pontus, prohibited Christian gatherings for fear of the emergence of “political clubs” (Pliny Ep. 10.34 in Garnsey & Saller, 1997:102). Regardless of such prohibitions, these clubs and associations were still formed and existed within cities such as Corinth, attested to by a

monument which had been erected by “the association of Lares of the imperial house in the early second century” (Chow, 1997:118). A *Lar* was the tutelary deity (or spirit) of an ancient Roman household. The hierarchical structure constituted divine patron deities at the top of the structure with human patrons just below them. Associations often invited rich and powerful members to act as patrons providing protection and benefaction to the ordinary members, where the latter completed the hierarchy. In Corinth, an often quoted inscription from Lanuvium provides insight into the operation of patronage by recording “the by-laws of a burial society” (Chow, 1997:119). The Roman Senate provided the approval for the association with deities Diana and Antinous, whose birthdays were celebrated with worship followed by a banquet. In the same way, Lucius Caesennius Rufus provided endowments to the association, while the members could meet uninterruptedly, and they in return honoured him and his family members by celebrating the birthdays of Rufus and his family members. This provides a striking resemblance of the honour bestowed upon patron deities. Importantly the hierarchical operation of the association was a copy of the operation of the “larger political structure of the day” (Chow, 1997:120) and even made use of titles such as *quinquennalis* that represented an “honourable office in a municipal government” (Chow, 1997:120).

3.4 PATRONAGE, SLAVERY AND THE HOUSEHOLD

Patronage did not only exist in civil society but filtered down into the household, where a rich man had relationships and associations with his manumitted slaves (freedmen), literary friends and those “who sought his help” (Chow, 1997:120). The relationship between a manumitted slave and former master could be compared to the relationship between a father and a son. Manumitted slaves were not entirely free from domination, but legally obligated to honour their former master (patron) who had provided him with his new life. Refraining from bestowing such honour upon the former slave master by a manumitted slave was punishable in the early Empire (Chow, 1997:121 n106). Freedmen had a duty to continue to serve their former masters and could hardly take legal action against them, since legislation protected patrons. Patrons could even claim half of the estate from the legacy of the freedmen, and at the time of Paul, this could only be prevented if the freedman had three direct descendants (Chow, 1997:121 n110). They did, however, have some obligations, such as feeding a freedman when he was truly in need, providing legal advice to those below twenty years of age and bringing murderers to justice (Chow, 1997:121). This begs the question of what the freedom formulas so often repeated in Pauline letters meant to early Christian society and how this was brought to bear on life, given the existing system surrounding slavery. In the first century, to someone who heard the “baptismal pronouncement” such as Galatians 3:28, as part of a ritual, this pronouncement did not only contain “the power to shape the ‘symbolic universe’ of the Christian community but also determined the social interrelationships and structures of the church” (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1997:226).

People with literary or exceptional skills also attached themselves to rich patrons even though they often denounced this behaviour in their colleagues. This relationship between patron and literary clients was, however, not sanctioned by law such as those between the freedman and patron. It benefitted the patron to have such esteemed clients, who could praise him in public and enhance his standing as a cultured person. The dinner table and the morning salutation mentioned previously both bore witness to the inequality of the patron-client relationship. The former contained seats of honour for those clients closest to the patron, and the best quality food and wine were reserved “for the host and his honourable friends”. The golden rule of a successful client was to “please the patron and to accommodate oneself to his opinion” (Chow, 1997:123). In essence, the closest friends of the patron had direct access to him, while those clients more distant were seen in a group and the balance seen en masse. It is essential to notice the difference between necessity and duty, where some clients were duty-bound, and others required to participate in the morning salutation out of necessity. The latter sought the help of influential patrons to further public careers and legal matters (Chow, 1997:123). The significant presence of patronage that permeated society will allow a more informed understanding of Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. Specifically, how he utilises patronage to achieve his desired outcome, and how he simultaneously opposes this aspect of the Roman imperial system.

3.5 PATRONAGE IN CORINTH

In summary then, the web of patronage spanned across the Empire starting with the emperor whose power centred in Rome, through local officials and people of influence into the regions (Chow, 1997). Rome extended its power into the regions by appointing local officials who acted on behalf of Rome or through local people of influence, those with great wealth, to the majority of the population, and even into the household. The Roman emperor was the chief patron to the entire Empire, which meant that he was also the patron of individual cities such as Corinth, although local officials practically applied this power dynamic. Local cities such as Corinth honoured important people through inscriptions on monuments. Chow notes that “the networks of relationships in Corinth can roughly be seen as a hierarchy made up of the emperor, Roman officials, local notables and the populace” (Chow, 1997:105).

The emperor and members of the imperial family were showered with honour in order to justify their vastly superior status by ascribing to them honorific titles such as “patron,” “benefactor,” “saviour,” and “son of god” (Chow, 1997:105). It was hardly possible to escape the enormous impact that the Roman emperor had within Corinthian society. Voting tribes such as Agrippia (named after Marcus Agrippa), Atia (mother of Augustus), Aurelia (mother of Julius Caesar),

Calpurnia (wife of Julius Caesar), Claudia (during the reign of Claudius), Domitia, Hostilia, Livia (wife of Augustus), Maecia, Vatinia (probably P. Vatinius, friend of Caesar), and Vinicia (probably Vinicius, 19 B.C.E., a friend of Augustus) were all local political divisions. They received the names of members of the imperial families or close friends and associates of Augustus (Chow, 1997:106). The emperors penetrated local Corinthian community through coins, statues, monuments and inscriptions, temples, Empire Cult and festivals and celebrations (cf Perry, 2001). It would have been impossible to engage in Corinthian society whilst remaining oblivious of the presence of the Roman emperor and the power and influence of Rome. Coins were minted which bore the images of the emperors and used in society. Emperors Augustus, Agrippa, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero all featured on coins and from Julius Caesar to Nero all the Emperors had inscriptions dedicated to the emperors and monuments erected to honour them (Chow, 1997:107)³⁴.

Celebrations were held, and cults founded in honour of emperors. “A cult was founded to celebrate the safety of the emperor, possibly at the time of Sejanus’s plot against Tiberius was discovered” (Chow, 1997:107) and a cult celebrated Claudius’s victories in Britain. Festivals celebrated birthdays of Roman rulers, but the most significant festival that celebrated the “power and glory of the Roman rulers” (Chow, 1997:108) was probably the imperial games held at the time of the biennial Isthmian games. Alongside the Isthmian games, there were two programmes that honoured the emperor – the Caesarea and the imperial contests. The former honoured Augustus after his victory at Actium over Marc Anthony’s forces and included an encomium of Augustus, an encomium of Tiberius and finally a poem in honour of the wife of Augustus (Livia). The latter honoured the reigning emperor and the names of the contests were modified to correspond with the reigning emperor³⁵.

The relationship between the emperor who was the “supreme patron in the Greek east” (Chow, 1997:109) and local rulers and notables was particularly significant. The local patrons were

³⁴ Chow (1997:106-107) refers to a host of literature that exists and analyses the use of coins, temples and other imperial portraits in Corinth.

³⁵ According to inscriptions the contests were called the “Tiberea Caesarea Sebastea” in honour of Tiberius and during the time of Claudius the name was changed to “Isthmia et Caesarea et Tiberea Claudia Sebastea”. When Nero arrived, the title was changed again to “Neronea Caesarea et Isthmia et Caesarea” (Chow, 1997:108 n25).

ascribed individual titles³⁶ that related to the Imperial Cult and “against this background one can perhaps better understand why the Imperial Cult was strongly promoted in first-century Corinth” (Chow, 1997:110). As mentioned previously, local officials who had access to the emperor wielded the representative power of the emperor and with considerable wealth, were able to exist as patrons in each location where they were “honoured and respected” (Chow, 1997:110).

Spartiaticus was such a patron who stood in relation to Claudius (Caesar) as a friend or client and was “named as patron of a tribe in Corinth” (Chow, 1997:110). Spartiaticus was the grandson of C. Julius Eurycles, who maintained much power and prestige in Greece during the early Empire. The history of this family is a showcase for the power of the emperor as patron. Eurycles did not descend from a proud lineage, but because he helped Octavian in his victory at Actium, he won “the *philia* of Augustus” (Chow, 1997:109) and this favour with the various emperors was maintained for generations thereafter. Spartiaticus was thus able to befriend Claudius (Acts 18:2) at the time of Paul’s work with the Corinthians. Spartiaticus was “procurator of Caesar and Augusta Agrippina” and awarded the equestrian rank³⁷, but crucially he also held several priestly posts besides his political offices, such as “*flamen* of the deified Julius, pontifex, and high priest of the House of Augustus in perpetuity” (Chow, 1997:109). It shows that the ability of anyone to be able to endure high on the power ranking necessitated a close relationship with the emperor as chief patron. The strong promotion of the Imperial Cult and his enormous wealth, suggested by his ability to serve as *agonethete* of the Isthmian and Caesarean games, were probably instrumental in maintaining this relationship and his position of power. As procurator of Caesar in his province, Spartiaticus was not only acting as a broker,

³⁶ The Pontifical College in ancient Rome was a body that consisted of the highest ranking priests of the state religion. The college consisted of four constituent parts, with Pontifex Maximus the most important member. Additionally there were the Vestal Virgins, the Rex Sacrorum, and the flamens. The Roman state religion was polytheistic and a flamen was the priest assigned to one of the fifteen deities during the Roman Republic. The most important three flamens served as major priests to the chief Roman gods of the Archaic Triad, those of Jupiter, Mars and Quirinus. The balance of twelve priests acted as “minor priests” to the other deities. The Vestal Virgins were the only female members of the college and consisted of girls identified before the age of 10, who performed the rites, and had to remain chaste for 30 years.

³⁷ Dio Cassius (in Chow, 1997:109 n33) comments that those who were of great wealth and good families were chosen to fill the equestrian rank during the reign of Caligula. Within the patronage system it would have benefited the emperor as patron of the entire Empire to have local officials and local notables and he would be looking for those individuals that were able to represent his power and presence throughout the Roman Empire.

by representing the interests of his superior in a locality, he also wielded his own power and influence. He “probably would have become an authority to be honoured and respected” (Chow, 1997:110).

Another illustration of the role of Roman officials pursued by Chow (1997:110) was the example of P. Memmius Regulus who “began his career in the reign of Tiberius as quaestor” and then praetor before becoming consul in 31 C.E. and later governor of Achaëa, Moesia and Macedonia between 35 and 44 C.E. (Chow, 1997:111). He held the position during the rule of three different emperors, despite an undistinguished background (Tacitus *Ann.* 14.47, in Chow, 1997:111). Noticeable was his devotion to the emperor, even personally escorting his wife to Rome to marry the emperor Caligula. He held priestly titles such as *sodalist Augustalis*, and associated with the *fratres Arvales*, a priestly college in Rome that offered worship for the well-being of the imperial household. During his later years, Regulus actively offered sacrifices, fulfilled his patronal obligation as a client to the emperor and visibly demonstrated allegiance to Rome (Chow, 1997:111-112). Regulus “was as distinguished as it is possible to be under the shadow of an emperor’s grandeur” (Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.47, in Chow, 1997:111). The importance of Regulus within the patronage structure, however, revolves not only around his relationship with the emperor, but his relationship with the people that he governed and focussing specifically on Achaëa, where the ancient city of Corinth was located. There were numerous inscriptions made in Corinth and the Greek east, honouring P. Memmius Regulus, and it leads to the conclusion that he had been particularly active, well supported and connected in the region. As such, he would have provided benefactions such as promotion of officials and helping people acquire Roman citizenship. Roman officials required relationships with the emperor, in order to remain in power. This necessitated a clear demonstration of allegiance in order to keep or improve their positions. In the same way, the local elites and Roman officials fostered relationships for mutual benefit.

Members of the senatorial order in provincial towns under the control of Rome were referred to as *decuriones*. They were often people of immense wealth or men who had served as local magistrates and maintained substantial authority, even higher than those of the administering officials. *Duoviri* (meaning “the two men”) were local magistrates, elected by the assembly of citizens. As powerful as they were, appeal against the *duovir’s* verdict would be referred to the *decuriones*, as well as, “matters relating to public accounts and public lands and buildings” for “investigation and decision” (Chow, 1997:114). Local magistrates, therefore, would attempt to satisfy the *decuriones*. Wealth was extremely valuable in order to become local notables and secure positions of honour in Corinth as exemplified by the Euryclids and Spartiacus. It was even possible for a wealthy, manumitted slave to hold offices such as *aedilis* and *duovir*

exemplified by the example of Erastus, “*aedilis* of the colony, probably after his promise to lay the pavement outside the theatre” (Chow, 1997:114). *Aediles* were responsible for maintenance of public buildings and regulation of public festivals, and they also had powers to enforce public order. Another prominent manumitted slave who had enormous wealth during the first century C.E. was Babbius Philinus who was able to be voted *aedilis* and *duovir*, but he was never able to obtain the highest honour, that of *agōnothetēs* (ἀγωνοθέτης) of the Isthmian games. This was probably due to his status as manumitted slave (Chow, 1997:115). It was particularly important in Roman cities such as Corinth for local notables and Roman officials to exist in reciprocal relationships. It was equally important, for local officials to maintain a reciprocal relationship and commitment to Rome and the emperor in order to advance in life. This complex web of patronal relationships formed the backdrop of the society within which the letters of Paul to the Corinthians should be read. The following analysis will focus specifically on Paul’s Corinthian correspondence and the role of patronage within 1 Cor 4:14-21. As indicated during the introduction, the examination will require a multidisciplinary approach in order to understand the social and cultural elements involved, assess various aspects of the text itself in light of other ancient writings, and ultimately address the ideological point of departure of Paul and his audience.

