

The Middle Voice of Love in 1 Corinthians:
Reading Singularity and Plurality from Different Cultures

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Preface

In this dissertation, I highlight five points that contribute to the critical studies of 1 Corinthians. First, the notions of honor and shame in a proprioceptive and communal culture. What I mean by proprioceptive is the embodied perception of the world in which everything and everyone are always already interrelated. We often forget that our perception of the world is embodied within, between, and among bodies. Too often we forget that our body feels and thinks too. This embodied perception of the world is not only highlighted in the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, it is also prominent in both the Chinese and Greco-Roman cultures.

It is because of this proprioceptive quality that the notion of community is understood. A communal culture is group-oriented not because many individuals gather together. It is group-oriented because everyone is always already interrelated with each other. We will come back to this in Paul's notion of "the body of Christ" in my third point. It is because of this experience of proprioceptive and communal quality that I foreground what Western sociologists and anthropologists have mentioned since the 1960s that the value of honor is a "felt" (cf. heteronomy), "claimed" (cf. autonomy), and "paid" (cf. relationality) value. While problems arise when the value of honor is reduced to only a certain aspect, the "felt" aspect of honor is neglected in critical biblical studies.

The "felt" aspect, the "claimed" aspect, and "paid" aspect of honor cannot be separated from each other. They are always interrelated. I express these various aspects of honor in terms of "honor felt"- "honor claimed"- "honor paid." The hyphens in this expression are indispensable. Not unlike how Paul portrays the various members in "the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12-27), they signify simultaneous conjunction and disjunction, which I find manifesting a dynamic

interplay of singularity and plurality in Paul's encounters with other "races"/ethnic groups, religions, and cultures.

The "felt" aspect is proprioceptive. It is a heteronomy or a religious experience that is beyond logical articulation. The "felt" aspect is (self-evidently and non-demonstrably) "felt" to be good. It is manifested as a "claimed" honor and a "paid" honor, but it is not exhausted of its meanings. As such, the "felt" aspect is other-oriented and cannot be objectified. While the "claimed" aspect is individual-centered, the "paid" aspect is community-centered. It is critical to note that the value of honor always has these three aspects working together. It is also critical to note that the hyphens in "honor felt"- "honor claimed"- "honor paid" show the conceptual gaps in the value of honor in concrete life situations.

For me, these three aspects of honor correspond to the three modes of existence that frame the various meaning-producing dimensions in our discourse of knowledge: autonomy (or individual-centered), relationality (or community-centered), and heteronomy (or other-centered). To highlight these three aspects and to keep a dynamic tension among them, I find A. J. Greimas's structural semiotics and scriptural criticism most helpful. It is crucial to note that these critical approaches are not a method. Rather, they are a style of questioning and thinking of how to make meaning, showing that meaning is always a meaning-effect in the sense that meaning is always relational and multidimensional, just like the notion of honor is a dynamic effect of the interaction of hyphens in "honor felt"- "honor claimed"- "honor paid."

The second point (closely tied to the first point) that I want to underscore is the notion of middle voice in Paul's semantic universe or system of convictions, which I find embodied in his notion of *euangelizesthai*, usually translated "to preach the gospel." I find this translation problematic because it seems to suggest that the gospel can be owned, objectified, and as such

passed to others who lack it. But if the gospel can be objectified, it can then be manipulated for various agenda. My reading of Paul's notion of *euangelizesthai*, however, shows that the gospel cannot be objectified. I am very concerned with the notion of *euangelizesthai* because Paul makes it very clear that Christ did not send him to baptize but to *euangelizesthai*, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power (1 Cor. 1:17). So the way we understand *euangelizesthai* affects how we understand Paul carries out his mission as an apostle to the Gentiles. While the middle voice is often treated as denoting a sense of self-reflexivity, my semiotic analysis of 1 Corinthians leads me to agree with Charles Scott's notion of middle voice that highlights a sense of "intransitive non-reflexivity." That is to say, in the mode of middle voice, the identities and positions of the subject and of the object co-arise. Neither the subject is a subject per se, nor the object an object per se. Just like the hyphens in "honor felt"- "honor claimed"- "honor paid," the middle voice prevents the identity and position of the subject and of the object from being fixed and objectified.

Therefore, in Paul's notion of *euangelizesthai*, we can say that the "preaching of the gospel" takes place in the "preaching of the gospel." The "intransitive" and "non-reflexive" features of the middle voice in *euangelizesthai* prevent us from properly speaking of an "object" (since it is intransitive) and a "subject" (since it is non-reflexive). In the mode of middle voice, there is no teleology (or preexisting or preprogrammed destiny). Neither is there a fixed origin and presence. To bring to the fore this "intransitive non-reflexive" feature of middle voice, I translate *euangelizesthai* as "to gospelize." Let me illustrate this point through 1 Cor. 9:16-17.

Paul writes:

For if I gospelize (εὐαγγελίζωμαι), it is not for me a boasting because the necessity (ἀνάγκη) presses upon me; for woe to me if I do not gospelize (εὐαγγελίσωμαι); for if I do this willingly, I have a wage, but if not willingly, I have been entrusted the stewardship (οἰκονομίαν πεπίστευμαι).

For Paul, “to gospelize” does not mean to *give* the gospel to someone as if one possesses it. Rather, to gospelize means to manifest the gospel *so that* one may become its participant (ἵνα συγ-κοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι) (9:23). In the middle voice, Paul gospelizes as he is gospelized (thus the gospel presses upon him). This is why in 1:17 Paul is careful not to gospelize (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) in the wisdom of *logos*. Paul is aware that he is only a medium of the gospel and as a medium he is vigilant that he is not the owner of the gospel, lest the (gift of the) gospel be emptied of its potentiality.

These two points lead to the third point that I foreground in my dissertation through my translation of 1 Cor. 12:27: “You are the body of Christ *insofar as parts beyond a part.*” This literal and strange translation of 12:27 is usually translated as “You are the body of Christ and individually members of it” (*NRSV*). For me, the second clause in 12:27 – καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους – speaks of the middle voice of the body of Christ, in which the body members, in a hyphenated relation, are body members *insofar as* they are interrelated. This notion of “parts beyond a part” can be further illustrated through Alain Badiou’s use of the set theory.

Let’s say a “cat” is a member of the set of living beings. While the cat is obviously a part of the living beings, inside the cat there are elements that are not parts of the set of living beings, such as the chemicals that constitute the cell. Can we count the chemicals as parts of the set of living beings? If not, then what do we do with the cat that is a part of the set of living beings? Herein lies the paradox. The cells are parts of the cat and yet, by the count of the set of the living beings, they are beyond the cat that is a part of the set of living beings. From my reading of 1 Corinthians, this paradox is well embodied by Paul’s notion of the body of Christ as “parts beyond a part,” where the body of Christ is always in the discursive process of being defined anew, again and again. The body of Christ does not have a common property nor a preexisting

property. It is always yet to be defined as it comes into contacts with other people, other culture, other religion, etc. From what we have noted about the hyphenated relations in “honor felt”-“honor claimed”-“honor paid” and the “intransitive nonreflexivity” in middle voice, the body of the Christ can be envisioned dynamically and holistically as “hand”-“leg”-“ear”-“eye”-“head”-etc. where the singularity of individual body members is singular *insofar as* individual body members are hyphenated in a relation of simultaneous conjunction and disjunction. In this notion of the body of Christ, plurality is plurality *insofar as* it is also marked by singularity.

By now, my choice of using structural semiotics and scriptural criticism as a style of questioning and thinking should become apparent. Just like structural semiotics and scriptural criticism, the middle voice and the hyphenated relations in “honor felt”-“honor claimed”-“honor paid” and in the body of Christ also underscore the various meaning-producing dimensions. This awareness of meaning as meaning-effects can prevent our knowledge from being essentialized and objectified, which is a major concern for Paul in my analysis of his treatment of “the Lord’s Supper” conflict (11:17-34), the “idol food” issue (8:1–11:1), and the “spiritual gifts” problem (12:1–14:40).

Contrary to many scholarly interpretations of 1 Corinthians that *exclusively* render Paul’s notion of love theologically, ethically, rhetorically, or ideologically, I find that each of these rendering is the result of making contextual, hermeneutical, and textual choices that foreground a certain textual dimension of 1 Corinthians that is most pertinent to the interpreter. Note, however, that the textual dimensions, which are put into bracket (as a result of foregrounding), do not disappear. They form the background to the textual dimension that is foregrounded. Because of these various meaning-producing dimensions, I acknowledge and emphasize the choices that I make in my critical interpretation of Paul’s love in 1 Corinthians. It is because I foreground the

“felt” aspect of honor – which for me, is closely tied to the “parts beyond a part” notion of the body of Christ – that I highlight the religious experience of Paul’s notion of love, which I find is performative, charismatic, and typological. Let me briefly explain.

First, it is important to note that Christ sends Paul to gospelize (1:17). It is also important to note that what God has prepared for those who love God is in the order of love that cannot be perceived and received except in the spirit of God that is given by God (2:9, 11-12). Paul makes this point again in 8:1-3 when he says that those who love [God] are known [by God]. Paul does not say that those who love God will know God. There is no certainty in love. If there is, it is only in the form of hope and faith. Love is characterized by risk and promise. This is why Paul says that when the time comes, “I will fully know insofar as I am fully known” (13:12). The condition to know hinges upon to be known. These verses, in particular those in 1 Cor. 13 show that for Paul the notion of love has to be in a “present progressive tense” in the sense that it must be always on-going. Love is not a thing that can be possessed and objectified. It is a relationship that has to be embodied and performed again and again, everyday. Here I will not go into the details of these textual analyses, which my studies of “the Lord’s Supper” conflict (11:17-34), the “idol food” issue (8:1–11:1), and the “spiritual gifts” problem (12:1–14:40) further confirm even as they show that Paul’s notion of love in 1 Corinthians is other-oriented.

This otherness-orientation or heteronomy comes to the fore in Paul’s positive notion of “heresy” in the Lord’s Supper. This is the fourth point that I highlight in my dissertation. While almost all scholars take the word “heresy” in 11:19 negatively, I argue that, for Paul, “heresy” in its primary and basic meaning as “a choice” is indispensable to prevent our knowledge from being fixed and objectified. In the face of “choices,” and hence “differences,” our horizon of vision can be challenged and transformed. Without such a challenge, we may fix and absolutize

our horizon of vision. Indeed, if for Paul, everyone has received from God (4:7), which means that everyone has something to contribute and to learn from each other, then “heresy” can help believers humble and alert to the unexpected works of God among them. It is for this reason that Paul in addressing the divisions (*schismata*) in the church of God urges believers *to receive (food) from one another* at the Lord’s Supper (11:33), instead of just *to wait for one another* or *to welcome one another*, as most translators argue. For Paul, “heresy” does not necessarily lead to divisions and conflicts. It can actually prevent them from taking root among believers. This notion of “heresy” echoes our emphasis on the various meaning-producing dimensions.

The fifth point that I bring to the fore in my dissertation is Paul’s treatment of the “idol food” issue (8:1–11:1) and the “spiritual gifts” problem (12:1–14:40) in light of the theme of “non-objectifying knowing.” On the “idol food” issue, I argue that once the notions of “icon” and “idol” are clarified, we can see why Paul’s response to the issue may appear ambiguous and ambivalent. Likewise, on the “spiritual gifts” problem, I contend that once the notions of “giver,” “receiver,” and “given gift” are clarified in our notion of the “spiritual gift,” then we will see that Paul is concerned with how the “spiritual gift” may be used to objectify the spirit that gives the gift, the subject who receives and performs the gift, and the receiver who is at the receiving end of the subject who performs the gift.

Now, do I find Paul’s notion of love problematic in his treatment of the Lord’s Supper” conflict (11:17-34), the “idol food” issue (8:1–11:1), and the “spiritual gifts” problem (12:1–14:40)? Yes, when I read them from the interpretive lenses that render Paul’s love theologically, ethically, rhetorically, and ideologically. These readings can make Paul’s love individualistic, authoritative, and utilitarian, which is detrimental to the issues of singularity and plurality in my context. But, No, when I read them from the interpretive lenses that render Paul’s love in the

middle voice of heteronomy. However, I do not deny the legitimacy and plausibility of these other renderings of Paul's love. Just as we have noted about the different aspects of honor, we have learnt from structural semiotics and scriptural criticism that meaning is always relational and multidimensional. It is this notion of meaning as meaning-effects that I want to highlight a Paul's notion of love that is performative, charismatic, and typological.

Introduction – An Inter-course of Context, Text, and Hermeneutics in Paul’s Vision of Love in 1 Corinthians

For I received from the Lord, which I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night that he was betrayed he took bread, and after giving thanks he broke it and said: “this is my body on behalf of you; do this for my remembrance” (1 Corinthians 11:23-24). – Paul

I remember how one day a foreman secretly gave me a piece of bread which I knew he must have saved from his breakfast ration. It was far more than the small piece of bread which moved me to tears at that time. It was the human “something” which this man gave to me – the word and look which accompanied the gift.¹ – Viktor E. Frankl

I. An Embodied and Dynamic Process of Meaning Production

How do we interpret (i.e., explain, understand, and apply) our lived experiences? How does a “small piece of bread” evoke such power for Frankl in the Nazi concentration camp? How can the “breaking of bread” stir up so much emotion, debates, and violence in Christian traditions? In asking these questions, we broach the issue of the process of meaning production. If meanings are produced in various ways, both actively and passively, we need to investigate the meaning-producing dimensions that we foreground *and* put in the background in our interpretive process (see the Methodological Appendix). In fact, if our textual analysis entails an interplay of three interpretive poles – i.e., contextual, textual, hermeneutical analyses (see the conclusion section) – then the meaning-producing dimensions that we highlight in each pole must not be overlooked.² Indeed, if we are always already in relation with others in this world, we need to

¹ Viktor E. Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy*. 4th ed. Translated by Ilse Lasch. Prefaced by Gordon W. Allport (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 93-94.

² For example, see the *Romans Through History and Cultures Series*, with Cristina Grenholm and Daniel Patte as the general editors. Volume 1: *Reading Israel in Romans: Legitimacy and Plausibility of Divergent Interpretations*. Edited by Cristina Grenholm and Daniel Patte (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000); Volume 2: *Engaging Augustine on Romans: Self, Context, and Theology in Interpretation*. Edited by Daniel Patte and Eugene TeSelle (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003); Volume 3: *Navigating Romans Through Cultures: Challenging Readings by Charting a New Course*. Edited by Yeo Khiok-khng (K.K.) (New York and London: T & T

assess the “modes of existence” (e.g., autonomy, relationality, and heteronomy) (see chapter 1) that we *primarily* assume and privilege in the framing of our analyses of the meaning-producing dimensions in *each* of the three interpretive poles. Not only do we need to be vigilant of the “modes of existence” *primarily* assumed in the text, we also need to pay attention to the mode of existence that we, ourselves, privilege in our contextual and hermeneutical poles. Albert Schweitzer’s critique of the “First Quest” of the “historical Jesus” that “[t]here is no historical task which so reveals [an interpreter’s] true self as the writing of a Life of Jesus”³ should have warned us of our socio-cultural, gendered, religious, etc. presuppositions in our interpretive process (see the Methodological Appendix). When we become critical of the “modes of existence” and the meaning-producing dimension(s) that we *primarily* foreground in our interpretive process, we can be keen to the “distinctive interpretive lines of reasoning”⁴ in various interpretations, lest we co-opt or uncritically reject any interpretations whose “interpretive lines of reasoning” are different from ours. We can also be critical of the kinds of arguments that we can make, lest our “interpretive line of reasoning” is not warranted by the meaning-producing dimensions that we focus on.

Clark International, 2004); Volume 4: *Early Patristic Readings of Romans*. Edited by Kathy Gaça and Larry L. Welborn (New York and London: T & T Clark International, 2005); Volume 5: *Gender, Tradition, and Romans. Shared Ground, Uncertain Borders*. Edited by Cristina Grenholm and Daniel Patte (New York and London: T & T Clark International, 2005); Volume 6: *Medieval Readings of Romans*. Edited by William S. Campbell, Peter S. Hawkins, and Brenda Deen Schildgen (New York and London: T & T Clark International, 2007); Volume 7: *Reading Romans with Contemporary Philosophers and Theologians*. Edited by David Odell-Scott (New York and London: T & T Clark International, 2007); Volume 8: *Reformation Readings of Romans*. Edited by Kathy Ehrensperger and R. Ward Holder (New York and London: T & T Clark International, 2008); Volume 9: *Greek Patristic and Orthodox Readings of Romans*. Edited by Daniel Patte and Vasile Mihoc (London and New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013); and Volume 10: *Modern Readings of Romans: Tracking Their Hermeneutical/Theological Trajectory*. Edited by Daniel Patte and Cristina Grenholm (London and New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013).

³ See Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Translated by W. Montgomery. Preface by F. C. Burkitt (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2005), 4.

⁴ This phrase comes from Daniel Patte’s review of *Romans Interpreted by Early Christian Commentators*, translated and edited by J. Patout Burns Jr. and Father Constantine Newman, for *The Review of Biblical Literature*. For a great illustration of how this “distinctive interpretive line of reasoning” is at work, see Mieke Bal, *Murder and Difference: Gender, Genre, and Scholarship on Sisera’s Death*. Translated by Matthew Gumpert (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

In short, we need to be critical of how we conceptualize our lived experience and how they inform, reform, and deform one another. Both our concepts and lived experience are integral to our making sense of the world. We cannot separate one from the other. Without the concept, our lived experience may be lost in translation. It cannot be articulated and critiqued. Without the lived experience, our concept may become emptied and ideologically driven. With Fernando Segovia I believe we need to stress the social locations and the role of the “flesh-and-blood” reader in biblical interpretation.⁵ Yet we also need to consider the role of our flesh and body (including our feeling/mood) in interpreting our encounter with others (e.g., the divine, people, environment, social locations, texts, etc.). To clarify our interpretive process, we need to examine how we and the other/Other are constituted in our process of meaning production.

Why should we care about this examination of our structure of interpretation? Because how we explain and understand (1) ourselves, (2) the others, and (3) our process of meaning production have ethical and political impacts.⁶ Not only does “how we interpret” affect the

⁵ See Fernando F. Segovia, *Decolonizing Biblical Studies: A View from the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 3-52. Also, see the trilogy that Segovia and Tolbert edit on the importance of the role of social locations in our biblical interpretations. Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert, eds., *Reading from This Place*. Vol. 1: *Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995); idem., *Reading from This Place*. Vol. 2: *Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspective* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995); idem., *Teaching the Bible: The Discourses and Politics of Biblical Pedagogy* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998).

⁶ Here, Marion’s notion of hermeneutics is noteworthy, which for him “does not operate on objects nor on *sense data*, of which it would modify at will, by arbitrary authority, the meaning – this attitude would rather define ideology. Hermeneutic practices a givenness of meaning on the given, from an appropriate meaning to the given, in such a way that the latter, instead of returning to its anonymity and remaining in hiding, is deliberately released and freed in its manifestation. Hermeneutics does not give a meaning to the given, by securing and deciding it, but each time, it gives *its* meaning, that is to say the meaning that shows that given as itself, as a phenomenon which is shown in itself and by itself. The *self* of the phenomenon rules in the final instance all the givenness of meaning: it is not a givenness by the ‘I’ of a meaning constituted by it into an object to this very object, but to let its own meaning come to the object, acknowledged more than known. The meaning given by hermeneutics does not come so much from the decision of the hermeneutic actor, as from that which the phenomenon itself is (so to speak) waiting for and of which the hermeneutic actor remains a mere discoverer and therefore the servant. The phenomenon is shown to the extent the hermeneutic actor gives to the given the most appropriate meaning of *that* given itself. Hermeneutics interprets not only the given in a phenomenon, but, to do so, it must leave the hermeneutic actor be interpreted by the given which has to be phenomenized.” See Jean-Luc Marion, *Givenness and Hermeneutics*. Translated by Jean-Pierre Lafouge The Père Marquette Lecture in Theology 2013 (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2012), 41, 43.

others, it also affects us in return. It is thus problematic to essentialize (or pigeonhole) and objectify any one of these aspects as if they are without interrelatedness and social locations. Under such an essentialization, the conditions for new possibilities are short-circuited because once we objectify the other/Other, we can claim and trade them for our purposes. The critique of Aimé Césaire that “colonization = ‘thingification’” is our reminder.⁷ Objectification can become an act of violence that reduces the otherness of the other/Other.⁸ (While the wording “other/Other” may seem cumbersome, it has important hermeneutical and theological connotations that resist such objectification and essentialization. The question is: How can one really tell one from the other? It is not possible to distinguish the neighbor from the Lord, as Matthew 25:31-46 underscores, and doing so would be essentializing both God and neighbor).

Paul’s notion of “love otherwise than knowledge” also avoids such an essentialization. “Anyone who thinks (δοκεῖ) that s/he knows (ἐγνώκειναι) something does not yet know (ἔγνω) as s/he ought to know (δεῖ γινῶναι). But anyone who loves [God] is known (ἔγνωσται) [by God]”⁹ (1 Cor. 8:2-3; cf. 13:9; Gal. 4:9). For Paul, if God is beyond our grasp (cf. 1 Cor. 8:6), then “what” do we love when we love God?¹⁰ Perhaps this question explains why Paul says that “anyone who loves [God] is known (ἔγνωσται) [by God].” The middle/passive voice of this perfect tense of ἔγνωσται is crucial. As the few textual variants indicate (in the omission of “God” and “by God”), ἔγνωσται can be a middle voice. That is to say, in “love,” knowing happens in its *taking place*. As Charles Scott points out, the “intransitive nonreflexivity” of the

⁷ See Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*. Translated by Joan Pinkham. New Introduction by Robin D. G. Kelley: “A Poetics of Anticolonialism” (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), 42.

⁸ In his analysis of Western theological education, Palmer also makes similar observation about the violence of knowledge that centers on an individualistic objectification of the other. See Parker J. Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1993).

⁹ For a discussion of important textual variants of this verse, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000), 625-27.

¹⁰ I highlight “what” because in love we cannot tell and pinpoint “what is it” (or “who is it”) that (or “whom”) we love.

middle voice “constitutes our language’s historical expression of self-enactment with neither passivity nor active intention.”¹¹ So a knowing that is in the mode of the middle voice does not objectify the knower and the “object.” It is a knowing that is not in the order of grasping or mastery.¹² It is a dynamically relational knowing that takes place in the knowing. A knowing that subtracts itself in knowing (cf. 13:12). A knowing that happens in Christ giving his life for people (11:23-27; cf. Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:14; Rom. 5:6-8). Paul thus speaks of “the love of God” in terms of the love “in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:39).¹³

For Paul, love cannot be calculative and dialectical in the sense of objectifying and co-opting the other/Other into the self. In drawing one out toward the other/Other, love suspends one’s intentionality and control. It exposes one to the other/Other, to the waiting and anxiety (cf. 1 Cor. 13:4),¹⁴ as one does not know how the other/Other will respond. It is in the waiting that the other/Other is present, but present in terms of hope and faith (cf. 13:7). This presence is thus outside (the measurement of) time (cf. 13:8), despite the fact that love takes place in time and

¹¹ Charles E. Scott, “The Middle Voice of Metaphysics,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 42.4 (June 1989): 743-64 (745). Elsewhere Scott writes: “The middle voice suggests something that goes beyond subject-object formations. It is able to articulate nonreflexive enactments that are not for themselves or for something else. As a formation, it does not need to suggest intention outside of its movement or a movement toward an other. It does not oppose active and passive formations, but it is other than they are. It is the voice of something’s taking place through its own enactment. It remains hearable by us in some reflexive functions; we have seen that those functions often lack particularly the middle-voice value of intransitive processes of enactment. We have seen that in the middle voice a certain immediacy of presence can be expressed, but we have also seen that the presence of a complex, ambiguous verb or event, by virtue of its ambiguity and countervalences, may in its middle voice express not the immediacy of simple presence, but transition, ambiguity, and dissolution of presence. In such cases there is an excess vis-à-vis the meanings that constitute the event or word. That excess suggests that the presence of meaning is not a sufficient basis for thinking in relation to the event, that the excess necessitates something other than the language of meaning and presence for its articulation.” See Charles E. Scott, *The Question of Ethics: Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 24.

¹² In emphasizing that Paul’s framework of knowing, where Paul is not as concerned with the content of knowing as with the way of knowing, Scott argues that “when Paul thought about theological matters his thoughts in fact had a narrative structure. He thought of actions and events which were both causally and temporally related, and which were all governed by the overarching plot of God’s rescue of his creation.” See Ian W. Scott, *Paul’s Way of Knowing: Story, Experience, and the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 118.

¹³ Garland writes: “the cross of Christ as the manifestation of God’s love for the world ... is the central defining reality for Paul’s understanding of ἀγάπη (*agapē*).” See David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 605.

¹⁴ As Barthes writes, “The lover’s fatal identity is precisely: *I am the one who waits*.” See Roland Barthes, “Waiting,” in *A Lover’s Discourse: Fragments*. Translated by Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1987), 40.

space. Love, as such, interrupts one's being with what is yet to come; nobody in love declares "I love you" with "the end of love" in mind. Yet such a declaration is fragile.¹⁵ There is a space of connection and separation between "I" and "You."¹⁶ This in-between space has risk in character as no one can guarantee that, tomorrow, s/he will still love the other/Other. In fact, not only does the saying "I love you" imply the question "Do you love me?" to both the enunciator and the enunciatee, the question and response are elicited, again and again.¹⁷ Lovers are never tired of asking and answering: "Do you love me?" and "I love you." Such uncertainty and risk actually already takes place when one *somehow* falls in love with the other/Other.¹⁸ The risk and lack of self-control in love may cause wound, but it is precisely the "beautiful risk"¹⁹ that one must take as it is also the very wound that opens oneself up to the joy of surprise (cf. Rom. 8:35-39).

For Paul, love has the quality of a "here and now but not yet" that demands one's fidelity to the calling of God (cf. 1 Cor. 1:1, 6, and 26). It is a demand of a continual response-ability to love. A demand that splits and ties the *love-captivated* "I" to the other/Other whose signification is end-less. Love certainly has rules and regulations, but it is not reducible to them (cf. Rom. 13:10; 1 Cor. 9:20-21).²⁰ It goes beyond representations. It extends the first encounter, the first

¹⁵ For an analysis of "I love you," see Jean-Luc Marion, "The Unspoken: Apophasis and the Discourse of Love" (translated by Arianne Conty), *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 76 (2003): 39-56. Also see Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains: A Commentary of the Letter to the Romans*. Translated by Patricia Dailey. Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 132-36.

¹⁶ For example, see Luce Irigaray, "I Love To You," in *I Love To You: Sketch for a Felicity within History*. Translated by Alison Martin (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 109-13.

¹⁷ See Jean-Luc Marion, "The Unspoken: Apophasis and the Discourse of Love," 50-52.

¹⁸ For example, see Roland Barthes, "Ravishment," in *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, 188-94. As Badiou stresses that love is impossible without risk, fidelity becomes integral to turning the love encounter from a chance meeting into a destiny. Love, as such, "is both and encounter and a construction." See the interview in <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2012/may/18/alain-badiou-life-in-writing> (accessed July 5, 2013). Also, see Alain Badiou, *In Praise of Love*. Translated by Peter Bush (London: Serpent's Tail, 2012).

¹⁹ This expression comes from Levinas. See James H. Olthuis, *The Beautiful Risk: A New Psychology of Loving and Being Loved* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 74.

²⁰ Likewise, Rosenzweig writes, "Surely, love cannot be commanded; no third party can command it or obtain it by force. No third party can do this, but the One can. The commandment of love can only come from the mouth of the lover. Only the one who loves, but really he can say and does say: Love me. From his mouth, the commandment of love is not a strange commandment, it is nothing other than the voice of love itself. The love of the lover has no other word to express itself than the commandment. Everything else is already no longer immediate expression, but

touch of the heart. It implies a promise that “I *will* love *you*.” A specific “you.” Love does not happen in the abstract. It is a perseverance that leads to transformations (1 Thess. 1:3; Rom. 5:3-5) in each declaration of “I love you.” Love, as such, is not merely “the ground of meaning.”²¹ It goes beyond it. As it carves out and shapes one’s existence and being, this beating of the heart in love grounds and ungrounds itself as well as (the relationship between) the self and the other/Other. Love, in short, is an event or a gift and grace of possibility of the impossible (see chapter 7). This is why love takes place in time and space and yet beyond time and space. It is specific and material and yet poetic and sentimental. It is protective and yet open to the unknown. It is fragile and exciting yet enduring and resilient.

Here, our usage of the word “poetics” follows the meanings of the Greek word “*poiein*” (to “make,” “produce,” or “create”).²² To say that love is poetics, not only do we follow the poetic description of love by Paul in 1 Cor. 13, we also want to highlight the metaphorical figure of love in Paul’s description, which shows that love has the capacity to “make” and “create.” This capability of “creating” means that love can re-describe or re-configure believers’ experience and interaction with the other/Other.²³ In light of this poetic or creative capability of

explanation – explanation of love. The explanation of love is very deficient, and like every explanation, it always comes after the event; and therefore, since the love of the lover is in the present, it really always comes too late.” See Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*. Translated by Barbara E. Galli. Modern Jewish Philosophy and Religion: Translations and Critical Studies (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 190-91.

²¹ Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians*. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1997), 232.

²² For example, see the discussion of Aristotle’s notion of poetics and mimesis in *Poetics* in Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*. Vol. I. Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 31-51.

²³ In speaking of love as a “feeling” (that is, a “gut feeling”), Ricoeur writes, “I have held off until this point any consideration of such expressions so as not to give in to the sirens of sentimentality. But now it is under the sign of the poetics of the hymn and the commandment that we can place this third feature, which I will sum up in terms of the power of metaphorization linked to the expressions of love.” See Paul Ricoeur, “Love and Justice,” in *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*. Translated by David Pellauer. Edited by Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 320.

love, it is not surprising that when Paul cites Isaiah 64:4,²⁴ he writes that what God has prepared for those who love God cannot be seen, heard, and thought (1 Cor. 2:9; cf. Isaiah 52:15). The poetic nature of love cannot be objectified and reduced to certain propositions. Thus, regardless of the textual variants in 1 Cor. 2:1 (cf. 4:1),²⁵ if the “mystery” or “witness” of God is taken as a subjective genitive, Paul makes it clear that he is only a *medium* through which the proclamation happens. Paul does not possess the proclamation, not to mention it is not a thing that can be objectified. Marked by such a “witness” or “mystery,” how can Paul not be in fear and trembling when preaching it (2:3-5)? No wonder that Paul and his co-workers speak of the hidden wisdom of God *in mystery* (2:7). What God has prepared can only be received in love through the spirit (2:10; cf. Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22). It is thus through love that faith produces effects (Gal. 5:6; cf. 1 Thess. 1:3). With the performative notion of love that bears, trusts, hopes, and endures all things (1 Cor. 13:7) (see chapter 4), love is a condition of knowing. A knowing that our knowing is limited (cf. 13:2, 9). Following Paul’s lead and our ethical concern, we will briefly explain our notion of meaning production. What we want to highlight is a subject who is neither static nor fragmentary but dynamically holistic in her/his interactions with the other/Other in the world. The subject is a flesh-and-blood subject-with-others in the world.

II. A Creative Distance between Concept and Lived Experience

But history, like ordinary discourse presupposes much more than the sciences, for the historian makes judgments about men’s motives and values, national character, political trends, institutional capabilities, revolutions – none of which, precisely

²⁴ For an overview of the debates about the syntax and source of this verse, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 248-52. Quoting Isaiah 64:4 (LXX and MT 64:3) and changing the verb “to wait for” (ὑπομένω; חָכַה) to “to love” (God prepared for those who love (ἀγαπᾶσιν) God) – note that the Septuagint is closer to 1 Cor. 2:9 as it says that God will do works for those who wait for God’s mercy (ἔλεον) – Paul highlights in 2:9 an intimate relationship between love and understanding. Such an understanding, related to the wisdom of God in mystery which has been hidden (2:7), was revealed by God *through* the spirit *for our benefit* (2:10). This change of verb forecasts 13:7 where Paul writes that love always waits or waits for everything (πάντα ὑπομένει).

²⁵ For a discussion of these textual variants, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 207-08.

speaking, can be said to be the subject matter of a science ... History ... is not so much itself a field as a field-encompassing field.²⁶ – Van Harvey

To highlight the messiness of the interpretive process that governs our reading of 1 Corinthians, it is helpful to review the scholarship on hermeneutics since Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976). In the field of Western critical biblical studies,²⁷ Bultmann argued in 1957 that there is no exegesis without presuppositions,²⁸ regardless of how scientific and objective we strive to be in our textual analysis.²⁹ Before we analyze the biblical text, we already have a certain impression about it.³⁰ Acknowledging that our existential concerns affect how we address our issues in our textual analysis,³¹ Bultmann touches upon the nature or mode of our existence in our structure of explanation and understanding. We interpret because of our *desire* to interpret,

²⁶ Van A. Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer: The Morality of Historical Knowledge and Christian Belief*. With a New Introduction by the Author (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 81.

²⁷ I use the words “West” and “Western” as a “contact zone” to stress the dynamic interaction that takes place in the encounter of cultures, lest the meanings of these terms are essentialized. Pratt defines “contact zone” as “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today.” See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 4.

²⁸ Rudolf Bultmann, “Is Exegesis without Presuppositions Possible?” in *Existence and Faith: Shorter Writings of Rudolf Bultmann*. Selected, translated and introduced by Schubert M. Ogden (New York: Meridian, 1960), 289-96. While Lancaster argues that Bultmann also thinks that exegesis without presuppositions is possible, the presuppositions here refer to prejudices that predetermine the meaning of the text. See Sarah Heaner Lancaster, “Scriptural Criticism and Religious Perception,” in *Gender, Tradition and Romans: Shared Ground, Uncertain Borders*. Romans through History and Cultures Series. Edited by Cristina Grenholm and Daniel Patte (New York and London: T & T Clark International, 2005), 275-76.

²⁹ In his cross-cultural reading of the *Analects* and *Galatians*, Yeo writes: “At best the ‘exegesis/eisegesis’ concern might be a construct that assumes a scholar can transcend his culture and detach himself from his own time and place, yet be able to become immersed in the past and know it with certainty. At worst, the ‘exegesis/eisegesis’ differentiation is a scholarly fear of living in partial knowledge, the insecurity of shared ownership of any text, or the alienation of self from the network of texts with which we all work.” See K. K. Yeo, *Musing With Confucius and Paul: Toward a Christian Chinese Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008), 54.

³⁰ For example, Bal writes: “Texts by definition being semiotic constructs, necessitating the active participation of readers or listeners for their existence, the textual object is dynamic, unstable, elusive. To study it we cannot be content with merely analyzing the text; it is after all the attribution of meaning that constitutes it ... It is naive to believe that we can analyze without interpreting, that we can work and live without lending meaning to the world around us.” See Mieke Bal, *Murder and Difference*, 135-36.

³¹ Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1958), 50. The importance of questioning is also highlighted in Gadamer’s dialectic question and answer. See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. Second, revised edition. Translation revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 356-71.

for a reason. Interpretation, in other words, is our systematic attempt to broaden our vision so that we can explain and understand “something” better.

However, if this “something” (in particular, our “gut feeling”)³² exists before our formal inquiry, then the methods we use to analyze and interpret it is inevitably marked by our first impression of it.³³ But, we are not passive recipients of this impression either, since it has to pass through our flesh-and-blood for it to register on us. Recall Paul’s saying of “anyone who loves [God] is known [by God].” Speaking of this impression, which we cannot perceive all at once, Bultmann rightly contends that we are inevitably dependent upon existing “conceptuality made available by tradition...”³⁴ In other words, while our tradition can help us conceptualize the impression in certain ways and representations, it may also prevent us from seeing other conceptualities that are foreign and strange to our tradition. The task at hand is how our tradition can expand, not contract nor just consolidating, our existing conceptuality. This task is a challenge that we must undertake repeatedly because once we stop, we could objectify our tradition and turn it into an idol that reflects our own image and blinds our vision (see our discussion of the quest of “the historical Jesus” in the Methodological Appendix).³⁵

³² This notion of “gut feeling” is particularly prominent in the notions of honor and shame, which for biblical scholars, are the pivotal values in biblical worldview (see chapter 1).

³³ In his review of the development of hermeneutics, Thiselton writes: “In the era of the Church Fathers (up to around A.D. 500) and from the Reformation to the early nineteenth century, hermeneutics was regularly defined as ‘rules for the interpretation of Scripture.’ Among many writers, although not all, hermeneutics was almost equivalent to exegesis ... Only in the nineteenth century with Schleiermacher and especially in the later twentieth century with Hans-Georg Gadamer ... did the notion emerge that hermeneutics was an art rather than a science.” See Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2009), 2. For Thiselton, the “concern for *whole process* [of explanation and understanding] as it involves author, text, reader, as an act of event of communication, distinguishes hermeneutics from exegesis... As such, hermeneutics also ... [asks] critically *what exactly we are doing when we read, understand, or apply* texts. Hermeneutics explores *the conditions and criteria* that operate to try to ensure responsible, valid, fruitful, or appropriate interpretation.” *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁴ Rudolf Bultmann, “On the Problem of Demythologizing,” in *New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings*. Selected, edited, and translated by Schubert M. Ogden (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984), 107.

³⁵ See Pelikan’s warning: “Tradition is the living faith of the dead; traditionalism is the dead faith of the living.” See the interview cited in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaroslav_Pelikan (accessed November 11, 2013).

The conceptuality that we use to make sense of our lived experiences is contingent for several reasons.³⁶ It is essential to remember that whomever/whatever we try to interpret should not be objectified as if s/he/it must fit our horizon of understanding. Such objectification leads to a confidence which is dangerous because that which can be represented could then be calculated, manipulated, replaced, and even traded. If the otherness of the other/Other can be categorized and represented, the other/Other have to appear according to our interpretation. If we can foresee them without seeing them, there is nothing new under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:9).³⁷ But, the fact that we become aware of our experience of someone/something implies that s/he/it refuses our gaze. This confrontation contests our egocentric tendency to grasp the other/Other. Here, we are

³⁶ When Bultmann overstresses the existentiality of interpretation, his demythologizing project subjects mythology to the lived experiences of the “I” (without exploring different possibilities of how the “I” is constituted, namely, the modes of existence such as autonomy, relationality, and heteronomy), and reduces the mythological or religious dimension of the text. Hence, many argue that Bultmann’s interpretation can be individualistic and private when he forgets the locality of his “conceptuality.” See Jean-Luc Marion, “The Possible and Revelation,” in *The Visible and the Revealed*. Translated by Christina M. Gschwandtner and others (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 9-10; Ernst Käsemann, *Jesus Means Freedom* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968); Brian K. Blount, *Cultural Interpretation: Reorienting New Testament Criticism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 28-39. Käsemann argues that such existential orientation reduces the eschatological aspect of Paul’s message, since Butlmann overemphasizes human decision in the present at the expense of the sovereign power of God in the present and future, in which humans are caught in different spheres of powers that influence us. See Ernst Käsemann, “On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic,” in *New Testament Questions of Today*. Translated by W. J. Montague (London: SCM Press, 1969), 108-37. Also, see J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980), 11-19.

³⁷ See Jean-Luc Marion, “What We See and What Appears,” in *Idol Anxiety*. Edited by Josh Ellenbogen and Aaron Tugendhaft (Stanford: Stanford University Press), 152-68. In the study of signs, where the signified refers to the concept that the sound image (signifier) points to, the original sign can then be replaced by another sign with a different signifier, which could be associated with a different signified. As a result, the signification of the original sign is reassigned, as the relation between the original signifier and signified is obscured. Hence Bal warns, “The sign must not be split into signifier and signified that each goes its own way, for if this split is radical the former without the latter is empty, form only, and the latter risks escaping from underneath the signifier and becoming myth, doxa, prejudice, falsity.” See Mieke Bal, *Loving Yusuf: Conceptual Travels from Present to Past* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 163. Or we can think of Marxist critique of alienation in the forces and relations of production in a capitalist economy. Singer writes: “Capital is nothing else but accumulated labor. The worker’s labor increases the employer’s capital. This increased capital is used to build bigger factories and buy more machines. This increases the division of labor. This put more self-employed workers out of business. They must then sell their labor on the market. This intensifies the competition among workers trying to get work, and lowers wages ... The more the worker exerts himself, the more powerful becomes the alien objective world which he fashions against himself, the poorer he and his inner world become, the less there is that belongs to him ... The externalization of the worker in his product means not only that his work becomes an object, an external existence, but also that it exists outside him, independently, alien, an autonomous power, opposed to him. The life he has given to the object confronts him as hostile and alien.” See Peter Singer, *Marx: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 33-34.

not suggesting that the other/Other can never be grasped (and hence we can be indifferent to them or be subjected to them), which contradicts our everyday life experience. To say so is to reify the other/Other into some obscure transcendental figures, not to mention it also indirectly affirms our egocentric view of the others.³⁸ Rather, we are saying that we can never grasp the other/Other *completely*, not to mention we are not static beings since our mood and social locations change *from time to time*.

Furthermore, the fact that we experience something implies that we *somehow* already interpret/feel it, even though we may not be able to articulate it. If our articulation of this initial feeling necessarily foregrounds and backgrounds the information/sense that are familiar and unfamiliar to us, then our conceptuality inevitably misses out that which does not appear against our horizons. It is critical to examine the context of our conceptuality, lest we absolutize it as if it is universally applicable to any other contexts. Given this irreducible tension (or gap) between concept and lived experience, we turn to Van Harvey's "historian's morality of knowledge."

[I]t is less helpful to talk about the historical method than it is to explore ... the historian's morality of knowledge, or ethic of assent; that it is more confusing to try to define historical understanding than it is to ask how historians go about justifying their claims; that it is more misleading to ask how one can verify a historical assertion than it is to explore numerous and diverse kinds of judgments historians make and the kinds of assent they solicit from their colleagues and readers.³⁹

One may be surprised by Harvey's strong emphasis on the "historian's morality of knowledge," as it seems to hold the historians responsible and accountable for their critical historical inquiry. But, can we speak of the "historian's morality of knowledge" in our critical historical inquiry?

³⁸ For example, see Daniel Patte's comments on Gerald O. West's project in "Reading with Gratitude: The Mysteries of 'Reading Communities Reading Scripture,'" in *Reading Communities Reading Scriptures: Essays in Honor of Daniel Patte*. Edited by Gary A. Phillips and Nicole Wilkinson Duran (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002), 377-79.

³⁹ Van A. Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer*, 33.

Why is our critical historical inquiry so intertwined with our “morality of knowledge”? In light of Stephen Toulmin’s structure of argument (i.e., “field of argument”) in which we use warrants from various fields to justify our argument, Harvey rightly contends that if “the historian’s canon for judgments about the past is the same canon he uses in making judgments about the present,”⁴⁰ then “[t]he real issue is not whether history can be objective or a science but whether, in particular cases, diverse kinds of claims can achieve an appropriate and relevant justification.”⁴¹ If the distinction between “how we come to know something and how we go about justifying what we have come to know”⁴² cannot be fused, even though they may be intertwined, then the social locations, and in fact, the very body through which we “come to know something” cannot be sidelined in critical biblical studies.

III. An Inter-Corporeal Hermeneutics

The world is not what I think, but what I live through. I am open to the world, I have no doubt that I am in communication with it, but I do not possess it; it is inexhaustible.⁴³ – Maurice Merleau-Ponty

In critiquing Edmund Husserl’s overemphasis on the “transcendental ego” that *tends to* overlook our *kinetic* facticity or situatedness in the constitution and essence of objects as they

⁴⁰ Ibid., 98.

⁴¹ Ibid., 55. For Harvey, the tension between “secular historiography and traditional Christian belief ... is best seen, not when we focus on the nature of historical explanation as such, but when we ask about the kinds of justifications that are appropriate for certain kinds of historical statements ... By concentrating on the problem of the justification of historical assertions, it is possible to throw into relief the subjective process of judgment itself, and only when this process of judgment is understood does it become clear why the basic but unspoken issue between the historian and the believer is a difference concerning intellectual integrity, the morality of knowledge.” Ibid., 46-47.

⁴² Ibid., 91. Harvey writes: “This distinction is important, because some historians who insist that history is the reenactment of past thought or experience sometimes talk as if the historian had some special intuitive powers by virtue of which he could ‘get inside’ other minds in a self-authenticating fashion. They argue that the historian does not infer what the agent is thinking or feeling but grasps it immediately and directly. Moreover, these historians sometimes insist that the historian does not have merely a thought or experience similar to the subject he is investing, but an identical one. He does not only rethink the thought of a past agent but has the identical thought.” Ibid., 92.

⁴³ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Collin Smith (London and New York, 2002), xix.

appear to one's consciousness,⁴⁴ Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) (Husserl's former assistant) argues for one's embedded-ness in the world. The focus is shifted from how an object appears to our intentionality to how an object gives itself from itself to itself. For Heidegger, whose lectures Bultmann attended as he attended Bultmann's at the University of Marburg, as human beings (*Da-sein*, "being-there") are already *there*, "thrown" (*geworfen*) into the "world" (*Welt*), we are always vulnerably in relations with others in our own contexts.⁴⁵ We cannot help but be marked by our tradition and language. Our consciousness of "something" is already affected before we are conscious of that "something." We cannot bracket out our anxiety and care for the "world" in our analysis of the meaning of our existence, as Husserl suggests. We are inevitably affected in the act and process of bracketing,⁴⁶ not to mention what we bracket out the frames of our meaning production. We should not mistake the manifestations of Being (*Sein*) in beings (*Seienden*) for Being itself (i.e., the transcendental condition for being which is also nothing apart from beings), as the Being is that which gives and allows the beings "to be."

Although Heidegger also stresses relationality (viz., "being-with-others" in the manner of "being-for-one-another") in his attempt to elucidate the meaning of Being (of beings) through the

⁴⁴ I highlight "tends to" because Husserl does mention our situatedness and embodied perception of the world as the result of intersubjectivity. For example, see Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*. Translated by David Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970); idem., *Ideas Pertaining to A Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. II: Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002). Nonetheless, the critique of Husserl's lack of consistent examination of one's situatedness is still valid. See Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientation, Objects, Others* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 1-64.

⁴⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York, NY: HarperSanFrancisco, 1962). See pages 78-86 (§12). The sense of relationality in terms of "being-with" others in the world is not always maintained, however. For instance, see the critique of Jean-Luc Nancy in "The being-with of being-there," *Continental Philosophy Review* 41 (2008): 1-15.

⁴⁶ In light of this situatedness, Porter and Robinson thus write: "no matter how thorough and objective the interpretation may seem [which the authors argue is the aim of interpretation set by Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), and Husserl (1859-1938)], it will always be at least partially determined by presuppositions and prejudices." See Stanley E. Porter and Jason C. Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpretive Theory* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2011), 10. Indeed, whatever that we bracket out recedes to the background, informing and framing whatever that we do not bracket out.

analysis of the “not worldless” (*weltlose*) *Dasein*, he focuses on the (universal) individual as the one who must make the decision in the face of possibilities of life situations. This focus back to the self is problematic. It suggests a self that is self-controlled, sufficient, and even alienated from the world. In his analysis of colonial discourse, Edward Said stresses the interrogation of the “worldliness” of the critics and texts.⁴⁷ For Said, if we are the product and the production of our “worldliness,”⁴⁸ we must examine the material conditions of our “being-in-the-world.” Regardless of how we render our “being-in-the-world,” our “worldliness” or relation with others is both a gap and a link to our understanding of ourselves and others, since in our “thrownness,” we are inextricably both the “subjects” and the “objects.”

Working on the “being-with-others-in-the-world” insight of his teacher Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) further highlights the importance of questioning that can challenge, broaden, and open up our horizon of understanding. Following Heidegger, Gadamer argues that our pre-understanding (or “preliminary understanding,” as Anthony Thiselton puts it)⁴⁹ is indispensable to our interpretation of the text and life situation. Whatever we try to make sense of, we have to start somehow, somewhere (or anywhere) that can help us relate to the text at hand.⁵⁰ Our pre-understanding mediates and enables us to have further (and hopefully, better) understanding, so on and so forth.⁵¹ Through the *metaphor* of an ongoing “fusion of horizons”

⁴⁷ See Edward W. Said, *The World, The Text, And the Critic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983); idem, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).

⁴⁸ Or as Berger points out, in making sense of our world, we constantly demythologize and remythologize our symbolic world. See Peter L. Berger, *A Rumor of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovering of the Supernatural* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969); idem, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. Reprint (New York: Anchor Books, 1990).

⁴⁹ See Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics*, 12, 32.

⁵⁰ “A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. He projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text. Again, the initial meaning emerges only because he is reading the text with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning. Working out this fore-projection, which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he penetrates into the meaning, is understanding what is there.” See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 269.

⁵¹ This hermeneutical circle is comparable to Ricoeur’s notions of first and second naïveté. See Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*. Translated by Emerson Buchanan (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1969), 351.

(like a dialectic dialogue or an open-ended hermeneutical “circle”) that makes new horizon appear,⁵² Gadamer argues for the possibility of understanding (the fusion between the past and the present as well as the fusion between the interpreter and the text). He also stresses that our understanding is always contextual, dynamics, and incomplete. For Gadamer, if a conversation “has a spirit of its own,” then vulnerability and the risk of “fall[ing] into conversation”⁵³ characterize our process of understanding. A genuine understanding, in other words, is what happens to us; it cannot be pre-designed, as if we can control it. It is an event that grasps and holds us open to the spirit of conversation.⁵⁴ As such, the process of interpretation can be unpredictable and messy.

Highlighting the messiness of our interpretive process, Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) speaks of a con-fusion of horizons that argues that the fusion of horizons is not harmonious but interruptive, since the fusion may suggest that the other can thus be co-opted and fused.⁵⁵ But, fused according to whose horizon in this “con”-fusion? The otherness of the other/Other cannot be reduced. S/he/it is not an instrument that helps one to understand oneself better. In the language of Emmanuel Levinas (1906-95), the face of the other/Other cannot be dis-regarded;

⁵² I put “circle” in quotation marks because “circle” seems to indicate a sense of totality, neatness, continuity, and lack of space and time in our process of making sense of our experience, which I do not wish to suggest.

⁵³ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 385. Emphasis added. One may critique Gadamer for being too optimistic since the “fusion of horizons” assumes that people will want to undertake the “fusion” to correct themselves in their understanding of the other. Gadamer, however, wants to argue that a dialogue or conversation, in a Platonic style, can at least allow horizons to come into contact with each other. This contact can initiate and encourage further conversation, and thus, possibly results in a better understanding of each horizon.

⁵⁴ In the words of Porter and Robinson concerning Gadamer’s notion of understanding, “understanding is not something [that which] we grasp through experimental isolation and interrogation but that which grasps us as an experience or an event of meaning outside of our control.” See Stanley E. Porter and Jason C. Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, 10.

⁵⁵ For example, see the debate between Gadamer and Derrida: *Dialogue and Deconstruction: The Gadamer-Derrida Encounter*. Edited by Diane P. Michelfelder and Richard E. Palmer (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989). For an overview, see Chantélle Swartz and Paul Cilliers, “Dialogue Disrupted: Derrida, Gadamer and the Ethics of Discussion.” *S. Afr. J. Philos.* 22 (2003): 1-18.

the face of the other/Other confronts us and commands us: “Thou shalt not kill.”⁵⁶ The face that we abuse or simply ignore will haunt us and mark our own face in return. Indeed for Derrida,⁵⁷ the trace of the other cannot be erased or incorporated into any horizon of understanding. We can only speak of the other in terms of a trace or a possibility of condition.⁵⁸ Once the other is named, s/he/it disappears: s/he/it has to appear according to the horizon that identifies it “as such.” In fact, for Derrida, the self or the subject does not have a pure self-presence. We are always already in relations with others. So even when we speak of an intersubjective “fusion,” we need to clarify how the subject and the other are constituted, lest we erase or reify the other. This Levinasian shift to an asymmetrical position in which one is always already addressed by the other⁵⁹ can, however, lead to exploitation when the other is objectified and represented.⁶⁰

Our purpose in highlighting both the positive and negative aspects of this prior calling or address of/by the other – the positive concerns preventing one from being egocentric and the negative entails subjecting one to the power of the other – is to stress that one is always already

⁵⁶ See Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*. Translated by Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 187-219; idem, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo*. Translated by Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1985).

⁵⁷ Derrida finds hints of violence in this focus on alterity through the use of language. See Jacques Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas,” in *Writing and Difference*. Translated with an Introduction and Additional Notes by Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 79-153.

⁵⁸ Derrida writes: “The trace (of that) which can never be presented, the trace which itself can never be presented... Always different and deferring, the trace is never as it is in the presentation of itself. It erases itself in presenting itself, muffles itself in resonating...” See Jacques Derrida, “Différance,” in *Margins of Philosophy*. Translated, with Additional Notes by Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 23.

⁵⁹ A similar argument is also made by Jean-Louis Chrétien, “The Wounded Word: The Phenomenology of Prayer,” in *The Phenomenology and the “Theological Turn”: The French Debate* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 147-76.

⁶⁰ One can think of the Althusserian notion of “interpellation,” where we are “always-already interpellated by ideology as subjects.” See Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation),” in *Essays on Ideology* (London: Verso, 1984), 50. While one can certainly ignore the vocative hailing, as Butler suggests in light of Foucault’s argument that power is exercised from multiple locations and directions, the ability to disregard the interpellation often assumes that the hailed is of similar power position as that of the hailer, which is not necessarily the case. Nonetheless, the fieldworks of James Scott tells us that even the oppressed may exercise power indirectly against the dominant power. See Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997); Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 1: *An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 81-102; James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. But a Levinasian ethics may not be easily translated into the sphere of politics.

in relationships with others in the world. From the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), we further learn that the experience of our sensation and perception of the world is also always already embodied.⁶¹ It is through our flesh-and-blood body that we feel, think, sense, comport ourselves, and act.⁶² This body's operative intentionality in terms of an *intertwining* phenomenon of the visible and the invisible foregrounds the vital and most apparent but neglected aspect our interpretive process: our flesh-and-blood body.

Not only is our perception of the world bodily oriented, our body also feels, thinks, and acts. As such, our notion of intersubjectivity cannot ignore the body and flesh in its social location. Hence, an intersubjective hermeneutic is necessarily an inter-corporeal hermeneutic. Why? Because we are always already “thrown” *into* the world together with each other *insofar as* the world is part of us. In their studies of various interpretive models in cognitive science, Francisco Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch agree with Merleau-Ponty and argue that our experience is both “emergent” and “enactive” in the sense that our mind is a part of the very world that it experiences, discovers, and makes sense of.⁶³ Our mind is not only embodied in the world of bodies that it seeks to understand, it also co-arises with it in the sense that our perception of the world is bodily or proprioceptively embedded in the world. This fundamental

⁶¹ In fact, Merleau-Ponty writes that our body is “enveloped” in the world in such a way that “If my arm is resting on the table I should never think of saying that it is *beside* the ashtray in the way in which the ash-tray is beside the telephone. The outline of my body is a frontier which ordinary spatial relations do not cross. This is because its parts are inter-related in a peculiar way: they are not spread out side by side, but enveloped in each other.” See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, 112.

⁶² “Perception is not a science of the world, it is not even an act, a deliberate taking up of a position; it is the background from which all acts stand out, and is presupposed by them. The world is not an object such that I have in my possession the law of its making; it is the natural setting of, and field for, all my thoughts and all my explicit perceptions.” *Ibid.*, xi-xii.

⁶³ They write: “Minds awaken in a world. We did not design our world. We simply found ourselves with it; we awoke both to ourselves and to the world we inhabit. We come to reflect on that world as we grow and live. We reflect on a world that is not made, but found, and yet it is our structure that enables us to reflect on this world. Thus in reflection we find ourselves in a circle: we are in a world that seems to be there before reflection begins, but that world is not separate from us.” See Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (Cambridge, MA; London, UK: The MIT Press, 1993), 3.

feature of our flesh-and-blood body in interpretive process, according to Julia Kristeva, is also inevitably inscribed in our writings.

Adapting the “mirror stage” of Jacques Lacan (1901-81) where the identity of the subject is split in the beginning stage of her/his awareness of her/himself, Kristeva argues for a caring split in terms of an intertwining of “the semiotic” and “the symbolic” in our signifying process.⁶⁴ For her, “the semiotic” is the pre-linguistic and rhythmic aspect of our bodily drive and feeling that undergird “the symbolic,”⁶⁵ which are the grammar, rules and regulations that categorize and organize our bodies and society. Even though “the semiotic” is prior to “the symbolic,” as the latter seeks to regulate the former, they cannot be separated. Without “the semiotic” element, the society will suffer from the lack of creativity and imagination and becomes mechanical and monotonous. Without “the symbolic” element, the society will become chaotic. A functional person, family, or society requires both “the semiotic” and “the symbolic.” In his analyses of Ancient Near East and Egyptian legal papyri, Yochanan Muffs even shows how certain formal and legal terms and formulas are emotive and poetic in character (see chapter 1).⁶⁶ Likewise, in his clinical studies, Antonio Damasio finds that “certain aspects of the process of emotion and

⁶⁴ I use “holistic” because as Oliver argues, the split is not the result of hostility but love because it allows the subject grow as an individual. See Kelly Oliver, *Reading Kristeva: Unraveling the Double-Bind* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 68.

⁶⁵ See Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Introduction by Leon S. Roudiez. Translated by Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 13-106.

⁶⁶ See Yochanan Muffs, *Studies in the Aramaic Legal Papyri from Elephantine*. Prolegomenon by Baruch A. Levine (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003). Elsewhere, Muffs writes: “Law is a synthesis of form and content, yet it is formal only on the surface ... I passionately disliked the proscriptive element in what was usually called law – the coercive, the anti-life, the limiting. Then, suddenly, I realized that ancient legal documents were telling a story, and that they told this story by a series of interrelated metaphorical clauses, clauses that had about them a poetic quality... For example, in ancient sale documents we come across three interrelated terms: ‘My heart is satisfied,’ ‘I remove myself from you,’ and ‘You are now in control of the property.’ I was shocked to realize that in the supposedly rigid and prosaic context of a sale document, one regularly found such metaphorical terms. I assumed that the ancients knew what they were doing, and that ‘satisfaction of the heart’ must refer to something well-defined and specific, binding yet not deadening, a mid-ground between primal feeling and abstraction.” See idem, *Love and Joy: Law, Language and Religion in Ancient Israel* (New York and Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 1. I want to thank Dr. Annalisa Azzoni for bringing this to my attention.

feelings are indispensable for rationality,”⁶⁷ since they help us make distinctions and decisions. Feelings are not only “as cognitive as other percepts,”⁶⁸ they are also “the direct perception of a specific landscape: that of the body,”⁶⁹ where “our most refined thoughts and best actions, our greatest joys and deepest sorrows, use the body as a yardstick.”⁷⁰ With his notion of “themata,”⁷¹ Gerald Holton, likewise, argues for the role of convictions (which cannot be demonstrated logically) in the field of science.⁷² In the words of a charismatic Christian philosopher, this conviction is a way and a kind of precognitive knowing that is “I know that I know that I know,”⁷³ in which “we [Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians] *feel* our way around the world more than we *think* about it, *before* we think about it.”⁷⁴

In the language of sign that delineates the relation between the signified and signifier, the notions of embodied mind and feeling in our perception of the world can be illustrated in terms

⁶⁷ See Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Avon Books, 1994), xiii.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, xv.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, xiv.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, xvi. Damasio writes: “(1) The human brain and the rest of the body constitute an indissociable organism, integrated by means of mutually interactive biochemical and neural regulatory circuits (including endocrine, immune, and autonomic neural components); (2) The organism interacts with the environment as an ensemble: the interaction is neither of the body alone nor of the brain alone; (3) The physiological operations that we call mind are derived from the structural and functional ensemble rather than from the brain alone: mental phenomena can be fully understood only in the context of an organism's interacting in an environment. That the environment is, in part, a product of the organism's activity itself, merely underscores the complexity of interactions we must take into account.” *Ibid.*, xvi-xvii.

⁷¹ That is, “fundamental presuppositions, notions, terms, methodological judgments and decisions ... which are themselves neither directly evolved from, nor resolvable into, objective observation on the one hand, or logical, mathematical, and other formal analytical ratiocination on the other hand.” See Gerald Holton, *Thematic Origins of Scientific Thought: Kepler to Einstein*. Rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA; London, England: Harvard University Press, 1988), 41.

⁷² Holton writes: “Cases abound that give evidence of the role of ‘unscientific’ preconceptions, passionate motivations, varieties of temperament, intuitive leaps, serendipity or sheer bad luck, not to speak of the incredible tenacity with which certain ideas have been held despite the fact that they conflicted with the plain experimental evidence, or the neglect of theories that would have quickly solved an experimental puzzle. None of these elements fit in with the conventional model of the scientist; they seem unlikely to yield to rational study; and yet they play a part in scientific work.” *Ibid.*, 8.

⁷³ See James K. A. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010), 48-85.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 72.

of an *obscure distance* between the signified and signifier.⁷⁵ The obscure distance implies a pre-linguistic phenomenon, in particular when our perception of the world is inevitably embodied. In the experience of such embodied perception, we can only think of the relations of signs (instead of the distinction into the signified and signifier), as Aline Patte and Daniel Patte suggest in their analysis of deep values or religious convictions of the biblical text.⁷⁶ It is the pattern of relations that we need to flesh out when the signified and signified of a sign are so intertwined together.

In chapter 2, we will see that this pattern of relations is typological and metaphorical in nature. As a “[m]etaphor turns the novel familiar (by the familiar), so as to turn the familiar novel (by the novel now-turned-familiar),”⁷⁷ it also concretizes or abstractizes the signification of a metaphor. Using speech-act theory, we can venture to say that a metaphor is simultaneously locutionary (utterance), illocutionary (performative speech), and perlocutionary (effects of speech).⁷⁸ Addressing the metaphorical language of Egyptian love poems and the Song of Songs in the Hebrew Bible, Michael V. Fox writes: “Without a bond between the terms, metaphorical predication is not comprehensible, but without significant metaphoric distance it is banal.”⁷⁹ Implied in this observation is that the interpretation of a metaphor needs to be imaginative and contextual (e.g., the measurement of engine power in terms of “horse-power”). The metaphor engages the interpreter as s/he tries to interpret it, in particular if one argues that language is

⁷⁵ Why such an obscurity? Because when the signified and signifier are simultaneously denotative and connotative, our determination for a referential marker, which the sign, signified, or signifier tries to point to and hinge one, can become really messy.

⁷⁶ See Aline Patte and Daniel Patte, *Structural Exegesis: From Theory to Practice (Exegesis of Mark 15 and 16: Hermeneutical Implications)* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1978), 101-02.

⁷⁷ Kuang-Ming Wu, *On Metaphoring: A Cultural Hermeneutic* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2001), 3.

⁷⁸ For example, see J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*. 2nd ed. Edited by J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisa (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975).

⁷⁹ Michael V. Fox, “Love, Passion, and Perception in Israelite and Egyptian Love Poetry,” *JBL* 102/2 (1983): 226. In her study of Ancient Near Eastern love lyrics, Westenholz points out the “extreme plasticity” and “capacity” of metaphors and symbols “to refer to several levels of perception at the same time. Not only can the same metaphor be used in different contexts with quite different meaning, but it may even have several meanings at the same time in the same text.” See Joan Goodnick Westenholz, “Love Lyrics from the Ancient Near East,” in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Vol. 4. Edited by Jack M. Sasson et al (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1995), 2483.

metaphorical in nature. A metaphor that makes a certain sense in one context may signify something else in another context. Since a term of the metaphor can be viewed *in terms of* something other than itself, there is a creative and tensive relation between the two terms. Because of this dynamic tension in the metaphor, what a metaphor signifies cannot be reduced to whether it is factually real or true.⁸⁰ A metaphor does not allow us to control its range of referential markers in its signification since it figuratively and rhetorically suspends and transforms the literal relation between the two terms of juxtaposition.

Now, if a metaphor can extend, retract, and create new meaning through the juxtaposition of two terms, without erasing their individual distinctions, then one can say that a “metaphor is a self-transcending thrust to and fro between the self and the other, the familiar and the novel, to inter-change all of them,”⁸¹ as Kuang-Ming Wu argues in his analysis of Chinese embodied and (complementary) *yin-yang* worldview.⁸² That is to say, as a metaphor facilitates the comparison of two terms of different semantic fields, it can foreground the obscure aspects of each thing that will otherwise remain hidden. Once the obscurity is brought to light, *both* the similarities *and* differences between them become less rigid but more dynamic. What is foreign in the others may surprisingly be found in the self and what is familiar in the self may be strangely discovered in the other. A metaphor not only transforms the relations between the self and the other, it also

⁸⁰ For example, Brümmer writes, “all the metaphors and models employed in God-talk are primarily relational: they are intended to indicate the ways in which we are to relate to God. If we call God a rock, this is meant primarily to indicate the way in which we can depend upon God and only in a secondary, implied sense to make the factual statement about God, that he is the kind of Being on whom we can depend in this way.” See Vincent Brümmer, *The Model of Love: A Study in Philosophical Theology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 19.

⁸¹ Kuang-Ming Wu, *On Metaphoring*, 3.

⁸² Here, I find Smith’s notion of worldview, following the definition of worldview propounded by James Olthuis, close to that of our Chinese understanding as “a *framework* of fundamental beliefs,” in which “to speak of a worldview is to speak about our most fundamental orientation to the world; a framework that operates even prior to thought; a passionate orientation of our imagination that filters and explains our experience of the world. It operates unconsciously at the very core of our identity.” See James K. A. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues*, 29.

transforms one's vision of the other and the self. In fact, each time a metaphor is interpreted (by a flesh-and-blood person), it becomes a different metaphor.

Thus regardless of how much we may want to suppress and eliminate emotions and (gut) feelings from reason – such an urge is also a manifestation of that which we seek to eradicate⁸³ – feelings, emotions, and reasons are metaphorically intertwined because of the shared flesh-and-blood body. Likewise, regardless of how much we seek to order and articulate our feelings in writings, the grammar cannot contain the dynamic bodily drive in feelings.⁸⁴ By restoring the flesh-and-blood feature of body into our interpretive process, we cannot fix our process of meaning production (unless our social location, mood, and feeling are static) and treat the characters in the text as if they are static and without flesh-and-blood characteristics. The representation that results from the signifying process, if it can be formulated, has to be tentative. The challenge lies in how to flesh out these characteristics in/of the texts.

IV. A Dynamic Inter-Corporeal Hermeneutics in Action

In his later works on structural semiotics, A. J. Greimas (1917-92) takes feelings seriously in his description of the way the subject and the other are constituted in the subject's interpretation of texts. This notion of "feeling" is the "gut feeling," the feeling of absolute

⁸³ Attempts to rule out what cannot be categorized and justify the exclusion of the strangeness and otherness of the other are well illustrated in Kristeva's notion of "abjection" and Agamben's notion of "state of exception" (i.e., the "inclusive exclusion"). For example, see Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982); idem, *Strangers to Ourselves*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

⁸⁴ As Kristeva points out, a text can be described in terms of a "genotext" that highlights the "semiotic" process of bodily drive and a "phenotext" that enforces the operation of the syntax. It is important to note that both of these types of texts are present in a same text, even though one may be more prominent than the other. See Julia Kristeva, "Genotext and Phenotext," in *Revolution in Poetic Language*, 86-89.

dependence,⁸⁵ or the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* (the tremendous and fascinating mystery that evokes awe)⁸⁶ that scholars try to describe and analyze. What stands out in this approach is the interpenetration of the border between the “semantics” (i.e., “gut feeling”) and the “syntax” (i.e., grammar) in the process of meaning production (see the Methodological Appendix), where the *intersection* of the “semantics” and “syntax” is also dynamic. So while the subject is dislocated from a nominative “I” to an accusative “me” or a vocative “me,” s/he needs to be able to register the encounter in order to respond to it.