4 A SOCIO-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF 1 CORINTHIANS 4:14-21

4.1 BACKGROUND TO 1 CORINTHIANS

Paul was someone who probably made ample use of people's homes in order to facilitate his preaching activities in Corinth and elsewhere (Stowers, 1984)³⁸. Luke records that when Paul was ejected from the synagogue, he was forced to move his activities to the house of Titius Justus (Acts 18:11). This became characteristic of Paul's preaching in Corinth and also in Ephesus, where he stayed for extended periods, except for the "peculiar situation" (Stowers, 1984)³⁹ of the hall of Tyrannus. From Paul's letters, supported by Luke's account in the book of Acts and barring any special Lukan interests, the evidence seems to indicate that Paul's preaching activity was primarily centred in the private home (Stowers, 1984). Ancient practices of sophists and philosophers would make this behaviour acceptable and a recognised way to participate in such activities. Paul does not, however, model ancient philosophers entirely. He was, for example, not prepared to forfeit his independence, even though he was teaching in private homes as evidenced in 1 Cor 9:15-19. He was, also, not going to allow himself to be charged with peddling God's word (2 Cor 2:17) by joining the households of well-to-do believers and depending on them for support. This kind of behaviour from Paul seems to resist typical patronage and sophistic behaviour. In other instances, such as 1 Cor 4:14-21, it will be shown how Paul was utilising patronage in order to emphasise his authority and catalyse his objectives. If Paul's teachings were mostly produced within private homes, it would have made sense for him to utilise the symbols of the household in order to convince his audience of a course of action.

The Corinthian community consisted of a diverse group of people (cf Bassler, 1998). A problem at Corinth seems to have been that some viewed Paul, Apollos and other missionaries as independent, competing teachers (1 Cor 1:10-4:20). Associations with specific teachers as well as the specific call to unity would have been reminiscent of party politics. Given the social dynamics of patronage, it is understandable that people would have sought to form alliances with those whom they considered patrons. Paul's use of such political language is also evident in his letter (Mitchell, 1991:68). The earliest Christian teachers did not organize themselves into

³⁸ Stowers (1984) regards Paul as a person that made use mostly of the home for his preaching activities in Corinth and Ephesus. This could be an indication of the motivation for Paul's use of the family as a metaphor.

³⁹ Stowers (1984) does not support the view of Paul as a Cynic-like preacher although he acknowledges his diatribe-like style.

academies as did the Rabbis and reach a consensus. They usually followed the pattern of the Greek philosophical or rhetorical teacher. This created a context of disunity and dyadic alliances between specific teachers and individuals that needed to be broken, and it would have necessitated forceful argumentation; the language of politics.

Paul was clearly a literate person with very good command of written language and rhetorical training as witnessed in his letters and philosophy (Mitchell, 1991; Neyrey, 2003:130). This level of literacy was only available to retainers, the governing class and rulers and leads to the conclusion that he belonged to at least the retainer class⁴⁰ (Neyrey, 2003:130). Paul's level of literacy is important in order to understand how he uses rhetoric, language and logic in order to address his audiences. It would also seem that one can distinguish between ancient writers who wrote literary letters "from those skilled in strictly scribal correspondence" (Neyrey, 2003:133). Paul thus evidenced skill not only associated with scribal correspondence, but he also utilised letter-writing skill not commonly associated with the education of a scribe. According to ancient traditional rhetorical arrangements the taxonomy for classification will belong to one of three major categories of rhetoric: forensic, deliberative and epideictic rhetoric. Consolation, admonition and advice belong to deliberative letters where the intention of the writer is to instil within the hearer and reader a sense of what should and should not be done. As noted previously, the argument of 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 is viewed as deliberative rhetoric⁴¹, with epideictic elements as elaborated in the following sections, where Paul's intentions to $\nu\upsilon\theta\epsilon\tau\hat{\omega}$ (4:14) his beloved children, are subjected to his struggle for concord (1:10).

Understanding "the rhetorical form and political content of 1 Corinthians, however is far from sufficient as a basis for understanding the argument of the letter" (Horsley, 2000a: 74). There were undoubtedly tensions within the Corinthian community between rich and poor and a community comprised of persons that equalled Paul in status as well as a large contingency of people with lower status (Neyrey, 2003:125; Bassler, 1998:412). The purpose here is not to clarify such social stratification, but to acknowledge it. This acknowledgement is significant in understanding the way that Paul challenges his audience, and requires cognisance of social

⁴⁰ Neyrey (2003) elaborates all the classes starting with the ruler at the top of the pyramid, followed by the governing class. This was a small number of aristocrats, who advised the ruler and had direct access to the Caesar as supreme patron. Retainers were "a small army of officials, professional soldiers, household servants and personal retainers" (Neyrey, 2003:128).

⁴¹ The proofs contained within deliberative rhetoric do not produce binary intentions such as proving right or wrong, but will attempt to convince the audience of a course of action.

and cultural elements. When social and cultural elements are combined with rhetorical analysis, in an ideological reading, it should provide a more sound assessment of Paul's thinking than purely historical or rhetorical analysis⁴². With these brief introductory comments in mind, the next section turns to the analysis of social and cultural texture in 1 Cor 4:14-21. This will be followed by addressing intertexture and lastly ideological texture.

4.2 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL TEXTURE

4.2.1 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ELEMENTS IN 4:14-17

4:14 Οὐκ ἐντρέπων

Language such as ἐντρέπων, τέκνα, νουθετώ, παιδαγωγός, πατέρας, μιμηταί, δύναμις warns of a world filled with social and cultural elements that reflect Paul's thinking. Values such as honour and shame, kinship, ancient personality and the purity system are all critical to understanding ancient Mediterranean culture and have been ably documented⁴³. Paul's comment that he does not intend to shame (Οὐκ ἐντρέπων), indicates that something larger lurks behind the scene. The understanding of honour must be mapped against the larger tapestry of the dominant social institution of society – kinship. “The family is truly everything” (Malina, 2001:29) and everything revolves around belonging to the family. Success is arranging life in such a way as to make “the right interpersonal connections” and “being related to the right people” (Malina, 2001:29). There is a central in-group to whom one belongs – the kinship group. The identity of people is related to their belonging to the kinship group and acceptance by this group. Honour then becomes the “claim to worth that is socially acknowledged” and it surfaces with the “intersection of authority, gender status, and respect” (Malina, 2001:29). Of these, two are worth mentioning in relation to the text of 1 Cor 4:14-21. Authority was a symbolic reality that indicated the ability to control others and should not be confused with physical force. This is significant for the text in view with its reference to power and the embedded power dynamic. There was a certain expectation with regards to attitude and the exhibition of appropriate behaviour towards those who controlled one's existence. “This was called ‘religion’ by people in the Mediterranean world well into the sixteenth century and bible translations call this attitude ‘piety’, and sometimes ‘fear’” (Malina, 2001:30).

⁴² Horsley (2000a: 75) points out that rhetoric was political as well as cultural.

⁴³ For a full treatment of the subject see Malina (2001); Rohrbaugh (1996) covers core values, social institutions and social dynamics and contains many references to other material. Although anthropology and the social sciences have been criticized for various shortcomings, it offers valuable insight when used in conjunction with other methods for New Testament interpretation.

It seems that, in 4:14, Paul is referencing the entire section between 1:10 and 4:13. When Paul claims that he does not intend to shame his audience, he is making this statement within the context of ταῦτα (these things). In referencing shame, ταῦτα must lead to behaviour that would be considered shameful in Mediterranean thought. Paul's contention that he is not shaming his audience and his need for clarification should warn the audience that honour is at stake. The spectacle expressed in ironic parody by Paul in 4:9-13 conjures up images of a shameful apostolic existence, with references to "men condemned to death" (4:9), "fools for Christ's sake... we are weak...without honour" (4:10), "hungry and thirsty...poorly clothed...roughly treated...homeless" (11), "we toil, working with our own hands...reviled...persecuted" (4:12), "...slandered...scum...dregs..." (4:13). Stacked up against the scenario of shameful images are the proud Corinthians. Paul calls them "prudent in Christ...strong...held in honour..." (4:11). If the rendering of Paul's view of himself as a "figure of shame" (Marshall, 1983) is accurate, his comment in 4:14 can be better understood in light of his appeal to be imitated⁴⁴. Paul's rhetorical strategy consistently put himself forward as example in order to accomplish his primary objective of establishing concord. Imitation of a figure of shame however would have been considered shameful. It seems that the problems of factions in Corinth were due to unhealthy dyadic alliances between individuals and apostles (1:12). Paul creates a fascinating solution to the problem of dyadism when he admonishes those who are in existing dyadic relations with Christ to pay obligations owed to Christ⁴⁵, in other words, to the in-group (Malina, 2001:97). In such a case, Paul's expectation of the charge that he is attempting to shame them would be valid. The way Paul refutes the anticipated argument however is to shift focus to the household with an admonition. What is the intention of Paul's warning to his Corinthian "children"? This question is only fully answered in the example of Timothy in 4:17, but before Paul drives home his point, he needs to convince his audience of another critical element. There is a patronal parent-child relationship here, not a mere guide-pupil relationship. Before returning to the admonition and its full meaning, Paul's use of patronage within the household must be briefly investigated.

4:14 ἀλλ' ὡς τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ νουθετῶ

⁴⁴ Marshall (1983) argues that Paul can be viewed as a figure of social shame. Seneca (in Marshall, 1983: 305) uses the metaphor of "led captive in triumph" found in Paul's letter. In friendship it was required of a benefactor that he immediately forget the service or gift he had given. In this instance, a humiliated recipient responds to his strutting benefactor who saved him. A benefactor can be parading his friend about for his own advantage and subjecting him to humiliation as a result.

⁴⁵ Malina (2001:97) refers to this as a polyadic relationship and compares it to a guild or burial association.

Elite males associated themselves with a polis such as Paul of Tarsus (Acts 21:39) or Philo of Alexandria. They were *politai* (citizens) of the polis and on the basis of “their residence and land control, they could participate in the decision-making processes that affected those living in the polis” (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:25)⁴⁶. This was not the case with non-elites, who associated with their parents, for example, Jesus, son of Joseph; Simon, son of Jonah. For this reason large numbers of people had no citizenship. Incredibly, “more than 90 percent of the Mediterranean world simply had no citizenship because they were not elites in any polis. Yet everyone had a place in some *oikos*, or household.” (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:16-18). The use of language such as τέκνος and πατήρ by Paul makes a “household” available to the Corinthians and indicates the application of the association of non-elites with their parents, in order to entice certain behaviour. Paul’s use of τέκνα indicates “one who is dear to another but without genetic relationship and without distinction in age” (Danker, 2000:994). The admonishing of his children creates an interesting tension within the text. For non-elites this would be a term of endearment and provision of a household, with all the concomitant power-dynamics involved, but for elites, this could be perceived as a challenge and the indication that a dyadic alliance is at stake⁴⁷.

Earthly patrons reflected the patronage of God and consisted, amongst other things, of the ability to create many children (Neyrey, 2001:371)⁴⁸. Paul is positioning himself as patron of the household, but he needs to drive his point home by convincing his audience that they do in fact belong to his household. In order to accomplish this, Paul makes creative use of the symbol of birth.

4:15: διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα

⁴⁶ The vocabulary used here echo the warning of Malina (1996:25) that references to “race”, “nation”, “state”, “city”, “citizen”, “country”, etc. reflect ancient Mediterranean meaning.

⁴⁷ Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:122) argues that Paul is deliberating with elites in his Corinthian correspondence. It is however more probable that both elites and non-elites were in view, with Paul’s intentions to level the playing field.

⁴⁸ Neyrey (2001:371) compares the patronage of God and earthly patrons and comments that “God’s patronage, similar to that of earthly patrons, consists of first-order goods: 1) power: ability to create, to defeat Egyptian, Assyrian and Seleucid armies, and to subdue the heavenly spirits who attack God’s clients 2) commitment: pledges of eternal loyalty and fidelity in a covenant of steadfast love with David, Abraham and their descendents 3) inducement: bestowal of rain and sunshine for crops, increase of herds and many children; 4) influence: Knowledge of God’s law and prophetic information of God’s plans.”

Paul would be able to make better use of patronage if he could justify his position as father of the Corinthian community. A father was the patron of his household, and theoretically he possessed *patria potestas*, absolute authority, with regards to his family⁴⁹. Paul's relationship with the Corinthian community is significantly affected by his claim of having birthed the community and becoming their father. Paul constructs his argument by combining his comment with the image of a guide, by referring to his opposition as *παιδαγωγούς*. This is more a guardian (Danker, 2000:748) than a teacher (Gal. 3:24) and it is likely that Paul is not including Apollos in this comparison (Witherington III, 1995:147). Such a person would not be required once the child reaches maturity, and it is likely that Paul intends to shame those who are challenging his authority. In light of Paul's reference to people who are not much more than guardians he is creating distance between himself and his opposition⁵⁰. The one unique quality of *patria potestas* was the enduring power exerted by the father, even beyond the maturity of a child. The father maintained such power into adulthood and included the prerogative to wield absolute power even after the establishment of their own households (Arjava, 1998:148). Paul is emphasising and utilising a unique and permanent paternal power-differential in order to persuade his audience of a mimetic relationship⁵¹.

Being the paternal patron of the community constitutes an unequal power dynamic, with Paul wielding the authority of the father. They were begotten by Paul (ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα), and he explains how it happened; ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (in Christ Jesus) and διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (through

⁴⁹ Arjava (1998:147-165) investigates this phenomenon. He provides a telling example of the power available to a father within the family context and the dominance according to Roman law (Arjava, 1998:147). Gaius (in Arjava, 1998:147) states that "again, we have in our power our children, the offspring of a Roman law marriage. This right is one which only Roman citizens have; there are virtually no other peoples who have such power over their sons as we have over ours. This was made known by the emperor Hadrian in an edict which he issued concerning those who applied to him for Roman citizenship for themselves and their children. I have not forgotten that the Galatians believe that children are in the power of their parents". Castelli (1991:101), similarly, points out that the image of the father must be read in relation to Greco-Roman society.

⁵⁰ Castelli (1991:101) mentions several authors who have other opinions, but concludes that "none of these scholars attempts to articulate any sort of reciprocity as part of the relationship between father and child".