In the language of Jean-Luc Marion, the subject is a dative “to me” in the sense that the subject is constituted in response to what happens to her/him (cf. 1 Cor. 4:7; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:3-4). In a group-oriented culture, the dative “to me” not only addresses me as a part of the community, it also shows that my experience takes place in the abandoning of my egocentricity. In the language of Paul, it is in the encounter with the other/Other that I receive myself, where I no longer live, but Christ lives in me (cf. Gal. 2:20). Indeed, the dative “to me” or “to my flesh and blood” speaks of a dynamic space between the subject and the other. The response, however, need not be a conscious one; some responses are beyond the subject’s control. As my flesh-and-blood body can instinctively respond to a confrontation without my awareness and decision, my flesh delivers me to myself, making me sense/feel the encounter. The traumatic shock from an accident, the feeling of falling in love, the overwhelming ecstasy and sorrow are some obvious examples. The encounter can also individuate the subject and the other not only because it happens in a specific encounter but also because it simultaneously brings to light personal appeal

⁸⁵ See Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*. Translated by Richard Crouter (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), and idem, *The Christian Faith*. Edited by H. R. MacKintosh and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989).

⁸⁶ See Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*. Translated by John W. Harvey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958).

and resistance. Through such an “en-counter,” as the word’s etymology suggests, things may then appear differently to both the subject and the other.

The sense of dative “to me” in one’s subjectivity in her/his social location is well encapsulated in Greimas’s structural semiotics that highlights the conditions of possibility of meaning in our interpretation of texts.⁸⁷ As the preposition “to” indicates, our understanding of the other and self is always an ongoing process. There is a non-reducible distance between the subject and the other (or the text) as well as a distance within the subject her/himself. The subject, in a sense, is “subjected” to the other, including her/his bodily drive and feeling that cannot be entirely controlled. So, even though “I” seeks to grasp the other (including the “self” of the other), “I” always finds the other slip away. The “I” is an integrated “I.” This inevitable slippage can prevent the other from being objectified. In the language of Luce Irigaray, the “indirection” of “to” is an interstitial space that sustains the distance of mystery between the subject and the other while connecting them.⁸⁸ In other words, this paradoxical notion of “to” is a meeting site of a co-arising “we” that speaks of “I” and the other. It is an “I” in terms of a “we” and an “other” in terms of a “we” because we are always already interconnected from the beginning.⁸⁹

Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005) also shows how the interpreter goes through stages of liminal experience in her/his reading of a text, from “prefiguration” to “refiguration” through

⁸⁷ See Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts: Greimas’s Structural Semiotics and Biblical Exegesis* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 25-72. Also, see Ronald Schleifer, *A. J. Greimas and the Nature of Meaning: Linguistic, Semiotics and Discourse Theory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), xviii-xxv.

⁸⁸ See Luce Irigaray, “I Love To You,” in *I Love To You: Sketch for a Felicity within History*, 109-13.

⁸⁹ Or as Olthuis put it, “The birth of a self and an identity is a bestowal of the love of others, birthed in and through the love shown by others. The human self is intersubjective: in the we there is the I; in the I there is the we. The self finds its center in mutuality. Consequently, the healthy decentering of the modernist self as self-centering need not lead to the postmodern non-self, but to a recentering of the self in relations of love in community.” See James H. Olthuis, “Crossing the Threshold: Sojourning Together in the Wild Spaces of Love,” in *The Hermeneutics of Charity: Interpretation, Selfhood, and Postmodern Faith: Studies in Honor of James H. Olthuis*. Edited by James K. A. Smith and Henry Isaac Venema (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2004), 34.

“configuration” or immersing oneself in the “emplotment of character.”⁹⁰ That is to say, the interpreter receives a new sense of self and the text as s/he inhabits the text and becomes contemporaneous with the “world of the text.” Or as Paul put it, one is refigured through the configuration of the cross (cf. 1 Cor. 15:35-36; Rom. 6:1-14). Such re-configuration is not without discordance. The formation of one’s identity is always in process. As in the operation of a metaphor, both the interpreter and the text address and transform one another. While the interpreter can certainly control her/his reading of the text and refuses to receive anything from the text, the resistance is still a reaction to the text. The reaction suggests that the text has addressed the interpreter. A certain sense or meaning has been made with the text. Even if it is nonsensical and nonsense, it is still felt by the interpreter; this suggests that the interpreter is not simply a passive recipient of that which is felt. It is this attention to the “felt” dimension of meaning and its articulation in different ways that draws me to Greimas’s theory of meaning.

Without presupposing a model of the communication process, as Umberto Eco initially did,⁹¹ Greimas emphasizes that meaning is relational and multidimensional. This notion of meaning as meaning effect suggests that the textuality of a text and its effects are beyond one’s intentionality. As the interface or face-to-face encounter between the “semantics” (i.e., “gut feeling”) and the “syntax” (i.e., grammar) constantly interrupts each other’s limits, the limits become the sites of tension, creativity, and transformation. As anything *can become* meaningful to the enunciator and enunciatee, the signifying process is fluid and endless. The process of meaning production is unpredictable. It cannot be neatly calculated and formulated. A sight (or a

⁹⁰ See Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*. Vol. I., 52-87.

⁹¹ While Eco first focuses on the communication process on how meaning is coded and decoded, with meaning understood in terms of communication and representation, he later stresses the contextual role of the reader in the communication process. That is to say, if the reader is a flesh-and-blood reader whose decoding of the text is unpredictable though delimited by the textual syntax, then meaning needs to be studied contextually. Any model of communication already assumes and privileges certain pre-understanding that is always already socio-culturally characterized. See Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1979); idem, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984).

smell, touch, taste, sound/noise, feeling, thought, saying, doing, etc. of something or someone) can surprisingly evoke and generate (unintended) meaning. Such a sense of meaning, moreover, is not static. The flesh-and-blood readers always are in the process of changing – an insight found at the core of Greimas’s theory.⁹² The center is always elsewhere, dynamic, in the midst of the flux of changes. So, in his “generative trajectory” (*parcours génératif*), Greimas makes it clear that the generation and transformation of meaning is always discursive and contextual.⁹³ As meaning is felt and engendered from the dynamic interactions of various factors such as the reader’s social locations, moods, literary competency, etc. in deciphering the text, meaning is therefore a “meaning effect.” In other words, meaning is the meaning effect of difference.

The implication of such “discursivization” is significant. For example, while some may find Paul’s writing contradictory,⁹⁴ such inconsistencies may not be incoherent if we consider the flesh-and-blood readers in the structure and condition of meaning production. A good illustration is J. Christiaan Beker’s notions of the contingency and coherence of the gospel in Paul’s letters⁹⁵

⁹² This point is highlighted in Algirdas Julien Greimas and Jacques Fontanille, *The Semiotics of Passions: From States of Affairs to States of Feeling*. Translated by Paul Perron and Frank Collins. Foreword by Paul Perron and Paolo Fabri (Minnesota, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). The focus on the qualification of the characters/actants in the text is also emphasized in structural exegesis in biblical studies since late 1970s. See Aline Patte and Daniel Patte, *Structural Exegesis: From Theory to Practice*.

⁹³ See Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Joseph Courtés, “Generative Trajectory,” in *Semiotics and Language: An Analytical Dictionary*, Vol. I. Translated by Larry Crist, Daniel Patte, James Lee, Edward McMahan II, Gary Phillips, and Michael Rengstorf (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), 132-34.

⁹⁴ For example, see Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983).

⁹⁵ See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul The Apostle*. For a condense version of the book, see idem, *The Triumph of God: The Essence of Paul’s Thought*. Translated by Loren T. Stuckenbruck (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990). Here, Keck’s clarification about Paul’s logic of argument is noteworthy: “Still, arguments adduced to persuade others are not to be confused with the persuader’s own thinking about the subject matter the arguments reflect. To recognize this distinction is not to accuse Paul of thinking one thing and saying another but rather to acknowledge the difference between cognition and persuasion. The track along which Paul sought to move his readers’ thinking is not necessarily the same track along which his own thinking had already moved.” See Leander E. Keck, “Paul as Thinker,” *Interpretation* 47.1 (January 1993): 27. In his discussion of the Greco-Roman reciprocity system in Paul’s “collection project,” which is related the notion of gift in Paul’s vision of love (see chapter 7), Joubert writes, “In terms of the so-called ‘coherence-contingency’ scheme of Paul’s hermeneutic, he used the ‘stable, constant elements’ which underlay the ‘ideological’ basis of his gospel to persuade his communities to participate in the collection. He also employed new strategies and theological motives, which were necessitated by specific situations that he had to deal with, in order to reveal the ‘true’ nature of the collection. In this regard, Paul constantly emphasized the religious nature of this project which involved his communities in a reciprocal relationship not only

or Patte's notions of the warranting and dialogical levels in Paul's didactic discourse (see chapters 3 and 4).⁹⁶ The fluidity of meaning suggests that a text is more than a text. Depending on when, where, why, and how we read it, we focus on certain textual elements and aspects. As a result, a printed page can produce many texts. This phenomenon of "textualization" should not surprise us.⁹⁷ It is not unlike the way we can have different witness accounts of a same event. Hence, in Paul's letter to the Corinthian believers, to take a simple example, we should not confuse the contingent/dialogical dimension with the coherent/warranting dimension of the letter, which is often symbolic, metaphorical, or typological in nature.⁹⁸ As the former seeks to express

with Jerusalem, but also with God. Although the theological principles basic to Paul's convictional framework, such as the impact or God's grace and the Christ-event on the lives of believers, played a central role in his understanding of the collection, he also intertwined his thinking with praxis." See Stephan Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor: Reciprocity, Strategy and Theological Reflection in Paul's Collection* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 200), 6. Joubert's notions of ideology, convictional framework, and theological principles are not clearly differentiated and clarified, however.

⁹⁶ See Daniel Patte, "Method for a Structural Exegesis of Didactic Discourses: Analyses of 1 Thessalonians," *Semeia* 26 (1983): 85-129. For the result of such interpretive approach, see idem, *Paul's Faith and the Power of the Gospel: A Structural Introduction to the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983).

⁹⁷ This "textualization" phenomenon is comparable to Derrida's notion of "doubling commentary": "This moment of doubling commentary should no doubt have its place in a critical reading. To recognize and respect all its classical exigencies is not easy and requires all the instruments of traditional criticism. Without this recognition and this respect, critical production would risk developing in any direction at all and authorize itself to say almost anything. But this indispensable guardrail has always only *protected*, it has never *opened*, a reading. Yet if reading must not be content with doubling the text, it cannot legitimately transgress the text toward something other than it, toward a referent (a reality that is metaphysical, historical, psychobiographical, etc.) or toward a signified outside the text whose content could take place, could have taken place outside of language, that is to say, in the sense that we give here to that word, outside of writing in general." See Jacques Derrida, "... That Dangerous Supplement ...," in *Of Grammatology*. Translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University press, 1976), 158; idem, "Afterword: Toward an Ethic of Discussion," in *Limited Inc.* Edited by Gerald Graff (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988), 111-54. Ricoeur also speaks of a similar idea in terms of first trait and second trait of reading. He writes: "I would like to consider the act of reading as a dynamic activity that is not confined to repeating significations fixed forever, but which takes place as a prolonging of the itineraries of meaning opened up by the work of interpretation. Through this first trait, the act of reading accords with the idea of a norm-governed productivity to the extent that it may be said to be guided by a productive imagination at work in the text itself. Beyond this, I would like to see in the reading of a text such as the Bible a creative operation unceasingly employed in decontextualizing its meaning and recontextualizing it in today's *Sitz-im-Leben*. Through this second trait, the act of reading realizes the union of fiction and redescription that characterizes the imagination in the most pregnant sense of this term." See Paul Ricoeur, "The Bible and the Imagination," in *Figuring the Sacred*, 145.

⁹⁸ Beker writes: "Paul's coherent center must be viewed as a symbolic structure in which a primordial experience (Paul's call) is brought into language in a particular way. The symbolic structure comprises the language in which Paul expresses the Christ-event. That language is, for Paul, the apocalyptic language in Judaism, in which he lived and thought..." See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul The Apostle*, 15. Likewise, Patte speaks of the warranting level in Paul's letter in terms of a convictional pattern or self-evident truth that cannot be demonstrated logically. See *Paul's Faith and the Power of the Gospel*, xiii-30.

the latter in a concrete way that is understandable to a targeted audience, it is a *specific* and *contextual* manifestation of the latter.

Now if the Corinthian believers already accepted the gospel that Paul proclaimed, then the letter probably aims to either affirm and strengthen the belief-practice or redirect and transform the belief-practice that Paul thinks has gone astray. So while the coherent/warranting dimension remains more or less the same in various letters (as, after all, it evinces Paul's fundamental conviction), the contingent/dialogical dimension in these letters can vary according to Paul's perception of the need of the group. Within the same letter, the contingent/dialogical dimension may also have layers of discourses that aim to reinforce the coherent/warranting dimension that Paul has initially taught the believers, in brief, his convictions that are paradoxically marked and embodied in the power and message of the cross of Christ (1 Cor. 1:17-18).⁹⁹ For Paul, the cross is not a predestined event, since if the rulers of "this age" had known the hidden wisdom of God, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (2:8). Rather, the cross reveals the wisdom and power of God that the world rejects as foolishness and weakness (1:24).¹⁰⁰ Yet, this paradox exposes and deconstructs the *doxa* of differentiation and categorization that crucifies Christ and dehumanizes believers into nothing. As a result, that which does not and cannot appear according to social norms can now appear and be honored

⁹⁹ See Alexandra R. Brown, *The Cross and Human Transformation: Paul's Apocalyptic Word in First Corinthians* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995); Raymond Pickett, *The Cross in Corinth: The Social Significance of the Death of Jesus*. JSNT Supplement Series 143 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997); Wenhua Shi, *Paul's Message of the Cross as Body Language* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); V. Henry T. Nguyen, "The Identification of Paul's Spectacle of Death Metaphor in 1 Corinthians 4.9," *NTS* 53.4 (October 2007): 489-501.

¹⁰⁰ Ricoeur writes: "For all God's power, God only gives Christians the sign of divine weakness, which is the sign of God's love. To allow myself to be helped by the weakness of this love is ... to accept that God can be thought of only by means of the symbol of the Suffering Servant and by the incarnation of this symbol in the eminently contingent event of the cross of Jesus." See Paul Ricoeur, "'Whoever Loses Their Life for My Sake Will Find It,'" in *Figuring the Sacred*, 284.

according to the foolishness and weakness of God (1:28).¹⁰¹ This paradox of the cross that the world cannot make sense of and tries to annul ends up imploding the system or *doxa* of the Roman Empire.

This paradox characteristic of Paul's conviction also saturates the contingent/dialogical dimension. It is not limited to the coherent/warranting dimension of Paul's discourse. In the Lord's Supper discourse (11:17-34), for example, while we can view Paul's allusion to the tradition of the Lord's sayings as rhetorically manipulative – and thus a part of the contingent/dialogical dimension of his discourse – we cannot conclude that through its use Paul is necessarily authoritative and imposing as he tackles the discrimination in the church. The allusion can be figurative in signification – a part of the coherent/warranting dimension of the discourse – in particular when we give attention to the play of words on giving and receiving (see chapters 3 and 4). A portrayal of Paul as a rhetorician suggests that Paul “cunningly” uses the cross as a means to rein in the troublemakers.¹⁰² While Paul may be sincere in his rhetoric, we get the impression from the contingent/dialogical dimension of his discourse that the cross becomes a mere tool for him to exhort the others, as if it was not applicable to him. This of course would contradict the coherent/warranting dimension of Paul's discourse, including his confession that Christ died for all (cf. 8:11, 15:9-10; Gal. 2:20, Rom. 5:6-12). Indeed, it would contradict his own conviction and concern that the “cross of Christ might be emptied of its power” (1 Cor. 1:17). From what we have learnt about the *intertwining* coherent/warranting and contingent/dialogical dimensions – which is similar to Kristeva's notions of “the semiotic” and

¹⁰¹ See Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being: Hors-Texte*. Translated by Thomas A. Carlson. Foreword by David Tracy (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 88-95.

¹⁰² I am not using the adverb “cunningly” negatively to reflect Paul's character. Rather, I am thinking of Given's notion of Paul's rhetorical strategy in terms of ambiguity, cunning, and deception. See Mark D. Given, *Paul's True Rhetoric: Ambiguity, Cunning and Deception in Greece and Rome*. Emory Studies in Early Christianity (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001). For Given, Paul's strategy reflects “a mysterious, ambiguous, and finally *sophistic* God, who cares enough to be cunning and is devoted enough to be deceptive. Of that God, Paul is the True Apostle.” *Ibid.*, 181.

“the symbolic” and Greimas’s “semantics” and “syntax” – we need to clarify which dimension of the letter that we view as most significant in our interpretation and what difference does it make to choose one rather than the other.

V. Conclusion: Scriptural Criticism (An Interplay of Singularity-Plurality)

We end this chapter by way of scriptural criticism because it highlights the interpretive choices that we make in our biblical interpretation. Developed by theologians, biblical scholars, and church historians,¹⁰³ this critical approach not only accentuates our “thrownness” into the world, it also stresses that *all interpretations* are contextual. This acknowledgment of our contextuality is important to dialogue as it can prevent us from absolutizing and relativizing any interpretation. The three main interpretive aspects and choices are:

- *three basic modes of interpretation (methodologies)*: the analytical, contextual-pragmatic, and hermeneutical-theological modes used for the interwoven interpretation of the three poles.
- *three poles (what is interpreted)*: the scriptural text, the believers’ life-context, and the believers’ religious perception of life, which are interdefining each other on the basis of the believer-interpreter’s three modes of existence.
- *three modes of existence (aspects of the believer-readers’ existence)*: autonomy, relationality, and heteronomy – that is, respectively, each believer-reader’s sense of personal identity; her or his place in the web of social relations, including power/authority relations; and her or his religious experience, including encounter or lack of encounter with the holy and a sense of the presence or absence of the divine.¹⁰⁴

Eugene TeSelle further summarizes scriptural criticism as thus:

¹⁰³ See the ten volumes in “Romans Through History and Culture Series.” For the theoretical and pragmatic reflections on this approach in textual analysis, see the first and the tenth volume: *Reading Israel in Romans and Modern Interpretations of Romans*.

¹⁰⁴ Cristina Grenholm, and Daniel Patte, “Overture: Receptions, Critical Interpretations, and Scriptural Criticism,” in *Reading Israel in Romans*, 35.

On the basis of a consideration of the actual practice of interpretation, they [Grenholm and Patte] find

three “poles” (what is interpreted): the scriptural text, the believer’s life context, and the believer’s religious perception of life.

They root these in

three modes of existence on the part of the reader or believer: autonomy, relationality, and heteronomy,

and they defend, furthermore, the legitimacy of

three basic “modes of interpretation” or methodologies: analytical, contextual-pragmatic, and hermeneutical-theological,

which in each scriptural interpretation, is reflected by

three interpretive frames: analytical, contextual, and hermeneutical.¹⁰⁵

While it may not be apparent in the citations above, Grenholm and Patte actually associate (1) the scriptural text (one of the three interpreted poles) with autonomy (one of three modes of existence) and the analytical mode of interpretation, (2) the believer’s life context with relationality and the contextual-pragmatic mode of interpretation, and (3) the believer’s religious perception of life with heteronomy and the hermeneutical-theological mode of interpretation. Let us unpack these sentences.¹⁰⁶

First, the word “scriptural” in scriptural criticism simply foregrounds the fact that the Christian Bible has been interpreted as the Word to live by for/by the believing communities. Wilfred Cantwell Smith’s notion of “Scripture” as a “bilateral term” that speaks of the dynamic relationship between the holy/sacred text and its community of believers is pertinent here.¹⁰⁷ As such, both the “Scripture” and the community are understood dynamically in terms of a living relationship with each other throughout the ages. The notion of a community as a group of believers should not be simply assumed and essentialized. Neither should the meaning of

¹⁰⁵ Eugene TeSelle, “Introduction – Engaging Scripture: Patristic Interpretation of the Bible,” in *Engaging Augustine on Romans: Self, Context, and Theology in Interpretation*, 1.

¹⁰⁶ See Daniel Patte, “A Western Biblical Scholar *Reading Romans with Greek Fathers and Eastern Orthodox Biblical Scholars*,” in *Greek Patristic and Eastern Orthodox Interpretations of Romans*, 207

¹⁰⁷ As a “bilateral term ... that inherently implies ... a relationship,” the scripture is “a human activity” that reveals “the relation between a people and the universe, in the light of their perception of a given text.” See Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *What is Scripture? A Comparative Approach* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 17, 18.

“Scripture” be fixed. Furthermore, the word “Scripture” does not necessarily denote and connote a confessional stance. Scriptural criticism respects and acknowledges that, for believers, these scriptures are inspired writings that hold invaluable place for them. It seeks to avoid objectifying these writings since they embody and reveal a living and dynamic relationship between believers and divine. To let the other be the other in our critical attempt to understand the other, we need to clarify our interpretive process. This leads to our second point.

As David Pellauer highlights Ricoeur’s notion of the autonomy of the text,¹⁰⁸ we note that the text also creates its own world, apart from the (possible) intention of the writer and the reader.¹⁰⁹ Of course, the intention of the writer and the reader cannot be dismissed. But, as we have argued, meaning is multidimensional and relational in the sense that it arrives through a dynamic con-fusion of horizons between text and reader. The meaning of the text is not entirely at the mercy of the reader. As such, not only the social locations and worldview of the text should be analyzed, the social locations and worldview of the interpreters must also be critically examined. This leads to our third point.

In connecting the believer’s religious (or lack of religious) perception of life with heteronomy and the hermeneutical-theological mode of interpretation, scriptural criticism highlights the inevitable “thrownness” of humanity in the world with others. That is to say, the world is outside and inside us. Thus as human beings, regardless of how critical we strive to become in our critical analysis of the texts, the meaning effects of the text and our own embodied perception always saturate and overflow our attempts to articulate them. The otherness of the

¹⁰⁸ David Pellauer, “The Significance of the Text,” in *Studies in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*. Edited by Charles E. Regan (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1979), 107.

¹⁰⁹ See Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” in *The Rustle of Language*. Translated by Richard Howard (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 49-55; Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?” in *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 102-20.

text and even of ourselves *somehow* disrupts our control and mastery. We can silence it, reduce it, order it, reject it, and even marginalize it, but the otherness remains, nonetheless.

Why am I so concerned with our interpretive process? Because it can kill or bring life to people. Having grown up in a multiracial, multireligious, and multicultural environment in Malaysia, I experienced discrimination caused by the configurations of power relations of “races,” “religions,” genders, cultures, politics, and economics. For me, the study of critical theories is not an abstract exercise. These theories are performative. They have concrete impacts on the quality of life. Given this situation, my question is: How can diversity be celebrated without absolutizing it by representing it as a pure singularity (when diversity is “fixed as an absolute”)?¹¹⁰ How can diversity retain its dynamic without being assimilated into a *static* universal? Or without being subjugated to a *static* universal? Can love be a potential answer to this question? These questions are pertinent to our reading of 1 Corinthians, in particular if the main concern of Paul in the letter is to promote and maintain concord, order, and unity of the community.¹¹¹

It is, however, important to note that singularity cannot be absolutized.¹¹² In the words of Jean-Luc Nancy, “Identity is by definition not an absolute distinction, removed from everything

¹¹⁰ As Glissant would say, when writing about the notions of Relation and creolization in Martinican language, ethnic and national identities to avoid a nostalgic ideology that asserts essences and excludes differences. For Glissant, contradictions in Relation are important for social changes. While Glissant endorses totality, he uses science such as the Relativity Theory to describe it as not totalitarian: “not imposed a priori, not fixed as an absolute. And, consequently, for the mind, it is neither a restrictive dogmatism nor the skepticism of probabilist thought.” See Edouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*. Translated by Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 134.

¹¹¹ See Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991).

¹¹² Nancy writes, “The absolute must be the absolute of its own absoluteness, or not be at all. In other words: to be absolutely alone, it is not enough that I be so; I must also be alone being alone – and this of course is contradictory. The logic of the absolute violates the absolute. It implicates it in a relation that it refuses and precludes by its essence.” See Jean-Luc Nancy, “The Inoperative Community,” in *The Inoperative Community*. Theory and History of Literature 76. Edited by Peter Connor. Translated by Peter Connor (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 4.

and, therefore, distinct from nothing: it is always the other of another identity.”¹¹³ In other words, there is no pure identity. So when the Malaysian government in 1970s designated the Malays (the majority of the population who must be Muslims by birth)¹¹⁴ as the *bumiputera*” (meaning, “prince of the earth”), since the government wants to promote diversity and unity of the country, the Malays should not be isolated and singled out from the rest of the people. Singularity takes place at the limit or in the face of the others. The naming that aims to help the Malays to compete with Chinese and Indians by granting them preferential treatments at the expense of other ethnic groups is problematic when it is reified and essentialized instead of being pragmatic. In a recent article, Michael Schuman finds that this “affirmative-action program has become so ingrained in the Malaysian psyche that it is akin to a national ideology,” where “3 in 4 of the poorest people in Malaysia are still *bumiputera*.”¹¹⁵ When the designation is reified, it may lock the *bumiputera*

¹¹³ Jean-Luc Nancy, “Eulogy for the Mêlée (*For Sarajevo, March ippis*),” in *Being Singular Plural*, Translated by Robert D. Richardson and Anne E. O’Byrne (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 149. “It is not that there is no ‘identity.’ A culture is single and unique. (If this is what one must settle for in the word ‘culture,’ which seems to identify already that with which it is concerned. But this word identifies precisely nothing. It is to settle for short-circuiting all the difficulties that bear down en masse if one tries to say ‘people’ ‘nation,’ ‘civilization,’ ‘spirit,’ ‘personality’)” (152). “A pure identity cancels itself out; it can no longer identify itself. Only what is identical to itself is identical to itself. As such, it turns in a circle and never makes it into existence” (153). When it seeks to identify itself nonetheless, as in the case of the Nazi, “it drags the other along in order to carry it into the abyss. The absolute and vertiginous law of the *proper* is that in appropriating its own purity, it alienates itself *purely* and simply” (154).

¹¹⁴ According to *World Christian Encyclopedia*, Malaysia’s population as of 2007 is 27.17 million, where Muslims occupy 60.4% of the population; Buddhists, 19.2%; Hindus, 6.3%; Confucians, Daoists, and Chinese folk religionists, 2.6%, and Christians, 9.1% (Roman Catholics, 3.3%; Protestants, 3%; Anglicans, 0.9%; Independents, 0.8%). Quoted from *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Edited by Daniel Patte (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 757.

¹¹⁵ Schuman writes, “After Kuala Lumpur was struck by race riots in 1969, a shaken leadership determined that communal peace was impossible without economic balance. The result was the New Economic Policy (NEP), introduced in 1971, which aimed to raise the Malays’ share of the economic pie. Malays were given preferential access to public contracts and university scholarships. Any company listing on the stock market had to sell 30% of its shares to *bumiputra* investors ... Malays even receive special discounts on home purchases.” See Michael Schuman’s article in *Time* magazine entitled “To Modernize, Can Malaysia Move Beyond Race?” at <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2013695-1,00.html> (accessed on September 15, 2013).

into a fixed identity and category of experience, sealing them off from the very transformation that the naming seeks to effect.¹¹⁶

Indeed, if singularity is *marked* by dynamic relations in the face of the others, then singularity must be contextual. This contextuality does not mean that singularity will become relativism. But as Alain Badiou says, speaking of love: “There is singularity only insofar as there is universality.”¹¹⁷ That is to say, singularity is not a particularism and universality must be able to address singularity as it is the interplay of singularities. Nancy also places love at the heart of this singular-plural dynamic. For him, it is in love, in the beating of the heart, or in the chiasmic touching-being touched where the subject is a being-with-others.¹¹⁸ Perhaps this is why Paul speaks of believers as the *σῶμα Χριστοῦ καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους* (12:27),¹¹⁹ where *καί* functions

¹¹⁶ Agamben’s notion of “example” also shows that by naming something as an example, “it transforms singularities into a member of a class, whose meaning is defined by a common property.” See Giorgio Agamben, “Example,” in *The Coming Community*. Translated by Michael Hardt. Theory Out of Bounds, Vol. 1 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 9. This “common property” may reduce singularities within the *bumiputera*, resulting in the silencing of differing voices within the group.

¹¹⁷ Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*. Cultural Memory in the Present. Translated by Ray Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 97.

¹¹⁸ See Jean-Luc Nancy, “Shattered Love,” in *The Inoperative Community*. Translated by Lisa Garbus and Simona Sawhney, 82-109; idem., “An Experience of Heart,” in *Dis-Enclosure: The Deconstruction of Christianity*. Translated by Bettina Bergo, Gabriel Malenfant, and Michael B. Smith (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 75-80.

¹¹⁹ What do these two neutral nouns *μέλος* and *μέρος* mean? For *μέλος*, the basic meanings are: a limb of the body (both literally and metaphorically) or a form or a feature in music such as the tune or melody (both literally and metaphorically) (*LSJ Supplement*, 1099). For example, a person can be a member of a family or be out of tune in what s/he is doing. A sense of (or lack of) harmony is implied in the usage of *μέλος*, in particular when the body and its members are often analogized as the *polis* (“city”) and its citizens. As of *μέρος*, it can mean (1) a share or portion, (2) a heritage or lot, or one’s turn of doing something (as in *ἀνά μέρος*), or a part from the whole (as in *ἐκ μέρους*), (3) a category, (4) a district, and (5) a “species or element in Neo-Platonism” (*LSJ Supplement*, 1104-105). Whether there is a sense of hierarchy and belonging embedded in the uses of *μέλος* and *μέρος*, *μέλος* and *μέρος* can be subsumed into serving the whole. The part and the whole may *mutually* support one another (cf. 12:19-20), as Chang tries to argue, but the categorization of the part and the whole can be problematic. See Kei Eun Chang, *The Community, The Individual And The Common Good: Τὸ Ἴδιον and Τὸ Συμμέρον in the Greco-Roman World and Paul* (New York and London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 10-13. Concerning the metaphor of the body as the city, Mitchell writes, “It has long been acknowledged by New Testament scholars that the metaphor of the body for the society or state was extremely common in ancient political literature, and must have influenced Paul’s Christian formulation of it in 1 Cor 12.” See Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 157. Horst, however, argues that “[t]here can be no question in Paul of any essential influence of the Greek concept of organism or of any mystical and speculative broadening of the metaphor into Gnosticism” (565). Rather, “the unity of a body with many members [which are “already integrated” (564)] ... is the ongoing act of the creative will of God” (563). All the quotes come from J. Horst, “μέλος,” in *TDNT* 4: 555-68.

epexegetically. *Namely*, believers are “the body of Christ” *insofar as* they are μέλη ἐκ μέρους in *living out* the body of Christ.¹²⁰

Regarding μέλη ἐκ μέρους, most translations render it as believers *individually* or each person (for his/her part, cf. BDF §212) constitutes the body of Christ (*ESV, NAB, RSV, NRSV, KJV, NKJV, NIV, and NIB*). Joseph Fitzmyer further thinks the Vulgate “strangely reads the second clause as: *et membra de membro*, ‘and members from a member.’”¹²¹ While Thiselton finds the “syntax of the verse [12:27] fittingly combines singular and plural,”¹²² he does not elaborate further. Likewise, in arguing for an “organic part-whole connective ethic” in Paul’s political-soteriological notion of τὸ συμφέρον, “a term widely used in ancient political, rhetorical, philosophical, and ethical contexts,”¹²³ Kei Eun Chang does not address this peculiar clause. He does, however, argue that “τὸ συμφέρον ... is unthinkable until believers grasp the value of ἀγάπη in their part-whole relationship”¹²⁴ with others. Love, in other words, not only connects the part and whole together in τὸ συμφέρον, it also characterizes τὸ συμφέρον.

In the clause of μέλη ἐκ μέρους, we note that the preposition ἐκ can signify a “beyond,” an “outside,” an “opening up,” a “de-parting,” a “means,” or a “spacing.” These possibilities not only highlight the connection and separation in the touching and spacing of the body parts, they also avert a fixed source of the origin and a totality. The preposition ἐκ in μέλη ἐκ μέρους reveals and conceals simultaneously the interface of μέλη and μέρους. So even if the body of Christ is an

¹²⁰ Although Kim does not address μέλη ἐκ μέρους, his notion of the “body of Christ” in terms of the cross of Christ and the cruciform lifestyle, instead of an organic body and organization which implies fixed boundaries and membership works well with my reading of μέλη ἐκ μέρους. See Yung Suk Kim, *Christ’s Body in Corinth: The Politics of a Metaphor*. Paul in Critical Contexts (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008).

¹²¹ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Yale Bible 32 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 482.

¹²² Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1012-013.