⁵¹ Castelli (1991:86) notes that "the question of authority is foregrounded in the mimetic relationship" and that "the model has authority to which the copy submits". Although this comment is reflecting the idea of a mimetic relationship between teacher and pupil, the intention here is to point to the fact that the same power differential is being exerted by Paul, through utilising the power of the system of patronage. It confirms the suspicion that Paul's persuasion lies within the confluence of several complexities simultaneously at work and not immediately evident to the modern reader.

the gospel). Paul claims therefore that he is not acting on his own, but he is acting as the broker of Christ Jesus (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), the true authority and power behind this birth. The Corinthian community belongs to a new in-group headed by a new Κύριος (Lord), Jesus the Messiah (Christ), and were brought into this kinship through the instrument of the gospel. Reading Paul's reference to a parent-child relationship outside the confines of patronage is more palatable and less "offensive to modern sensibilities" (Castelli, 1991:102). According to Castelli, most commentators have understood this text in the light of love and affection and that it would be more accurate to view "the image of the father...in cultural context" (Castelli, 1991:101), the role as dictated by Greco-Roman society⁵².

The statement of Paul that he became their father could be viewed as paraenetic⁵³ material written in an affectionate tone. Paul's mention of father and child could be interpreted as reminiscent of a highly personal and supportive comment. In such an interpretation the father would coax the child into obedience. Paraenetic, in the sense of hortatory and persuasive would be accurate, but the question here remains as to how Paul's argument can revolve around a parent-child relationship in order to be truly persuasive? The necessity of Paul to reference his position as the parent, not only a παιδαγωγός (teacher) but a πατήρ (father) is necessary in order to remain persuasive. There are a number of reasons for reading these verses through a "veil of power" (Gordon, 1997), with Paul utilising whatever he has at his disposal to convince his audience of his arguments.

Firstly there is the question of position. Paul positions his mention of father and children in the final section of his long argument that provides proof of the need for Paul's advice (Mitchell, 1991:202-212). Paul is in the process of admonishing his audience by his own admission (4:14) and in 4:18 calls some of his audience φησινόω (arrogant). Although not everyone is called arrogant, Paul is addressing the arrogant people throughout the first proof where he initiates his petition for unity. The position, as the apogee of his first proof, should drive the point home and constitutes a powerful indictment, rather than a delicate and friendly attempt at coaxing. This positioning should at least suggest that something powerful and compelling is at work. Secondly the symbol of a father talking to his children cannot be understood anachronistically,

⁵² See also DeSilva (2001) where he elaborates the way Jewish promises now become available to the kinship group. The attachment to Christ determines whether one is part of such family. This is a serious indictment against individuals who do not accept Paul's authority.

⁵³ Roetzel (2009:67) believes that the bulk of 1 Corinthians 5-15 belongs to paraenetic material. He finds Paul's statement that "I became your father" in 1 Corinthians 4:15 as "highly personal and supportive".

independent of patronage. As noted by Castelli (1991:101), it is probable that Paul is using his reference to “father” within the Mediterranean context of patronage, where the father is the patron of the household, who demands honour and respect from his children. Paul as patron-father of his children would exercise lifelong authority over them with various responsibilities and behaviour attached to the relationship. When Paul makes the statement that the Corinthians have *μυρίους παιδαγωγούς ἔχητε ἐν Χριστῷ*, he intends to show them that he fulfils a unique role that no one else would be able to claim. This is necessary because a guide would not be able to wield the power that a patron-father would. His starting point is to convince his audience that he is not only a guide such as those who have been visiting the Corinthian community, but that he is uniquely their father⁵⁴. This relationship allows him to make unique demands related to honour and shame as dictated by patronage. The tone is therefore reminiscent of a father staking his claim as supreme authority within the household. Paul is carefully building an argument that would enable him to *command* behavioural change, ordinarily not possible. This can be seen in the following statement.

4:16 *μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε...*

This is a pivotal verse in Paul’s first argument and demands that the Corinthians should imitate him. Paul’s lack of detail in this verse, that the community was intended to mimic, has been problematic for interpreters and forced them to look elsewhere within the Pauline corpus (Sanders, 1981:353). Although attempting to understand the specifics that Paul would have in mind is interesting, the lack of specificity, is probably fundamental to the power of his demand in 4:16 for imitation. The intention is not to provide the community with a list of do’s and don’ts, but to convince and stir them to action; they need to mimic the example of the person that is their patron-father, regardless of the content of such mimesis. Following Paul’s example would constitute some behaviour that could not readily be considered logical or honouring and before any specifics could be discussed, this was Paul’s primary contention. He needed to find a way to force their hand and patronage offered the opportunity to showcase honourable behaviour. This can also be seen in the example of Timothy that reminds them of *τὰς ὁδοὺς μου τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ* (his ways in Christ). The lack of specificity seeks to convey once more the message that it is the imitation that is important because it constitutes honourable behaviour in a patron-client relationship. Timothy is honourable because he is *πιστὸν ἐν Κυρίῳ* (faithful in Christ). Paul communicates, however, something more forceful than a meek request. It is a command as

⁵⁴ Paul’s reference to feeding his community with milk, not solid food in 1 Cor 3:3 is provocative in that it reflects Paul as a guide, who was responsible for basic tutoring. This comment includes him as one of the guides (at least), referred to in 4:15, but it also turns the stereotypical role of a male on its head, where Paul is ascribing the nursing activity associated with women to him. Paul is able to skilfully reinterpret the embedded societal value system.

indicated by the second person plural imperative γίνεσθε. The example contained in 4:17 is also referring back to 4:14-4:16, and it puts on display the reciprocal behaviour demanded by “father” Paul of his “children”. The example of Timothy in 4:17 clarifies that father (Paul) demands the reciprocal behaviour which could only exist in a patron-client relationship. Why did Paul choose to use the example of Timothy to drive his point home? This question will be addressed in the following section.

4:17 Διὰ τοῦτο ἔπεμψα ὑμῖν Τιμόθεον, ὃς ἐστὶ μου τέκνον ἀγαπητὸν καὶ πιστὸν ἐν Κυρίῳ, ὃς ὑμᾶς ἀναμνήσει τὰς ὁδοὺς μου τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ, καθὼς πανταχοῦ ἐν πάσῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ διδάσκω

When Paul is putting forward the example of Timothy, he has already told his audience that they are beloved children, he has become their only father (and teacher), he has acted as broker of Christ to them, the benefit they received was the gospel message and that he demanded to be imitated. This was, however, not enough, because if Paul was not attempting to shame them, then honour was involved and the Corinthian community must have been convinced that this behaviour could have been reckoned as honourable. Within a society where honour was of such importance, Paul distinguishes one attribute of Timothy that highlights his honourable behaviour; Timothy imitated Paul, he honoured his parent as Christ intended and therefore he is πιστὸν ἐν Κυρίῳ (faithful in the Lord). Paul does however have a challenge. His intention is to convince his audience to imitate him, but this does not constitute honourable behaviour. The qualities described in 4:9-13 would certainly not have been considered honourable. Paul, however, utilised the power of the system of patronage in order to convince his community. As patron of the Corinthian community he would have been able to enforce a reciprocal relationship, and the faithfulness of Timothy is put forward as behaviour considered honourable in ancient society; faithfulness towards a patron and a father.

Several claims by Paul in the section of 4:14-4:21 warrant further treatment. Paul’s initial comment in 4:14 contains epideictic elements. These rhetorical elements relate to praise and blame and consist of the “censure of a person, city or thing” (Mitchell, 1991:215). Quintillian (Inst. Orat. 3.7.15, 2011) stated:

At times on the other hand it is well to divide our praises, dealing separately with the various virtues, fortitude, justice, self-control and the rest of them and to assign to each virtue the deeds performed under its influence.

In antiquity there were four commonly identified virtues: prudence (φρόνησις), justice (δικαιοσύνη), temperance (ἐγκράτεια) and fortitude (ὑπομονή), also known as the famous four (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:44). Occasionally “a fifth or sixth virtue, such as piety might be listed. But in time, the famous four held pride of place” (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:44). Various authors ascribed certain virtues as primary, for example Josephus puts primary focus on “religion” or

“piety” as the umbrella virtue, with all others contained within⁵⁵ (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:44). The interpretation of Genesis 15:6 by Philo (in Malina & Neyrey, 1996:44) leads him to believe that “faithfulness is the queen of virtues and the most perfect of them”. Aristotle (Vir. 1250b) wrote:

To righteousness it belongs to be ready to distribute according to desert, and to preserve ancestral customs and institutions and the established laws, and to tell the truth when interest is at stake, and to keep agreements. First among the claims of righteousness are our duties to the gods, then our duties to the spirits, then those to country and parents, then those to the departed; and among these claims is piety, which is either a part of righteousness or a concomitant of it. Righteousness is also accompanied by holiness and truth and loyalty (πίστις) and hatred of wickedness.

According to this statement Aristotle presented piety (εὐσέβεια) and loyalty (πίστις) as types contained within justice (δικαιοσύνη). “Thus Aristotle defined ‘justice’ (dikaiosynê) and treated it as a genus with species of piety and loyalty”⁵⁶ (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:44). According to this definition, righteousness lays claim to certain duties and the duties relate to the gods, spirits, country and parents, etc. Piety and loyalty have to do with the management of relationships in such a way that they properly fulfil their obligations. Justice “or righteousness (dikaiosynê), then, is about proper interpersonal relations and the obligations entailed in those relations” (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:45). It refers to keeping agreements and performing duties. Piety “or religion describes the practical respect for those who control one’s existence” (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:45). The relationship between mortals and gods was governed by benefaction from the patron gods and mortals needed to reciprocate with respect and honour. Piety meant that “one shows respect, obedience, and loyalty to one’s patron” (Malina & Neyrey, 1996:45). The distinguishing virtue wedged between the Corinthians and Timothy therefore is faithfulness that ranked at least as one of the supreme virtues and was considered the appropriate behaviour associated with righteousness. Paul is essentially saying to the Corinthians that Timothy is a child of his, just like they are and he is displaying righteous behaviour in honouring his patron-parent. Timothy will remind them of his way of life and they need to be convinced of this fact. This is honourable treatment of Paul as their father. The entire section between 4:14-4:17 is thus focussed on convincing his audience that they need to imitate him, because this is honourable, and Paul is claiming this honour as rightfully his. The authority of the argument revolves around the power embedded in patronage. It seems that Paul was more bent on getting this message across, and the details were not really all that important at this point in his

⁵⁵ Malina and Neyrey (1996:44) refer to other ancient works by Josephus (The Life 14) and Philo (Spec. Leg. 4.147).

⁵⁶ Rhetor (in Malina & Neyrey, 1996:45), not only confirms that piety is a part of justice, but also that there is a reciprocal relationship between.

argument. The significant point was that they needed to be convinced that they were required to display appropriate righteous behaviour; this in turn would be honourable, and was constituted in the faithful action of imitating Paul. Children owed their existence to their parents and they expected honourable, reciprocal behaviour towards the patron-parent. Of this they should now be convinced.

Returning briefly to 4:14, the reference of "these things" is therefore the description of the roles of Paul and Apollos (and others) as servants according to 3:5-4:13, 5. It is not a reproof of the Corinthians but a definition of the roles of the apostles. Rivalries based on the attraction to particular persons should not arise once it is clear that these two are nothing but servants. Paul, speaking as the father to his children, urges them not to look at him nor at Apollos, but to the Lord who is the one and only foundation of the church (3:11): "All is yours, and you are Christ's and Christ is God's" (3:22). Ultimately, Paul points to the patron (Christ) and not to himself.

The response to the question as to Paul's true intentions, with his comment that he was admonishing his audience, concludes that Paul should be imitated. He rather wants them to respond appropriately to his warning (νοουθετεῖω) by displaying the right behaviour. This would constitute honourable behaviour towards a father by his children and they would be displaying the typical virtues that are considered honourable. The authority of the patron-father will not be undermined, and their obedience will be honourable, as intended by their Lord (Christ). Others might not notice this as honourable, due to the nature of the behaviour listed in 4:9-4:13, but if they recognise that he is not just a teacher, but their father, then they will appropriate honourable behaviour by imitating Paul. The warning is thus, in the first place, one that is meant to reflect the appropriate behaviour within the honour-shame context of a household. In such a context, Paul uses the existing values of patronage in order to command his authority. The power that he displays is embedded in the system of patronage and this enables him to command his "children". Most of his audience does not have ascribed honour⁵⁷ due to noble birth οὐ πολλοὶ εὐγενεῖς (1:26), but responding appropriately will result in honourable behaviour (4:17). In a typical challenge-response scenario between social unequals, Paul would be attempting to reduce the honour of his opponents in a limited-goods society. This is the

⁵⁷ Ascribed honour is based on who a person is by birth, whether noble birth of the higher classes, wealth, polis, etc. Honour can also be ascribed to someone by a notable person of authority, who has the power to enforce the acknowledgement of such honour. Acquired honour is the claim to worth that a person acquires during a challenge response, when the person excels over another during the social challenge. For a full treatment of the subject see Malina (2001:30-57) and Rohrbaugh (1996:19-40).

clarification that 4:14 is putting across to them; Paul is not attempting to remove honour from them and take it for himself (acquired honour), neither is he abasing them by commanding them to follow his shameful⁵⁸ example (4:16). His *νουθετώ* (warning) is ringing out to prevent them from dishonourable behaviour. This offers his imitators a unique opportunity to display one of the supreme virtues of righteousness (faithfulness) to their true Lord (Christ).

4.2.2 THE CONCLUSION OF PAUL'S FIRST PROOF IN 4:18-21

Language that speaks of grace contains the elements of patronage. For Paul this is initiated already in his epistolary prescript and thanksgiving (1:1-1:9). With his formulaic introduction in 1:3 that *χάρις* (grace) *ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη* (peace) *ἀπὸ Θεοῦ* (from God) *πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* (our father and the Lord Jesus Christ) Paul brokers the favour and peace from God and from the Lord Jesus. As previously mentioned this favour and peace does not proceed from *κυρίου* Caesar, but from *Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* and is distinctly anti-imperial. It creates the distinct impression that Empire is not proclaiming true favour and peace. Such peace and favour belong to another kingdom, the kingdom of which Paul is the broker to the true Lord.

His thanksgiving in 1:4-1:9 continues with language filled with favour from the Lord. In light of this foundation established right at the beginning of his letter, Paul's confidence that he is representing *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ* is telling. It is reminiscent of the language of Jesus in Mark 1:15 where Jesus announces that *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ* is near and that they should *πιστεύετε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ* "along with the ready presence of divine patronage" (Malina & Rohrbaugh, 2003:390). In this scenario Jesus set himself up as broker to the patronage of God. Paul continues his authority as the broker to the patronage of the Lord with his statement in 4:19 that he will come, *ἐὰν ὁ Κύριος θελήσῃ* (if the Lord wills). In light of Paul's brokering, it is only the Lord who will be able to thwart Paul's plans and no-one else. His statement that he will find out *οὐ τὸν λόγον τῶν πεφυσιωμένων, ἀλλὰ τὴν δύναμιν* (not the speech of the [having been] puffed up but the power) is firstly accusing those that are puffed up of not having power, but it is primarily stating that they are not representing the kingdom, because *οὐ γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει* (for the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power). The way Paul weaves together his references to the gospel and the kingdom in this passage indicates that he is brokering in the same manner as Jesus (Mk 1:15). Such a close association with his Lord constitutes a powerful indictment against his opponents and Paul is once again putting daylight between them by confirming that he is a broker of the Lord, unlike those who are just talking. The power that Paul is referring to is contained within the authority that stems from patronage. It

⁵⁸ See Marshall's (1983:302-317) discussion of Paul as a "figure of shame".

is the authority that emanates from the Lord of which Paul is the broker. This is Paul's authority and provides the confidence to be able to state with finality that the Corinthian community has a choice; he could either come with gentleness or with a rod.

4.2.3 THE CHALLENGE-RIPOSTE OF 4:18-4:21

Paul's accusation of arrogance in 4:18 can be viewed as a Mediterranean challenge-riposte. Within the context of an honour-shame society such as Corinth, arrogance meant that one had no concern for honour and it was a challenge to those of higher social standing (Neyrey, 2001:371). They challenge the honour of Paul and others who are *μωροὶ* (fools) and it requires a riposte from him⁵⁹. In light of this, his comment that he does not intend to shame is curious. As noted before, Paul's view of himself as a figure of shame leads to the conclusion that his intention is not to shame, but when opposed by those who are puffed up, "he surely does" (Malina, 2008:80). The interaction here is confined to the in-group and Paul does not only intend to shame his opposition, but to mend internal relations; to create unity. This is also aligned with his rhetorical strategy. Some are committed to this bravery of challenging Paul's honour, due to his prolonged absence and the conviction that this situation shall remain.

The community in Corinth must have been comprised of lower classes as indicated by the questions relating to slavery, but also those considering themselves of at least equal social standing to Paul. The latter would have been brazen enough to challenge for honour and Paul's deliberative discourse would also be aimed at them⁶⁰. This complicates Paul's argument because he needs to resolve the issue of unity and the challenge to his authority with a riposte. Addressing the challengers, Paul responds to their negative challenge to his honour. His perception of the negative challenge would be perceived "in terms of usual publicly acknowledged criteria or norms of judging" (Malina, 2001:34).

⁵⁹ In a limited-good society there would have been a set amount of honour to go around. By claiming honour, Paul would have to remove honour from someone else. Shaming someone in a challenge-riposte would be a tug of war where one party would gain honour and another lose honour (be shamed). If *ταῦτα* in 4:14 is referring to the previous section, outlining the activities involved, then Paul's audience could have interpreted his intentions as someone attempting to shame them (take honour from them).

⁶⁰ Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:120-122) argues for Paul's appeal to a Corinthian audience of higher social standing like himself. The contention here is that Paul addresses his entire audience, not only those of equal social standing, but also the bulk of the community who would be of the lower classes, but his challenge-riposte would specifically address those of higher social standing. This would partly explain the ambiguity in his response, for example his denial of intending to shame his audience in 4:14. The challenge-riposte would thus be crafted in such a way as to enable this kind of communication.

Paul launches a scathing attack on his hearers in five distinct negative challenges. Firstly he challenges his opponents with his reference to them as παιδαγωγοὺς (4:15a) and sets himself up in a position as father (4:15b) that is different and superior to them. Referring to them as guides is a form of disdain, someone that fulfils a temporary role and might be required initially but becomes redundant later. His position as father mimics the position of God, the Father (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1999:121). In a second negative challenge Paul accuses them in 4:18 that some ἐφουσιώθησάν (were puffed up). He repeats this accusation in 4:19, where he threatens to investigate such arrogance. Following the charge of arrogance, Paul continues to offer a barrage of negative challenges to his audience by committing to a visit, which will only be prevented by the Κύριος Jesus (4:19). During this visit he intends to investigate not the speech of these arrogant people, ἀλλὰ τὴν δύναμιν (but their power). This third challenge charges Paul's opponents that he represents power, leading to the conclusion that his opponents do not have power. The implications of this statement are far-reaching and do not only implicate the audience, but the claim to power of the Empire. Such power as one would expect to exist in the emperor is now claimed to exist in another Κύριος. In this manner Paul is claiming to be the authentic representative of true power. In 4:20 he clarifies this position where he associates the kingdom of God with such power. This constitutes a fourth negative challenge, which indicates to the audience that they belong to a redundant kingdom, one without power and filled with talk. Following his positioning as a broker of Christ, representing the βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ (kingdom of God), he continues with a final negative challenge that threatens to come ἐν ῥάβδῳ (with a rod) if this opposition were to continue.

Even though Paul ends his first proof with a barrage of negative challenges intended to make his challengers stagger, and Paul claims the right to command and punish, he “ostentatiously chooses persuasion and love” (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1999:121). The entire challenge-riposte is typical of a battle for honour and in the Mediterranean world, Paul has responded to this social challenge with great rhetorical skill. He commands a compelling argument for being the true representative of an alternative kingdom, filled with power. Given Paul's use of the challenge-riposte and concomitant values, the analysis also requires to investigate the relationship between the Corinthian letter and the world of Paul. How else did Paul make use of his world in order to accomplish his objectives? The analysis of intertexture attempts to briefly address this and other related questions.

4.3 INTERTEXTURE

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Within the Corinthian community there were debates and ongoing discussions that pertained to a new lifestyle as proposed and championed by Paul, Apollos and others. The lifestyle could be summarised, as represented by the pre-baptismal formula of Gal 3:26-28 (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1997:224). The challenge was to understand how this was brought to bear upon society. Subsequently questions, tensions and differing approaches arose regarding marriage, sex, children, slavery, general social and lifestyle issues and ultimately led to a divided community. In response to these questions and reports on community activities that Paul received from others (1:11), he is deliberating with his audience. The rhetorical analysis does not imply that Paul implemented rhetorical structures verbatim, but rather that he was responding to life situations and in his responses to the various communities made use of rhetorical skill in order to articulate and convince others of his views. It is important to take note that the rules of rhetoric could be bypassed and the orator had the liberty to adapt his approach based on circumstances (Murphy-O'Conner, 1995:83).

In deliberative rhetoric the author does not attempt to pass judgement but attempts to convince his audience to make the right decisions. This would be articulated in the spirit of an orator who appeals to the assembly of freeborn men to make the right political decision for the polis (Schüssler Fiorenza, 1999:120). There are inherent dangers in finding a specific rhetorical schema within the letters of Paul, which could result in appropriating importance to any specific section, that Paul never intended (Murphy-O'Conner, 1995:83). The rhetorical arrangement of the first letter to the Corinthians, based on the convincing analysis of Mitchell (1991)⁶¹, argues for the overall unity of the letter and renders the following structure:

Epistolary Prescript (1:1-3)

Epistolary Thanksgiving/Rhetorical προοίμιον (1:4-9)

Epistolary Body (1:10-15:58)

Thesis Statement/πρόθεσις (1:10)

Statement of Facts/διήγησις (1:11-17)

⁶¹ In his analysis of the social location of Paul, Neyrey (1997:135) comments that “Mitchell’s rhetorical analysis takes full cognisance of epistolary structure and conventions, and stands up well against other arrangements”.

Proofs/ πίστιεις (1:18-15:57)

First Proof: Factionalism (1:18-4:21)

Second Proof: Integrity of the community against Defilement (5:1-11:1)

Third Proof: Manifestations of Factionalism (11:2-14:40)

Fourth Proof: The Resurrection as the Final Goal (15:1-57)

Epistolary Closing (16:1-24)⁶²

In this construction, the section between 1:10 and 15:58 contains the epistolary body. The section represented by 1:10-4:21 contains the first part of the epistolary body, includes the thesis statement, and concludes with the first proof. Within 1:10-4:21, the following minor segments have been identified by several scholars: 1:10-17, 18-25, 26-31; 2:1-5, 6-16; 3:1-4, 5-17, 18-23; 4:1-5, 6-13, 14-21 (Smit, 2002:231), where the last unit within the section of proof is 4:14-21 and aligns with the overall structure proposed here. As noted before, the proposal of Mitchell (1991) for the unity of the letter and subjecting the entire letter to the struggle for concord is maintained. The section between Paul's thesis (1:10) until the end of the first proof (4:21) can be viewed as a coherent unit. "Scholars are unanimous in their opinion that 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 forms a rounded and coherent unit within the first letter of Paul to the church at Corinth" (Smit, 2002:231). It should, however, not be separated from the overall aim of concord. Paul's primary contention in his first proof is that the Corinthians are in fact in trouble and do need advice to effect concord (Mitchell, 1991:207-212). The section of 4:14-21 will be assessed here in broad terms as the culmination of the first proof and not entirely independent of the balance of Paul's argument.

The factions in Corinth are critical in understanding the overall deliberative argument and Paul's use of the image of the household in 4:14-21. The author of 1 Clement helps to elucidate the meaning of σχίσμα mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor 1:10. He formats an argument that applies the example of Paul and the parties to the "abominable and unholy στάσις" in the church of his own day and asks: "Why are there quarrels and anger and dissension and divisions (σχίσματα) and war among you?" (1 Clem. 46:5). The terms with which "σχίσμα is associated" (Welborn,

⁶² Murphy-O'Conner (1995) provides a tabulation of major interpreters of 1 Corinthians in terms of rhetorical content. He warns against the dangers of rhetorical criticism and finds that the content of Pauline letters can't be neatly fitted to a rhetorical scheme. The content of the letters differed significantly but in form "they provide a consistent general pattern" (Murphy-O'Conner, 1995:135). See also the summary rhetorical structure in Murphy-O'Conner (1995:81) that relates the broad categories of Exordium, Narratio, Probatio and Peroration for the chapters in question.

1987:87) shed light on the “factions that were engaged in a power struggle” (Welborn, 1987:87) and elucidate Paul’s approach to the Corinthian community, and the language that he utilises in order to effect unity. The struggle is not religious heresy, or a minor and “harmless clique” (Welborn, 1987:87), it is much more serious than that⁶³. In 3:3 Paul accuses the Corinthians that there is ζήλος καὶ ἔρις (jealousy and strife) amongst them when he points to the root of their behaviour. This does not reflect minor infractions, but according to Lysias (in Welborne, 1987:87) “ζήλος is the gnawing, unquiet root of civil strife-the real, psychological cause of war”. Paul’s seems to view the party-strife as assertive jealousy that attempts to remove honour from others, as opposed to defensive jealousy that would constitute concern for maintaining honour.

How then does Paul go about formulating his argument? Aristotle (in Mitchell, 1991:198) described arguments as consisting of essentially two components, a πρόθεσις (thesis) followed by πίστις (proof of the thesis). This approach is much simpler than later Greek and Latin handbooks that differentiate “*propositio/expositio, partitio/divisio, enumeratio* and *distributio*” and appropriate for analysis of “1 Corinthians because it contains only a single proposition, the call for unity” (Mitchell, 1991:199). Mitchell ably demonstrated that the argument throughout the first Corinthian letter serves to convince the assembly by addressing various topics as proofs that urge (Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς – Now I beseech/appeal [to] you) the divided community to abandon their differences and move towards concord (see the four πίστιεις in the structure proposed by Mitchell above). Paul uses παρακαλῶ as a pattern of speech, commonly found in deliberative arguments⁶⁴. He finds this unity (διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) in the common denominator and broker of God - Christ. The passage within view (4:14-21) is thus situated within a proof that pertains to factionalism and that is intended to glue the community together, as indicated by Paul’s πρόθεσις in 1:10. Throughout 1:18-4:21 “epideictic elements of censure” can be found (Mitchell, 1991:213). Paul embeds epideictic elements in a larger deliberative rhetoric in order to serve the purpose of enhancing the force of his argument. The

⁶³ According to Welborn (1987:86) “A σχίσμα is a rift, a tear, as in a garment; it is used metaphorically of a cleft in political consciousness (e.g., Herodotus 7.219; PLond. 2710.13). The verb from which the abstract noun is derived is used by Diodorus, for example, to describe the civil strife at Megara”. Welborn believes the reason for the discord in Corinth as possibly jealousy, by reflecting on Philo’s (in Welborn, 1987:87) version of the “Alexandrian mob that began the civil war against their Jewish fellow citizens” that was driven by “jealousy”. Jealously must be understood in the context of honour and shame (Malina, 2001:126).

⁶⁴ Mitchell (1991:199 n79).

existence of such epideictic elements will be investigated briefly in order to reflect on how this could have been accomplished.

4.3.2 EPIDEICTIC ELEMENTS IN PAUL'S ARGUMENT

In 4:8-13 Paul has just completed a section that employs the progymnastic genre of comparison "in an ironic parody of self-praise" (Neyrey, 2003:142) that leads to the final argument in his first proof. Paul articulates the final section of epideictic proof in 4:8-13 that culminates in 4:13 and precedes the summary of 4:14-21 (Mitchell, 1991:219). Castelli believes that this section could "function as a kind of rhetorical crescendo, sharply contrasting the Corinthians on the one hand and Paul on the other" (Castelli, 1991:106).