¹²³ See Kei Eun Chang, *The Community, The Individual And The Common Good*, 3. He explains: “By a rhetoric of the part-whole, I mean a traditional Greco-Roman ethical discourse in which the community (‘whole’) and/or the seeking the advantage of the whole (τὸ συμφέρον) become the criterion for the proper behavior of its individual members (‘parts’).” *Ibid.*, 11.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 192.

organic whole, μέλη ἐκ μέρους prevents it from being turned into an identity in and for itself. The body of Christ is always in touch with the others. It is a body broken that gives birth to life. Indeed, a life that gives birth to lives at the limit of the body. That is to say, the body of Christ is members beyond a member precisely because it is a crucified and resurrected body, taking place at the limit of humanness. In fact, like the features of a metaphor, the μέλη ἐκ μέρους create and extend the body of Christ. As Paul stresses in the tradition of the Lord's Supper, the body of Christ is a gesture of thanksgiving, broken, given, and shared among people. It is not a sterile body. Nancy writes: "That's why the body, bodily, *never happens, least of all when it's named and convoked*. For us, the body is always sacrificed: eucharist."¹²⁵ Perhaps we can say that a body of Christ that is broken is a "community without community"?¹²⁶ It happens *each time in every* thanksgiving, breaking, sharing, eating, drinking, and proclaiming until the Lord comes (11:26).

This relationship between one and many in 12:27 is already mentioned in 12:12 when Paul writes that "for just as the body is one, namely (καί), it has many members, all the members of the body are one body, just as Christ is also." In case we subsume everything under this oneness, Paul clarifies that "indeed, the body is not one member *but many*" (καὶ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα οὐκ ἔστιν ἓν μέλος, ἀλλὰ πολλά) (12:14). Paul even speaks of the relations of members in terms of suffering and rejoicing together (12:26), just as love rejoices with the truth (13:6) and endures all things (13:7). Paul does not say what the foot, hand, eye, or ear is or should do, as if a hand can perform its function without other members. A hand is not just a hand. It cannot be just a

¹²⁵ See Jean-Luc Nancy, "Corpus," in *Corpus*. Translated by Richard A. Rand (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 5.

¹²⁶ See *Deconstruction In A Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*. Edited with a commentary by John D. Caputo (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 106-24.

hand. It has many parts. It is a hand precisely because it is *also* a hand-foot-ear-eye-etc.¹²⁷ As such, the members of a member are beyond a member. Thus no members can decide who should or can be a part of the body (12:18), unless they want to sever themselves from existence. The hyphens are indispensable. They simultaneously signify a touch in connecting and separating, a touch that reveals and conceals that limit at the touch.

Using Badiou's example (in set theory) of the cat's cells in a set of elements of living beings, we can think of the cells as parts from a part (i.e., cat) in the counting of living beings. Yet, the cells are also outside and beyond the element "cat" in the set since they have chemicals that are not parts of the living beings.¹²⁸ This is why the body of Christ, in light of μέλη ἐκ μέρους, cannot be objectified. A certain part will always be in excess of the counting operator or the definition. In Badiou's language, we can say that the body of Christ is not an event but an "evental site,"¹²⁹ where the event of μέλη ἐκ μέρους may take place. The translation of καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους into *et membra de membro* is indeed strange. It is a strangeness that let the other be the other as we speak of the other; a strangeness that keeps the individuality of the body members from being absorbed into a generality (or an economy of exchange) that measures and polices the relations among them. Without being exposed to the limit at members beyond a member, the body of Christ can become a means to hierarchy, abuse, and exploitation. But as each member realizes its singularity at the limit (in the face of the other), it also realizes its need

¹²⁷ This was my personal experience when I broke my right foot in the summer of 2009 and had to spend six months recuperating from the injury which left me with a platinum plate and six screws implanted onto my bone. When I started to learn to walk again, I realized that my body and mind also need to help my right leg to walk.

¹²⁸ See Alain Badiou, *Number and Numbers*. Translated by Robin MacKay (Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008), 62-63, 71-72.

¹²⁹ Badiou writes: "I will term *evental site* an entirely abnormal multiple; that is, a multiple such that none of its elements are presented in the situation. The site, itself, is presented, but 'beneath' it nothing from which it is composed is presented. As such, the site is not a part of the situation. I will also say of such a multiple that it is *on the edge of the void*, or *foundational*." See Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*. Translated by Oliver Feltham (London and New York: Continuum, 2005), 175.

of the others. This is why the limit at the semiotic and symbolic (Kristeva) or semantics and syntax (Greimas) in the process of signifying must not be overlooked and con-fused.¹³⁰

Commenting on 1 Cor. 12:27, Giorgio Agamben thus says that “the remnant [μέλη ἐκ μέρους?] is precisely what prevents divisions from being exhaustive and excludes the parts and the all from the possibility of coinciding with themselves.”¹³¹ The “division of divisions” in μέλη ἐκ μέρους is *ongoing*; it cannot be incorporated into any system.¹³² It is a division that gives birth to division; a division that renews itself, again and again. Is this not the situation of most of the believers: discounted and abandoned by the Empire and yet called into existence in Christ (1:26-28)? Does Paul not call himself and his co-workers the “refuse of the world” (4:13)? Paradoxically, what is unaccounted for or “[t]he remnant is therefore both an excess of the all with regard to the part and of the part with regard to the all.”¹³³ The body of Christ cannot be objectified; after all it is God who calls people into the fellowship of Jesus Christ (1:9). The “parts beyond a part” are the body of Christ as they identify with the foolishness and weakness of God: the crucified Christ. It is an identification empowered and revealed by the spirit (2:10-12). No wonder Paul speaks of the gifts of the spirit in the same chapter in a very similar manner that he speaks of the body (12:7-11; cf. Rom. 8:9-11).

In other occurrences where ἐκ μέρους appears (1 Cor. 13:9, 10, and 12), we find a sense of continuity and discontinuity interrelated: connection and separation at the same time. Believers are not in solitary but solidarity, as Edouard Glissant would say.¹³⁴ But such solidarity does not erase differences. It is a solidarity of “division of divisions.” This capacity for the

¹³⁰ See Juri Lotman, “On the Semiosphere” in *Signs Systems Studies* 17 (1984): 5-23.

¹³¹ Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains*, 56.

¹³² In the words of Agamben: “The people is neither the all nor the part, neither the majority nor the minority. Instead, it is that which can never coincide with itself, as all or as part, that which infinitely remains or resists in each division, and, with all due respect to those who govern us, never allows us to be reduced to a majority or a minority.” *Ibid.*, 57.

¹³³ *Idem.*

¹³⁴ See Edouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, 131.

“division of divisions” without predicates is the name of love for Agamben. He writes, “Love does not allow for copulative predication, it never has a quality or an essence as its object. ‘I love beautiful-brunette-tender Mary,’ not ‘I love Mary because she is beautiful, brunette, tender’ in the sense of her possessing such and such an attribute.”¹³⁵ Notice the “hyphens” in “beautiful-brunette-tender Mary.” They embody the sharing and separation at the same time that *somehow already* takes place towards Mary in the love of “I.”¹³⁶ For Badiou, this *co-existing* of “the Two” in love cannot be reduced, lest the couple is assimilated by the other or the third person.¹³⁷ In emphasizing “the Two,” Badiou highlights the “scene” or the world created *together* by the love couple *singularly*, a point that Patte also emphasizes.¹³⁸

Hence when we emphasize unity or the so-called homogenizing “melting pot” of racial, cultural, and other differences (as the Malaysian government has been trying to do through its education systems, which cause the pervasive phenomenon of “brain drain”), we note that the common good implies singularity. Without differences there is no differentiation, which means there is no need to speak of the common good. The common good spoken in terms of the “melting pot” may sound good, but “melted” according to whose measurement and for whose benefit? Paul’s concern about the schisms in the church is a case in point since each group strives to be the “melting pot” of others. As believers make their own groups according to their own criteria,¹³⁹ dividing up and using Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ for their own purposes (1:12-13) instead of letting the Lord doing the assignment (3:5; cf. 12:11, 18), they objectify and

¹³⁵ Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains*, 128.

¹³⁶ This notion of “somehow already” is highlighted in Agamben’s analysis of Heidegger’s notion of facticity of *Da-sein*. See Giorgio Agamben, “On Potentiality,” in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*. Edited and translated with an Introduction by Daniel Heller-Rozaen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 183.

¹³⁷ See Alain Badiou, “The Scene of Two” (translated by Barbara P. Fulks), *lacanian ink* 21 (Spring 2003): 42-55.

¹³⁸ See Daniel Patte, *Paul’s Faith and the Power of the Gospel*, 72-76.

¹³⁹ See Andrew D. Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1-6* (Leiden; New York; Köln: Brill, 1993).

“pigeonhole” themselves.¹⁴⁰ They become their own master by enslaving themselves to their own criteria. With their wisdom, they empty out the power of the word of the cross. But the cross of love cannot be co-opted. It is nothing: not a *thing* that can be objectified. It is an *aporia*, a *kenōsis*. Consequently, those who *embody* the cross cannot objectify *and* be objectified. They are kenotic in character in terms of excess (cf. Gal. 2:20). The *kenōsis* takes place as the human wisdom annuls itself *when* it rejects the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:19-25). By rejecting the wisdom of God the human wisdom disqualifies itself as wisdom and crucifies Jesus (2:8). Thus not only does Paul write: “By the grace of God I am who I am” (15:10a), he also stresses in 15:9a that he is the least of the apostles (“Ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι ὁ ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων”). It appears that as μέλη ἐκ μέρους, the body of Christ (viz., the crucified and the resurrected body), universalizes and singularizes at the same time.

The body of Christ is not a “melting pot,” however. There are always remainders. In evoking the name of “melting pot,” do we posit that it is supposed to take place or that it is not already in process?¹⁴¹ Betraying its own name, the “melting pot” does not melt away differences. Neither can it reify differences, as if we are not already interrelated. It makes differences go underground and, as such, heightens them. At best, it mixes differences together and becomes polyphonous in character. At worst, it ignores them and short-circuits any potential dialogue. But, what stands out in this dynamic play of singularity and plurality is the flesh-and-blood person with her/his social locations, agency, responsibility, and mood/feeling. The concreteness and the changing situations of the person mark the flesh-and-blood person. A person is always an inter-

¹⁴⁰ While it is difficult to reconstruct the socio-historical situation about the divided groups based upon the slogan in 1:12, it is unlikely that the factions were made up by Paul as the issue of factionalism seems to be predominant in 1 Corinthians. For an overview of different reasons that cause the divisions (whether theological, social-economic, or political), see Oh-Young Kwon, *1 Corinthians 1-4: Reconstructing Its Social and Rhetorical Situation and Re-Reading Its Cross-Culturally for Korean-Confucian Christians Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 14-58.

¹⁴¹ See Jean-Luc Nancy, “Eulogy for the Mêlée (*For Sarajevo, March ipps*),” in *Being Singular Plural*, 145-58.

corporeal person, as we receive our body from our mother and father as well as from their fathers and mothers. As an inter-corporeal being, we receive our body from the love of our parents. Love, felt in the beating of our heart, opens us up toward the other and what is yet to come. It is a *dynamic* condition that sustains our faith and hope in our relatedness with one another. Without this beating of the heart, there is no (continuation of) life.

A society or a community is not just consisted of separate individuals coming together, but of individuals who are always already interrelated with many others.¹⁴² An individual is always already an individual-with-others.¹⁴³ An individual's individuality is, likewise, always an individuality-with-others. Our being-with-one-another does not erase and discount our individuality. It accentuates it. This "being-with" is at the limit (or intersection) where continuity and discontinuity and similarity and difference take place. We may resemble our parents in many ways, but we also differ from them in no fewer ways. Singularity and plurality need not be oppositional. They sustain one another at the limit. Such a co-existing is not dialectical. There is no teleological synthesis, a static returning to the self, or essentialization of the other. The self and the other co-arise in a dynamic relationality, unpredictable and inexhaustible. In chapter 2 and the Methodological Appendix, we will elaborate on this differential quality of singularity when we discuss the concept of "typology," using the notion of "narrative semantics" in

¹⁴² See the conversation between Paul Tillich and some Buddhists in Japan, analyzed by Choan-Seng Song in *Third-Eye Theology: Theology in Formation in Asian Settings*. Rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 21-22. As Jacobsen points out, people in ancient near eastern cultures usually "operate in terms of collectives rather than pluralities made up of individuals. A family or a people is not a congregation of individuals each with their own life and fortunes but rather a living organism, and what happens to any part helps or harms the whole." See Thorkild Jacobsen, "Foreword," in *Love and Joy: Law, Language and Religion in Ancient Israel*, xviii. One may critique the use of the metaphor of "a living organism" to describe a society, as Campany points out, but what Jacobsen says about the "collectives" character still holds. See Robert F. Campany, "On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)," *History of Religions*, vol. 42, no. 4 (May 2003): 287-319 (295-96).

¹⁴³ "And we ourselves [Chinese] are communal first before being individuated into isolate units. Our individual integrity is communal by nature; to take us as lone insular individuals destroys our personal individuality. In fact, it is *unnatural* (against our grain, against nature) for us to first think of units, then add those units to make up a totality." See Kuang-Ming Wu, *On The "Logic" Of Togetherness: A Cultural Hermeneutics* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 1998), 17.

Greimas's and Patte's structural semiotics. This emphasis on "typology" comes from our very embodied existence in the world, as Merleau-Ponty first points out and then expanded at the social level by Pierre Bourdieu (see chapter 2). As we will see in chapter 1, this embodied perception of the world and the focus on typology is in tune with the Chinese *yin-yang* holistic and dynamic worldview, a non-dualistic worldview also found in Greco-Roman cultures.¹⁴⁴ In chapters 3-7, we will argue, with case studies, that Paul's notion of love also embodies the "being-with" quality: "the (singular plural) condition of presence in general [understood] as copresence."¹⁴⁵ This notion of "with" is vital to Paul. As Paul speaks of how the Son of God loves him and dies for him and how he no longer lives but Christ lives in him (Gal. 2:20), we see the notions of "with" and limit at work in Paul's understanding of love. Elsewhere Paul even writes: "we are always carrying with us the death of Jesus (τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ) in the body, *so that* the life of Jesus may appear in the body of ours (ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ)" (2 Cor. 4:10). It is with this character of love that Paul responds to his calling as the apostle of the Gentiles.

¹⁴⁴ Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 3-37.

¹⁴⁵ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*, 40.

Chapter 1 – Scholarly Interpretations of Paul’s Vision of Love: The Modes of Existence of Interpretations

My argument is: yes, “natives” are represented as defiled images – that is the fact of our history. But must we represent them a second time by turning history “upside down,” this time giving them the sanctified status of the “non-duped”?¹

– Rey Chow

[T]he body, as represented in the brain, may constitute the indispensable frame of reference for the neural processes that we experience as the mind; that our very organism rather than some absolute external reality is used as the ground reference for the constructions we make of the world around us and for the construction of the ever-present sense of subjectivity that is part and parcel of our experiences; that our most refined thoughts and best actions, our greatest joys and deepest sorrows, use the body as a yardstick.² – Antonio R. Damasio

I. Why a Renewed Study of Paul’s Discourse of Love in 1 Corinthians?

In the previous chapter, we learned of the importance to examine the mode of existence that we *primarily* assume or privilege in each of the three interpretive poles (e.g., contextual, textual, and hermeneutical) in our biblical interpretation. In this chapter, we will, through our review of scholarly interpretations of Paul’s notion of love in 1 Corinthians, further show how our modes of existence affect the way we see, formulate, and address the questions that we find in our interpretation of Paul’s notion of love. Since Paul speaks of the “call” in the beginning of 1 Corinthians and since honor and shame are pivotal values in ancient Mediterranean cultures, we will demonstrate that the “call” and the value of honor can, likewise, be interpreted in the framework of either autonomy, relationality, or heteronomy. Here, we should not be surprised that the ancient texts cited by scholars to support their interpretations of Paul’s love can, similarly, be interpreted in different modes of existence.

¹ Rey Chow, “Where Have All the Natives Gone?” in *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 54.

² Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes’ Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Avon Books, 1994), xvi.

(i) The Multi-dimension of Religious Phenomena

Religion is at all times more or less both traditional and individual; both external and internal; both institutional, rational, and volitional. It always answers more or less to the needs of authority and society; of reason and proof; of interior sustenance and purification.³ – Baron Friedrich von Hügel

How do we respond when we witness Hindus bearing the *kavadi* that has metal skewers pierced to their bodies, cheeks, and tongues without causing much damage to the body?⁴ How do we feel in the midst of the act of spirit possession in Chinese temples,⁵ which perhaps resemble Iamblichus’s description of “divine inspiration and possession” as the result of “divine descent and illumination” and “human ascent and receptivity”?⁶ How do we understand this double identity in the same body in one’s relationship with the divine (cf. Gal. 2:20)? How do we make sense of such charismatic phenomena as prophesying, profound songs writing (by the “unschooled”), tongues speaking, etc. in many Chinese churches? The liminality of these numinous or religious experiences that overwhelm our bodily feeling/sense and rational thought can certainly be described and analyzed. But, it cannot be adequately articulated. In pointing out that reason lacks “purely rational accounts of reason” but relies on supplements outside itself,⁷ William Franke argues that for reason “to fully realize itself, [it] must be kept open to the infinite

³ Baron Friedrich von Hügel, *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and Her Friends*. Vol. 1: *Introduction and Biographies* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co; London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1923), 54. For von Hügel, the three *intertwining* elements of religion are: (1) “authoritative, historical, traditional institutional” (cf. relationality) (ibid., 51), (2) “reasoning, argumentative, and abstractive” (cf. autonomy) (ibid., 52), and (3) “experimental and mystical” (cf. heteronomy), where religion “is rather felt than seen or reasoned about, is loved and lived rather than analyzed, is action and power, rather than either external fact or intellectual verifications” (ibid., 53).

⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thaipusam> (accessed November 20, 2013).

⁵ For example, see Alan J. A. Elliott, *Chinese Spirit-Medium Cults in Singapore*. Monographs on Social Anthropology, No. 14 (England: Department of Anthropology of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1955), 26-29; Jean DeBernardi, *The Way that Lives in the Heart: Chinese Popular Religion and Spirit Mediums in Penang, Malaysia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

⁶ Crystal Addey, “Divine Possession and Divination in the Greco-Roman World: The Evidence from Iamblichus’s *On the Mysteries*,” in *Spirit Possession and Trance: New Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Edited by Bettina E. Schmidt and Lucy Huskinson (London and New York: Continuum, 2010), 171-85.

⁷ William Franke, *Poetry and Apocalypse: Theological Disclosure of Poetic Language* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 47.

and indefinable that operates within it and yet is not comprehended by it. Reason must be willing to sacrifice any finite identity or definition of itself.”⁸ For reason to be reason-able, it cannot close itself off from “the infinite and the indefinable.”⁹ From the field of neurobiology, Antonio Damasio even argues that reason, emotions, and feelings are inseparably intertwined.¹⁰

If these numinous experiences cannot be just dismissed and demonized as superstitious and delusionary, we need to articulate them with the awareness that what appears to be “strange” to us may be quite “normal” for others, and vice versa. The interweaving of (religious/poetic) “feeling” and manifestations of such “feeling” in religious beliefs and practices about one’s meaning, concern, and relationship with the other/Other in the world, as Ninian Smart highlights in his descriptions of religion – (1) doctrinal and philosophical, (2) ritual/practical, (3) mythic/narrative, (4) experiential/emotional, (5) ethical/legal, (6) organizational/social, (7) material/artistic, and (8) political¹¹ – should warn us not to be reductive¹² in our interpretation of religious phenomena. So even if “feeling is the deeper source of religion, and that philosophic and theological formulas are secondary products, like translations of a text into another tongue,”¹² the critique of “religion” as an *ideologically constructed* category to order and

⁸ Ibid., 48.

⁹ Using Agamben’s language, we can think of all potentiality is always already impotentiality in the sense that “there is truly potentiality only where the potentiality to not-be does not lag behind actuality but passes folly into it as such. This does not mean that it disappears in actuality; on the contrary, it preserves itself as such in actuality. What is truly potential is thus what has exhausted all its impotentiality in bringing it wholly into the act as such.” See Giorgio Agamben, “On Potentiality,” in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*. Edited and translated with an Introduction by Daniel Heller-Rozaen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 183.

¹⁰ From his “[t]wo decades of clinical and experimental work with a large number of neurological patients,” Damasio finds that “reason may not be as pure as most of us think it is or wish it were, that emotions and feelings may not be intruders in the bastion of reason at all ... The strategies of human reason probably did not develop ... without the guiding force of the mechanisms of biological regulation, of which emotion and feeling and notable expressions.” See Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes’ Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human*, xii. This intertwining of emotion and reason echoes what we find in Plato’s second speech in *Phaedrus*.

¹¹ Ninian Smart, *Dimensions of the Sacred: An Anatomy of the World’s Beliefs* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996).

¹² William James, “Lecture XVIII: Philosophy,” in *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*. (Megalodon Entertainment LLC, 2008), 365.

represent one's "feeling" and lived experience should not be overlooked.¹³ The tension between "feeling" and the articulation of "feeling" in religion cannot be reduced. Given the ambiguity and ambivalence in feeling, I associate it with "gut feeling," mood (*Stimmung*),¹⁴ bodily drive, religious experience,¹⁵ conviction, etc.

In analyzing the power relations in the strategic use of "stereotype," Homi Bhabha foregrounds the creative tension in how concepts represent one's lived experience and how the latter strains the explanatory power of the former.¹⁶ In her poignant experience (see the epigraph), Rey Chow also points out how the "natives" have to iterate, internalize, and perform the stereotypes *for* the gaze of the West. Stereotypes are never innocent, in particular when economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capitals can be interchanged.¹⁷ The twist and turn in the

¹³ For example, see Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'The Mystic East'* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 35-61; Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

¹⁴ For example, see Giorgio Agamben's exposition of Heidegger's notion of love or passion in "The Passion of Facticity" in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*, 185-204.

¹⁵ As Caputo puts it, "if the impossible is the condition of any real experience ... and if the impossible is a defining religious category, then it follows that experience itself, all experience, has a religious character, whether or not you march yourself off to church on Sunday morning now that your mother is no longer there to get you out of bed. That religious edge to experience, that notion of life at the limit of the possible, on the verge of the impossible, constitutes a religious structure, the religious side of every one of us, with or without bishops or rabbis or mullahs." See John D. Caputo, *On Religion* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 11.

¹⁶ See Homi K. Bhabha, "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," in *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 66-83.

¹⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of A Theory of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 159-97. One recent instance we can refer to is the prohibition of the use of the term "Allah" for God in Christian publications. On December 31, 2009, when a Malaysian High Court overturned the Malaysian government's ban on the use of the Arabic word "Allah" in Christianity-related materials, several Christian churches were firebombed and vandalized as a consequence. Several Hindu temples were also damaged. As the violence targeting non-Islamic worship places escalated, the court on January 6, 2010 suspended the ruling, awaiting the government's appeal. Malaysian non-Muslims cannot use the term "Allah" in their publications until further notice. Regarding this controversy, Malaysia's Attorney General Abdul Gani Patail calls it "a matter of national interest." This "national interest" is significant; certain laws in Malaysia even allow the authority to detain any suspects indefinitely without formal charges. In this case, the government – or more accurately, the predominant Malay-Muslim party in the coalition government – maintains that the term "Allah" for God is exclusive to Muslims and that it is misleading for Christians to employ the word to signify their Christian God. Although Indonesia and other Arabic countries allow the usage of this noun for God in Christian-related materials, Malaysia's Home Ministry secretary, General Mahmood Adam insists that the situation in Malaysia must be treated differently. On October 14, 2013, after the government won the general election in May by a slight margin, the court ruled that the word "Allah" cannot be used in translation. See <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/12/world/asia/12malaysia.html?fta=y> (accessed on March 16, 2013); <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-24516181> (accessed on October 20, 2013).

public and hidden transcripts of the dominant and the marginalized in the public sphere further complicate the deposit, stagnancy, exchange, and expenditure of these capitals.¹⁸ But, if the word “capital” already implies converted relations, the interchangeability of capitals should not be taken for granted. Whether we speak of a Bataillean “principle of loss” or a Marxian “use value” or “exchange value,” we cannot leave out the concrete contexts. In my case, the intertwining of religious elements in socio-political and economic beliefs and activities both in Malaysia and in Roman Corinth.¹⁹ Not unlike all kinds of mosques in Malaysia, where five times a day, from sunrise to sunset the *adhan* broadcasts from mosques’ loudspeakers and mass media calling Muslims to worship and pray, “the imperial cult [was] the most widespread and ubiquitous religious practice [in Corinth] ... [where] the imperial presence even came to dominate public space at the very center of urban life, the arena for political and commercial activity.”²⁰

(ii) The Multi-dimension of Paul’s Notion of Love

With this caveat, what is Paul’s notion of love in 1 Corinthians when, in addressing multiple conflicts, he affirms love as the most excellent way (καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν) (12:31b)? Which mode of existence is privileged in his notion of love? While one can treat this “most

¹⁸ See James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990). For an example of how such practices work in the Roman Empire, see Neil Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2008).

¹⁹ For example, in Roman Corinth, temples were dedicated to Zeus (or Jupiter), Apollo, Asklepios (or Asculapius), Aphrodite (or Venus), Demeter (or Ceres), Tyche (or Fortuna), Poseidon (or Neptune), Hermes (or Mercury), Artemis (or Diana), Dionysos (or Bacchus). See Donald Engles, *Roman Corinth: An Alternative Model for the Classical City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 92-120; John R. Lanci, *A New Temple for Corinth: Rhetorical and Archaeological Approaches to Pauline Imagery* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 25-43; Nancy Bookidis, “Religion in Corinth: 146 B.C.E. to 100 C.E.,” in *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Edited by Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 141-64; John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth: A Social-rhetorical Reconsideration of 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 2003), 49-157; Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth: Texts and Archaeology*. 3rd revised and expanded edition (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2002).

²⁰ Richard A Horsley, *1 Corinthians*. Abingdon New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 27.

excellent way”²¹ as a rhetoric *pathos* to manipulate the audience’s feeling,²² for Paul love marks believers fundamentally, as Christ dies because of his love for them. So regardless of how competent, gifted, and knowledgeable a believer is, s/he is nobody without love (13:1-3). As Paul put it in Gal. 2:20: “I no longer live (ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ), but Christ lives in me.” The nominative “I” becomes a dative “I,” not just a vocative or an accusative “I.”²³ Addressing love *figuratively* (1 Cor. 13:4-8), Paul exhorts believers to *do* everything *in* love (16:14; cf. Gal. 5:14, Rom. 13:8-10).²⁴ Facing group divisions (1 Cor. 1:5–4:21), problems of eating “idol food” (8:1–11:1), and conflicts over spiritual gifts (14:1-40), Paul uses the love language. In the end of his letter, Paul even invokes a curse upon anyone who does not love (φιλεῖ) the Lord (16:22).

What is love? Why does Paul switch his uses of *agapē* and *agapan* to one instance of *phileō* in the end of the letter?²⁵ Does the invocation of curse in 16:22 contradict love? Or, does it actually manifest love, as curse and love are parts of the covenantal language in

²¹ Fitzmyer argues that although *kath’ hyperbolēn* is used as an adverb in Gal. 1:13; 2 Cor. 1:8, 4:17; Rom. 7:13 “to mark the surpassing quality of something,” it is used as an adjective in 1 Cor. 12:31b “because as an adverb it would ill suit the verb *deiknymi*.” See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 484.

²² For example, see Lauri Thurén, “‘By Means of Hyperbole’ (1 Cor 12:31b),” in *Paul and Pathos*. Edited by Thomas H. Olbricht, and Jerry L. Sumney. SBL Symposium Series 16 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 97-113. This overstatement in 12:31b, according to Thurén, is due to Paul’s “personal attributes” (105) to (1) to “manipulate the audience’s emotions” or “to create or intensify positive emotions among the addressees” (108), (2) “to support the surrounding argumentation by adding to it some emotional thrust” (109), (3) to waken the audience’s interest in the case” (109), (4) to affect “the audience’s ability to absorb the message” (110), and (5) to provide “intellectual comprehensibility, which also makes the listener more *attentus* ... Especially in persuasion, where emotions are involved, the purer and clearer the ideas, the easier it is to convince others of their validity” (110). Thurén, however, does not spell out the notion of emotion or *pathos* in the kind of rhetoric that he privileges.

²³ See our discussion in section 4 “A Dynamic Inter-Corporeal Hermeneutics in Action” in “Introduction” chapter.

²⁴ The word “believers” is one of the expressions that Paul uses to describe the “followers of Christ” in 1 Corinthians (1:21; cf. 7:12-15; 10:22).

²⁵ Furnish thinks φιλεῖν and ἀγαπᾶν may be used interchangeably in 1 Cor. 16:22 and suggests that the meaning of φιλεῖν is enriched by the association with ἀγαπᾶν. See Victor Paul Furnish, *The Love Command in the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1972), 226, 231. Moffatt, on the other hand, cites this verse as one of the examples to show that φιλεῖν and ἀγαπᾶν “had become practically synonymous in classical Greek by the time of Xenophon, although occasionally distinctions were drawn between them,” but “in Hellenistic Greek the distinction had been gradually fading.” See James Moffatt, *Love in the New Testament* (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1930), 45. Also, see C. C. Tarelli, “ΑΓΑΠΗ,” *Journal of Theological Studies* NS 1 (1950): 64-67.

Deuteronomy?²⁶ Is there an inevitable tension or a dialectic between the imperative and poetic aspects of love?²⁷ If Paul's description of love in 1 Cor. 13 is in the genre of poetry, then can we ignore the poetic framework of Paul's command to love? Also, will any element of love be missed out or reified in asserting love? Is there a danger in idealizing love (without a concrete context)? Or is it because of these various possibilities that love, a subject's particular response to grace in fidelity to the event of love, *can* prepare the condition for a non-conformist universality?²⁸ Or is it because of one's experience of the limit of "potentiality/impotentiality" that love is capable of, that we can speak of a "coming community" without (objectified) common properties?²⁹

What do people experience (or do not experience) in love? How are they constituted and transformed in love? What do they give and receive in loving? How are the giving and receiving performed? How does Paul conceptualize and configure love in tackling the issues of singularity and plurality in religious, racial, gender, socio-political, and economic conflicts in the church?

²⁶ William L. Moran, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of Love in Deuteronomy," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 25 (1963): 77-87 (83-84).

²⁷ Highlighting the textual framework of the commandment to love in the Christian Scriptures, Ricoeur writes: "Only sundered from its source – the commandment to love – is there any scandal in an interhuman love (a 'horizontal' love, so to speak); that a lover's love obliges is a surprise, but not a scandal." See Paul Ricoeur, "Theonomy and/or Autonomy," in *The Future of Theology: Essays in Honor of Jürgen Moltmann*. Edited by Miroslav Volf, Carmen Krieg, and Thomas Kucharz (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1996), 289. Here, we see that Ricoeur agrees with Franz Rosenzweig that "the commandment to love springs from the bond of love between God and the individual soul. The commandment that precedes every law is the word that the lover addresses to the beloved: Love me! This unexpected distinction between commandment and law makes sense only if we admit that the commandment to love is love itself, commending itself, as though the genitive in the 'commandment of love' were subjective and objective at the same time. Or, to put it another way, this is a commandment that contains the conditions for its being obeyed in the very tenderness of its objurgation: Love me!" See Paul Ricoeur, "Love and Justice," in *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*. Translated by David Pellauer. Edited by Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 319. Likewise, when addressing Aristotle's *philein* in the *Rhetoric*, Konstan finds that "there is no tension between the sentiment of love and the requirement or even the demand that one help others in achieving the goods to which they aspire. For if loving (to *philein*) as an emotion just is the wish to provide such assistance, then the failure to aid another convicts one of a want of love itself." See David Konstan, "Love," in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 176.

²⁸ See Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*. Cultural Memory in the Present. Translated by Ray Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

²⁹ See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains: A Commentary of the Letter to the Romans*. Translated by Patricia Dailey. Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2005).

One may cite 1 Cor. 13:4-8a to answer “What is love?” But this citation needs to be fleshed out. If Paul is dramatically transformed by the love of God through Christ (15:9-10; cf. 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Rom. 5:8), then love can shock and reboot the world of believers. Such a shock cannot be thematized (cf. 1 Cor. 1:17). The site of the shock is utterly cruel and shameful in the ancient Mediterranean world: the crucifixion.³⁰ The shock exposes the world of its contradictions; after all how can a condemned criminal become the Lord? With Christ living in him, the shock exposes and reconfigures Paul (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:1-14, 8:9-11). Love becomes a call and response of this shock. A call and response that does not thematize but embody the shock. In the language of Jean-Luc Nancy, perhaps we can say that the call and response is the beating of the heart.³¹ Like the beating of the heart, the call and response are rhythmically intertwined. The liminality of call and response is even ritualized in the meal gathering of believers when the libation that is supposedly dedicated to the Roman god, goddess, or emperor is now poured out in honor of the crucified Christ (1 Cor. 11:23-31).³²

In traditional biblical studies, it is thus not a surprise that the condition of possibility or impossibility of love be duly noted in a diversity of interpretations: Paul’s love is rendered in theological, ethical, rhetorical, and ideological ways. However, from the perspective of a group-oriented culture (from where I come) where numinous experience is not uncommon, I find the religious experience or feeling in Paul’s notion of love sidelined.³³ If the interconnection of body

³⁰ See Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion: In the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross*. Translated by John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977).

³¹ Jean-Luc Nancy, “Shattered Love,” in *The Inoperative Community*. Translated by Lisa Garbus and Simona Sawhney, 82-109.

³² For example, see Hal Taussig, *In the Beginning was the Meal: Social Experimentation and Early Christian Identity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 135-43.