Certain stereotypical categories served as sources of honour in society and within deliberative rhetoric there is room for such epideictic elements of praise and blame. It is thus not surprising that throughout the argument of 1:18 to 4:21 there are traces of epideictic elements as described in the rhetorical handbooks. Such handbooks allow for epideictic elements of praise and blame as part of deliberative rhetoric (Mitchell, 1991:213). Paul's use of language in 4:14 (Οὐκ ἐντρέπων ... ἀλλ'...νουθετῶν....) is reminiscent of the following statement (Rhet. Her. 3.8.15 in Mitchell, 1991:213 n144):

And if epideictic rhetoric is only seldom employed by itself independently, still in judicial and deliberative causes extensive sections are often devoted to praise or censure.⁶⁵

Paul's intention as articulated in 4:14 to admonish and not to shame is also reminiscent of the statement by Isocrates (Paneg. 4.130):

It is not, however, possible to turn men from their errors, or to inspire in them the desire for a different course of action without first roundly condemning [ἐπιτίμησις] their present conduct; and a distinction must be made between accusation [κατηγορεῖν], when one denounces with intent to injure, and admonition [νουθετεῖν], when one uses like words with intent to benefit; for the same words are not to be interpreted in the same way unless they are spoken in the same spirit.

In an encomium or harsh censure, it was standard rhetorical practice to make use of illustrious examples where the person or city under discussion was compared. This is what Paul articulates in 4:1-13, by performing a comparative analysis of the Corinthians and the epitome of Christianity as manifested by the apostles (Mitchell, 1991:219). Aristotle (Rh. 1.9.39) states:

⁶⁵ See the references and discussions by Mitchell (1991:213 n144-146) including her discussion on praise and blame in ancient witnesses.

Amplification is with good reason ranked as one of the forms of praise, since it consists in superiority, and superiority is one of the things that are noble. That is why, if you cannot compare him with illustrious personages, you must compare him with ordinary persons, since superiority is thought to indicate virtue.

The exhortation of Paul for imitation is both forward-looking and backward-looking. It is part of the rhetorical strategy to champion unity and although explicit in 4:16 and 11:1, it is implicit throughout the letter. Throughout Paul “presents himself as the opposite of a factionalist” (Mitchell, 1991:222) and leads to the conclusion that “4:16 thus serves as the predominant rhetorical strategy of the proof sections to follow, a strategy already explicitly used in the first proof section” (Mitchell, 1991:222). Several explanations have been offered for the puzzling reference to Timothy’s visit in the past and Paul’s visit in the future (4:17-21). According to partition theorists the apparent inconsistency with Paul’s call to receive Timothy in 16:10-11 points to evidence that this is the end of a letter fragment (Mitchell, 1991:222)⁶⁶. Although Mitchell does not believe that this issue is crucial to her argument, it has more significance for the current investigation. Mitchell (1991) offers a solution that she believes requires more attention, specifically the grammatical construct and intention of the conditional ἐὰν (4:15) as epistolary commonplace referring to the arrival of the letter and/or its carrier (or envoys). It seems obvious to her that admonishing his audience through deliberative letters will have some effect, but this could not replace the power of the personal presence of someone such as Timothy or Paul himself. The significance then seems to be that Paul’s references to physical presence and absence play a role in his rhetorical argument (Mitchell, 1991:223). Although Mitchell’s argument is valid, it seems appropriate to press the rhetoric beyond this statement. By reflecting on the possibility of Paul’s use of epideictic elements and specifically an *encomium*, it creates opportunity for Paul to utilise his example of Timothy in an even more powerful way than initially evident. Before addressing specifically the rhetoric of Paul in 4:14-21 and the location of 4:17 in Paul’s argument, the value and use of the encomium in epideictic rhetoric must be briefly addressed.

4.3.3 1 CORINTHIANS 4:14-17 AS ENCOMIUM

Progymnastic education included exposure to the encomium as a vehicle “for learning epideictic rhetoric” (Neyrey, 2003:143). Could it be that in 4:14-17, as part of his overall deliberative discourse Paul wanted to make use of the encomium, to empower his argument, in order to convince the Corinthians to imitate his lifestyle? How was the example of Timothy related to

⁶⁶ The question revolves around the grammatical construct of ἔπεμψα which can either be an epistolary aorist or a genuine preterite. Both Origin and Chrysostom (in Mitchell, 1991:223 n198) understood Timothy to be the actual carrier of the letter.

Paul's use of an encomium and did this enhance his ability to convince his audience to make the appropriate decision? This proposition will be investigated in the following analysis. A typical encomium was categorised and ordered according to a structure that resembled the following (Neyrey, 2003:145):

1. Origin (ethnos, polis, ancestors and parents) and birth (phenomena at birth: stars, visions, etc.).
2. Nurture and training (education, teachers, arts, skills, laws learned).
3. Accomplishments and deeds can be divided into three types of deeds. Firstly deeds of the body: beauty, strength, agility, might, health; Secondly deeds of the soul: justice, wisdom, temperance, courage; Thirdly deeds of fortune: power, wealth, friends, children, fame, fortune, length of life, happy death.
4. Comparison.

4:14-15: Paul initiates his argument through direct appeal that articulates his intention. He uses "like words with intent to benefit" (Isocrates, Paneg. 4.130) by telling his audience that he does not intend to injure them (shame), rather admonish them. His contention is that their origin can be traced back to himself their father and ultimately to Christ. Paul's statement that he is the father of the Corinthian community addresses creatively the origin of many that were not able to maintain any form of boasting due to *ethnos* or *polis* such as Paul himself was able to do (Acts 21:39). Their sense of belonging to the in-group was through spiritual birth and fit the encomiastic pattern that initiates with *origin*. Origin was directly related to honour and if the assessment of Paul being a retainer is correct, then this would benefit the majority of Corinthians, who would have belonged to the lower classes. For someone of equal status to Paul this would constitute a challenge. Nevertheless, Paul is addressing their origin in his argument by stating that he is their only father and ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα (birthed them) through the gospel.

4:15: Paul does not use nurture and training to praise his audience, but seems to bring correction by stating hypothetically through the subjunctive ἔχητε that even if they were to have μυρίους παιδαγωγούς (countless tutors), yet not many fathers (in Christ). Tutoring by παιδαγωγούς was reminiscent of a group of people that still required milk and not solid food. The tutors would therefore be countless but the training not much to be proud of. If Paul is not being sarcastic with his comment, that he does not intend to shame them, then this indicates more an attempt to shame the tutors, who can be viewed as no more than typical guides to the wealthy. In other words they might believe that they are teachers, but they are actually just nursemaids.

The challenge from Paul that there are people that associate with παιδαγωγούς also strikes at the heart of the fictive kinship group in Corinth. Those who subscribe to such teaching can not belong the kinship group, in this case the family of which Paul is the father. This association of nurture, with either the father or the tutors, places a serious question mark behind the origin of those who refuse to accept Paul as parent of the community.

There is another tension that remains, because Paul's positioning as their father indicates the kind of teaching that a father was required to perform as *patria potestas*. It seems that Paul's non-specific reference to tutors compared to him as father, opposes the teaching of a father and the basic tutoring of a nursemaid. The latter would be temporary, somewhat beneficial, but clearly not comparable to the quality and permanent nature of the teaching of a father. Paul's reference to nurture and training thus fits the pattern of an encomium by stating that proper teaching such as a father would bestow upon a son, is clearly the (only) honourable choice. This is foundational for the command of 4:16.

4:16: Paul petitions his audience through the formulaic address παρακαλῶ (I beseech) that appeals to his audience, and culminates in an imperative γίνεσθε (become). There is no other option but to imitate him. This verse is quite frustrating with its lack of detail, and as noted before, this has caused authors to search elsewhere for specifics related to the imitation of Paul. When the verse is viewed as the focal point of Paul's argument, however, and as part of an encomium, it produces a provocative result. In a typical encomiastic pattern, Paul should have mentioned some accomplishments in terms of the deeds of the body, soul and fortune. By ignoring specifics, this has the powerful effect of imploding all accomplishments and deeds into a single command; to imitate Paul. The ultimate accomplishment can, therefore, be found in the deed that constitutes the imitation of Paul. This can be expected to conclude with a comparison to complete the encomium.

4:17: This concludes the encomium by performing a comparison between the Corinthians and Timothy. Here, is someone who has done exactly what is proposed to the community. Paul states that this as his reason (Διὰ τοῦτο) for sending Timothy to them, so that they can use Timothy to perform this comparison. Timothy is someone, ὃς ἐστὶ μου τέκνον (who is a child of mine). He is just like the Corinthians; he is ἀγαπητὸν (beloved), just as I love you Corinthians; he is πιστὸν ἐν Κυρίῳ (faithful in the Lord), just as you should be; he will ἀναμνήσει τὰς ὁδοὺς μου (remind you of my ways); he is imitating me just as I want you to imitate me. In this comparison, Paul juxtaposes the behaviour, and the role, of Timothy with those of the Corinthian community, and honours the behaviour of Timothy by commending him as πιστὸν (faithful).

According to Neyrey (2003:145), Paul's use of the encomium in 2 Corinthians 11-12 leads to the conclusion that the main point of this rhetoric is obtaining honour, by exceeding those who rival him in Corinth. The conclusion of this brief analysis, however, is that Paul is using an encomiastic pattern and the honour-shame paradigm, in order to address the larger theme of factionalism. Paul does this by applying the encomium as a progymnastic exercise (Neyrey, 2003:145). The use of the encomium within 4:14-17 can be described as a challenge-riposte with encomiastic pattern that describes the way the Corinthians should gain honour. This can be accomplished if they follow Timothy's example and strengthens Paul's mimetic petition. Put in another way, Paul is admonishing the Corinthians by telling them that it will be honourable to follow his example. With Paul's innovative use of the rhetoric of an encomium, he brings all the weight of his argument to bear upon the command of 4:16.

4.3.4 THE CENTRALITY OF 4:16

As indicated previously, the petition by Paul to imitate him is situated within the overall unit of 1:10-4:21. This verse (4:16) has puzzled interpreters who have been attempting to attach meaning to Paul's petition by looking elsewhere within the Pauline corpus (Sanders, 1981:353)⁶⁷. It does however seem prudent to rather attempt to position 4:16 within the epistolary body of 1:10-4:21. It has already been noted that the presence of the hortatory formula παρακαλῶ in 1:10 and 4:16 point to the unity of 10:-4:21, with 4:16 referring back to the content discussion from 1:10 and 4:14-4:21 then the culmination of the first proof. Sanders (1981:354) comments that the similar phrase of admonishment "in both passages [1:10 and 4:16] suggests that we should consider 1:10-4:21 as a unit of which 4:14-21 is the final paragraph". Paul's reference to ταῦτα in 4:14 can be understood as referring to the entire discussion until this point. Sanders (1981:355) concludes that "one may say that 'these things' in 4:14 refers to the discussion in 1:10-4:21 as a whole". The repetition of Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς (1:10 and 4:16) points to the link with unity as well as the action of Paul as mediator in the mimetic relationship. Castelli (1991:102) states similarly that:

The call for a resolution of divisiveness in this situation is strengthened by these two parallel exhortations in Paul's discourse: first, the call for unity which is shored up by the invocation of the power of baptism; second, the exhortation to become Paul's imitators.

Imitation was also a common rhetorical strategy and seems to have been Paul's strategy throughout the entire letter, hinging on but not limited to his two explicit commands in 4:16 and 11:1.

⁶⁷ Sanders (1981:353 n1) mentions several interpreters who investigate this verse in this way.

In summary, this brief analysis leads to the conclusion that the key to the first proof (1:18-4:21) of the thesis (1:10) proposed by Paul, is embedded within 4:16 and situated where one would expect to find the deeds of the body, soul and fortune outlined. Imitation is the first key that unlocks elusive unity within the Corinthian community. If the Corinthians were to imitate Paul, they would not only be honourable (looking backward), but they would have power (looking forward). In order to accomplish this, the community needs to look no further than the practical example of Timothy who will remind them of Paul's ways in Christ (Sanders, 1981:363). Imitating Paul is the deed of the soul that contains justice. In 4:14-17, Paul has completed a second section of progymnastic genre of comparison by proposing Timothy as a prime example of faithfulness. Ultimately this faithfulness is aimed at Christ their patron, of whom Paul is a representative. This seems to be the crescendo of Paul's argument, but if the crescendo of Paul's argument can be found in his mimetic petition, what does he then intend with the culmination of his first proof in 4:18-21? This question will be addressed during the following brief rhetorical analysis.

4.3.5 A BRIEF RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF 4:18-4:21 AS PERORATIO

In the final *peroratio* of 4:18-20 Paul is addressing one of the consequences of factionalism - the arrogance of some (4:18), presumably the guides of 4:15 (Witherington III, 1995:147). As previously noted, this indicates a challenge-riposte, and Paul is offering a negative challenge in the form of an insult by calling his opponents arrogant. The content of these verses however will lead the audience to a number of conclusions that would unequivocally communicate the seat of power with Paul as broker. Aristotle (Rh. 2.21.2) states that if a reason is added to a rhetorical maxim, it becomes an enthymeme. Quintilian (Inst. Orat. 5.10.1-2; 5.14.1; 24-5, 2011) provides as one of his definitions that an enthymeme is a "proposition with a reason". Paul makes several propositions within the *peroratio* that are worth noting, since it produces a powerful conclusion to his first proof.

Enthymemes contain deductive reasoning where one of the premises or the conclusion is not stated explicitly. According to Aristotle (Rh. 2.21.2) enthymemes are general comments and deal with questions of human conduct that should be followed or avoided. Paul's accusation that some ἐφυσιώθησάν "were puffed up" fits the criteria. Arrogance constituted human behaviour that Paul was addressing in his audience and wanting to steer them away from, in order to re-establish unity. Maxims are the conclusions of enthymemes without the syllogism (Aristotle, Rh. 2.21.2). Aristotle (Rh. 2.21.3) also identifies four types of maxims:

1) Maxims with an epilogue that are imperfect enthymemes 2) Maxims with an epilogue that are enthymematic in character but not in form 3) Maxims without an epilogue such as are well known and 4) Maxims without an epilogue that are clear as soon as they are uttered.