³³ See David E. Fredrikson’s recent work that highlights the resistance to the erotic dimension of love in the critical study of *Philippians* in *Eros and the Christ: Longing and Envy in Paul’s Christology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013).

and mind,³⁴ the continuum of invisible and visible worlds,³⁵ and the embeddedness of individual identity in community are somewhat similar in Chinese culture and in the ancient Mediterranean world,³⁶ then a dualistic worldview is questionable. We are “thrown” into the world along with others in the world. The religious, theological, ethical, rhetorical, and ideological issues cannot be compartmentalized. As scriptural criticism stresses, how we analyze our contextual problems *and* how we perceive the *primary root problem* (e.g., wrong/lack of knowledge, will, ability, ideology, vision, etc.) that undergirds them influence the *role of scripture* that we privilege in our choice of critical theory and methodology to analyze the dimensions of the text that we deem most pertinent to our interpretation.³⁷

(iii) Interpretations of Paul’s Love in 1 Corinthians

Just as a religion can be perceived in different modes of existence, Paul’s notion of love in 1 Corinthians can also be interpreted through different modes of existence. In biblical studies, we find that while theological and ethical interpretations of Paul’s love often frame their textual analysis in the mode of autonomy, the social-scientific, rhetorical, and ideological interpretations usually prioritize the mode of relationality as their *primary* framework. However, a heteronomy-oriented interpretation of Paul’s love, foregrounded by continental philosophers like Alain Badiou, Giorgio Agamben, etc.,³⁸ is often sidelined, if not treated suspiciously. Because of my contextual concerns regarding the issues of singularity and plurality in an honor-and-shame

³⁴ See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 3-37.

³⁵ See Kabiro wa Gatumu, *The Pauline Concept of Supernatural Powers: A Reading from the African Worldview*. Foreword by James D. G. Dunn (Milton Keynes; Colorado Springs; India: Paternoster, 2008).

³⁶ See Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 63-89.

³⁷ We discuss the multiple dimensions of a text and the creation of many texts out of this text in the “Introduction” chapter and the Methodological Appendix. Also, see Daniel Patte, Monya A. Stubbs, Justin Ukpong, and Revelation E. Velunta, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Contextual Introduction for Group Study* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003).

³⁸ For example, see Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul*, 12-15, 54, 86-98, 107-111; and Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains*, 76-77, 108, and 128.

group-oriented culture, I interpret Paul's notion of love through the mode of heteronomy. Here, it is critical to note that we are not dismissing interpretations that are not heteronomy-oriented. In fact, neither are we advocating exclusively for a heteronomy-oriented interpretation. Rather, as scriptural criticism foregrounds the discursiveness of contexts (of both the text and the interpreter), we are arguing for a *primary* mode of heteronomy (which may secondarily include the modes of autonomy and relationality in our interpretation of Paul's love). Here, if all interpretations are contextual and ideological, it is only critical and ethical for interpreters to clarify the "distinctive interpretive lines of reasoning" in the choices that they make in each of their three interpretive poles. The contextuality of interpretations, however, does not mean that all interpretations are valid and valuable. As the word "contextuality" signals, the validity of an interpretation must be evaluated contextually. That is to say, as a context is dynamically intersected with various socio-cultural, political, gendered, religious, economic, etc. issues, all interpretations must be assessed *again and again*, lest they be objectified. With this note of clarification, let us now turn to various interpretations of Paul's love that prioritize different modes of existence, whose meanings will be further clarified in the next section.

Traditionally biblical scholars read Paul's notion of love in theological and ethical terms concerning the love of God to people, the love of people to God, and the love among people. A major concern in such interpretations is to dissociate love from passion and feeling so that love does not become egocentric, which can then lead to moral laxity, self-righteousness, empty words (e.g., flattery and dissimulation), unsustainable commitment, or uncritical compliance to the norms and trends of the world. To address the potential problems that could be caused by the "feeling" aspect of love, these scholars rationalize the intense passion of love when they assert that believers should imitate the cross *because* the nature and will of God are *necessarily*

affirmed and manifested in the cross. They stress the historical context of the cross (to counter any form of “Docetism,” “spiritualization,” and comparison with Greco-Roman “mythical religions”),³⁹ but the purpose is to reinforce the necessity, possibility, and goodness of obedience and fidelity to the cross. The goal is to receive “atonement,” “redemption” (in the sense of forgiveness”) and “salvation” (which are usually not rigorously defined) through habits of obedience in fidelity to the grace and love of God.⁴⁰ These features of theological interpretations of Paul’s love correspond to von Hügel’s “reasoning, argumentative, and abstractive” element of religion, which we find echo the mode of autonomy.⁴¹

The issue of “authority” in social positions does not worry these scholars. Paul’s authority is assumed to be good for believers. The believers’ concerns are viewed through the character/actant of Paul, assumed by the interpreters. As such, even when ethics is emphasized when discussing Paul’s notion of love, the framework of such ethics is individualistic, top-down.⁴² While the notion of “authority” (conveyed in the form of a letter),⁴³ intimately tied to the notion of power, needs to be clarified (see below about the modes of existence),⁴⁴ these

³⁹ For example, see James Moffatt, *Love in the New Testament*, 58-63.

⁴⁰ Moffatt writes, “In the Pauline theology faith is more than either surrender to Christ’s love and grace or mental assent to the truth of the gospel; it is trust and it is belief, but as both it has active functions in life ... The God who meets us in Christ, Paul teaches, is a God of love who forgives sins because He loves men. The response to this free and forgiving love is believing trust, such trust as carries love with it. All love implies trust, and trust in Another implies love, the love that devotes itself to the ends of that Other and identifies itself freely and fully with His purpose ... Paul prefers often to speak of this devotion towards God or Christ as ‘faith,’ reserving ‘love’ for the human side.” *Ibid.*, 171-72.

⁴¹ See n. 3.

⁴² The different models of ethics (e.g., deontological, perfectionist, consequentialist, womanist, etc.) show that our notion of ethics can be individual-centered, communal-centered, or other-oriented. See Thomas W. Ogletree, *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983); Sharon D. Welch, *A Feminist Ethic of Risk*. Revised edition (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000).

⁴³ Consider this, for example: “Letters are usually thought simply to convey information. They re-present the writer and simulate his or her voice ... [but] letters are also objects like photographs or locks of hair that bring loved ones into presence only then to reiterate their absence. In the ancient world, letters were reread, wept over, kissed, and placed in bed in order to soothe the longing desire they never failed to rekindle. Modern scholars, however, have approached Philippians as if the letter were only Paul’s *παρουσία* and *ὁμιλία*, and they read his writing as only the expression of his ideas or the concerns of his commands.” See David E. Fredrikson, *Eros and the Christ*, 28.

⁴⁴ For example, see John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*. New Introduction by Wayne A. Meeks (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 1-34. For different notions of “power” explicated

scholars do not address the authoritative features of Paul's use of rhetoric to exhort believers to be considerate to one another.⁴⁵ They do not see Paul as an authoritative figure subjecting believers to his apostleship. Neither do they stress the possibility that Paul, via the language of *agapē*, confronts the ideology of Roman Empire (cf. 1 Cor. 1:22-23, 2:6-9).⁴⁶ While there are concerns for the lack of emphasis on the ethical demands of love,⁴⁷ the socio-cultural, political, and economic impacts upon believers generally do not receive much attention.

Foregrounding the role and function of rhetoric in constructing and upholding the power positions between Paul and the Corinthian believers, an increasing number of biblical scholars recently treat Paul's language of love as socially conditioned, utilitarian, authoritative, and manipulative. Here, von Hügel's "authoritative, historical, traditional institutional" element of religion, which resembles the mode of relationality, is notable.⁴⁸ But, similar to those who focus on the theological and ethical aspects, many of these scholars are suspicious and wary of the

in biblical studies, see Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991); Kathy Ehrensperger, *That We May be Mutually Encouraged: Feminism and the New Perspective in Pauline Studies* (London and New York: T&T Clark International, 2004); and Yung Suk Kim, "Imitators' (*Mimetai*) in 1 Cor. 4:16 and 11:1: A New Reading of Threefold Embodiment," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 33 (2011): 147-70.

⁴⁵ For an overview of the potential problems in the use of ancient rhetoric to analyze Greco-Roman letters such as Paul's letters, see Jae Hyun Lee, *Paul's Gospel in Romans: A Discourse Analysis of Rom 1:16-8:39*. *Linguistic Biblical Studies* 3 (Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill, 2010), 17-22. Also, see the essays in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*. JSNTSup 90. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993). Concerning the genre of 1 Corinthians, Mitchell writes, "deliberative rhetoric was common employed within epistolary frameworks in antiquity. Because deliberative rhetoric is compatible with the letter genre, Paul's use of it in 1 Corinthians is not anomalous in ancient literature..." See Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991), 20.

⁴⁶ Although Nygren does not address this issue, he does repeatedly stress that "Agape is like a blow in the face to both Jewish legal piety and Hellenistic Eros-piety." See Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*. Part I: *A Study of the Christian Idea of Love*. Part II: *The History of the Christian Idea of Love*. Translated by Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), 200.

⁴⁷ For example, see Victor Paul Furnish, *The Love Command in the New Testament*, 198-205.

⁴⁸ See n. 3.

“feeling” or religious aspect of Paul’s love. Let us review some examples from social-scientific, rhetorical,⁴⁹ and ideological interpretations.

In-scribing love in “an anti-introspective, nonpsychologically minded, collectivistic society,” Bruce Malina and John Pilch argue that “the word *agapē* is best translated as ‘group allegiance.’”⁵⁰ According to them, in such a culture, “[t]here may or may not be affection, but it is the inward feeling of attachment, along with the outward behavior bound up with such attachment, that love entails.”⁵¹ By de-fining the feeling and idea of love as a “group allegiance,” Malina and Pilch may assume an agonistic “we vs. them” notion of “community” when love is not present. By focusing on “the outward behavior” of love, they also assume a direct correspondence between “the outward behavior” and “the inward feeling,” which presupposes that we can define and analyze “the inward feeling” without reducing it. This issue is further complicated in cross-cultural dynamics, such as Greco-Roman notions of emotions and feelings, which David Konstan argues are intertwined with one’s “very idea of a self.”⁵²

The social function of love is also highlighted in Gerd Theissen’s notion of “love-patriarchalism” (*Liebepatriarchalismus*).⁵³ Comparing two kinds of “itinerant preachers” in the

⁴⁹ Summarizing George Kennedy’s “new rhetoric,” Watson writes: Kennedy’s “methodology has five interrelated steps: (1) determine the rhetorical unit; (2) define the rhetorical situation; (3) determine the rhetorical problem or stasis and the species of rhetoric, whether judicial (accusation and defense), deliberative (persuasion and dissuasion), or epideictic (praise and blame); (4) analyze the invention, arrangement, and style (‘invention’ is argumentation by ethos, pathos, and logos). ‘Arrangement’ is the ordering of the various components, such as the *exordium* (introduction), *narratio* (narration of the facts), *probatio* (main body), and *peroratio* (conclusion). ‘Style’ is fitting the language to the needs of invention and includes such things as figures of speech and thought; and (5) evaluate the rhetorical effectiveness of the rhetorical unit in meeting the exigence.” See Duane F. Watson, “New Testament Rhetorical Criticism,” in *Methods for Biblical Interpretation*. Foreword by Douglas A. Knight (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 192. For a critique of “new rhetoric,” see Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 6-16. For an overview of these debates, see Troy W. Martin, “Investigating the Pauline Letter Body: Issues, Methods, and Approaches,” in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams. Pauline Studies Series 6 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), 185-212.

⁵⁰ Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch, *Social-Science Commentary on the Letters of Paul* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 116.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 376.

⁵² For example, see David Konstan, “Pathos and Passion,” in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 3-40.

⁵³ For example, Theissen writes: “This love-patriarchalism takes social differences for granted but ameliorates them through an obligation of respect and love, an obligation imposed upon those who are socially stronger. From the

history of early Christianity – i.e., the itinerant charismatics in the synoptic tradition and the community organizers in urban Mediterranean areas like Paul and Barnabas – Theissen finds that Paul follows the social patterns of “community organizers” that promote solidarity but do not challenge the very structures that create and sustain social stratifications of the marginalized whom he supports. For Margaret Mitchell, this love-patriarchalism reflects a compromise for the common advantage to maintain concord in the church.⁵⁴ A few questions arise, however. If Paul did go through trials and tribulations (e.g., 1 Cor. 4:11-13; 2 Cor. 11:23-28) in responding to the call of God as an apostle to the Gentiles,⁵⁵ and if Paul is who he is by the grace of God (1 Cor. 15:10a), will he practice love-patriarchalism for the sake of concord and unity of the church? What happens to the message of the cross that is the power of God (1:18)? Or is it precisely because of the gospel (9:23) that Paul compromises so that he may please *all* in *all* things to save many (10:33)? Is this compromise a form of opportunism? What is the notion of gospel?

To reinforce the view that Paul’s love language points to solidarity and group allegiance, scholars recently emphasized its rhetorical, sociopolitical, and ideological features. For example, in demonstrating that 1 Corinthians is thematically and literary-rhetorically a cohesive unit,⁵⁶ Mitchell shows that the letter is “filled with terms and *topoi* derived from politics which are directly related to the issue of factionalism.”⁵⁷ She argues that it is Paul who relates *all* the

weaker are required subordination, fidelity, and esteem.” See Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*. Edited and Translated with an Introduction by John H. Schütz (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982), 107. As such, “love-patriarchalism allows social inequities to continue but transfuses them with a spirit of concern, of respect, and of personal solicitude.” *Ibid.*, 139.

⁵⁴ Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 127 n. 382.

⁵⁵ Henry T. Nguyen, “The Identification of Paul’s Spectacle of Death Metaphor in 1 Corinthians 4.9,” *NTS* 53.4 (October 2007): 489-501.

⁵⁶ Mitchell notes that the “deliberative argumentation” in ancient deliberative literature has four characteristics that are also present in 1 Corinthians: “1) focus on future time as the subject of deliberation; 2) employment of a determined set of appeals or ends, the most distinctive of which is the advantageous (τὸ συμφέρον); 3) proof by example (παράδειγμα); and 4) appropriate subjects for deliberation, of which factionalism and concord are especially common.” See Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 23.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

problems to factionalism.⁵⁸ As a “deliberative letter” that “employs deliberative rhetoric in the letter body”⁵⁹ to create unity, 1 Corinthians is neither a forensic rhetoric nor an epideictic rhetoric.⁶⁰ Rather, in using “future-directed statements” and “imperatives,” Paul urges believers to aim for the common advantage (τὸ συμφέρον) of the community (which is also the τέλος of deliberative rhetoric).⁶¹

For Mitchell, the shift of τὸ συμφέρον from “personal to communal advantage,”⁶² readily seen in the metaphors of the “body” and “building (up),”⁶³ “is at the heart of the entire argument in 1 Corinthians.”⁶⁴ As Paul speaks of love as not seeking one’s own advantage (13:5), Mitchell links συμφέρειν and οἰκοδομεῖν with love (cf. 8:1), which as “the principle of social cohesion”⁶⁵ “is the mortar between the bricks of the Christian building, the ἐκκλησία.”⁶⁶ Love, in short, is an antidote to factionalism.⁶⁷ As 13:4-7 portray “a one-to-one precise correspondence with Paul’s description of Corinthian factional behavior,”⁶⁸ the description of love is not so much a praise of

⁵⁸ Ibid., 301.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 22 n. 5.

⁶⁰ For an overview of the roles and functions of rhetoric in the Greco-Roman world, see Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 1995), 40-48.

⁶¹ Mitchell writes, “by definition, an argument which focuses particularly upon τὸ συμφέρον, the advantageous course to follow in the future, is deliberative.” Ibid., 28.

⁶² Ibid., 143.

⁶³ Ibid., 37. Mitchell agrees with Kitzberger’s linguistic analysis that the verbs συμφέρειν and οἰκοδομεῖν are synonymous. See Ingrid R. Kitzberger, *Bau der Gemeinde. Das paulinische Wortfeld οἰκοδομή(ἐπ)οικοδομεῖν*. Forschung zur Bibel 53 (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1986).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 36. Although Mitchell concludes “that the term συμφέρειν is clearly a part of the technical vocabulary of deliberative rhetoric texts” (32), she also clarifies that the term is “used in a wide range of ethical and political discussions in antiquity, one attestation of which is the writings of Stoic philosophy” (33). Chang further finds the term “widely used in ancient political, rhetorical, philosophical, and ethical contexts.” See Kei Eun Chang, *The Community, The Individual And The Common Good: Τὸ Ἴδιον and Τὸ Συμφέρον in the Greco-Roman World and Paul* (New York and London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 3.

⁶⁵ Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 178. In discussing Paul’s exhortation in 14:1b-40, Mitchell even says that the common advantage is “synonymous with love.” Ibid., 279-80.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 171. See page 180 for a list of terms and phrases in 1 Corinthians that Mitchell finds are closely related to the issues of factionalism and concord in ancient Greco-Roman literature.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 165-71.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 170.

love as a check list targeting the specific faults of believers.⁶⁹ Yet Mitchell does not elaborate on why love has such a cohesive function, although the self-reference of Paul throughout the letter seems to suggest an answer. Not only is Paul the expert builder (4:10), he is also the exemplar of not seeking one's own advantage (9:1-27) for the sake of τὸ συμφέρον.⁷⁰ Even when Paul's self-reference is evident in 1 Cor. 13, as "much of the chapter is written in the first person,"⁷¹ "he is a hypothetical negative example to be rejected."⁷² With this mixture of actual and hypothetical conditions, Paul's advice may appear to be more acceptable.

Following this work of Mitchell, many commentators allude to this functionalist view of love. For example, as Ben Witherington III argues for the "character of Christian *agapē*" in terms of a "behavior, not feeling,"⁷³ he agrees that "[t]he concept of love was often used in arguments for social concord and against factiousness."⁷⁴ Likewise, Richard Hays endorses Mitchell's interpretation, as he claims, in stressing judgment/discernment and the unity of the church, that "the purpose of this chapter [1 Cor. 13] is straightforwardly ethical ... to promote

⁶⁹ Or as Sigountos argues that praise and blame in encomium are "two sides of the same coin" in rhetorical practice, the praise of love can also be a critique of "virtually every behavioral problem at Corinth is mentioned in vv. 4-7" See James G. Sigountos, "The Genre of 1 Corinthians 13," *New Testament Studies* 40.2 (April 1994): 246-60 (256).

⁷⁰ In pointing out the importance of the use of praise and examples in deliberative rhetoric, Mitchell finds that "Paul's self-references in 1 Corinthians almost amounts to a summary of the contents of the letter." *Ibid.*, 54.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 58. Holladay strongly argues that the "I" is an autobiography that serves as a warrant to Paul's exhortation. See Carl R. Holladay, "1 Corinthians 13: Paul as Apostolic Paradigm," in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*. Edited by David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 80-98. Collins also thinks that the "I" in 13:1-3 does not refer to "the generic human being," but Paul himself. He writes, "The structural parallelism of chs. 12-14 with chs. 8-10 confirms the autobiographical and self-referential character of the first subunit in Paul's digression (vv. 1-3). Of course, Mitchell would disagree with Collins that 1 Cor. 13 is a digression. See Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*. Sacra Pagina 7 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 472. Contra Holladay, Mitchell, and Collins, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 492.

⁷² Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 273.

⁷³ Ben Witherington, III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 269. He writes, "Note the profoundly social character of the love that Paul is speaking about. In all these verses [in chapter 13] Paul is talking about love in action, not mere feelings. Real Christian love does not amount to mere pious platitudes about love, but doing love. Nor is Paul exhorting his audience to have warm feelings about others, since he believes that one can love someone that one does not feel attracted to or even like." *Ibid.*, 272 n.38.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 265.

the *character formation* of the members of the Corinthian community.”⁷⁵ Similarly, David Garland stresses that Paul “does not appeal to it [love] simply because of its utilitarian benefit to bring about concord,”⁷⁶ he refers to Mitchell’s view of love in combating factionalism and promoting church unity. In the same line, Raymond Collins suggests a functionalist notion of love, even though he emphasizes the eschatological quality of love as the power of God.⁷⁷ For instance, in addressing the triad of “faith, hope, love” in 1 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians 1:3 and 5:8, Collins differentiates the former from the latter in terms of factionalism among the Corinthian believers. He writes: “They were a community torn by a spirit of factionalism and the disdain of some by others within the community. So Paul writes to them about love, whose proper object ... is other members of the Christian assembly (cf. 1 Thess. 3:12; 4:9-10).”⁷⁸

This notion of love as a means to an ends is also found in Laura Nasrallah’s analysis of Greco-Roman and Paul’s taxonomy of ecstatic or spiritual gifts and “periodization of history,” as she sees Paul using love to trump the wisdom boasted by the *pneumatikoi*. She writes, “Paul’s praise of love in chapter 13 deliberately displaces and controls the Corinthians’ interest in wisdom, as chapters 1-4 had done before.”⁷⁹ This critique of Paul’s language of love echoes Lauri Thurén’s argument about the rhetorical function of *pathos* in 1 Corinthians 12:31b as an

⁷⁵ Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians*. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1997), 221-22. Hays writes: “Love is not a higher and better gift; rather, it is a manner of life within which all the gifts are to find their proper place. Second, love is not merely a feeling or an attitude; rather, ‘love’ is the generic name for specific actions of patient and costly service to others. If we attend closely to what Paul actually says in this chapter, all sweetly sentimental notions of love will be dispelled and replaced by a rigorous vision of love that rejoices in the truth and bears all suffering in the name of Jesus Christ.” *Ibid.*, 222.

⁷⁶ See David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 604.

⁷⁷ Collins stresses that Paul’s love is different from the love in the category of virtues in Hellenistic Judaism. See Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 483-84.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 485.

⁷⁹ Laura Nasrallah, *An Ecstasy of Folly: Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity*. Harvard Theological Studies 52 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 90. Wire, moreover, argues that these *pneumatikoi* are women prophets who were prominent in the *ekklēsia* and as such posed threat to the patriarchal structure of the *ekklēsia*. See Antoinette Clark Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul’s Rhetoric* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990).

“overstatement” and “rhetorical cautionary introduction” to influence the believer’s feeling.⁸⁰ A more critical view of Paul’s notion of love comes from Elizabeth Stuart, who in referring to the work of Graham Shaw (which Krister Stendahl on the back cover of the book describes as “a wonderfully troublesome book”),⁸¹ strongly says that Paul uses 1 Cor. 13 as a “guise” to “assert his authority over the Corinthian community by identifying himself with that divine, self-giving love (*agapē*) whilst at the same time revealing how alienated the Corinthians themselves are from that love through having rejected the exclusive authority of Paul.”⁸² This concern of Stuart about “authority” gone wrong cannot be simply dismissed. Let us cite Shaw at length.

[T]he appeal to God distracts attention from the human speaker. Heaven is silent, and when men’s [sic] attention is directed towards it, we easily fail to notice that human lips are moving. This is not to dismiss *all* talk of God as deceit, but it does suggest that we fix our eyes most carefully on the human speaker, and treat with caution any confusion of identity between man [sic] and God. Wherever a man [sic] cannot speak in his own name but buttresses his speech with divine authority, suspicion is certainly in order. Is the human speak benefiting by this device, and if so, how?⁸³

It is important to note that Shaw is not seeking “to dismiss all talk of God as deceit.”⁸⁴ Rather, he is arguing for a “use of power which encourages the independence of others, and an exercise of authority which seeks the response of others rather than their silence.”⁸⁵ Given this concern, Shaw finds Paul’s description of a “personified love” allows him “to say everything he needs to

⁸⁰ Lauri Thurén, “‘By Means of Hyperbole’ (1 Cor 12:31b),” in *Paul and Pathos*, 97-113.

⁸¹ See Graham Shaw, *The Cost of Authority: Manipulation and Freedom in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983).

⁸² Elizabeth Stuart, “Love is ... Paul,” *The Expository Time* 102 (June 1991): 264-66 (264).

⁸³ Graham Shaw, *The Cost of Authority*, 15-16. Emphasis added.

⁸⁴ To do so could end up claiming a high ground outside the system, which Liew in his analysis of the critique of the power structure in the Gospel of Mark has warned us not to repeat the very structure that we critique in our criticism. See Tat-siong Benny Liew, *Politics of Parousia: Reading Mark Inter(con)textually*. Biblical Interpretation Series 42 (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 1999).

⁸⁵ Graham Shaw, *The Cost of Authority*, 22. That is to say, an authority “which recognizes the temporary nature of its position of power [that] is not threatened by the outlook and experience of others,” which “can therefore adopt a much more open and inclusive social stance because it knows that its own identity cannot be preserved indefinitely.” *Ibid.*, 21.

say to his critics without either exposing himself or taking direct responsibility.”⁸⁶ Stuart wants to push Shaw’s reading further. For her, “1 Cor 13 is Paul at his most manipulative. Its message is that it is only through Paul that the Corinthians can experience the love of God in Christ because only Paul, no other Christian teacher, possesses that love. In short, love is Paul.”⁸⁷ Stuart may be too critical in her reading of Paul’s love,⁸⁸ but Shaw is right to highlight an alternative notion of authority.⁸⁹ But if authority is “the interpretation of power,” and if “power is directed toward specific goals and transformed from natural to a social concept,”⁹⁰ then what matters in the critique of authority is the interpretation of power.

However, if power “is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away...,”⁹¹ as Michel Foucault stresses, then power is not a “thing” that can be objectified. Rather, power must be understood as a dynamic power relation that cannot help but be *constantly* thematized and configured in various ways.⁹² This tension between power and its configuration is illustrated in John Schütz’s analysis of Max Weber’s

⁸⁶ Ibid., 92.

⁸⁷ Elizabeth Stuart, “Love is... Paul,” 265.

⁸⁸ For a critique of Stuart’s interpretation, see Cecil J. Waters, “‘Love is ... Paul’ – A Response,” *The Expository Times* 103.3 (December 1991): 75. However, just as Waters argues that “[i]t is always difficult to try to fathom other people’s motives,” Waters’ interpretation also faces similar challenge.

⁸⁹ Patte reminds us that authority “means not sheer power but legitimate power. Authority exists only insofar as those who submit to it do so by acknowledging the legitimacy of those who are in a position to use institutional or other power and/or to speak authoritatively. In Christian thought, authority belongs first to God, then to Christ, then to those who are authorized by God and Christ (prophets, apostles) to transmit the Christian tradition, and to the writings that were gathered together as Scripture and, for Christians, the NT as canon within the canon. How is the divine authority transmitted from Christ to his followers? What is received as authoritative? Differing answers to these questions have occasioned many church conflicts...” See Daniel Patte, “Authority in/of the Church,” in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Edited by Daniel Patte (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 87. Also, see John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 9-21.

⁹⁰ John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 13. For Schütz, while authority seeks to make power accessible, legitimacy seeks to interpret and make authority accessible in concrete forms. Ibid., 16.

⁹¹ See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*. 3 vols. Vol. 1: *An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 94.

⁹² For example, Foucault finds that “power must be understood in the first instance *as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere* in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; *as the process* which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; *as the support* which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, *or on the contrary*, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another, and lastly, *as the strategies* in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies.” Ibid., 92-93. Emphasis added.

three types of authority: “rational (legal), traditional, and charismatic.”⁹³ According to Schütz, Weber’s notion of authority presupposes “the idea of legitimacy,”⁹⁴ which assumes the notion of charisma. Here, we see that the charisma has a dual role: it is one type of authority and yet prior to authority. Charisma, as such, can stabilize *and* revolutionize the tradition. Schütz writes: “charisma is not merely one of three types of legitimate authority, but a constituent element in all legitimate order.”⁹⁵ This “exclusive inclusion”⁹⁶ of charisma in defining authority and power is probably due to the fact the first two bases of legitimacy cannot be fully articulated.⁹⁷ Not unlike our discussion of μέλη ἐκ μέρους in the end of the “Introduction” chapter, the paradox of charisma destabilizes our concepts of power and authority. And, if Paul’s notion of love is intimately tied to the concepts of power and authority, as rhetorical and ideological approaches highlight, then our interpretation of love needs to pay attention to this paradox as well.

II. The Modes of Existence: Autonomy, Relationality, and Heteronomy

Without the integration of sensation, feeling, and thinking, our dialogues with each other and the shape of our efforts toward liberation will be imprisoned behind ideologies that erase our sometimes contradictory and paradoxical experiences.⁹⁸ – Rita Nakashima Brock

⁹³ John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 17. For details, see Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Society*. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1978), 3-62.

⁹⁴ The bases of legitimacy are “(a) *tradition*: valid is that which has always been; (b) *affectual*, especially emotional, *faith*: valid is that which is newly revealed or exemplary; (c) *value-rational* faith: valid is that which has been deduced as an absolute; (d) positive enactment which is believed to be *legal*.” See Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, 36. Quoted from John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 17-18.

⁹⁵ John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 19.

⁹⁶ This expression is given by Agamben to describe the operation of “example.” He writes: “What the example shows is its belonging to a class, but for this very reason the example steps out of its class in the very moment in which it exhibits and delimits it (in the case of a linguistic syntagm, the example thus shows its own signifying and, in this way, suspends its own meaning).” See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 22.

⁹⁷ See n. 94.

⁹⁸ Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1988), 42.

One important lesson that we can glean from various interpretations of Paul's notion of love and his notion of power is that our meaning production cannot be reduced to only a certain meaning-producing dimension. Moreover, if depending on the mode of existence that we *prioritize*, we can conceive of power relations in terms of "power-over" (cf. autonomy), "power-with" (cf. relationality), or "power-lessness" (cf. heteronomy), then our interpretation of Paul's love may also display similar characteristics of "power-over," "power-with," and "power-lessness." To decide which notion of love is more valid than the others, we need to assess their value and effect in concrete contexts. Now, let us consolidate what we have learnt so far about these modes of existence.

(i) Autonomy

According to *The New Oxford American Dictionary*, the word autonomy comes from two Greek words *auto* ("self") and *nomos* ("law"). It refers to "the right or condition of self-government," "freedom from external control or influence; independence," or "(in Kantian moral philosophy) the capacity of an agent to act in accordance with objective morality rather than under the influence of desires."⁹⁹ Cristina Grenholm notes that "[a]s a political term dating back to antiquity and the Stoics, autonomy referred to free city-states and free men."¹⁰⁰ This idea of autonomy, according to Grenholm, is not only affirmed by Paul as "a gift from God for all, including slaves and women (Gal. 3:28, 5:11),"¹⁰¹ it is also asserted by the church in the late Medieval against the political/military regime,¹⁰² by the Protestants against the Catholic papacy,¹⁰³ and by scholars against ecclesial institutions during the European Enlightenment. In

⁹⁹ "Autonomy," in *The New Oxford American Dictionary*. 2nd ed. Edited by Erin McKean (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 108.

¹⁰⁰ Cristina Grenholm, "Autonomy," in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, 89.

¹⁰¹ *Idem*.

¹⁰² See Joseph H. Lynch, *The Medieval Church: A Brief History* (London and New York: Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1992).

¹⁰³ See Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

his discussion of the prescriptive feature of the law in the framework of the biblical narrative, as Paul Ricoeur argues for a dialectic tension between theonomy and autonomy,¹⁰⁴ we need to note that our assessment of autonomy must be contextual. Yes, when viewed exclusively by itself, autonomy can lead to imperialism and colonialism, as it promotes a great confidence in one's ability and will power to know and to do the universal good (cf. deontological ethics),¹⁰⁵ nevertheless it should not be completely dismissed. In the case of those attempting suicide, a sense of self-worth and self-sufficiency is indispensable for their survival and transformation. So in our evaluation of an autonomy-centered love, while a self-centered love that focuses on the giver can be dangerous,¹⁰⁶ as it can objectify the "I" and "you" from an "I-Thou" relation into an "I-It" relationship,¹⁰⁷ it need not be always negative. A sense of self-independence can be a remedy to a love that con-fuses the self and the other, thereby leading to an abusive relationship. In this situation, autonomy can help keep a healthy distance between the lover and the beloved.

(ii) Relationality

Without denying that autonomy has its place in cultures which are not individual-centered, in a group-centered society such as ancient Mediterranean world, relationality becomes primordial. For many Chinese in Malaysia too, it is our relationship with others that defines our social identity. There is no "self" outside the community. The community lives in the "self." A

¹⁰⁴ See Paul Ricoeur, "Theonomy and/or Autonomy," 284-98.

¹⁰⁵ This ethics assumes that once everyone learns of the truth, s/he will put the truth into practice. But, who decide this truth? Moreover, while it presumes that we will harm not people, it does not tell us from whose perspective do we perceive harm. What we consider helpful may become harmful to others. Ogletree argues that the weakness of deontological ethic lies with "the abstractness of the principles and rules we formulate to express the content of our moral obligation" and the assumed universality of these moral principles. See Thomas W. Ogletree, *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics*, 26.

¹⁰⁶ For example, Brock points out that "[t]he Christian attitude toward charity is often built on the idea of the superior helping the inferior, which locks paternalism into the relationship. Rather than seeing our capacity to give to the poor as part of a social-economic system that produces poverty and hunger, much Christian charity is designed to help others into the exploitive system." See Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 8.

¹⁰⁷ See Martin Buber, *I and Thou*. A new translation, with a prologue and notes by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

“community is not based on the principle of the separation of individual identities.”¹⁰⁸ To stress autonomy in a group-centered culture can be taken as disdainful of one’s relationship with others, as if one is ashamed of them.

In a culture where one is indebted to others and to one’s heritage and ancestors, autonomy is defined in terms of one’s relation with others. For Grenholm, this orientation is neglected by Western churches, where “relationality is commonly viewed as secondary, because theologies tend to emphasize the autonomy and sovereignty of God as a person, known to humans as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but the relationality of the Trinity is *fundamentally hidden* from humans. Thus, individuals are ideally autonomous, as God is.”¹⁰⁹ In this description, Western theologies not only “emphasize the autonomy and sovereignty of God as a person” – and the autonomy of each person within the Trinity (each person being defined by a particular role) – they also want the church and her members to share such qualities. But, if “the relationality of the Trinity is fundamentally hidden from humans” (cf. Augustine’s *Dei Trinitate*), then relationality is secondary to autonomy and heteronomy.

Relationality, however, can be conceived of in many ways. After World War II, in the aftershock of Shoah/Holocaust,¹¹⁰ as biblical scholars re-examine the Jewish-Christian relations, we see a perspectival and analytical shift from an individual-centered autonomy to a community-centered relationality. In Pauline studies, for example, the rise of the “New Perspective” stresses the unique salvific position of Jews in Pauline letters.¹¹¹ In addition to the beginning of French

¹⁰⁸ Choan-Seng Song, *Third-Eye Theology: Theology in Formation in Asian Settings*. Revised edition (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 21.