The comment made by Paul in 4:18 that ἐφυσιώθησάν τινες can be viewed as a maxim (Aristotle, Rh. 2.21.2):

There is no man who is really free [maxim] -> for he is the slave of either wealth or fortune [enthymeme]

The initial statement is a maxim, but adding the epilogue changes into an enthymeme, similar to Paul's argument in 4:18:

There are some who are arrogant [maxim] -> as though I were not coming to you [enthymeme]

The argumentation within the rest of the section leads to several conclusions that are not explicitly stated and can be deduced. Each verse positions Paul in such a way that he confirms his status as authority figure. The conclusions can be paraphrased in the following manner:

4:19: I will establish the power of the arrogant:

The arrogant have no power, but I do [unstated conclusion];

I act as broker for the Κύριος [unstated conclusion]

4:20: The Kingdom consists of power [maxim]:

The arrogant don't represent the Kingdom [unstated conclusion]

4:21: I will come with the option to exercise power:

I represent the Kingdom and [unstated conclusion]

I have power [unstated conclusion]

Paul is using the logical rhetorical progression to convince his audience to modify behaviour. He attempts to achieve this through arguing that he is the broker of the Κύριος and the Kingdom, therefore there is authority vested in him. His ultimate objective is not primarily concerned with his physical presence, but to use this as instrument in order to censure the behaviour of those

who are *φυσιόω* (puffed up)⁶⁸. Paul's reference to his presence, "in a stern, almost threatening way, is rhetorically quite understandable after his censure of the Corinthians" (Mitchell, 1991:224). Paul is merely behaving as expected by deliberative orators. "Furthermore, while those who admonish (*νουθετεῖν*), even if only verbally, are hated by most men, but those who delight with flattery are approved to a surprising degree..." (Dio Chrys. Or. 51.4 in Mitchell, 1991:224 n206)⁶⁹.

There is, therefore, a logical, rhetorical progression that looks forward from the example of Timothy. It moves from the example and presence of virtuous Timothy, to the arrogance due to Paul's absence, to the probability that Paul will appear if the Lord wills and finally ends with a choice as to how Paul will come. Paul's primary objective with this progression is to prove that he has power and his authority originates from his brokering of God's Kingdom. As the broker of Christ and God's Kingdom, and the *patria potestas* of this household, he should be obeyed. Although it should now be apparent that Paul's argument is utilising many aspects not open to the modern reader, the rhetoric of the text in view loses much of its power without cognisance of the ideological force of patronage that is consistently lurking in the background. A reflection on this aspect of Paul's thought should prove useful in understanding his use of symbols of the household to substantiate his petition for unity.

4.4 IDEOLOGICAL TEXTURE

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Ideology is the most powerful tool at Paul's disposal "for creating his relationships of power with his communities" (Castelli, 1991:123). It is apparent that Paul did not command military power and could not physically force people to relate to him. He could not impose his gospel through coercion and utilises ideological tools such as rhetoric and patronage to achieve his objectives. Paul would have been familiar with all aspects of imperial ideology within the city of Corinth, and his daily existence influenced by Empire. Paul's mission in Corinth needed to create a "movement of solidarity" (Horsley, 1997b:90) as can be seen from his thesis in 1:10 for unity. The Roman Empire made use of symbolic language that conveyed the message of unity through the already existing image of the *σῶμα* in the political language of the Republic

⁶⁸ Mitchell (1991:224 n204) believes that this is not an announcement of visitation plans.

⁶⁹ For more ancient witnesses see Mitchell (1991:224 n206).

(Welborn, 1987: 87)⁷⁰. Within this body, the emperor was the head, the controlling power and intelligence without which the body could not function. In a widely dispersed Empire where patronage was instrumental in order to maintain control, the effect of the hierarchy in terms of Paul's alternative society must be assessed. The hierarchy mentioned before consisted of the gods, emperor, Roman officials, local notables and the populace within a complex web of relationships. In Paul's alternative society, the head of this movement was Christ (12:27) with the Corinthian community the members (12:12-12:27). Paul's use of political language should warrant a brief investigation of the overlaps and differences between the value system of Roman society and the community that he is building. If the premise is that Paul is contending for an alternative society, the analysis needs to address the aspects of this society that conform to Empire and those aspects that are in opposition to Empire. The following section, briefly explores this tension in Paul's Corinthian correspondence.

4.4.2 PATRONAGE AND EMPIRE IN CORINTH

As mentioned before, the Roman emperor was at the top of the pyramid of power, and he had direct access to the gods. His vastly superior status was well known within society through the many honorific titles. "The name of the colony, Colonia Latus Julia Corinthiensis, stood as a constant reminder of the grace that Julius Caesar who helped to refound the colony" (Chow, 1997:106). Paul challenges this supreme honour from his first epistolary prescript and thanksgiving in 1:1-1:9. The chain of command is clarified and ordained διὰ θελήματος Θεοῦ (by the will of God). The community does not belong to Caesar, but it is ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ (the assembly of God). The Lord of the community is represented by Christ (1:2,3,5,10) and not the emperor. Within 1:1-1:10, Paul drives his point home that Christ is not only Κύριος (lord), but he is also Κυρίου ἡμῶν (our Lord). Six times within these verses, Paul ascribes the common title of the Roman emperor to Christ. This theme continues throughout and within the text in view, in 4:17, Timothy is faithful "in the Lord", and he is portraying loyalty as dictated by the alternative Lord (Christ Jesus), of the Corinthian community. In terms of the disparate power within Roman

⁷⁰ Welborn (1987:87) states that "In 1 Cor 1:13 Paul asks rhetorically, μεμέρισται ὁ Χριστός; (has Christ been divided?), alluding by synecdoche to the notion of the church as the σῶμα Χριστοῦ." According to him there is an underlying political connotation that the translations fail to capture. This meaning would have been obvious to the ancient audience. Welborn (1987:87) elaborates on the party-political terminology and sites ancient texts to confirm that such language was commonly used. He concludes that "We may gain in clarity if we paraphrase Paul's question thus: 'Has the body of Christ been split into parties?' This political deliberative rhetoric is embedded in the ideology of the Roman Empire and echoes the warning by Horsley (1997, 2000, 2004), Brueggeman (2009), Rieger (2007), Wright (2000, 2005, 2009), Elliott (2008) and others that the letters of Paul should be read with cognisance of the ideological context of the Roman Empire.

patronage, the highest honours thus belonged to Lord Jesus. The political language that Paul utilises to combat factions is reminiscent of political struggles, however, notably Paul does not attempt to petition Caesar or the Empire in order to establish unity. He juxtaposes an alternative order to Empire that cannot be maintained without conflict with Empire. Paul's establishment of Jesus as Lord and mentioning God and Jesus together are critical to his argument. His authority as apostle rested solely on the conviction that he had access to the Lord. In the same way, a local representative of the Empire would have power based on access to the emperor. Officials and powerful elite develop local authority in relation to the people, but those local officials who have access to the emperor held a clear advantage in terms of authority and power. This access to the emperor would permit and enable political manoeuvring.

The way Paul sets himself up in relation to Christ Jesus is similar to the way that a Roman official would be set up in relation to the emperor. Powerful local officials mentioned before, such as Spartiacus' and P. Memmius Regulus, fostered relationships with the emperors Claudius and Caligula, respectively, that enabled them to wield considerable power as clients of the emperors. It also authenticated their local authority. Local authority is, therefore, firstly established through relationships with the emperor. Paul's association with the Lord of the Corinthian community would prove him as a person of notable local authority. Paul establishes his authority in the epistolary prescript through his statement: χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ Θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1 Cor 1:3). The grace and peace typically associated with the Pax Romana is now approaching them from the powers that are operating at the apogee of the pyramid of patronage; God and Christ their Lord. Paul set himself up as a broker of this power by brokering the message of χάρις καὶ εἰρήνη (favour and peace) to the Corinthian community on behalf of their Κύριος. The positioning of Paul as a broker of the Lord meant that in order to maintain appropriate behaviour towards a patron the Corinthians would have to manifest reciprocal behaviour. It is this reciprocal behaviour that contains the power of Roman patronage. Demanding such behaviour would constitute the consistent effort required to maintain social standing in a web of patronage. As noted previously, P. Memmius Regulus⁷¹ offered similar allegiance to Rome and the emperor that Paul was offering to his Lord (Jesus).

⁷¹ It is not suggested that Paul is specifically mimicking Regulus or any other patron. The examples are relevant firstly because these patrons lived roundabout the time of Paul and archaeology confirms that they were active patrons within Corinthian society. Secondly it also serves to highlight the ongoing social power dynamic within society from which neither Paul nor his audience would have been shielded. As mentioned during chapters 1 and 2, patronage was embedded in society and although tensions between the status quo and Paul's sometimes anti-imperial attitude are evident in his letters, the ideology is bound to be found in Paul's thinking, albeit sometimes in opposition and at other times in conformance.

The various inscriptions made in Regulus' honour lead one to conclude that Regulus had been well-supported and well-connected within the region of Achaëa (Chow, 1997:112). It indicates a properly managed and reciprocal relationship with the people and one that Paul would have been acutely aware of.

The political body represented the unity of the Roman Empire and was creatively applied by Paul to the church community. Directly related to this was the emperor that needed to set an example to the rest of the Empire (Gordon, 1997:129)⁷². Velleius Paterculus, for example, relied heavily on the authority of Tiberius for his own moral claim to authority. He stated that "the best of emperors (*princeps optimus*) teaches his fellow citizens to do right by doing so himself, and though he is the greatest in authority, he is still greater in the examples which he sets" (Gordon, 1997:129). This imagery is telling in Paul's application of following the example of Christ in order to establish unity (1:10, 11:1) and his mimetic command of 4:16. In light of this, Paul's rhetoric and behaviour resemble Roman patronage. Although Paul makes elaborate use of the dynamics of patronage, other respects he seems to vehemently oppose values of the system that he is utilising. These remaining tensions require some brief comments.

4.4.3 BROKER TENSIONS

In patronage, the broker would have set himself up in order to maintain power and authority, by fostering relationships with the emperor, with peers and through benefaction towards the populace. This would put Paul on top of the local pyramid, and he would be placing himself between his audience and Christ in the way that a broker would⁷³ appear between Caesar and the people. Reflecting back on 1:18, Paul displays this economy where he creatively articulates

⁷² Several authors have commented on the political language of the body. Gordon (1997:129) mentions several examples of the critical function of the emperor in terms of the example that he was required to set. Pliny's Panegyric of Trajan "We do not need strict rule so much as an example" and Augustus in the Res Gestae: "By introducing new laws I have reintroduced numerous traditional *exempla* which had already begun to disappear from our age, and have myself left exempla in many things to be handed down to our descendants" (in Gordon 1997:129). Suetonius comments that Augustus "had been fully conscious of his own imitation of great men of the past and of the exemplary role of the *princeps*" and Quintillian made the comment that "it was characteristic of Romans to work by example" (Gordon 1997:130).

⁷³ This view is supported by Castelli (1991), where she points out that the teaching methods of the Sophists were based on imitation. Witherington III (1995:144) quotes Castelli with regards to the Sophists and their emphasis on imitation, but does not agree that Paul injected himself at the "top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy" in a coercive move.

the nature of the dispute regarding baptism and associations with individuals who baptised. When Paul states that οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλέ με Χριστὸς βαπτίζειν, ἀλλ' εὐαγγελίζεσθαι (1:17), he is ascribing to himself a unique authority vis-à-vis the gospel. On the one hand, there is unique authority, on the other hand, there is emptiness because Paul is not the one speaking, it is Christ speaking through him. Paul claims to be void of all content, bar the gospel. The gospel is politically charged and does not originate with the emperor, but with Jesus. If anyone believed in the authority of the Lord Jesus, then differing with Paul means defying the truth. In this way “the economies of unity and sameness are recast as truth” (Castelli, 1991:98).

Mimetic language is not fortuitous, but logical in terms of the thematic content of the letter (Castelli, 1991:111). The language is political, and Paul’s invocation of the paternal metaphor “evokes authority” (Castelli, 1991:107)⁷⁴. Paul decisively shifts from the first-person plural to the first-person singular in 4:14-4:21 and the exhortation of 4:16 is based on “his special status as father” (Castelli, 1991:107). In this sense, Paul and Apollos are not equals and Paul is uniquely empowered (Castelli, 1991:107). The lack of content in Paul’s mimesis could be viewed as an expression of gentleness, but as mentioned previously “the paternal metaphor does not necessarily evoke a sense of kindness or love” (Castelli, 1991:109) and Paul is still appealing to his own authority, albeit through the use of personal relationship. Castelli contends that Paul’s lack of content in 4:16 points to the “political nature of his relationship with the community” (Castelli, 1991:110)⁷⁵ and there is a re-inscription of authority. In other words, by not clearly stating what is required, the community who have to follow Paul’s example will constantly be reviewing their own behaviour. It re-enforces the authority of Paul’s command and can also help to clarify the example of Timothy; behaviour should be measured against Timothy who will remind them τὰς ὁδοὺς μου τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ (of my ways in Christ). The “unifying rhetorical strategy of the letter, enumerating and describing Paul’s self-references in 1 Corinthians almost amounts to a summary of the contents of the letter” (Mitchell, 1991:54).

⁷⁴ Castelli notices a “profound tension between the representation of Paul and Apollos as co-workers and equals in 3:6-4:5 on the one hand and on the other hand, Paul’s clear and forceful singular voice in 3:1-4 and 4:14-21. It leads her to the conclusion that Paul is claiming authority by ascribing a special position to himself.

⁷⁵ She builds this argument on Foucault who demonstrated in technology power relations that the “more generalised and unpredictable the technology’s applications, the more effective its result”. This makes her believe that the more general call of Paul to imitate, constructs a power relation within the community that forces the imitators to constantly review their own position and in this way it re-inscribes the authority of the model.