¹⁰⁹ Cristina Grenholm, “Relationality,” in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, 1062. Emphasis added.

¹¹⁰ See *Betrayal: German Churches and the Holocaust*. Edited by Robert P. Ericksen and Susannah Heschel (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999); Robert P. Ericksen, *Complicity in the Holocaust: Churches and Universities in Nazi Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

¹¹¹ For an excellent review of this historical trajectory, see Magnus Zetterholm, *Approaches to Paul: A Student’s Guide to Recent Scholarship* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009). For some odd reasons, the work of Patte which makes similar argument to that of E. P. Sander is always omitted in the review of the “New Perspective.” See

poststructuralist critique of Western metaphysics in 1960s, biblical scholars in the wake of various ideological criticisms also began to interrogate ideologies in biblical interpretations, and how ideologies justify and reinforce certain domination and marginalization in different spheres of human living conditions.¹¹² Relationality becomes a term that negotiates and highlights the tensions of various configurations of power relations and social positions in society.

While we want to advocate mutuality in relationality, Bonnie Miller-McLemore cautions us to be concrete and specific in our definition. In pointing out the process, transition, and direction or goal in a relationship, she reminds us that “mutuality takes on different meanings in different contexts.”¹¹³ The term “mutuality” should not be objectified into a slogan, as if it means the same thing in all situations. To do so is to essentialize the notion of mutuality and ironically erase relationality. She asks: “Does mutuality mean mutual intimacy, equal power, agency, or regard, or shared responsibility and just love? Or isn’t it more accurate to say that it means all of these in different times and places?”¹¹⁴ A relationship of mutuality between parents and children is different from that of between lovers or between friends or between employer and employee, etc. In fact, not all relationships should aim for mutuality in all stages.¹¹⁵ In the words of Miller-McLemore: “mutuality is more a verb than a noun; it describes an always-evolving process rather than an object that people obtain.”¹¹⁶ In short, to address the issue of mutuality, “we must pay better attention to several commonly overlooked dimensions: (1) the reality of temporary

Daniel Patte, *Early Jewish Hermeneutics in Palestine*. Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 22 (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1975). Note that this was Patte’s dissertation in 1971.

¹¹² See “Ideological Criticism,” in *The Postmodern Bible: The Bible and Culture Collective* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 272-308. A very good overview of works by Said, Spivak, and Bhabha remains Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics* (London and New York: Verso, 1997).

¹¹³ Bonnie Miller-McLemore, “Sloppy Mutuality: Just Love for Children and Adults,” in *Mutuality Matters: Family, Faith, and Just Love*. Edited by Herbert Anderson, Edward Foley, Bonnie Miller-McLemore, and Robert Schreiter (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 126.

¹¹⁴ *Idem*.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 128. Even “power-over relationships” “are not destructive in and of themselves; they are harmful when they are ‘unchanging.’” *Ibid.*, 127.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

inequality and ‘transitional hierarchies,’ (2) the role of duty, responsibility, authority, and even sacrifice on the part of the adult and qualified self-centeredness on the part of the child; and finally (3) the inevitability of failure, harm, and reconciliation.”¹¹⁷ Grenholm, likewise, makes this point rather clear in her notion of “motherhood” when she, through concrete life examples of the relationship between a mother and her baby in different stages of life, argues that “asymmetry is not identical with inequality” and “vulnerability must not be confused or equated with either weakness or exposure.”¹¹⁸ Deploying the Korean concepts of “*han*” (“deep regret,” “brokenness”) and “*jeong*” (“a sticky feeling and relation”),¹¹⁹ Wonhee Anne Joh also argues for an asymmetrical and mutual notion of love. Using postcolonial theory that highlights a neither-nor interstitial space and Julia Kristeva’s notion of “abjection” through the lens of Kelly Oliver’s reading (see chapter 2), Joh shows that a *jeong*-love not only exposes the oppressive power and structure, it also heals the psychological damage of both the oppressed and the oppressor.¹²⁰ Likewise, in his analysis of the Hebrew word *hesed* (“loyalty,” “loving-kindness”), Uriah Kim highlights the iconoclastic notion of *jeong* in *hesed* and argues that it is not limited to an act of will to be

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 127.

¹¹⁸ Cristina Grenholm, *Motherhood and Love: Beyond the Gendered Stereotype of Theology*. Translated by Marie Tåqvist (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2011), xiii.

¹¹⁹ “One cannot succinctly define *jeong* without losing the depth of its multiple and shifting dimensions. Moreover, *jeong* embodies the invisible traces of compassion in relationships and is most often recognized when we perceive our very own self, conscious and unconscious, in the mirrored reflection of the other. *Jeong* is a Korean way of conceiving an often complex constellation of relationality of the self with the other that is deeply associated with compassion, love, vulnerability, and acceptance of heterogeneity as essential to life. It not only smooths harsh feelings, such as dislike or even hate, but has a way of making relationships richly complex by moving away from a binary, oppositional perception of reality, such as oppressor and oppressed.” Wonhee Anne Joh, *Heart of the Cross: A Postcolonial Christology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), xxi. In terms of “*han*,” Joh points out that while it can be a *won-han* or a *hu-han*. “She writes: “*Won-han* is distinctive for its deep awareness of injustice and justice seeking” (Ibid., 25). But this *won-han* can turn into a *hu-han* when the unjust situation remains the same. “*Hu-han* [therefore] has given up on justice as a possible goal and seeks instead retaliation and violent revenge” (idem.). Following the analysis of Lee, Joh agrees that “*han* is double-edged in its embodiment of love and hate ... When hate gets stronger, it becomes *won-han*, whereas when love becomes the stronger force, *han* turns into *jeong-han*” (Ibid., 23). For Joh’s allusion to the notion of *han*, see Jae Hoon Lee, *The Exploration of the Inner Wounds – Han*. AAR Academy Series 86 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1994).

¹²⁰ For a short version of Joh’s *Heart of the Cross* that specifically addresses Spivak’s notion of “planetary,” see W. Anne Joh, “Love’s Multiplicity: Jeong and Spivak’s Notes toward Planetary Love,” in *Planetary Love: Spivak, Postcoloniality, and Theology*. Edited by Stephen D. Moore and Mayra Rivera (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), 168-90.

faithful within pre-existing relationship. Rather, as *hesed* comes from the heart, it is also an “act of ‘affection and kindness’ that a person can perform for another for the sake of God or for the sake of human solidarity, irrespective of whether or not there is a close relationship between them.”¹²¹ In his review of *hesed* in scholarship, Kim shows how a concept can be approached so differently, depending on the modes of existence that one privileges and assumes.

The attention to the specific context of mutuality is crucial, lest we think that it must be a strict symmetrical or equal reciprocity between two parties. In their critique of the patriarchal and hierarchical views of love, Rita Nakashima Brock and Carter Heyward also do not rule out asymmetrical relationships in mutuality.¹²² Mutuality is not a calculation of reciprocity. If we demand for a strict reciprocity, a love relationship can become an economy of exchange and a form of autonomy. But, as relationality addresses the interaction between the self and others, it heightens our awareness to the power relations in love. It then shows that love is more than a relationship between two individuals. Love affects each other’s *current and future* families and friends, whether socially, materially, or psychically. In this framework, one cannot ignore the opinions of those associated with the beloved. In this mode of love, it is not merely an individual giving love to another individual. Rather, in giving love to the beloved, the lover is already the recipient of love that s/he receives in her/his encounter with the beloved. Our notion of relationality, in other words, must not be reduced to just an economy of exchange.

¹²¹ Uriah Y. Kim, *Identity and Loyalty in the David Story: A Postcolonial Reading* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), 27. For a very helpful review of scholarship on *hesed*, see pages 30-60.

¹²² For example, Brock writes: “Erotic power is the power of our primal interrelatedness. Erotic power, as it creates and connects hearts, involves the whole person in relationships of self-awareness, vulnerability, openness, and caring.” See Rita Nakashima Brock, *Journeys by Heart*, 26. Likewise, Heyward writes: “What is ‘in’ me is not simply ‘in’ me. My feelings, thoughts, commitments, beliefs are not solely mine. They have been/are being shaped in me by forces and factors that are not me at all but that participate in forming me – parents, teachers, friends, enemies, forces known and unknown to me, ancient and modern, near and distant, familiar and alien to my awareness.” See Carter Heyward, *Touching Our Strength: The Erotic as Power and the Love of God* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1989), 12.

(iii) Heteronomy

Heteronomy is an asymmetrical relationality. It underscores vulnerability and mutuality. As “*hetero*” means “one or the other of two” or “other than should be,” it suggests an element of otherness. The *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language* defines heteronomy as a lack of control, where one is subjected to others, whether in politics or in “lacking moral freedom or self-determination.”¹²³ This feature of otherness is rather apparent in our feeling, mood, religious experience, and bodily drive, which we have emphasized, cannot be totally grasped and articulated.

Given this otherness in heteronomy, it can thus lead to exploitation. Grace Jantzen, for example, critiques the otherness of mysticism when we do not check “whether involvement in spirituality might actually deflect attention from the real needs of people, offering palliatives to individuals rather than attending to the social causes of injustice.”¹²⁴ Likewise, Daphne Hampton argues that the church, instead of addressing social oppression and injustice, relegates social activism to the domain of revelation, monotheism, and ecclesial institution.¹²⁵ Heteronomy as such is dangerous, as it is set beyond any possible critical assessment when it is treated as divinely revealed. Grenholm writes, “Heteronomy is oppressive when it smothers mutual relations and fails to respect the individual.”¹²⁶ However, Grenholm continues: “heteronomy is also the positive empowering that occurs when one ultimately abandons control of oneself, trusting God (rather than relying on oneself or human [relational] institutions) or receiving the

¹²³ “Heteronomy,” in *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language*, 1063.

¹²⁴ See Grace M. Jantzen, *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 18.

¹²⁵ Daphne Hampton, “On Autonomy and Heteronomy,” in *Swallowing a Fishbone?: Feminist Theologians Debate Christianity*. Edited by Daphne Hampton (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1996), 1-16.

¹²⁶ Cristina Grenholm, “Heteronomy,” in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, 511.

gift of love.”¹²⁷ In other words, if heteronomy as a human condition is embedded in autonomy and relationality, then it also needs to recognize their otherness.

Examining the heteronomy in Christian creeds, Sarah Coakley takes note of Hampton’s concern and her view of *kenōsis* (“emptying out”), but she critiques them through her detailed analysis of Philippians 2:5-11 and of early Christian creeds and mystical prayer. Coakley recognizes the transformative power of *kenōsis* practiced in silent prayer or contemplation. She writes: “we can only be properly ‘empowered’ here if we cease to set the agenda, if we ‘make space’ for God to be God.”¹²⁸ Of course, this “silent waiting on the divine in prayer” will “involve great personal commitment and great personal risk.”¹²⁹ But, Coakley insists that this vulnerability in heteronomy “is not an invitation to be battered, nor is its silence a silencing.”¹³⁰ To be silent does not mean to do nothing, to give up, or to give in to the situation. Silence is not meaningless. It recognizes the monstrosity of injustice and realizes that in order to not repay evil with evil we need to be empowered in our vulnerability or woundedness.

Speaking of the silence of God at the cross, C. S. Song wonders whether Jesus’ God was shocked and reduced to silence by the brutality of humans against humans. The silence of God must also be a protest, just as Jesus protests with silence before the religious and political leaders. The silence is not a sign of resignation and despair. Song writes:

After so much horror and grief protest is not easy. This is our [Taiwanese and Chinese] experience. Horror renders you numb, and grief sucks out of your life force. There is precious little left to do anything else. You continue stupefied and your grief seems to have no end. To protest injustice, we have to have moral courage. To protest brutality we have to have spiritual power ... And on top of all these we have to have physical strength to protest injustice, brutality, and inhumanity ... Protest does not have to be done with words and action, however.

¹²⁷ Idem.

¹²⁸ Sarah Coakley, “Kenōsis and Subversion: On the Repression of ‘Vulnerability’ in Christian Feminist Writing,” in *Swallowing a Fishbone?*, 107.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 108.

¹³⁰ Idem.

There are situations in which protest has to be done in silence. Then that silence becomes powerful silence, ominous silence, frightening silence ... In silence God is in profound agony with Jesus and through Jesus with victims of human atrocity.¹³¹

The power in silence: such power in vulnerability may seem absurd and delusional to many. Yet, it is a transformative silence that preserves our human dignity and integrity without being degraded into paying wrong for wrong. It sounds absurd when injustice rampages and stares at us starkly. Yet, do we not see similar absurdity in womanist theology,¹³² Black theology,¹³³ Latin liberation theology,¹³⁴ etc. in the face of the monstrosity of violence and injustice?

Thus it is not a surprise that Coakley finds tremendous power and meaning in silence where she sees vulnerability as an impossibility manifested in the event of *kenōsis*, in the cross of Christ. Coakley argues that *kenōsis* or vulnerability is not “a negation of self, but the place of self’s transformation and expansion into God.”¹³⁵ Like a ritual, this prayer space/time is a liminal space/time that lets the other be other, God be God (cf. 2 Cor. 1:3-11).¹³⁶ So instead of feeling powerless, heteronomy or the “ethics of risk,” as Sharon Welch puts it, reminds us that “strength

¹³¹ C. S. Song, *Jesus, The Crucified People* (Lima, OH: Academic Renewal Press, 2001), 115-17.

¹³² See Katie Geneva Cannon, *Katie’s Canon: Womanism and the Soul of the Black Community*. Foreword by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (New York: Continuum, 1995).

¹³³ See James H. Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2011).

¹³⁴ For example, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. Revised edition with a new introduction. Translated and edited by Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988); Alexander Nava, *The Mystical and Prophetic Thought of Simone Weil and Gustavo Gutiérrez: Reflections on the Mystery and Hiddenness of God* (New York: State University of New York, 2001). Also, see Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *En la Lucha: In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujerista Theology: A Hispanic Women’s Liberation Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993).

¹³⁵ Sarah Coakley, “Kenōsis and Subversion,” 108.

¹³⁶ Similarly Chrétien finds the vocal prayer the religious phenomenon *par excellence*. Treating prayer as a *speech act*, Chrétien thinks that not only do we reveal ourselves before the *invisible* other in prayer, we also respond to the call as we pray. For Chrétien, this response to the call is what “dispossesses us of our egocentrism.” But, who call us? To whom do we pray? An invisible other. Is our prayer a soliloquy? No. It is a speech act; a communal act in fact, we could add. In praying, not only do we address the unknown, we also address ourselves. Perhaps more importantly, in prayer and contemplation we pay heed to our voices, voices that struggle with other voices in our heart and head, voices that reverberate through our body, as we face the other and wonder how to proceed. See Jean-Louis Chrétien, “The Wounded Word: The Phenomenology of Prayer,” in *The Phenomenology and the “Theological Turn”: The French Debate* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 153.

is not founded on certainty, but on trust and belief,”¹³⁷ where strength is measured “in its ability to continually call forth hope and righteous agency.”¹³⁸ Heteronomy, vulnerability, risk, etc. are not passive in the face of injustice. A heteronomy-oriented love is risky and can be exploited. But it is also hospitable to creativity and transformation that do not reify any category. As such a love cannot be objectified, it must be examined and committed again and again.

III. Different Modes of Existence in the Felt, Claimed, and Paid Aspects of Honor

[H]onor is too intimate a sentiment to submit to definition: it must be felt, it cannot be analyzed except by the anthropologist. It is therefore an error to regard honor as a single constant concept rather than a conceptual field within which people find the means to express their self-esteem or their esteem for others.¹³⁹

– John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers

If honor and shames are pivotal values in ancient Mediterranean cultures, then how we understand them can greatly affect our interpretation of 1 Corinthians, including its passages about love. In fact, if the modes of existence (i.e., heteronomy, autonomy, and relationality) correspond respectively to the three aspects of honor (i.e., honor felt, honor claimed, and honor paid) then our interpretations of 1 Corinthians must take into account of the role of modes of existence in our textual analysis.

Since 1960s anthropologists and sociologists have noted that in a collective culture, “[h]onour is at the apex of the pyramid of temporal social values and it conditions their hierarchical order. Cutting across all other social classifications it divides social beings into two

¹³⁷ Sharon D. Welch, *A Feminist Ethic of Risk*, 35.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹³⁹ See John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Introduction,” in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*. Edited by John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers (Cambridge, UK; New York; Victoria, Australia: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 4.

fundamental categories, those endowed with honour and those deprived of it.”¹⁴⁰ Following these field studies, biblical scholars also notice how honor and shame were “pivotal values of the first-century Mediterranean world.”¹⁴¹ Halvor Moxnes writes: “[p]atronage, slavery, economic practices, purity rules, meal practices, and even the peculiar Mediterranean sense of identity that derives from group membership must likewise be understood in terms of honor and shame.”¹⁴²

In his commentary on 1 Corinthians, Anthony Thiselton cites Witherington approvingly: “Corinth was a city where public boasting and self-promotion had become an art form. The Corinthian people thus lived with an *honor-shame* cultural orientation, where *public recognition was often more important than facts ...*”¹⁴³ In his recent monograph on honor and conflict in 1 Corinthians, Mark Finney also argues that the conflicts in the church of God in Corinth “is a crisis of social identity” that comes “directly from the cultural ‘power’ of φιλοτιμία [love of honor].”¹⁴⁴ And, as the value of honor is associated with the endowment of divine favor, it is not

¹⁴⁰ John G. Peristiany, “Introduction,” in *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*. Edited by John G. Peristiany (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), 10.

¹⁴¹ Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World*, 28-62. Downing, however, argues that honor “is only occasionally pivotal and is often negligible, if it is present at all.” See F. Gerald Downing, “Honor among Exegetes,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 61 (1999): 53-73 (68).

¹⁴² Halvor Moxnes, “Honor and Shame,” in *The Social Sciences and the New Testament Interpretation*. Edited by Richard L. Rohrbaugh (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 20. For a dynamic view of patron-client relationships in the Roman Empire, see the articles in *Patronage in Ancient Society*. Edited by Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (London and New York: Routledge, 1989). Also, see Richard A. Horsley, “Patronage, Priesthoods, and Power: Introduction,” in *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*. Edited by Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 88-95; Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, “Patronal Power Relations,” in *Paul and Empire*, 96-103; John K. Chow, “Patronage in Roman Corinth,” in *Paul and Empire*, 104-25.

¹⁴³ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000), 13; Ben Witherington, III., *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 8.

¹⁴⁴ Mark T. Finney, *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World: 1 Corinthians in its Greco-Roman Social Setting*. Library of New Testament Studies 460 (London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2012), 3. To address the problem, Finney contends that “Paul’s presentation of the cross of Christ is offered (or insisted upon!) as the only paradigm in which the social lifestyle of the Christ-movement can adequately proceed.” *Ibid.*, 4.

surprising that honor is “in essence, the pre-eminent social value in the Roman world.”¹⁴⁵ In his summary of the notion of value in Greco-Roman world, Finney writes:

the drive for personal honour operated strongly amongst the vast majority of men, especially those engage in public life and, even more ... the loss (or potential loss) of honour aroused the very deepest feelings. Greeks and Romans were lovers of honour and competitive in their quest for privilege and esteem; any attack on one’s τιμή was an attack on the very basis of one’s life and well-being.¹⁴⁶

Note that drive and feeling of φιλοτιμία are so intense that “any attack on one’s τιμή was an attack on the very basis of one’s life and well-being” (cf. heteronomy). In his reading of the Platonic *erōs*, Olivier Renaut further argues that as *thumos* (“passion”) is at the very heart of *philotimia* (“love of honor”), love and honor are not only interwoven and marked by heteronomy, the self is also marked by heteronomy.¹⁴⁷ This feeling dimension of honor is of great importance to our understanding of honor and love.

In his well-known works that introduce and integrate anthropology in biblical studies, Bruce Malina also defines honor as “a person’s (or group’s) feeling of self-worth and the public, social acknowledgement of that worth ... It is the basis of one’s reputation, of one’s social standing, regardless of gender.”¹⁴⁸ Consequently, “any human group worthy of belonging to humankind, needs to have shame, to be sensitive to its honor rating, to be perceptive to the opinion of others”¹⁴⁹ in maintaining and acquiring its honor. Despite Malina’s mention of “feeling” in his definition of honor, he surprisingly does not explore the feeling dimension of

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 37. “Roman life was a public affair and the pursuit of honour subsisted under the constant scrutiny of those within one’s own social class, who invariably concerned themselves with the calculation of a person’s honour, relative both to themselves and others.” Idem.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 48.

¹⁴⁷ See Olivier Renaut, “Challenging Platonic *Erōs*: The Role of *Thumos* and *Philotimia* in Love,” in *Erōs in Ancient Greece*. Edited by Ed Sanders, Chiara Thumiger, Chris Carey, and Nick J. Lowe (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 95-110.

¹⁴⁸ Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World*, 50.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 51.

honor. He focuses on the social functions of honor,¹⁵⁰ which we saw earlier is also present in his definition of Paul's love. As such, the value of honor is reduced to a functionalist account (cf. relationality). But, as Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers point out, "honor is too intimate a sentiment to submit to definition: it must be felt."¹⁵¹ Secondly, while Malina clearly stresses that honor is a group-oriented value, his notion of collectivity is strangely individual-centered.¹⁵² In light of

¹⁵⁰ Malina writes: "Values are about the quality and direction of behavior. Since values are essentially qualities that inhere in something else, what that something else might be is always open to dispute within social limits, of course." Ibid., 53. To analyze the inherent qualities of values, Malina then focuses on the "functions" of honor and shame. But since "functions" are representations (symbols) of values, as Julian Pitt-Rivers notes, such analysis is indeed "open to dispute." See Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status," in *Honour and Shame*, 26.

¹⁵¹ John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Introduction," in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*. Edited by J. G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers (Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge Press, 1992), 4.

¹⁵² In his *Windows on the World of Jesus*, for example, Malina proposes potentially very helpful concrete illustrations of honor and shame that seek to highlight a necessary interconnectedness of individuals in the social networks in an honor and shame culture. But Malina's formulation of these illustrations is quite ambivalent, as he remains influenced by the individual-centered Western perspective from which he writes. As concrete illustrations taken from a community-centered culture are most helpful, as Malina has recognized, we will follow his lead by providing similar, but very different, illustrations from an honor-shame culture – Malaysia – which is not unlike the Mediterranean-Judean culture. For details, see Jackson Wu, "The Honor of God in the Shame of Christ for Salvation: A Theological Contextualization from Chinese Culture" (Ph.D. diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 148-92. Notice that Wu also alludes to the importance of feeling dimension of face ("mianzi" and "lian") in the value of honor and shows how this heteronomy can be translated into different forms of relationality in the social area of morality.

Now, in "Window 11," Malina tells a story of how some Mediterranean-Judean parents were upset that their children did badly in a teacher's class. They confronted the teacher (Frank), "'I know my child is bright and if he got a D on your test then there must be something wrong with your teaching,' or 'Why do you dislike my child so much?'" See Bruce J. Malina, *Windows on the World of Jesus: Time Travel to Ancient Judea* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 29.

Note that this story is told from an individual-centered viewpoint. The Mediterranean-Judean parents would probably say "*we* know *our* child" and "Why do you dislike *our* child so much?" While Malina rightly points out that "in first century Palestine, poor performance in school is thought to reflect faulty upbringing" (idem), he does not flesh out the implication of this interconnectedness. Just as a child is a child-with-others-in-the-society, a grade is tied to many other things. This is why honor and shame are collective values.

In a communal culture, a teacher's relationship with the student goes far beyond the classroom. If the teacher knows the student's family, then giving the student a bad grade may make his relationship with the family awkward. Even if he may not know the student's family, his family and friends may know the family. In a group-oriented culture, everyone is interconnected. In addition, the student's bad grade may reflect the teacher's teaching competency, which may affect his reputation among the colleagues, unless the student is already known for getting bad grade. Now, if a person's reputation is intertwined with everything that s/he is and does, then would people not want to maintain harmony as much as possible, at least on the surface? Because when one offends someone, one may also indirectly offend people and groups that are associated with oneself. As such, would people not want to avoid unnecessary conflicts? Malina's assessment that honor and shame are "agonistic" is accurate, but the competition is subtle and comes in various ways and forms.

Let me use Wu's illustration: "When disputes do occur, how do [honor and shame] influence matters of reconciliation and forgiveness in China? The legal system is not the preferred way of handling problems. Since harmony is of utmost importance, it is not surprising that Chinese prefer to avoid open conflict. In fact, many problems can be avoided simply by using indirect communication. On the whole, Chinese show a great deal of reluctance to extend forgiveness, as has been verified in numerous empirical studies. For one reason, to openly

these two aspects of honor, our notion of love needs to consider the modes of existence and the very different ways in which human interactions are perceived.¹⁵³

Now, we may not be able to describe and define the value of honor except by examining its expression and manifestations in human behaviors and interactions. Yet, if honor and shame “are the reflection of the social personality in the mirror of social ideal,”¹⁵⁴ then there is a gap (i.e., “reflection”) between the practice and the ideal. In the words of Pitt-Rivers: “Honour, therefore, provides a nexus between the ideals of a society and their reproduction in the individual through [the individual’s] aspiration to personify them.”¹⁵⁵ As a nexus between the ideals of society and the individual, honor works like this: “the sentiment of honour inspires conduct which is honourable, the conduct receives recognition and establishes reputation, and reputation is finally sanctified by the bestowal of honours. Honour felt becomes honour claimed and honour claimed becomes honour paid.”¹⁵⁶ That is to say, honor felt (i.e., heteronomy) is manifested in honor claimed (i.e., autonomy) and acknowledged in honor paid (i.e., relationality). As this sentiment, feeling, or drive is further tied to the divine favor, cosmic order, or the sacred,¹⁵⁷ it explains why the value of honor can be so powerful that some cultures even consider

discuss the problem leads to someone losing face. Secondly, some suggest Chinese relationships have higher expectations and emphasis on sacrifice than do many other cultures. This results in greater hurt when there are serious fissures in relationship.” See Jackson Wu, “The Honor of God in the Shame of Christ for Salvation,” 168.

¹⁵³ Wu rightly points out that our views of honor and shame “largely depend on whether one appeals to an ‘independent self-concept’ or ‘interdependent self-concept.’”¹⁵³ See Jackson Wu, “The Honor of God in the Shame of Christ for Salvation,” 172.

¹⁵⁴ See John G. Peristiany, “Introduction,” in *Honour and Shame*, 9. He writes, “A study of the value judgements concerning honour and shame involves the study of the supreme temporal ideals of a society and of their embodiment in the ideal type of man. It is also a study of the basic mould of social personality.” *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁵⁵ Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Honour and Social Status,” in *Honour and Shame*, 22.

¹⁵⁶ *Idem.*

¹⁵⁷ See Mark T. Finney, *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World* 12-13; Jackson Wu, “The Honor of God in the Shame of Christ for Salvation,” 160; John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Introduction,” in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, 2-3; John K. Campbell, “Honour and the Devil,” in *Honour and Shame*, 141-70. This connection to the sacred is also alluded to in Pierre Bourdieu, “The Sentiment of Honour in Kabyle Society,” in *Honour and Shame*, 193-241.

it “more important than life itself.”¹⁵⁸ For Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, this is why honor is also related to grace (see the discussion of *charis* in section 5 below). No wonder there is a gap between the practice and the ideal. No wonder Finney, in his review of Greco-Roman notion of honor, finds that “any attack on one’s τιμή was an attack on the very basis of one’s life and well-being.”¹⁵⁹ Concerning this notion of the sacred, Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers write:

One is perhaps chary of talking loosely about “the sacred” today ... yet we nevertheless require a word to denote the fact that there is a realm of mental behavior where the extraordinary is opposed to the ordinary and where accepted truths are placed beyond question by a conviction, impervious to reasoning because it lies deeper than consciousness; it commands an attachment that springs from the bottom of the self, refusing the logic of everyday conduct. This is where the sentiment of honor arises ...¹⁶⁰

In saying that the sentiment of honor that arises from the sacred is “impervious to reasoning because it lies deeper than consciousness,” the authors give us a definition of conviction. What counts as an honor is a conviction, a self-evident truth that cannot be demonstrated. This conviction comes to the fore in the tension between honor precedence (i.e., relationality) and honor virtue (i.e., heteronomy).

In her critique of Malina’s notion of honor that focuses on honor precedence, Louise Lawrence gives a list of exceptions to his definition in the Gospel of Matthew that display honor virtue, an honor that comes not from social conventions but contradicts them as it is grounded in the divine.¹⁶¹ Lawrence rightly points out that Pitt-Rivers does speak of this honor virtue in

¹⁵⁸ See Jackson Wu, “The Honor of God in the Shame of Christ for Salvation,” 154; John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Introduction,” in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, 2.

¹⁵⁹ See Mark T. Finney, *Honour and Conflict in the Ancient World*, 48.

¹⁶⁰ John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Introduction,” in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, 2.

¹⁶¹ See Louise Joy Lawrence, *An Ethnography of the Gospel of Matthew: A Critical Assessment of the Use of the Honour and Shame Model in New Testament Studies* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2003), 29-30, 89-92, 142-80. In her literary-ethnographic analysis of Matthew, Lawrence problematizes the rigid categories that Malina sets up in his social-scientific analysis of cultural values and practices in the ancient Mediterranean world. She finds such use of model risks pre-determining one’s textual analysis, as one analyzes the text by mapping the model onto the text.

tension with the agonistic honor precedence, even though Malina neglects it.¹⁶² This distinction between honor precedence and honor virtue is also found in Chinese notion of honor in the figures of *mian-zi* and *lian* (both mean “face” in Chinese).¹⁶³ Jackson Wu writes: “*Mianzi* [honor precedence; relationality] can simply mean one is well known or has impressed others, regardless of moral grounds (e.g., athletes, singers, CEOs). A poor person could have *lian* [honor virtue; heteronomy] but little *mianzi*.”¹⁶⁴ While Wu finds that “a sharp distinction should not be pressed too far,”¹⁶⁵ Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers argue that the distinction is not dualistic. They write:

The paradox that honor is at the same time a matter of moral conscience and a sentiment on the one hand, and on the other, a fact of repute and precedence, whether attained by virtue of birth, power, wealth, sanctity, prestige, guile, force, or simony ... implied that honor could not merely be reduced and treated as an epiphenomenon of some other factor, but obeyed a logic of its own which could dispel the paradoxes.¹⁶⁶

Here, understanding the “logic of its own” involved in honor may “dispel the paradoxes” in the recognition and operation of honor, but such a logic is felt or religious oriented. The paradox needs to be examined in terms of each context where the value of honor is at work, lest the felt aspect is reduced to the claimed and paid aspects.

¹⁶² She writes: “Biblical scholars who have relied solely on Malina’s definition of honor (largely corresponding to ‘honor precedence’) have remained unaware of Pitt-Rivers’s twofold definition of the concept of honor and have, accordingly, labeled anything different from this model as deviant or countercultural.” See Louise Joy Lawrence, “‘For truly, I tell you, they have received their reward’ (Matt 6:2): Investigating Honor Precedence and Honor Virtue,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64 (2002): 687-702 (690); Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Honour and Social Status,” in *Honour and Shame*, 31, 42-43, 61-63, 72.

¹⁶³ Wu writes: “Far from being limited to China, face is a universal human phenomenon, a fundamental consideration in social interactions. In fact, face must be protected and given in order to maintain harmony in a group. In different contexts, the rules and signs for recognizing face may differ. A person loses faces when he or she claims to have certain characteristics but others do not acknowledge that claim.” See Jackson Wu, “The Honor of God in the Shame of Christ for Salvation,” 152.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁶⁵ *Idem.*

¹⁶⁶ John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Introduction,” in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, 5. Pitt-Rivers continues: “It would appear that there are in Western civilization two opposed – and *ultimately complementary* – registers: the first associated with honor, competition, triumph, the male sex, possession, and the profane world, and the other with peace, amity, grace, purity, renunciation, the female sex, dispossession in favor of others, and the sacred.” See Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Postscript: The Place of Grace in Anthropology,” in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, 242. Emphasis added.

To conclude. The intertwining of feeling or sentiment and social function of honor is central to Pitt-Rivers's understanding of honor, as he repeats the following sentence in several places: "Honour felt becomes honour claimed and honour claimed becomes honour paid."¹⁶⁷ From my experience growing up in a group-oriented honor and shame culture, it is important to clarify that we cannot easily tell apart these aspects of honor. The relation among them is not a causal relationship, in particular when there is a gap between honor felt and honor claimed and honor paid. That is to say, the value of honor is an "honor felt"- "honor claimed"- "honor paid" value. As we noted in the end of the Introduction chapter, the hyphen is indispensable. It signifies a metaphorical distance that associates, divides, extends, retracts, and creates meanings. As such, to claim that honor is a collective value is not denying that it is also a *felt value*, that is, a proprioceptive value. The value of honor therefore has both subjective and communal elements intertwined, together. How do we address this felt dimension of honor? We need to address this question because as soon as we articulate its felt aspect, honor is no longer felt; it becomes claimed and paid, which are important aspects of honor. If honor is only a felt value without any articulations, then it cannot be claimed and paid. The felt aspect needs to be manifested in the claimed and paid in order for honor to be *publicly* affirmed, acknowledged, and operative in the society. At the same time, however, as the claimed and paid aspects of honor are affirmation of the felt honor, they both represent and misrepresent the felt aspect. The claimed and paid aspects of honor are not *the* felt aspect itself. The felt aspect can be represented in many forms, depending on how the individuals and the groups claim and pay for it.

¹⁶⁷ Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Honor," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. Edited by David L. Sills. Vol. 6 (New York: Macmillan, 1968), 503-511 (503). Also, Pitt-Rivers includes his long chapter in *Honour and Shame* (1966) in *The Fate of Shechem or The Politics of Sex: Essays in the Anthropology of the Mediterranean* (London; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 2.

This limitation in representation comes to the fore when we occasionally find certain practices of the felt honor contradict the claimed and paid honor. An example is Paul's message of the cross which is foolishness to those who are perishing but the power of God to those who are saved (1 Cor. 1:18). Or the tension between honor precedence and honor virtue. Or the gap between *mianzi* and *lian*. The incoherency does not necessarily mean that the practices are counter-cultural. The crack in representation of claimed and paid honor could point to the conviction or the proprioceptive/felt feature of honor. So the conflicting practices may appear to be dishonorable in terms of the claimed and paid aspects, but they could still be honorable in terms of the felt aspect. Does this mean that the felt aspect and the claimed and paid aspects of honor are incompatible? Not necessarily. Rather, as Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers put it: "It is ... an error to regard honor as a single constant concept rather than *a conceptual field* within which people find the means to express their self-esteem or their esteem for others."¹⁶⁸

IV. Different Modes of Existence in the Notion of "Call"

Paul, called (κλητὸς) to be an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God... (1 Cor. 1:1)

The different modes of existence or aspects of honor are also applicable to Paul's notion of "call" in the beginning of 1 Corinthians, as interpreters also privilege different modes of existence in their interpretations. We choose to focus on this notion of "call" because as Philip Tie puts it, "How an author decides to open his or her letter sets the tone for the letter's

¹⁶⁸ See John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, "Introduction," in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, 4. Emphasis added. The felt aspect is, however, rendered differently by Malina. While he writes that "honor felt is honor paid, and honor paid indicates what ought to be felt ... [and] honor causes a society to derive what ought to be done from what in fact is done. That is, the social order as it should be is derived from the social order as it is," he subsumes the felt aspect under the paid aspect. He does not clarify what he means by "what in fact is done" or "the social order as it is." See Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World*, 48. From our discussion about the felt value, the predicate "is" is not an ontological "is." Rather, it is a felt "is." As a felt "is," then the ethic in terms of "what ought to be done" or "the social order as it should be" is also a felt ethic.

contents.”¹⁶⁹ Indeed, for Peter Arzt-Grabner, the “opening parts of the letter body” are “much more than mere formulaic expressions of closeness or formal receipts for oral or written news.”¹⁷⁰ David Pao even argues that “one can no longer speak of a Hellenistic epistolary introductory thanksgiving section in in papyrus letter contemporary to Paul.”¹⁷¹ Rather, it is “a part of the *formula valetudinis* as occasioned by specific contexts or events.”¹⁷²

In introducing himself, as one called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God and Sosthenes his *adelphos* as the co-writer of the letter (1 Cor. 1:1),¹⁷³ Paul may appear to be flashing his apostolic badge to the Corinthian believers.¹⁷⁴ He may appear as an authority

¹⁶⁹ See Philip L. Tie, “How to Begin, and Why? Diverse Functions of the Pauline Prescript Within A Greco-Roman Context,” in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, 59. Tie notes that “[t]he additions and expansions in letter prescripts are intentional or unintentional discursive acts that carry persuasive force.” Ibid., 65. Likewise, when it comes to the greetings, “Not only does Paul establish a mutuality of religious identity with his recipients by means of the *salutatio*, he also uses the greeting to reinforce aspects of his positional moves earlier in the prescript.” Ibid., 74.

¹⁷⁰ See Peter Arzt-Grabner, “Paul’s Letter Thanksgiving,” in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, 156; Peter Arzt, “The ‘Epistolary Introductory Thanksgiving’ in the Papyri and in Paul,” *Novum Testamentum* 36 (1994): 29–46.

¹⁷¹ David W. Pao, “Gospel Within the Constraints of An Epistolary Form: Pauline Introductory Thanksgiving And Paul’s Theology of Thanksgiving,” in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, 114. Agreeing with Arzt that “the use of the verb εὐχαριστῶ in connection with such *formula valetudinis* in introductory paragraphs appears only in the second century C.E.” (Ibid., 106), Pao argues that “unless one is able to point to a substantial number of papyrus letters that do contain thanksgiving formula(s) similar to the ones that appear in the Pauline epistles, to identify isolated examples throughout these few centuries would not be sufficient to show that Paul is relying on Hellenistic epistolary convention.” Ibid., 109. Contra Arzt and Pao, Collins finds that “the functional and formulaic similarities between Paul’s epistolary thanksgivings and those of the extant papyri letters give ample, though admittedly limited, evidence that Paul’s thanksgivings lie fully within with the tradition of Hellenistic letter-writing.” See Raymond F. Collins, “A Significant Decade: The Trajectory of The Hellenistic Epistolary Thanksgiving,” in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, 182.

¹⁷² See David W. Pao, “Gospel Within the Constraints of An Epistolary Form,” 112. For Pao, what causes Paul to give thanks is witnessing Christ at work among the Corinthian believers. Paul’s thanksgiving not only shows an “intense focus on God,” it also focuses on the “spiritual well-being” of believers and their relationship with God (ibid., 120–21). Highlighting the relationality of thanksgiving, Pao finds that “Paul is not concerned primarily with Christian etiquette or a proper emotional state, he is rather calling God’s people to be faithful to their God” (ibid., 126). For Paul, the “acts of thanksgiving are acts of worship, and a life of worship is manifested in the way Christians are to act out their confession” (ibid., 125).

¹⁷³ In arguing that Paul uses the metaphor of sibling *only* for believers, Aasgaard writes: “The most central role that Paul attributes to the Christians ... is that of Christian siblingship: the Christians are one another’s *siblings*, i.e. *brothers and sisters*.” As such, believers not only need to help each other as siblings, they also need to preserve the honor of the family. See Reidar Aasgaard, “‘Role Ethics’ in Paul: The Significance of the Sibling Role for Paul’s Ethical Thinking,” *New Testament Studies* 48.4 (October 2002): 513–30 (515).

¹⁷⁴ Adams finds that “Paul did not randomly include people in his letters as co-senders, but strategically integrated them within his letters ... Paul’s use of cosenders was tailored to the recipient of the letter.” See Sean A. Adams, “Paul’s Letter Opening and Greek Epistolography: A Matter of Relationship,” in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, 44. Adams also find that “[i]n general, the use of a title within the Pauline letter is connected to the relationship and

figure when he addresses “the church of God in Corinth ... with everyone calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both their Lord and ours” (1:2).¹⁷⁵ Sean Adams thus argues that “Paul opens his respective letters with a reminder that his authority was bestowed upon him by God and that he has been sent to instruct them in the message of the gospel”¹⁷⁶ (cf. autonomy). While some can stress the communality of Paul in mentioning Sosthenes, “everyone calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place,”¹⁷⁷ and those who greet believers in the end of the letter (16:19-20) (cf. relationality),¹⁷⁸ others can still claim that Paul actually invokes them to boost his credential and authority (cf. autonomy). But, if Paul “is attempting to use rhetoric to enhance his position, and consequently, the importance of the letter,”¹⁷⁹ it is also possible that the “importance of the letter” may be the reason for his use of rhetoric.

As believers are called by God into a partnership of Jesus Christ (1:9), we can, however, take the genitive of the “apostle of Christ Jesus” and the “will of God” as a subjective genitive. That is to say, an “apostle of Christ Jesus” is not an apostle *about* Christ Jesus, but an apostle

the experiences that Paul had with that particular church and that Paul is drawing on this relationship to connect with the letter recipients.” Ibid., 54.

¹⁷⁵ However, in noting the difficulty of interpreting the prepositional clause “with everyone calling upon the name ...,” Fitzmyer thinks that the clause “is best understood as modifying ‘the church of God that is in Corinth.’” See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 126.

¹⁷⁶ Sean A. Adams, “Paul’s Letter Opening and Greek Epistolography,” 52. Likewise, Tie writes: “Given the schismatic problem in 1 Cor 1:10–17 and Paul’s call for unity, the challenge to Paul’s authority by some in Corinth while upheld by others, the expansion in the *superscriptio* is both a claim to authority (‘an apostle’) and one grounded ‘through the will of God.’ Thus, in the prescript Paul uses himself to set up the tone of the letter: i.e., to direct attention away from internal divisiveness or charismatic leaders, and rather towards the mutual calling that they share in ‘the will of God’ ...” See Philip L. Tie, “How to Begin, and Why?” 83-84.

¹⁷⁷ Finding that “Paul’s letters are not entirely official or personal, yet both show their influence on his writing” (38), Adams further thinks that “a sizable introduction with title was used almost exclusively by those in the highest authority, namely, royalty ... [As such,] Paul, by lengthening his self-introduction, is attempting to exert his influence on the hearer by increasing his epistolary presence.” See Sean A. Adams, “Paul’s Letter Opening and Greek Epistolography,” 50.

¹⁷⁸ In pointing out the important of each five sections of Pauline letter closings (e.g., the “peace benediction,” “hortatory section,” “greetings,” “autograph,” and “grace benediction”), Weima argues that they “function much like the thanksgiving section, but in reverse. For as the thanksgiving foreshadows and points ahead to the major concerns to be addressed in the body of the letter, so the closing serves to highlight and encapsulate the main points previously taken up in the body.” See Jeffery A. D. Weima, “Sincerely, Paul: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings,” in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*, 309.

¹⁷⁹ Sean A. Adams, “Paul’s Letter Opening and Greek Epistolography,” 51.

whom Christ Jesus sends and through whom Christ/God works. The difference between the two is tremendous. While the objective genitive renders Paul as an apostle who proclaims a message about Christ Jesus (cf. autonomy and relationality), the subjective genitive shows Paul as a servant through whom God works (3:5-10; cf. 4:1) (cf. heteronomy), and as such, Paul needs to study and follow the direction of God and Christ Jesus (cf. 8:6). Paul cannot objectify his mission. He is not the owner of the mission. He is a co-worker who needs to be in the power of the Spirit to work with God, Christ, and other believers (cf. 9:19-23; 10:32-33). He is anxious to avoid taking the call for granted, becoming lax, and even being disqualified (9:27). This is why the believers' response to the call of God is vital to their relationship with God and others. God calls and people respond (cf. 15:9-11).

Concerning this call, J. Brian Tucker contends that Paul wants believers to “remain in the situation they were in when God called them” (7:17, 20, and 24).¹⁸⁰ That is to say, “rather than seeking to obliterate existing social identities, [Paul] is seen as one drawing from these to form diverse expression of Christ-movement identity.”¹⁸¹ For Tucker, this remaining in one's situation “was Paul's way of saying that the appreciation and acceptance of difference reflects the way the God of Israel accepted each of them, as brothers and sisters for whom Christ died.”¹⁸² But, if the situations are oppressive, should believers still remain there? This question challenges the notion of “call” in the modes of autonomy and relationality from being appropriated by anyone.

Thus, in calling the notion of “as not” in 1 Cor. 7:29-31 as “the ultimate meaning of *klēsis*,” Giorgio Agamben points out that “[t]he messianic vocation is the revocation of every

¹⁸⁰ J. Brian Tucker, “*Remain in Your Calling*”: Paul and the Continuation of Social Identities in 1 Corinthians (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 227.

¹⁸¹ *Idem.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 231.

vocation.”¹⁸³ In other words: “Vocation calls for nothing and to no place.”¹⁸⁴ It is not that Paul wants believers to remain in the situations in which they were called. Rather, he asks them to remain there *with God* (παρὰ θεῶ) (7:24). When Paul says, “let those who have wives as if they do not have, let those who bewail as if they do not bewail...” (7:29-31), the “as not” self-deconstructs any representations and makes the “call” heteronomous. The “vocation coincides with the movement of the calling toward itself.”¹⁸⁵ As such, “something remain unchanged but is radically changed nevertheless ... That which is changed is not the meaning of the relation and even less so its content.”¹⁸⁶ In the words of Agamben:

The Christian way of life is in fact not determined by worldly relations [i.e., not relationality] or by their content, but by the way, and only by the way, in which they are lived and are appropriated in their very impropriety. Nonetheless, for Paul, what is at stake is not appropriation [i.e., not autonomy], but use, and the messianic subject is not only *not* defined by propriety, but he is also unable to *seize* hold of himself as a whole [i.e., heteronomy], whether in the form of an authentic decision or in Being-toward-death.¹⁸⁷

These words of Agamben echo the message of the cross. The cross cannot be appropriated (1:17-25). Like the cross, Agamben’s notion of the use is a use that can be used only when it un-uses itself each instant it is used. They also echo the resurrection event, as it is a mystery (15:51). Yet, it is a (heteronomous) mystery that is at work *now* in the lives of believers, since what one sows does not come to life unless it dies (15:36). Paul thus trains himself as if he were a Roman athlete preparing for the contest (9:24-27),¹⁸⁸ since the calling calls for a constant vigilance and response. Paul thus has to remind believers of their calling, lest they objectify it (1:26-31). If

¹⁸³ See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains*, 25. Tucker, on the other hand, focuses on an apocalyptic notion of “as if.” See J. Brian Tucker, “*Remain in Your Calling*,” 208-13. Regarding the notion of “as if,” see Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains*, 35-37.

¹⁸⁴ See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains*, 25.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁸⁸ See James R. Harrison, “Paul and the Athletic Ideal in Antiquity: A Case Study in Wrestling with Word and Image,” in *Paul’s World*. Pauline Studies 4. Edited by Stanley E. Porter (Leiden, 2008: Brill), 81-109.

God is the one who calls, who can grasp the calling? The calling already dislocates the subject from her/his ego. This is why the response cannot be objectified either.

This discussion of the “call” shows that, in a call and response relation between God and believer(s), the relationship can be conceived of in different modes of existence. From an individual-centered perspective, the call signals the charisma of the believer, making her/him a figure of authority. From a communal viewpoint, the call can be configured and locked into a system of reciprocity (cf. relationality). From a heteronomous outlook, as the call cannot be grasped, it cannot be objectified and the believer, as a result, must *always* be vigilantly responsive to the call. While all these notions of call can be textually grounded – and thus legitimate and plausible – they are not all valid. An interpretation that is textually legitimate and hermeneutically plausible can be valid (valuable) in one context but not in another. Besides examining the textual support and hermeneutical plausibility of an interpretation, most importantly, we also need to investigate how and in what mode of existence are the questions of the context (of both the text and the interpreter) perceived, formulated, and addressed.

V. Different Modes of Existence in Various Notions of Love in Some Ancient Texts

In our review of rhetorical and ideological reading of Paul’s love, we find that when 1 Corinthians is read as Paul’s attempt to battle factionalism, with 1:10 as the thesis of the letter, one tends to render love as a means to an end to promote harmony and concord.¹⁸⁹ This political notion of love – a relational view – is only one possible representation of love.¹⁹⁰ Plato, for

¹⁸⁹ Note that the word “harmony” comes from Greek “harmozein,” meaning to join, a covenantal and political term. See Moshe Weinfeld, “Covenant Terminology in the Ancient Near East and Its Influence on the West,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 93, No. 2 (April-June 1973): 190-99 (190 n. 2). This relation between love and harmony is already told by Hesiod who wrote that Terror, Fear, and Harmony were born of Aphrodite and Ares.

¹⁹⁰ Renaut writes, “A close reading of the central part of the charioteer’s myth in the *Phaedrus* shows that *thumos* is actually the seat of many erotic effects. It is then necessary to address a discourse to *thumos* in order to persuade it to

example, speaks of different aspects and types of *erōs* (cf. *Symposium* 205b10-d8; *Phaedrus* 252c6-e1; *Laws* 837a3-d9),¹⁹¹ with the Platonic love as the ideal that can guide the sexual appetite for common good. These different types of love depend on how the self is educated philosophically in her/his love relationship with the other and how the beloved appears to the self. This relationship is not just intersubjective. It is dynamically inter-corporeal, privileging the heteronomous mode of existence and its “madness.”

In explaining Socrates’s *palinode* in *Phaedrus*, Terence Irwin argues that Plato “treats eros as a type of madness that belongs to the rational part [of the soul] ... because he rejects the conception of the rational part that confines it to instrumental prudence,”¹⁹² which can turn love into a calculative means to an end. Of course, desire and love may not be easily regulated, but they can be moderated (cf. *Laws* 835e2-842a2). Although the causal relationship between love and beauty is hard to determine, when beauty fails to inspire divine madness, the love that is essential to the common good can become a mere observance of moral rules and teachings. While *erōs* can certainly be a self-centered passion (cf. autonomy), it can also be a genuine concern for the good of the other/Other, as the sight of beauty may captivate and inspire one to let go of one’s desire to grasp the beloved.¹⁹³ In this love, the beloved may even be inspired by

care for the rational part of the soul, the ‘true self,’ represented by the coachman. Plato keeps *thumos* as a mover, but neutralizes its propensity to corrupt intellectual love.” See Olivier Renaut, “Challenging Platonic *Erōs*: The Role of *Thumos* and *Philotimia* in Love,” 104. According to Renaut, “The *thumos* plays a twofold role: as the first and immediate function of the soul to feel the effects of love, *thumos* is the main addressee of erotic discourses; but, as an intermediary, it defeats (or tries to defeat) sexual desires, builds a relationship founded on mutual love and respect, and helps give rise to philosophical love. In focusing the description of the effects of love from the viewpoint of *thumos*, Socrates tries to convert its motivational force into philosophy.” Ibid., 106. For Renaut, Aristotle in book 7 of his *Politics*, also “makes *thumos* the function of the soul whereby we feel *philia*.” Ibid., 109.

¹⁹¹ For example, see Kathy L. Gaca, *The Making of Fornication: Eros, Ethics, and Political Reform in Greek Philosophy and Early Christianity* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2003), 23-41. For an overview of love in *Laws*, see Seth Benardete, *Plato’s Laws: The Discovery of Being* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 238-46. For an interpretation of love in *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*, see A. W. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 15-102.

¹⁹² See Terence Irwin, *Plato’s Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 304.

¹⁹³ For example, the continual struggle between the charioteer and the good horse on the one hand, and the bad horse on the other, in beholding, loving, caring, and edifying the beloved is evident in *Phaedrus* 246a8-257b8. With

the beauty of the lover toward Beauty and Goodness.¹⁹⁴ *Erōs* need not be selfish, acquisitive, and motivated by the value of the desired object,¹⁹⁵ as Anders Nygren insists.¹⁹⁶ In linking *erōs* and concord together, Mitchell indirectly highlights this feature of *erōs*. Mitchell, however, only focuses on the rational and practical part of love for the common good (cf. relationality). She does not address the non-rational and heteronomous aspects of love as well as the intertwining of love and reason in the accent of Platonic love toward the form of the Beauty or Good.¹⁹⁷ She does not mention why and how *erōs* can motivate people to such a lofty goal.¹⁹⁸ While Mitchell's emphasis on the relational/political dimension of Paul's rhetorical discourse (including what it says about love) legitimately chooses as most significant aspects of the discursive syntax of Paul's letter (see the Methodological Appendix), which address an audience in a city of the Roman Empire, as any other interpretive choice it brackets out other meaning-producing dimension of the letter, including Paul's semantic universe. But for me and my

respect to this other-oriented feature of *erōs*, I agree with Marion that *erōs* and *agapē* are "two names selected among an infinity of others in order to think and to say the one love." See Jean-Luc Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon*. Translated by Stephen E. Lewis (Chicago: the University of Chicago, 2007), 221.

¹⁹⁴ "If Plato's erotic theory escapes ... the charge of promoting the exploitation of desired persons and objects, it does so not because *erōs* ... at the moral improvement of the *erōmenos* ... but because both lover and beloved, aroused alike by their visions of an identical beauty emanating (apparently) from each other and driven by the intensity of their separate desires to new labors of visionary creativity, make simultaneous and reciprocal, though independent, progress toward the contemplation of the Forms." See David M. Halperin, "Plato and Erotic Reciprocity," *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (April 1986): 60-80 (75).

¹⁹⁵ See A. H. Armstrong, "Platonic *Eros* and Christian *Agape*," *The Downside Review* 79, no. 255 (Spring 1961): 105-21; Lowell D. Streiker, "The Christian Understanding of Platonic Love: A Critique of Anders Nygren's *Agape and Eros*," *The Christian Scholar* 4 vol. 47 (1964): 331-40 (339).

¹⁹⁶ It is, however, important to note that when Nygren makes such a strong distinction between *agapē* and *erōs*, he is actually talking about two different semantic universes of Plato and the New Testament writers, as is evident in his explanation of his "motif research" methodology. See Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 30-40.

¹⁹⁷ Irwin writes, "In the *Phaedrus* Plato combines his different claims about eros in the *Republic* and the *Symposium*. He insists that, as the *Symposium* claims, one sort of eros belongs to the rational part. But he also argues that this eros shares some of the intensity and apparent irrationality of non-rational appetites; that is why 'eros' is the right name for it." See Terence Irwin, *Plato's Ethics*, 306. In *Phaedrus'* praise of love in *Symposium*, even if *philotimia* ("love of honor"), which arises from *thumos*, may be the wrong basis for love, Renault argues that "Diotima rightly points out the efficiency of *philotimia* as lever to virtuous behaviour. Indeed, the three examples of Alcestis, Achilles, and Codrus are illustrious ones; what is therefore questioned is not the effect of *philotimia* but the way those heroes have misconstrued the image of the object of love." See Olivier Renault, "Challenging Platonic *Erōs*: The Role of *Thumos* and *Philotimia* in Love," 102.

¹⁹⁸ This silence on the tremendous power of *erōs* is striking, especially given the overpowering influence of *erōs* in popular ancient Greek thoughts. See Kathy L. Gaca, *The Making of Fornication* 65-67. Also, see Ethelbert Stauffer, "ἀγάπῳ," in *TDNT* 1: 35-55 (35).

cultural and religious contexts this is leaving out the most significant and valuable dimensions of Paul's discourse on love: the poetic quality of Paul's notion of love is reduced to a function and a command, and love becomes a tool to maintain the concord of the community.

A very different notion of love appears when one takes into account that *Erōs* is born of *Poros* and *Penia*;¹⁹⁹ this dynamic hybridizing of excess and poverty makes love rather fluid (*Symposium* 203b1-204c7). There is no final destination and synthesis of *erōs*. Love is a movement between excess and poverty. We can perhaps say that love defers and differs from itself and the other/Other. This heteronomy of love is not only found in how the Greek word *erōs* is used by Plato in the *Symposium* – it is also present in such words as *philia* and *agapē*. Plato even calls such a loss of self in the bedazzlement of the beauty of the beloved not an *erōs* but a *philia* (*Phaedrus* 255e1; also see 256e2). From our reading about *erōs*, this distinction is not so much an opposition between autonomy and heteronomy as an intertwining of autonomy, relationality, and heteronomy in *erōs*. In fact, such a Platonic *philia* is interwoven with *erōs*.²⁰⁰ It does not sublimate and replace *erōs*, as Aristotle would argue.²⁰¹

The meaning of *philia* also includes components that belong to different modes of existence, with different ones emphasized in different interpretations. As “the most general and widely used term for ‘love’” in classical Greek,²⁰² *philia* denotes different kinds of love, loyalty,

¹⁹⁹ For a review of the stories of *Aphrodite* and *Erōs*, see Martin S. Bergmann, *The Anatomy of Loving: The Story of Man's Quest to Know What Love Is* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 21-35.

²⁰⁰ In light of this feeling of *erōs* on the part of the beloved toward the lover, Halperin finds that “the Platonic approach all but erases the distinction between lover and beloved, between the active and the passive partner – or, to put it better, the genius of Plato's analysis is that it eliminates passivity altogether: according to Socrates, both members of the relationship become active, desiring lovers; neither remains solely a passive object of desire.” See David M. Halperin, “Plato and Erotic Reciprocity,” *Classical Antiquity*, 68.

²⁰¹ “Aristotle even goes so far as to consider the myth of Plato's Aristophanes (*Symposium* 189d-193d) to be an illustration of the power of *philia*: what specifically gives rise to binding unions, such as the union between two lovers, is in Aristotle's view the intense *philia* generated by the erotic relationship, rather than the *erōs* that generates it (*Politics* 2.1262b8-17). But Plato, in certain passages at least, insists on using *erōs*, not *philia*, as the basis for an ideal intellectual fellowship.” *Ibid.*, 71.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 169.

and solidarity in family, marriage, friendship, political alliance, etc.,²⁰³ that is, it has different relational features that can be the focus of the interpretation. So while Konstan agrees with Martha Nussbaum's cognitive or evaluative approach to the study of emotions in Greco-Roman philosophy,²⁰⁴ he also stresses the affective aspect of the response to the stimulus in influencing one's judgment (cf. heteronomy),²⁰⁵ and contends that *philia* "was fundamentally an affective bond in ancient Greece and Rome, just as it is today."²⁰⁶ Note that as Konstan argues that the Greeks view the emotion as a response to the stimulus, "love" (categorized by Aristotle as an emotion) is thus a response, regardless of whether it is mutual or unilateral. While such a response may or may not anticipate a reciprocity, the response is not coerced and calculative.

Among the *phil*-terms that Aristotle uses to describe love,²⁰⁷ Konstan finds that Aristotle reserves the word *philia* for a mutual love (cf. relationality), while *philêsis* and *to philein* (or *eunoia*) for a unilateral love,²⁰⁸ with *philêsis* as an affection toward inanimate objects and *to*

²⁰³ See Gustav Stählin, "φιλέω κτλ.," in *TDNT* 9: 149-54.

²⁰⁴ See David Konstan, "Pathos and Passion," 20-40; Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Konstan writes: "Aristotle offers no explicit indication of how emotions affect judgments, but given his cognitive approach to emotion, we may hazard the guess that the kinds of beliefs that elicit emotions ... when excited by the accompanying sensations of pleasure and pain, influence in turn other beliefs or decisions ... The role of evaluation in emotion is thus not merely constitutive but dynamic: a belief enters into the formation of an emotion that in turn contributes to modifying some other belief or, perhaps, intensifying the original one. In the latter case, the emotion would act on belief in such a way as to confirm the emotion itself." See David Konstan, "Pathos and Passion," 37.

²⁰⁵ According to Konstan, Aristotle's notion of emotion is consisted "of two basic elements: first, every *pathos* is accompanied by pain and pleasure; second, the *pathê* are, in Aristotle's words, those things 'on account of which people change and differ in regard to their judgments.'" Ibid. 27.

²⁰⁶ See David Konstan, "Love," in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 170.

²⁰⁷ We have these different terms because "classical Greek lacked an ordinary noun corresponding to the English 'friendship' (or to the Latin *amicitia*, for that matter), which uniquely designates mutual affection as opposed to the individual sentiment ... Hence, he presses *philia* into serving as the name of the former, and finds other terms to do duty for the simple emotion, whether the nonce words *philêsis* and *antiphilêsis*, or *eunoia* (temporarily), or the verbal noun *to philein*." See David Konstan, "Love," in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 174.

²⁰⁸ For example, in *Rhetoric* 2.3.4, Aristotle writes: "Let loving (ἔστω δὴ τὸ φιλεῖν), then, be defined as wishing for anyone the things which we believe to be good, for his sake but not for our own, and procuring them for him as far as lies in our power." I am using the translation from Aristotle, *The "Art" of Rhetoric*. Translated by John Henry Freese. The Loeb Classical Library 193 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 193.

philein toward people.²⁰⁹ This one-directional love (that privileges the autonomy of the lover) highlights a *phil*-related love goes beyond a sense of duty or obligation toward the other. It is a desire to love the others for themselves and wishes them good for their own sake.²¹⁰ As a mutual love that is primarily centered on goodness, *philia* is thus a heteronomous emotion and a personal relationship (cf. relationality) as well as a selfless desire and an “altruistic wish for the good of another, like *to philein*”²¹¹ (that privileges the autonomy of the lover). Given this “altruistic wish” feature of *philia*, “the failure to assist in time of need, whether on the part of friends or relatives, proves the absence of the wish and hence the love itself.”²¹²

Konstan also argues that “*philia* is produced by a service or favour (*charis*), especially when it is not demanded and when one does not publicize it, since in this way it seems to be performed for the other and not for some auxiliary motive.”²¹³ *Philia*, as such, is related to the feeling of gratitude toward “a service or favour.” Now, if gratitude (*kharin ekhein*) is inspired by acts of generosity – that is to say, accidental acts or acts aimed to gain something in return is not a *charis*, insisted by Aristotle²¹⁴ – then *philia* is not a relationship of duty or obligation between the giver and receiver of *charis*. One’s response to the recognition of *charis* may indicate the social norms and positions implied in the giving and receiving of *charis*, but it does not

²⁰⁹ Konstan further finds that “Aristotle explicitly contrasts *eunoia* with both *philia* and *philêsis* as rather a dispassionate form of affection (cf. *Eudemian Ethics* 7, 1241a3-14).” See David Konstan, “Love,” in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 173.

²¹⁰ Konstan argues that in a world where “one was always defending one’s status against insult, intimidation, or disapproval ... resenting the unfair advantage of others (envy, indignation), or being conscious of one’s debt to them (gratitude) ... friendship appeared as the locus of a selfless desire for another person’s welfare that went beyond the demands of reciprocity or duty. It was still marked, of course, by a concern with want and security ... [and hence was] embedded in the world of social exchange ... But the love between friends nevertheless looked beyond the self, and in this resembles, for all the differences, the idea of love we have today.” *Ibid.*, 183-84.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 178. For major differences in the notion of friendship between the ancient Greece and Rome and today’s world, see David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 14-23.

²¹² David Konstan, “Love,” in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 182.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 175.

²¹⁴ See David Konstan, “Gratitude,” in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 161-62.

necessarily put *charis* into an economy of exchange²¹⁵ (contra Zeba Crook’s argument that Paul’s notion of *charis* should be understood in terms of an asymmetrical reciprocity in the Greco-Roman system of patronage and benefaction, even though he cites Konstan’s notion of emotion).²¹⁶ For Konstan, to be grateful for the *charis* that one receives is not a “social obligation to repay a service,”²¹⁷ in particular if *charis* is “bestowed precisely with no ulterior intention of gain on the benefactor’s part.”²¹⁸ The “emotion of gratitude is distinct from the act of reciprocation: it is felt, not due as compensation ... Gratitude is never owed”²¹⁹ (cf. relationality in the framework of heteronomy). We may not be convinced by this distinction, since it is hard to distinguish whether an “act of reciprocation” is a heartfelt response or an obligated demand by the social norms, not to mention there are equal and unequal *philia*, depending on one’s social standing.²²⁰ But, it should be clear from Konstan’s reading of *charis*

²¹⁵ Konstan writes: “Whereas Greeks of the classical period demanded and repaid *kharis* (or a *kharis*) in the sense of the good turn deserved by another ... the terms for asking or paying back are never found in connection with *kharin ekhein* or *eidenai*.” See David Konstan, “Gratitude,” in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 167.

²¹⁶ See Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualization Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter), 42-43. In a later article, Crook disagrees with Konstan’s notion of *charis*. See Zeba Crook, “Fictive Giftship and Fictive Kinship in Greco-Roman Society,” in *The Gift in Antiquity*. Edited by Michael L. Satlow (UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 68-70. While Crook insists on this functionalist notion of *charis*, he writes, “Patronage and benefaction worked in harmony with the values of honour and shame, for without the importance attached to accruing honour and without the hope of doing so within one’s own lifetime, patronage and benefaction would not have existed in the form or to the extent it did. Consider, for example, that Dio Chrysostom connected benefactions with a hunger for honour, going so far as to claim, satirically probably, that people would endanger their well-being and survival, spending all their wealth and selling their belongings in the hope of accruing honour through grand benefactions (1 *Glar.* 2; *De lege* 7).” See Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualization Conversion*, 68. Here, Crook’s notion of honor and shame relies on Malina’s definition of honor and shame. But, as discussed, Malina’s functionalist definition of honor does not address honor as honor felt even though he does highlight the feeling component of honor.

²¹⁷ See David Konstan, “Gratitude,” in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 168.

²¹⁸ *Idem*.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 167.

²²⁰ In the beginning of *Eudemian Ethics* 7.9.5, for example, Aristotle writes: “Since equality is according to number and proportion (Ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ ἴσον τὸ μὲν κατ’ ἀριθμὸν τὸ δὲ κατ’ ἀναλογίαν), there will also be various kinds of justice, friendship, and partnership (τῆς φιλίας καὶ τῆς κοινωνίας)” (cf. Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.7.2-6). Welborn writes: “Aristotle attests the antiquity of the proverb ‘Friendship is equality’ (ἰσότης ἢ φιλότης). Again, according to Aristotle, the true friend is ‘equal and alike’ (ἴσος καὶ ὁμοιος). To be sure, Aristotle recognizes that few friendships qualify as the best kind, in terms of equality and likeness. Yet Aristotle insists that ‘equality’ remains the goal of unequal friendships, and he elaborates ratios for achieving it. Aristotle explains that ‘there are two sorts of equality,’ corresponding to the two species of friendship. In a friendship between equals, whether in wealth or virtue, equality is ‘numerical’ (κατ’ ἀριθμὸν), ‘as it is measured by the same standard.’ But in a friendship between

in the works of Aristotle that this sense of heteronomy in gratitude also characterizes *philia*. Given our discussion of honor in terms of honor felt-honor claimed-honor paid and the intimate relationship between honor and *charis*, can we describe *charis* in terms of “*charis* felt”-“*charis* claimed”-“*charis* paid”?