Witherington III is critical of Castelli (1991) for interpreting Paul's rhetoric as a "coercive move" attempting to establish him at the "top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy" and aligned with "the teaching methods of the Sophists.... based specifically on imitation" (Witherington III, 1995:145). According to Witherington III Paul is not mimicking sophistic thought, but opposing it, firstly by presenting himself as a different father than the emperor and teacher than the Sophists and secondly by inverting the hierarchy to servant-leadership that opposes patriarchal Roman society. He contends that unless all fathers can be considered unsuitable parents and "inherently oppressive and that therefore all father-figure imagery is necessarily the imagery of coercion and manipulation" (Witherington III, 1995:145), one cannot follow the reasoning that Paul is setting himself up in this fashion. Isocrates commented that the pupil should "pattern themselves after him [the teacher] (Isoc. Against the Sophists 17)" and he contends that "Paul's role and status are established by God" (in Witherington III, 1995:145) and comments that Paul is not rendering "an *apologia* or an attempt to re-establish a lost authority" (Witherington III, 1995:145). In patronage, however, authority was constantly fought for and re-inscribed in an ongoing battle of honour and shame, within the context of a limited-good society. Local notables and Roman officials needed to exist in reciprocal relationships with each other, with the emperor and Rome and act as brokers to the populace. With Paul positioned as a broker of the Lord, (Jesus) there was a reciprocal relationship with the community of Corinth that needed to be maintained. In light of the authority of the local notable vested in the emperor, it seems that Paul's petition to be imitated would re-inscribe his own authority as a broker of the Lord's Kingdom. Paul's opposition of the sophistic model is, however, valid. He does not attempt to create dependence, such as a broker would, and his authoritarian approach remains subjected to his intention to proclaim an alternative Lord.

Witherington III believes that it is not accurate to state that "Paul is imposing himself between his convert and Christ by calling for them to imitate him as he does Christ" and that Paul did not intend to keep his audience in "perpetual infancy" (Witherington III, 1995:145) but wants them to mature. Paul is apparently not threatened by other apostles and supported by Paul's theology that serves the community from below. This also aligns with Paul's theology of the cross as outlined, for example, in the Christ hymn of Phil 2:6-11. With this understanding, mimesis for Paul would have meant "imitation without total identification" (Witherington III, 1995:146) for which the conclusion comes at the resurrection as outlined by Paul in 1 Cor 15. This stands in opposition to patronage, because it does not attempt to elevate Paul's social status and reflects faithfulness to their Lord (Christ). Witherington III correctly points out that the goal of Paul's call for imitation is unity, and in order to establish this unity Paul opposes patronage.

Re-inscription or re-establishment of authority seems to be (at least in part) Paul's intentions with his claim to being the one father⁷⁶ of the community. Whilst re-inscribing his authority as the father, he commands the community to imitate (4:16) him and does not have to compromise his intention to establish unity (1:10). As broker-father, Paul's belief is that he is acting in the best interest of the community. His call for unity is directly related to his conviction that mimesis will result in unity. In 10:23-11:1, the aim is not to seek individual advantage but the advantage of the in-group⁷⁷. The ultimate goal, therefore, defies the objectives of patronage which would be personal enrichment and advancement by abusing social stratification. Paul is not re-inscribing the values of the system of patronage and here the tension remains. In order to found a community that refuses to live by the traditional rules of patronage, Paul utilises the method of the same system that he is opposing. Paul's refusal to receive help, for example, in 1 Cor 9 was also motivated by his desire to establish unity. He opposed the Roman patronage system in his envisioned development of a community, where the value system differed from the economic relations found in Roman patronage.

In one sense Paul's relationship with the Corinthian community maintains the power-differential embedded in their patron, resulting in his right to assume the authority to punish (4:21). Paul's deliberation with his community makes abundantly clear that, as the broker of the Lord and his kingdom, he has authority. The community in Corinth owed their lives to him in the same way that the Lares of the imperial house owed their existence to the patronage of the *quinquennalis*. When Paul states that ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα (4:15), he is re-establishing a patron-client relationship where the child owes his life to the parent. Even in Paul's use of the example of Timothy he presents honourable, reciprocal behaviour such as the honour needing to be bestowed upon a *quinquennalis* by society members. A *quinquennalis*, however, was not expected to perform a function such as the plebses were required to do. As patron of the society, he would supply resources and favours, receiving honour in return through

⁷⁶ Castelli (1991:108) interprets 4:15 as Paul stating that he is the one father and distinguishing himself from Apollos specifically in switching to first person singular. It also makes sense in terms of the metaphor that there would be only one father however the father still maintains a unique position as patron of the household, regardless of whether there is more than one. Paul clearly makes a distinction between himself and even Apollos, certainly between himself and those who are contending for the attentions of the Corinthian community.

⁷⁷ This section is filled with language reflecting core Mediterranean values such as kinship and honour and shame, for example the conscience of a person should be seen as both personal conviction and conviction of the in-group. Care should be taken to read the section against the backdrop of core values as outlined by social-scientific interpreters.

public support in activities such as the morning salutation. The benefit that Paul's society received from him was not financial, but it was the εὐαγγέλιον delivered to them by their patron-father. Their reciprocal mimetic behaviour would be the honourable and expected community response, however, with the shameful behaviour displayed by Paul, he was not benefiting from the community's honourable reciprocal behaviour. The framework of Roman patronage remains, but Paul's content stands in stark contrast to the patronage system⁷⁸. The communities of believers that Paul was helping to come into being everywhere were meant to operate according to an alternative value system. It is likely that Paul had a concern that included an attempt to ensure that his communities did not replicate the oppressive and exploitive power differential that was prevalent in the Empire.

Ultimately it should be evident that Paul's primary aim in the community of Corinth was to produce unity, but during his struggle for this unity, he was proposing a value system that stood in stark contrast to patronage as it was known within the Roman Empire. However, in order to deliberate effectively with his community, Paul did not shy away from also utilising the authority made available by his imperial context. This broker-tension remains in his communication, and represents the voice of ideology; a voice that should clearly not be ignored. A few final remarks will draw some conclusions from the foregone investigation.

⁷⁸ In 4:15 Paul makes mention of μυρίους παιδαγωγούς (many teachers) who had been working within the Corinthian community. Some of them can be identified through the Corinthian letter and included are Apollos, Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaicus, and others (16:12-18). This creates a difficulty, since Paul is addressing factions but in the process of arguing against factions and admonishing them to have μὴ ... σχίσματα (no divisions) among them, he makes a distinction between himself and the other teachers. This unique role could have contributed to the divisiveness already in existence. Sanders (1981:356) argues that the reason for the schism not to widen can be found in Paul's statement in 4:15 that he became their father "through the gospel". "The Corinthians' new existence is not based upon Paul as their father, but upon the word of the cross of which Paul is the servant and agent (1:17-19)" (Sanders, 1981:356). In light of Roman patronage it is difficult to see how this would preserve Paul's authority and his claim to have power, unless the power is spiritualised. Authority as a father would be maintained if Paul were the broker of Christ and the benefit derived from Christ as the Lord, would be the εὐαγγέλιον distributed by Paul.

5 CONCLUSION

In reading the letter of Paul to the community in Corinth, one becomes acutely aware of his use of the household metaphor, and his concomitant assumption of authority. It leads to the belief that Paul utilised the socio-cultural dynamics that formed part of the context of ancient Mediterranean culture, and that the Roman Empire influenced Paul in more than a material way. The brief overview of the Roman Empire confirmed that it contained a sophisticated social and cultural dynamic, which cannot be easily disentangled from the other aspects of Empire, such as the Empire Cult. It also confirmed the complexity of Empire, and that it is a worthwhile endeavour to explore the Roman Empire not only as a material reality, but also as a complex framework against which New Testament literature can be interpreted. During the investigation of various authors and the positions they maintain towards Empire, it was concluded that “moderated scholarship” contain the most plausible arguments for the study of Empire. Such scholarship acknowledges that Paul opposed Empire powerfully, but also made use of imperial aspects, such as patronage, in order to further his objectives. It interprets Paul against the material backdrop of Empire, takes into account the ideological force of his argument and keeps in mind that Paul’s opposition of Empire was subjected to larger themes.

The investigation of patronage as dimension of Empire strengthened this position and concludes that it was a powerful tool during the time of Pauline writings. Following Actium, it was imperative that the Empire maintain social control across its vast geographic sprawl. The dynamics of patronage reached into cities such as Corinth, where the presence of Empire was marked. Assessing the strong presence of patronage as dimension of Empire in Corinth, leads to the conclusion that it would have been impossible for someone such as Paul to operate within the city, whilst remaining ignorant or impartial to the influence of Empire. This hypothesis was tested by performing a multi-dimensional, socio-rhetorical analysis of 1 Cor 4:14-21. The following concluding remarks summarise the findings of this investigation.

An investigation of the social and cultural aspects of Paul’s correspondence has confirmed several propositions. Firstly, there was a value system operating that must form part of the tapestry against which Paul’s correspondence is read. Paul’s reference to shame highlights, the importance of honour and shame, throughout his entire argument. Secondly, the extremely pivotal role of kinship allowed Paul to utilise the dynamics of this dominant social institution. Since the identity of people was related to their association with the kinship group, Paul is striking at the core identity of the people in the community of Corinth, by addressing his audience as children. He is creating a relationship that distinguishes him from all others. Paul makes use of societal values, because it governs behaviour. This line of argumentation is

particularly compelling in ancient society, and it constituted success in life. The social and cultural analysis of 4:14-21, leads to the conclusion that Paul's rhetoric must be interpreted specifically against the values of honour and shame, and the social institution of kinship.

Paul's primary objective is to convince his audience of future behaviour, and he justifies why they should attend this course of action. This view is confirmed by Paul's use of deliberative rhetoric, where the main purpose of deliberative proofs is the "appeal to advantage" (Mitchell, 1991:202). Paul utilised the power differential embedded in a patron-client, father-child relationship and his petition for imitation. He re-inscribed his authority and added weight to his argument, by using epideictic elements and an encomium in his deliberative argument. Against this backdrop, Paul convinces his audience that he should, in fact, that he must, be imitated. He implodes the deeds of the body soul and fortune into a single appeal to imitate him. The power of this rhetoric is that the honourable deeds of the soul, such as justice, reflected in the example of Timothy, presented the only honourable option available to the Corinthian community. He ends his first proof with several conclusions that can be drawn from the rhetorical analysis of the peroratio in 4:18-21 and the enthymeme in 4:18. All of these substantiate Paul's claim to authority and confirms the hypothesis that Paul is utilizing imperial patronage to empower his argument for *ὁμόνεια* (unity).

Although Paul made use of patronage, he did not advocate allegiance to the Roman imperial system, which would demand faithfulness to the chief patron Caesar. He demanded faithfulness to Lord Jesus. Wrapped up in this argument for an alternative allegiance is a powerful anti-imperial message⁷⁹. Ironically, Paul has to make use of system of patronage, in order to present himself as the broker of this Lord. This mimics patronage in the same way that a local official would represent the Roman lord (Caesar). Paul is also making a claim to local authority such as that provided by Caesar to officials and local notables. His admonishing of the Corinthians to reciprocate with faithfulness impresses upon them a virtue, considered of immense value. The entire dynamic of 4:14-21, utilises power that is embedded in the imperial system of patronage, constitutes unequal power-dynamics, and allows Paul to make the demands that he believes are necessary, in order to achieve his aim of allegiance and concord.

There is, however, a tension that remains. His innovative use of patronage in the household lays claim to the community and impresses upon them that they owe their existence to him and

⁷⁹ The substantial implication of this alternative lordship is elaborated in Addendum A of this study.

that he birthed them through the gospel. However, the benefit that he offers is not financial subsistence and the mimetic behaviour that he expects does not fully reflect imperial patronage. As a broker, of the alternative principle patron Christ, the resource on offer is the “message of the cross” (1:18); it is a self-effacing message. Although imitation in itself would constitute honourable behaviour, the content of Paul’s imitation does not seem honourable, because it follows the shameful existence of an apostle. Such honourable behaviour by the community will not serve to promote Paul’s status or social standing, typical of patronage. Here, Paul stands in stark contrast to the imperial system. The allegiance that he is demanding, associates with an alternative Lord that represents an alternative kingdom, with a value system that contradicts imperial values of self-promotion and social status disparity. Ironically, once again, it also serves to re-inscribe Paul’s fatherly authority. Paul utilises the unequal power dynamics of patronage in order to empower his argument and achieve the desired behaviour in the Corinthian community, but his objectives are in many ways shameful and anti-imperial.

The power of Paul’s argument remains within the unresolved tension that remains as he aims all his arguments, at his objectives to promote allegiance to an alternative Lord and establish concord. In order to accomplish this, Paul makes full use of patronage as dimension of Empire. There is, however, inevitable conflict between the Lord of which Paul is a broker, and Ceasar’s Empire. When this conflict arises, Paul is not afraid of opposing the values of Empire. In subjecting the dimensions of Empire to his aim, it requires him to both oppose aspects of Empire and make use of the dimensions of Empire such as patronage. He remains a person of his time, radically reinterpreting his world, affected and influenced by the social dynamics of his context.

ADDENDUM A – THE CROSS AS ANTI-IMPERIAL SYMBOL

The behaviour inspired by the alternative lordship of Christ in passages such as Phil 4:1-9 does not support imperial violence. This can be seen in Paul's radical statement where he weeps for those who are "enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil 3:18). It is thought-provoking that Paul can hint at any friendship with the cross, and one has to wonder how the object of such cruel subjugation can be the friend of anyone. This is a radical reinterpretation of the primary symbol of violence in the Roman Empire. The cross reflects freedom manifesting in the behaviour of those who are free and offering true peace, not the false peace and security of the Pax Romana, but the "peace of God...in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:7). Only in a substantial reformatting of symbols can nonviolent behaviour be associated with friendship of the cross, "a well-known political tool for breaking the will of the people" (Rieger, 2007:46).

The resurrection functions in Paul's thought as more than just historical fact, but also as theology and symbol which portrays a power that overcomes the ultimate violence of the Roman Empire⁸⁰ (Wright, 2009:70). It does not symbolise Roman violence and absolute authority, but an authority above Roman authority, to which "every knee will bow" (Phil 2:10) and to which it requires allegiance that manifests in values that stand in stark contrast to the false pretences of the Roman imperial system. The Roman cross has become a symbol of life; it has become a resurrection-cross; a symbol that overcomes death and provides hope. Complete alignment between the lordships of Empire and Christ, creates the false impression that the same oppressive power related to the political symbol of the cross, is valid for the lordship of both. On the other hand, the cross as a symbol of freedom opposed the Empire's ability to subjugate people through violence and is distinctly anti-imperial.

Paul's reinterpretation, of the politically loaded symbol into a symbol of freedom of which people can be "enemies" (Phil 3:18) to their detriment, also has apocalyptic overtones. In order to fully explore Paul's view on the cross, the crucifixion and the resurrection and how this relates to Jesus as Lord, one would have to review the influence of apocalyptic in Paul's thought. Most authors that find an anti-imperial message in Paul's letters would agree that the apocalyptic elements in his letters are unmistakable and serve to explain his reinterpretation of symbols such as the cross. Authors such as Horsley (2000b), Wright (2009) and Elliott (2008) all explore

⁸⁰ The reinterpretation of Paul's symbol of the cross as a symbol of freedom must be seen in light of his understanding of the resurrection. The violence of the Pax Romana manifested in the ultimate symbol of oppression, but the very symbol of violence and oppression becomes the symbol of life. Rieger (2007:46-47) points out that the crucifixion of Jesus can't be readily separated from politics. The Jewish high priests were appointed by Herod the vassal of Rome and collected the tribute to Rome. This integration makes the religious separation between Jews and Romans, in general, difficult. There are those who benefitted from Empire and those who did not (Rieger, 2007:46-47).

apocalyptic elements in their reading of Paul's letters. Blount (2009) believes that there are anti-imperial sentiments embedded in the message of perseverance. The overall theme encourages a persevering witness to the lordship of Christ that contradicts the lordship of the Roman imperial order. Such perseverance must be continued no matter what the cost, even "unto death" (Rev 2:10). Kim acknowledges this view of Revelation, however believes that the imperial situation in Paul's day had not developed sufficiently for an anti-imperial message such as can be found in Revelation (Kim, 2008:20). He points out that it was only much later that the church found itself in a situation that necessitated such resistance as depicted and encouraged in Revelation. Kim (2008:30) is critical of what he believes is an assumption that most anti-imperial interpreters make, regarding Paul and apocalypticism. He criticises the view that (Kim, 2008:30-31):

Paul as an heir to Jewish apocalypticism, caused him to think in terms of two ages and this leads to an assumption that he must have seen the Roman Empire as the 'rulers of this age' doomed to destruction (1 Cor 2:6), and himself and the church as engaged in a struggle against it as the representatives of the new age of the Kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The apocalyptic themes as described by anti-imperial interpreters are however difficult to ignore given Paul's Jewish background and the abundance of Jewish apocalyptic literature. The expectation of the ultimate judgment of the evil rulers of the Roman order, the emancipation of the currently subjected people and the vindication of those who have been martyred for their uncompromising witness to the alternative and true lordship of Christ should therefore be expected to exist in Paul's theology. The apocalyptic heritage of Paul should thus be considered as a significant influence in his message.

ADDENDUM B - THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE KYPIOS (LORD)

Throughout history, there has been the temptation to identify Christ and emperor. This was clearly visible under Constantine or the “medieval church under the emperors of the ‘Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation’” (Rieger, 2007:35). More recently “the theologians who wrote and signed the Barmen Declaration of Germany in the 1930s suspected that the church was, in fact, putting Hitler and Christ on equal footing.” (Rieger, 2007:35). The parallel between Christ and Empire is not necessarily made explicit in literature, and it seems worthwhile to investigate the implications of Paul ascribing the title of Lord to Jesus. Recognition that the previous notion of a neatly separated political world from the religious sphere is a recent phenomenon causes the title of “Lord” to become both religious and political. This is one of the primary charges that anti-imperial interpreters aim at traditional historical-criticism.

The term κύριος had various uses during the development of the New Testament. The following four possible backgrounds to the title lord are worth mentioning (Rieger, 2007:38): Firstly in Palestinian-Jewish culture, “lord” was a secular form of address meaning “sir”; secondly it was used in a religious sense referring to God represented by the Tetragrammaton YHWH; thirdly Hellenistic Jews referred to God as “Lord” in light of the Septuagint’s translation of God; and finally in pagan culture the emperors and pagan gods were called “lord” (Rieger, 2007:38). The term was also applied to “the Roman emperors from Augustus” (Rieger, 2007:38) onwards. The fact that Paul ascribes to Jesus the term “Lord” must be carefully considered in light of this. If Paul were suggesting a new spiritual dynamic, completely independent of the Roman imperial context the term “Lord” would be harmless. Within the context of the ideology of Empire, however, this would not be the case. It is simply not sufficient to spiritualise the content of Paul’s message by maintaining that it refers to a spiritual and religious dynamic, entirely separated from the socio-political realities of the Roman Empire. Paul was either totally naïve and oblivious of political developments, or he utilised this language with intentionality, “either in support or resistance to the Roman Empire” (Rieger, 2007:39). One also has to consider the possibility of Paul utilising the word with both support and resistance in mind. What is the nature of the lordship that Jesus exercises? Rieger believes that there was a qualitative variation in the title ascribed to Jesus as opposed to the title of Caesar (Rieger, 2007:40). This proposition can be tested, by utilising one of the oldest New Testament traditions that invokes Jesus as Lord - Phil 2:5-11.

Reflecting on the way subjects fell prostrate before an imperial ruler would constitute a replacement of one ruler by another and not consider any of “the differences between Christ’s lordship and the Roman emperor’s lordship” (Rieger, 2007:42). The power attributed to Jesus

as lord is no different from the power attributed to the emperor or the Roman Empire. “Antoinette Clark Wire sees in Philippians 2:5-11 ‘the downward plunge of the divine’ in which Paul himself participates – through his own loss of status” (Rieger, 2007:43). Robert Hamerton-Kelly maintains that Paul associates “with the self-emptying process” (in Rieger, 2007:43) and Saunders contends that Paul is not only praising humility but in 2:8 he is associating himself “in solidarity with humankind” (in Rieger, 2007:43). All of these interpretations still maintain the status quo in terms of a top-down power model that would uphold the Roman imperial power, which subdued its subjects in different ways. It is, however, still not clear “what kind of power we are talking about” (Rieger, 2007:42). Authors that argue Paul was able to make full use of the Roman order to spread his gospel (which contains some truth at least), but conflict and Paul’s imprisonments were purely coincidental, do not identify any difference between the lords of the Roman or other empires, and Christ as the Lord. Analogous to Paul’s view of Christ, are the roles of the emperor as political ruler, as a broker between God and humanity, as head of the family and priest of the Imperial Cult. White concludes that Paul’s Jewish messianic expectation and more importantly his “idea of Christ as household master and as idealized heir” (White, 1999:205) aligns with the Abrahamic tradition. Combined with Paul’s experiential knowledge of the post-apotheosis Christ, he was able to “modify both Jewish models and ruler cult ideology” (White, 1999:205). Such analysis is particularly effective in extrapolating Paul’s theology from imperial themes, but it does not consider the differences to explain the fundamental resistance to imperial lordship.

Rieger notes that, if the downward spiral described in the Philippian correspondence “does indeed make a difference, the result is a truly different kind of ‘high Christology’ than the one that is frequently proclaimed by the church, decisively resisting the top-down hierarchies of the empire” (Rieger, 2007:43). This is precisely Paul’s point and he gets this across to his readers and hearers by applying this top-down resisting Christology to his own life in Philippians 3 (Wright, 2000:173-181). It resisted Empire by proclaiming an alternative lordship with an alternative value system, approved by God through the resurrection, and lived out in the church communities of which Paul himself was setting the standard. There is a clear confrontation with the pagan Roman Empire, not only suggesting an alternative lord, but also challenging the essence of the despotism of imperial rule with its top-down hierarchy. The question is whether “that downward kenosis” did, in fact, “forever change the upward exaltation in its type, its mode, and its practice?” (Crossan in Rieger, 2007:51). The response to this fundamental question dictates whether “Christ is the lord of empire or not” (Rieger, 2007:51). Christ’s lordship as described by Paul is one of lowly kenosis and Paul’s appeal in Phil 2:4 initiates with “do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.” (Rieger, 2007:51). It was also the lifestyle evidenced by Paul himself as he described his immense difficulties, challenges and persecutions to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 11:21-27). As a Jew,

Paul probably could have laid claim to some political privilege and protection, because the Roman Empire was tolerant of Jewish worship of their own God, and honouring Caesar in this manner. This political protection that Paul could have enjoyed as a Jew, was voluntarily relinquished by him, driven by his belief that he should follow the example set by Christ his Lord (Phil 3:4-11). In stark contrast to a simple regurgitation of imperial terms by Paul, “Christ as Lord models a kind of power that is opposed to the power of the empire.” (Rieger, 2007:51). Some comments on the way Paul develops his argument in Phil 3 will clarify these differences.

In Phil 3:20-21, Paul uses language with imperial and messianic overtones when he refers to the Κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν (Lord Jesus Christ). One of the dangers of current readings is to represent Christ almost as a surname, without cognisance of the context of terminology. In this compact theological statement Paul ascribes Messianic (Χριστός) lordship to Jesus of Nazareth who is coming again and when he does, will exercise power and change the bodies of those who are citizens of his kingdom. The fact that this Lord wields the power that enables him to subject all things to himself, ascribes a greater power to Jesus than the power claimed by the Roman Empire and the emperor himself. This statement is accurate in a top-down power ranking, however, Paul highlights a different aspect of Jesus' lordship. For Paul knowing this is not enough, “therefore ...” (4:1a), there is an outcome that must be visible in behaviour, and it is this behaviour that once again mimics the “downward kenosis” (Rieger, 2007:43) of Christ. Paul wants to convince his hearers to “stand firm in the Lord” (4:1b), “live in harmony in the Lord” (4:2), “rejoice in the Lord” (4:4), to let their “forbearance” be known “to all men” and the reason for this is that “The Lord is near” (4:5). This entire exhortation seems to be the outworking of what Paul is stating with his mimetic command for them to “join in following my example, and observe [σκοπεῖτε] those who walk according to the pattern you have in us” (3:17). Paul’s use of imperatives such as γίνεσθε and σκοπεῖτε disclose his convictions.

Even anti-imperial opponents are acknowledging that the message in Paul’s letters such as Philippians 2-3 invokes a comparison between Christ and the emperor and affirm the “superiority of Christ and his salvation” (Kim, 2008:15), although the outworking of this comment for various interpreters would be variegated. Although Paul borrowed liberally from the language of Empire, the simple reuse of terminology is not enough to maintain an anti-imperial message. Moving beyond terms such as “lord” and exploring the meaning clarifies a decidedly different lordship depicted and lived by Paul than that of the Roman Empire which privileges the powerful. Did Paul maintain a theology of *via eminentiae*, where the lordship of Christ is similar to that of the emperor, but just of a higher form, or did he maintain a theology of *via negativa*, where the lordship of Christ stands in contradiction to that of the emperor? Tradition has probably indoctrinated the ethical-spiritual interpretation of many texts written by Paul and

facilitated the ignorance of an underlying theological building block; a new form of power that is from below. Reading texts such as Romans 12:16 “...associate with the lowly...” and 1 Cor 1:28 “and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen...” through the ideological lens of a different lordship produces an image of a Lord that does not overwhelm and lives in harmony with the powerful, rather, reflecting a complete reversal of power that associates with the lowly. It contradicts the ideology of the Roman Empire.

ADDENDUM C – IMPERIAL TIMELINE ADAPTED FROM ELLIOTT (2008:X)

63 B.C.E. Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great), having defeated Mithridates of Pontus and been hailed as a god in Asia Minor, exerts Roman control over Judea as well. Upon his return to Rome he forges an alliance with Gaius Julius Caesar and Crassus (the First Triumvirate) to rival the ascendant power of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.E.)

44 Julius Caesar (b. 100) is assassinated; his grandnephew and adopted son Octavius, who takes the name Octavian (63 B.C.E.-14 C.E.) vows to avenge him.

31-27 After defeating Marc Antony's forces and compelling his suicide, Octavian returns to Rome and is hailed as "Augustus" by the Senate, who confer on him tribunician power for life.

Paul may have been born in the last decade B.C.E. or the first decade C.E.

14 C.E. At Augustus's death, his stepson, Tiberius Julius Caesar (42 B.C.E. – 37 C.E.) whom he had adopted, comes to power. During his reign, Tacitus would later write, "all was quiet" in Judea (*Hist.* 5.10), the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth (in 30?) failing to attract the historian's interest.

31 At Tiberius's death, Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus ("Caligula," 12-41 C.E.), whom Tiberius had made his son in his will, comes to power.

38-41 Roman policy exempting citizens from the poll tax in Alexandria prompts some Judeans to sue for citizenship; the resulting backlash from Greek citizens escalates into a firestorm of persecution. Philo (ca.30 B.C.E.-45 C.E.) leads an embassy of protest to Rome, during which he and his comrades are dismayed to hear of Gaius's effort to install a statue of himself in the inner sanctuary of the Jerusalem Temple.

41 Gaius is assassinated by a conspiracy of Roman officers, who set Tiberius's nephew, Tiberius Claudius Nero Germanicus (10 B.C.E.-54 C.E.) in power. Claudius immediately issues a decree suppressing riots in Alexandria.

49 Claudius orders the expulsion of some Judeans from Rome, probably after the disturbances in the streets.

54 Claudius dies, probably poisoned: his niece and wife, Agrippina, is suspected. Upon his accession to power, her son, and Claudius's adopted son, Nero Claudius Caesar (37-68), requests that the Senate confer divine honours upon Claudius.

55 or 56 (Or, possibly, one or two years later): Paul writes the letter to the Romans, whom he has been delayed from visiting by the urgency of his travel to Jerusalem with the collection. According to Acts (chaps. 21 -28), that trip ends in disaster as Paul is confronted by a mob in the Temple precincts; he is subsequently hauled before a series of Roman magistrates ending up at last in Rome.

65-68? According to 1 Clement (6:1), Paul and Peter were put to death under Nero, who had targeted Christians for persecution in the wake of the great fire in 64. Paul's own execution (by beheading according to Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. 2.25) may have been the result of a formal hearing.

66-70 A series of outrages by Roman soldiers sparks revolt in Judea; after four brutal years, the Romans conquer Jerusalem and destroy the Temple.

68 Nero kills himself to avoid capture in a military coup.

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