Indeed, if *philia* is about loving the others *for themselves*, one needs to address how the modes of existence in one’s understanding of how the self and the others are constituted so that the otherness of the others is not reduced. A. W. Price thus argues that Aristotle’s notion of *philia* is related to his “ethical conception of the self, and the life (mental and physical) that constitutes it in action, as being rooted in but not exhausted by the identity of the living physical substance that is a man.”²²¹ We will not let this issue sidetrack us; it should be clear that *philia*, like *erōs*, can also be conceptualized through different modes of existence, whether it is self-centered, other-oriented, or mutually negotiated. We can make similar remarks about *agapē*, in particular if the semantic of this noun for love is not sharply distinguished from that of *erōs* and *philia*, as James Barr argues.²²²

unequals, such as that between benefactor and beneficiary, ‘equality’ must be ‘proportional’ (κατ’ ἀναλογίαν), ‘since it is just for superior and inferior to have not the same share but proportional shares.’” See L. L. Welborn, “‘That There May Be Equality’: The Contexts and Consequences of a Pauline Ideal,” *New Testament Studies* 59.1 (January 2013): 73-90 (76). Aristotle, however, also writes, “Equality in friendship, however, does not seem to be like equality in matters of justice. In the sphere of justice, ‘equal’ (fair) means primarily proportionate to desert, and ‘equal in quantity’ is only a secondary sense; whereas in friendship ‘equal in quality’ is the primary meaning, and ‘proportionate to desert’ only secondary. This is clearly seen when a wide disparity arises between two friends in point of virtue or vice, or of wealth, or anything else ... It is true that we cannot fix a precise limit in such cases, up to which two men can still be friends ... but when one becomes very remote from the other, as God is remote from man, it can continue no longer” (8.7.3-5). See Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by H. Rackham. The Loeb Classical Library 73 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 479.

²²¹ See A. W. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle*, 105. For a better understanding of *philia*, it is thus important to clarify Aristotle’s notion of the self, the ground of friendship (e.g., utility, pleasure, and virtue; *Eudemian Ethics* 7.2, 1236a8-b27), and how a virtuous person through *hexis* (or bodily disposition) is “realized in sequences of, especially, desire, choices, actions, and results.” Idem.

²²² James Barr, “Words for Love in Biblical Greek,” in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology. In Memory of George Bradford Caird*. Edited by L. z D. Hurst and N. T. Wright (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 3-18.

In his book *Agape and Eros*, which many Christians still like to cite to show the radical difference between *agapē* and *erōs*, Nygren is not making a distinction between these two words of love on a linguistic basis.²²³ Rather, the distinction is argued theologically.²²⁴ Nygren writes, “Eros and Agape are the characteristic expressions of two different attitudes to life, two fundamentally opposed types of religion and ethics. They represent two streams that through the whole history of religion, alternately clashing against one another and mingling with one another. They stand for what may be described as the egocentric and the theocentric attitude in religion.”²²⁵ In other words, the difference between a heteronomy-oriented Agape and an autonomy-centered Eros is not so much a textual as a hermeneutical/theological and/or contextual/ethical distinction. It seems that this dichotomy between Agape and Eros, which many have criticized as reifying, can be Nygren’s attempt to prevent the heteronomy of Agape, which at times may appear to be in the mode of autonomy, from being reduced and incorporated into the autonomous and relational mode of existence.

Indeed, for Nygren, even if Agape and Eros are distinctively different from one another, we tend to mix these two ideas together. For example, in Nygren’s explanation of the use of *agapan* in 1 John 2:15,²²⁶ he explains that “the difference between the two kinds of love is determined simply by reference to their objects, in the one case the world, in the other God. Then Agape, which otherwise is a love that gives and sacrifices, and the very opposite of acquisitive

²²³ Barr writes, “Nygren was not seeking to describe all linguistic usage, but to draw the contrast between two profound theological motifs.” *Ibid.*, 4.

²²⁴ As the translator of *Agape and Eros* writes: “There is no suggestion that, wherever the Greek word *eros* or the Greek word *agape* occurs, it must necessarily have the same meaning as it bears here, or that this meaning cannot be represented on occasion by other words. Nor is there any suggestion that every form of love that existed in the Hellenistic world, or that exists in the non-Christian world generally, must be classified as Eros ... The question under discussion is not how the Greeks or the primitive Christians actually loved, but what they thought about love, their ideas or theories of love.” See Philip S. Watson, “Translator’s Preface,” in *Agape and Eros*, viii. Also, Watson’s final remarks are also noteworthy: “merely to consider formal statements of doctrine is not enough; we must discover the underlying religious motif, the real motive forces behind them.” *Ibid.*, xv-xvi.

²²⁵ See Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 205.

²²⁶ 1 John 2:15: Μὴ ἀγαπᾶτε τὸν κόσμον μηδὲ τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. ἐάν τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν κόσμον, οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ πατρὸς ἐν αὐτῷ.

love, becomes itself a species of acquisitive love.”²²⁷ Barr, however, highlighting the inconsistent usage of the *agap*-words in the New Testament, argues that “though Nygren acknowledged this [inconsistency], it cannot be said that his recognition of it and its implications was adequate in detail or in profundity.”²²⁸

Philologically, the noun *agapē* is almost absent outside the biblical literature.²²⁹ Its verbal form, *agapan*, however, is rather common in Greco-Roman literature. A search for *agap*-words on the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* database yields hundreds of entries, beginning with the ones in Homer’s *Illiad* and *Odyssey*. Sometimes *agapan* and *philein* or *agapan* and *eran* appear together.²³⁰ Sometimes *agapan* and *philein* are even used interchangeably.²³¹ In general, scholars

²²⁷ See Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, 157. In terms of the word usage, Boer finds that Paul uses the *agap*-words “in an unqualified sense, without distinction in meaning, whether it is God, Christ or human beings who love, and whether the human love is for God, for Christ, or for fellow human beings.” See Hendrikus Boers, “Ἀγάπη and Χάρις in Paul’s Thought,” *CBQ* 59 (1997): 697.

²²⁸ See James Barr, “Words for Love in Biblical Greek,” 4 n. 4. It is not clear the “implications” that Barr mentions are about the idea or the usage of the word (which of course affects the idea too). One may take Nygren’s explanation as not addressing how *agapan* may contradict his idea of “Agape,” but this is not an illegitimate move, given that while *agapan* in the New Testament can denote a good or bad love (e.g., Luke 11:43; John 3:19; 2 Tim. 4:10; 2 Pet. 2:15), *agapē* always has a positive connotation. It can refer to the Lord’s Supper (e.g., Jude 1:12), the love of God (e.g., Luke 11:42; John 5:42; Rom. 5:5; etc.) – for three ways of reading the genitive (e.g., love by God, love for God, love from God), see Catherine Osborne, *Eros Unveiled: Plato and the God of Love* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 24-51 – the love of the spirit (e.g., Rom. 15:30), the love of Jesus or Christ (e.g., John 15:9-10; Rom. 8:35; etc.), the love of the disciple (e.g., 1 Cor. 4:21, 16:24; 1 Thess. 3:6; etc.), the love for one another (e.g., John 13:35; Rom. 14:15; Col. 1:4; etc.), the personified love (e.g., 1 Cor. 8:1, 13:1-4; etc.), etc. Or we can take Nygren’s explanation as actually confirming his idea of “Agape.” That is to say, the *agap*-words should indeed not be used in such a manner that is not directed toward the good. As such, the use of *agap*-words for wrong object is an irony that deserves to be critiqued. For example, Greenlee points out that as “only God and each human being are proper objects of ἀγάπη. Improper objects of ἀγάπη are condemned in the NT: chief seats in the synagogue (Luke 11:43), the darkness (John 3:19), Balaam’s love for the wages of unrighteousness (2 Pet. 2:15), and the sinful world system (1 John 2:15).” See J. Harold Greenlee, “‘Love’ in the New Testament,” *Notes on Translation*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2000): 49-53 (50). As Greenlee puts it, the author “in 1 John 2:15, urges his readers not to love (ἀγαπάω) the world (the sinful world-system) – that is, not to regard it as being of surpassing value” (ibid., 51). Perhaps this is why Nygren writes that “the love in question [in 1 John 2:15] is not Agape, but acquisitive love.”

²²⁹ See Ethelbert Stauffer, “ἀγαπάω,” in *TDNT* 1: 37. In his analysis, Spicq argues that “the term *agapē*, derived from *agapaō* (and not from *agapēsis*) is proper to the Koine. If the LXX gave the word its theological density, it also existed in the pagan language, but it is not attested before the first century AD.” See Ceslas Spicq, “ἀγάπη,” in *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*. 3 vols. Vol. 1: ἀγα – ἐλπ. Translated and edited by James D. Ernest (Peabody, MA: Hendrikson Publishers, 1994), 18.

²³⁰ Stählin gives a list of texts where *agapan* and *phileō* appear together: Plato’s *Lysis* 215a-b, 220d; Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* 1.11. (p. 171a, 21); Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethic* 9.7 (p. 1167b, 32), 9.8 (p. 1168a, 28-30); Xenophon’s *Memorabilia Socratis* 2.7, 9; Philo’s *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres sit* 44; Dio Cassius Cocceianus 44, 48, 1; Claudius Aelianus’ *Varia Historia* 9, 1. See Gustav Stählin, “φιλέω κτλ.,” in *TDNT* 9: 117.

agree that the meaning of *agapē* derives from that of *agapan*.²³² Barr points out that even if *agapē* is “a neologism morphologically” in the Septuagint, “the actual form of *ἀγάπη* was less important in the LXX than one might imagine.”²³³ In the LXX, it appears that the usage of *erōs*, *philia*, *agapē* is not sharply differentiated.²³⁴ Moreover, given its wide semantic range and popular usage,²³⁵ *agapan* appears more frequently in the LXX than *eran* and *philein*. With *agap*-words being used for various love relationship, including erotic love,²³⁶ Barr argues that the “words of the *ἔρωσ* group were not much used ... because the general all-purpose word for love, *ἀγαπᾶν* with its related nouns, already itself covered the semantic ground that the *ἔρωσ* group covered.”²³⁷

²³¹ Tarelli even argues that “*ἀγαπάω* in the New Testament ... has in fact come to express all that was once meant by *φιλέω*.” See C. C. Tarelli, “ΑΓΑΠΗ,” 67.

²³² Ibid., 8. Barr finds that *agapan* “already in classical times was used with senses quite close to those found in the LXX and the New Testament, and this is still more obvious in Hellenistic usage.” Idem.

²³³ Idem.

²³⁴ Ibid., 10, 13, 14. Also, see Ethelbert Stauffer, “*ἀγαπάω*,” in *TDNT* 1: 37. Quell argues that “in Hebrew ... there is absolutely no possibility of expressing ... the distinction between the two magnitudes of *ἔρωσ* and *ἀγάπη*. This means that the element common to both must have controlled the conceptions of the OT authors so strongly that they did not feel any need for verbal variation.” See Gottfried Quell, “*ἀγαπάω*,” in *TDNT* 1: 21-35 (24).

²³⁵ *Agapan* “was used because it was already a normal and very natural term in the language and well established in the two connections that were most important, namely that of one person loving another like a child or a close friend and, even more, that of a human loved by a god. The LXX in this respect is one manifestation of that general rise of *ἀγαπᾶν* to prominence much of which is most fully documented in later writers, Josephus being the most obvious: he uses *ἀγαπᾶν* very much more frequently than *φιλεῖν*.” See James Barr, “Words for Love in Biblical Greek,” 7. Tarelli points out that “in Modern Greek *ἀγάπη* is the ordinary word for ‘love’ in all its senses, and indeed practically the only word.” See C. C. Tarelli, “ΑΓΑΠΗ,” 65.

²³⁶ Barr writes, “In it [i.e., LXX] almost all cases of the noun *ἀγάπη* concern erotic love, especially if we include those in the Song of Songs: there are only a handful that are not erotic ... Indeed, it is likely that the use of these words in Bible translation had the effect of actually increasing their degree of erotic reference: since Hebrew used almost only one word for many kinds of love, including erotic love, the Greek translation, tending to use the same equivalences throughout, expanded the extent to which the terms were used of erotic love.” See James Barr, “Words for Love in Biblical Greek,” 10.

²³⁷ Ibid., 11. “The difficulty about *ἔρωσ* and its group was not that they designate a different sort of love from that designated by *ἀγαπᾶν*, but that they express only a very limited portion of the range and spectrum of love – whether good or bad, approved or disapproved – that *ἀγαπᾶν* normally expressed. They tended to be inchoative: they expressed falling in love, desiring, beginning to love, or they expressed unlawful lust: but *ἀγαπᾶν* expressed all this and a good deal more.” Idem. Likewise, Tarelli writes: “it seems safe to assume that the word [*ἀγάπη*] by which they expressed their meaning was already current in popular speech for expressing all that men were capable of thinking about love, a word which in fact had superseded in the language of the people, both *φιλία* and *ἔρωσ*.” See C. C. Tarelli, “ΑΓΑΠΗ,” 66.

For Ceslas Spicq, however, the meaning of *agapē* is clearly different from that of *erōs* and *philia*. There is no overlapping of meaning. For him, *agapē* “is the most rational kind of love, inasmuch as it involves recognition and judgment of value, whence its frequent nuance of ‘preference’”²³⁸ (cf. autonomy). As opposed to *erōs* that “brings endless suffering and disaster,” *agapē* “is accompanied by contentment.”²³⁹ As opposed to *philia* that “is properly used only of a relationship between equals,” *agapē* “links persons of different conditions ... it is a disinterested and generous love, full of thoughtfulness and concern.”²⁴⁰ While Greenlee stresses that different kinds of love do appear together in a relationship – for instance, *philein* is more personal and affectionate than *agapan*, which is more formal and respectful, recognizing the object of love is of “surpassing value” – he argues that the words that describe love have their own distinctive meaning and are not used interchangeably. He “insist[s] that neither word is ever used in the NT inconsistently with its basic sense.”²⁴¹ From our review of *erōs* and *philia*, it is however difficult to make such a clear distinction. As a result, in our analysis of Paul’s conceptualization of love in 1 Corinthians, we will have to focus on a synchronic or paradigmatic reading that allows us to see what kind of semantic universe undergirds Paul’s notion of love and how it links love with other ideas in Paul’s conviction (see chapters 3 and 4).

Now, let us turn to the Ancient Near Eastern literature and the Hebrew Bible that Mitchell cites to support a political notion of love. William Moran gives multiple examples of how the word “love” was used in the Hebrew Bible (*’āhabh*, *’ah^abhāh*) and Ancient Near Eastern treaties and legal documents to indicate friendship, loyalty, service, and obedience between the sovereign and vassals or between God and people in domestic and international

²³⁸ See Ceslas Spicq, “ἀγάπη,” 12-13. Also, see Ethelbert Stauffer, “ἀγαπάω,” in *TDNT* 1: 36.

²³⁹ See Ceslas Spicq, “ἀγάπη,” 13.

²⁴⁰ *Idem.*

²⁴¹ See J. Harold Greenlee, “‘Love’ in the New Testament,” 52.

relations (cf. relationality).²⁴² That is to say, to say that “A” loves “B” means that “A” is loyal to “B.” Hence we have expressions that say that the subjects must love their king. To not love or hate the king is to oppose him. In the case of Egypt, Moran points out that just as the “Pharaoh is expected to love his vassal ... the vassal must love the Pharaoh.”²⁴³ In the story of Jonathan loving David (*’ahabh* in MT and *agapan* in LXX) (1 Samuel 18:1, 3; 20:17), Moran argues that a similar notion of love is also at work.²⁴⁴ Confirming Moran’s argument, Moshe Weinfeld shows that such words as oath, bond, faith, goodness, grace (or kindness, favor), friendship, peace, etc.²⁴⁵ also denote one’s commitment to the treaty and covenant in both Ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman worlds. He writes: “The identity in covenant formulations and idiomatic expressions in Mesopotamia, Syro-Palestine, Anatolia, Greece and Rome seems to point towards a common origin of the treat terminology in the ancient world.”²⁴⁶ While Yochanan Muffs agrees that “the covenant between the [Israel] people and God, the concrete manifestation of God’s transitivity and involvement, was based on Near Eastern legal patterns,”²⁴⁷ he finds the notion of love too stifling and proscriptive.²⁴⁸

²⁴² William L. Moran, “The Ancient Near Eastern Background of Love in Deuteronomy;” *The Amarna Letters*. Edited and translated by William L. Moran (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), xxiv, 18-19 (*EA* 9: “Ancient Loyalties, New Requests”), 41-42 (*EA* 17: “A Mittani Bid for A Renewed Alliance”), 43-46 (*EA* 19: “Love and Gold”), etc. Quell argues that “there can be no doubt that the thought of the covenant (διαθήκη) is itself an expression in juridical terms of the experience of the love of God. Hence the concept of love is the ultimate foundation of the whole covenant theory.” See Gottfried Quell, “ἀγαπάω,” in *TDNT* 1: 27.

²⁴³ William L. Moran, “The Ancient Near Eastern Background of Love in Deuteronomy,” 79.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 82 n. 33.

²⁴⁵ Moshe Weinfeld, “Covenant Terminology in the Ancient Near East and Its Influence on the West;” *idem*, *Deuteronomy and The Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 69, 81-83, 140, etc.

²⁴⁶ Moshe Weinfeld, “Covenant Terminology in the Ancient Near East and Its Influence on the West,” 197. He further argues that “[t]he fact that most of the idioms sprang up in the middle of the second millennium, the time when international relations on a global scale started to crystalize (contacts between Assyria and Egypt and between Egypt and the Hittite empire) teaches us that the origin of the treaty terminology is to be sought in the East, at the El Amarna period.” *Ibid.*, 198. Moran agrees: “By the Amarna period ‘love’ (*rāmu/ra’āmu* and derivatives) had become part of the terminology of international relations.” See *The Amarna Letters*, xxiv n. 59.

²⁴⁷ Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy: Law, Language and Religion in Ancient Israel* (New York and Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 6.

²⁴⁸ Concerning the legal aspect of love, Quell uses Lev. 19:18 (“you shall love your neighbor as yourself”) to argue that “although couched in the legal style of the usual demand, and containing the legally very closely circumscribed term not really a legal statement, because the attitude denoted by the word אָהַב, is not really a legal statement, because

Highlighting the “primal feelings underlying the law” in his philological analysis (cf. heteronomy),²⁴⁹ Muffs writes: “Like most personal relationships, the divine-human encounter, once formalized, was often experienced in legal terms, as a covenant between overlord and vassal, between father and son; or between husband and wife.”²⁵⁰ If the laws of social relations are drafted and institutionalized to order and govern human relations, then they should not be mistaken for the human relations. Just as our lived experience can be perceived in various ways, human relations can also be thematized and configured in many ways. This distance between concept and lived experience is perhaps what Muffs seeks to articulate: “Law is a synthesis of form and content, yet it is formal only on the surface.”²⁵¹ The love language is certainly a covenantal and political term for loyalty and service (cf. relationality), but it is also used metaphorically, alongside the more frequently used word “joy” (*simḥah*, *ἡδονή*), to signify the *inner* attitude of volition and willingness (cf. heteronomy).²⁵² (Note: citing Epictetus 4.4.45 and

the attitude denoted by the word *צדקה* is one of natural feeling which cannot be legally directed ... If the concern of the legislator is to order social life, he knows that all his ordinances in this direction can only be half measures if they are purely legal, and that the thought of power will always have a disruptive effect on society. Hence, whether or not he perceives its legal incongruity, he formulates the paradoxical command to love.” See Gottfried Quell, “ἀγαπάω,” in *TDNT* 1: 25.

²⁴⁹ Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy*, 1.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 165. Muffs argues that “[t]he religious life of the ancients – Mesopotamian and Hebrew alike – was less a quest for salvation or union with a metapersonal godhead than an ongoing personal relationship, of different degrees of stability and intimacy, between man and his god(s).” *Idem.* Likewise, Quell writes: “The wealth of hymnic motifs which we find in the OT allows us to deduce the high significance and rich cultivation of this form of piety in the religion of Yahweh, which we might otherwise fail to appreciate ... when the formal concept of love occurs ... it is almost always turned to exhortatory or confessional use and thus seems to be more of a rational product than is really the case.” See Gottfried Quell, “ἀγαπάω,” in *TDNT* 1: 29.

²⁵¹ Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy*, 1. That is to say, the symptom and disease may be related, but a same symptom can be a manifestation of several illnesses, just as different symptoms can be caused by a same illness.

²⁵² In summary, “the volitional metaphors of love and joy found in a wide range of legal situations, but their distribution in seemingly non-legal contexts is much wider than the traditional legalist would ever expect: not only Deuteronomy and Chronicles, but Ben Sirah and Philo, the sermons of Paul, early and late rabbinic midrash and *piyyut*, Jewish and Christian liturgy, Samaritan marriage documents and early Arabic deeds of sale.” *Ibid.*, 122. According to Muffs, “[t]he earliest examples of expressions of joy to indicate volition come from Old Babylonian deeds from Susa (ca. early 19th century BCE), where the clause *ina ḫūbātīšu ina nar’amātīšu*, literally ‘in his joy [Akkadian *ḫūb* = Hebrew *ἡδονή*], in his love’ [Akkadian *rāmu* = Hebrew/Aramaic *רַחַם*], is rendered idiomatically by almost all interpreters as ‘of his own free will and voluntarily.’” *Ibid.*, 144.

Plutarch *Theseus* 17.2, Spicq argues that “[i]n the secular language, ἀγαπάω and χαίρω are already often synonyms”).²⁵³

This inner attitude is expressed in the “brilliance of face” and the alacrity in the joy that one does something.²⁵⁴ If one does something quickly and happily, it implies that one does it willingly, “without having been forced, without having been coerced.”²⁵⁵ When it comes to one’s giving in love, this willingness and volition becomes vital in the acts of giving and receiving, especially if “the validity of ancient Near Eastern donations was dependent to a great degree on the intention and good will of the donor; if his feelings of affection towards the donee happened to change, the legal basis of the transfer was weakened, and the gifts may have been demanded in return.”²⁵⁶ Likewise in receiving the donations, one receives them “in the spirit with which they were given: with thankfulness, if the recipient be human; with ‘favor,’ if the recipient be divine.”²⁵⁷ Thus, “even those sacrifices that are obligatory (that is, not voluntary contribution) must be brought freely and with complete willingness. It is *raṣon* [“favor”] that makes an offering acceptable; without proper intention an offering is nothing more than fire on the altar.”²⁵⁸ Implied in this giving is to give according to one’s means, lest the giving becomes burdensome, and leads to unwillingness, as God rewards those who give willingly (cf. Deut. 15:10).²⁵⁹ For Muffs, these three features of giving – giving freely in one’s means resulting in God’s blessing – are notable in 2 Cor. 9:5 where Paul “insists that donations be given *hōs*

²⁵³ Ceslas Spicq, “ἀγάπη,” 13 n. 28.

²⁵⁴ Muffs writes: “the inner attributes of generosity or niggardliness expressed by the joy or sadness of the subject were metaphorically transferred to his outer agents, his handbreadth or fingers. Thus, a measure measured with a smile – happily and willingly – engendered the metaphorical expression a ‘smiling (i.e., generous) measure.’” See Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy*, 147.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 128. For philological evidence, see Yochanan Muffs, *Studies in the Aramaic Legal Papyri from Elephantine*. Prolegomenon by Baruch A. Levine (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003). Muffs finds that “the Akkadian, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic sources all know and employ in virtually identical legal contexts the metaphor of joy as an expression of uncoerced willingness.” See Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy*, 148.

²⁵⁶ See Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy*, 166.

²⁵⁷ *Idem.*

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 179.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 178-80.

eulogian kai mē hōs pleoneksian, ‘not as an exaction, but as a willing gift.’”²⁶⁰ As the conjunction *hōs* (“as”) indicates, the issue at hand is not the gift itself, but *how* the gift is given. One may give abundantly, but if one gives unwillingly, the gift is not valid. This explains why Paul continues to say that “as each person decides (to give) in her/his heart, do not give out of sorrow or necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver (ἡλαρὸν γὰρ δότην ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεός)” (2 Cor. 9:7; Prov. 22:9).²⁶¹ So, how do we give willingly from the heart?

Thus far we see that the gift, giving, receiving, and reciprocity cannot be systematized into any formulation. If the gift is given in spontaneous willingness, then what counts and qualifies the gift is the heart, which cannot be reified and objectified. With this dynamic character of the gift, it appears that the gift cannot be used to objectify and define (the social position of) the giver and receiver, just as neither can the giver nor the receiver use it to objectify each other. At the very core of the gift, giving, and receiving is the heart of willingness that is the mode of heteronomy. Then, the identities of the gift, giver, and the recipient cannot be objectified even though we can still speak of them. Indeed, if the gifts are accepted “in the spirit in which they were given” and if they are given without ulterior motives, the gifts and the acts of giving and receiving may not be reduced to the economy of exchange.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 182.

²⁶¹ Muffs writes: “God really only wants that which is offered freely. If you are generous within your means, then God will favor you by seeing to it that you always have enough, even enough to be able always to give charity. The idea that through the giving of charity one will win the blessing of always being well enough off to give more charity is a common Jewish motif ... In this eloquent fundraising sermon, Paul again shows his deep Jewish roots ... To sum up: Paul’s sermon in 2 Corinthians 8-9 clearly reflects our triple complex of ideas, saying, in effect, ‘I don’t want you to overdo it like your brothers elsewhere. God does not want to impoverish you. You don’t have to give under duress and coercion, nor do you have to give more than you have; after all, God loves a joyful giver. And if you give in this spirit, God will provide you with the ability to give more.’” Ibid., 182.

²⁶² It appears that Derrida’s concern about the economy of gift is noted in this use of the word “love” in the acts of giving and receiving to highlight the impossibility of the gift as the condition of the gift. See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*. Translated by Peggy Kamuf (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992); idem., *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret*. 2nd ed. Translated by David Wills (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago, 1995).

At the same time, since the gift largely depends on the feeling and intention of the giver, there is a need to “insure the donation against its inherent instability.”²⁶³ There are two ways to do so through the language of love to prevent the gift from being objectified into a calculated exchange. The donee (or the recipient of the gift) can offer a counterdonation to the donor’s gift, “thereby assimilating the donation to the more stable vehicle of sale” or the donor can declare her/his volition in the donation.²⁶⁴ The word “love,” as such, is a double bind: it expresses a sense of spontaneity and a feeling of willingness that cannot be stipulated and formalized and yet must be declared. This notion of love echoes our notion of honor as “honor felt”-“honor claimed”-“honor paid,” in which one can still speak of the function of honor without reducing and erasing the felt aspect of honor. Of course, once the language of love is institutionalized and used to serve the validity of the gift, it risks being crafted and manipulated. Nonetheless, love embodies the “inherent instability” of the gift, giving, and receiving.

This polyphonous meaning of love should not surprise us; after all, “love, the emotion, and sexuality, the physical attraction ... were not perceived as separate forces” in the Ancient Near East.²⁶⁵ When we turn to the figurative language of love in Sumerian,²⁶⁶ Egyptian,²⁶⁷ and

²⁶³ Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy*, 166.

²⁶⁴ *Idem.*

²⁶⁵ See Joan Goodnick Westenholz, “Love Lyrics from the Ancient Near East,” in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. 4 vols. Edited by Jack M. Sasson. Vol. 4: *Language, Writing, and Literature* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1995), 2471.

²⁶⁶ “Most Sumerian love songs are written in the female voice, even if they were composed by male singers.” See *The Literature of Ancient Sumer*. Translated and introduced by Jeremy Black, Graham Cunningham, Eleanor Robson, and Gábor Zólyomi (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 88. For the Sumerian love songs and narratives, see pages 63-99, 188-209. Likewise, Leick writes: “In Mesopotamian literature, the woman’s voice dominates the poetic discourse. She speaks of her desire and demands the gratification of her sexual needs, while the male voice is often an imagined response to her pleas.” See Gwendolyn Leick, *Sex and Eroticism in Mesopotamian Literature* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 56. Westenholz further writes that “Sumerian love poetry can be arranged into three categories: (1) deities assume the role of lovers; (2) individual Sumerian kings are praised as they unite with their consorts or with the goddess Inanna; and (3) lovers are not gods or kings.” See Joan Goodnick Westenholz, “Love Lyrics from the Ancient Near East,” 2472. For the meanings of the Sumerian word for love, *ki-ág*, and the Akkadian word for love, *rāmu*, see A. O. Haldar, “𒀭𒀪𒀭,” in *TDOT* 1: 100-01.

²⁶⁷ See Michael V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 3-81.

Israel-Palestinian love poems and dramas,²⁶⁸ the different modes of existence embodied and expressed by erotic passion and conflicts are rather evident. In Sumerian love poems such as “A Love Song for Šu-Suen,” we read about Inana’s highly explicit erotic love for Šu-Suen, “the fourth king of the Third Dynasty of Urim” (2112–2004B.C.E.),²⁶⁹ but in the song of “Inana and Išme-Dagan,” we see the terrifying power of Inana in warfare.²⁷⁰ Such erotic enchantment and destructive force of Inana are juxtaposed in “A Hymn to Inana.”²⁷¹ This portrayal of Inana delineates an intertwining of a relational/political and a heteronomous erotic aspect of love.²⁷² Gwendolyn Leick further points out that, in the Sumerian love lyrics, the female body and sexual

²⁶⁸ See Michael V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love*, 82-177; idem., “Love, Passion, And Perception in Israelite and Egyptian Love Poetry,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 102.2 (1983): 219-28.

²⁶⁹ See *The Literature of Ancient Sumer*, 88. The translators writes: “This song may surprise us by its intimate tone and sexually explicit words, but it is typical of Mesopotamian love poetry of this period. The sticky sweetness of honey is used as a vivid metaphor for Inana’s sexual arousal.” Ibid., 89. In lines 1-14, for example: “Man of my heart, my beloved man, your allure is a sweet thing, as sweet as honey. Lad of my heart, my beloved man, your allure is a sweet thing, as sweet as honey. You have captivated me (?), of my own free will I shall come to you. Man, let me flee with you – into the bedroom. You have captivated me (?); of my own free will I shall come to you. Lad, let me flee with you – into the bedroom. Man, let me do the sweetest things to you. My precious sweet, let me bring you honey. In the bedchamber dripping with honey let us enjoy over and over your allure, the sweet thing. Lad, let me do the sweetest things to you. My precious sweet, let me bring you honey.” Idem.

²⁷⁰ For example, in lines 7-16: “Holy Inana was endowed by Enlil and Ninlil with the capacity to make the heavens shake, to make the earth tremble, to hold the four directions in her hand and to act grandly as their lady, to shout with wide open mouth in battle and combat and to wreak carnage (?), to butt all at once valiantly (?) like a wild bull, to make the earth drink the blood of enemies like water and to pile up their bodies, to take captive their overwhelmed (?) troops and to make them serve, to make the people ascend from below to above, to make the foreign people change their place, and to turn light to darkness and darkness to light.” Ibid., 91.

²⁷¹ In lines 132-54, for instance, “... mercy and pity are yours, Inana ... are yours, Inana. To cause the ... heart to tremble ... illnesses are yours, Inana. To have a wife ... to love ... are yours, Inana. To rejoice, to control (?) ... are yours, Inana. Neglect and care, raising and bowing down are yours, Inana. To build a house, to create a woman’s chamber, to possess implements, to kiss a child’s lips are yours, Inana. To run, to race, to desire and to succeed are yours, Inana. To interchange the brute and the strong and the weak and the powerless is yours, Inana. To interchange the heights and valleys and the . . . and the plains (?) is yours, Inana. To give the crown, the throne and the royal sceptre is yours, Inana. (12 lines missing).” Ibid., 96.

²⁷² We also have love lyrics that speak of love and well wishes of a mother and of a son in “A Lullaby for a Son of Šulgi,” and “Lu-diğira’s Message to His Mother.” Ibid., 190-95.

pleasure are also more prominent than that of the male (e.g. “Ploughing with the Jewels,”²⁷³ “A Love Song for Šu-Suen,” etc.).²⁷⁴

When it comes to the Egyptian love songs and the Song of Songs in the Hebrew Bible,²⁷⁵ the modes of relationality and heteronomy of love are also apparent. However, compared to the Song of Songs, the male and female speeches in the Egyptian love songs are actually monologues, as the male and female characters do not address and respond to the words of each other.²⁷⁶ Both of these love songs, however, use nature and artifacts to address the intense feeling of love and the beloved in vivid imageries and metaphors.²⁷⁷ Through these metaphors, we see

²⁷³ In lines 36-40, for instance, “Ama-usumgal-ana [i.e., Dumuzid] answers the mistress: ‘It is for the mistress, it is for my spouse the mistress – I am ploughing with them for her! For holy Inana, the priestess – I am ploughing with them for her!’ He of the *suba* stones [Dumuzid’s semen or the precious stone worn by Inana?], he of the *suba* stones will indeed plough with the *suba* stones! Ama-usumgal-ana, he of the *suba* stones, will indeed plough with the *suba* stones.” See *The Literature of Ancient Sumer*, 85.

²⁷⁴ See Gwendolyn Leick, *Sex and Eroticism in Mesopotamian Literature*, 125. When it comes to the few extant Akkadian texts on love, however, Leick finds “the tone of [the love] poetry is more solemn and official” and the subject of sexuality is “presented obliquely, less as the result of personal experience than as an issue to be reflected upon.” Ibid., 178. However, also see Martti Nissinen, “Love Lyrics of Nabû and Tašmetu: An Assyrian Song of Songs?” in “*Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf*”: *Studien zum Alten Testament und zum Alten Orient. Festschrift für Oswald Loretz zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres mit Beiträgen von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1998), 585-634. Nissinen argues that “[e]ven a cursory reading shows the structural, metaphorical and literary affinity between the Love Lyrics of Nabû and Tašmetu and the Song of Songs. The overall structures of both texts have two significant features in common: the dialogical structure and the poetic form. Moreover, individual passages of both texts are analogous to a high degree, for instance those employing the *wasf* type of body description, the garden imagery, and the topos of the nocturnal yearning of the woman. In addition, there are parallels on individual lines throughout the Love Lyrics of Nabû and Tašmetu.” Ibid., 597. For Akkadian love lyrics, narrative, charms, and incantations, see Benjamin R. Foster, *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*. Vol. 1: *Archaic, Classical, and Mature*. 2nd ed. (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1996).

²⁷⁵ For the meanings of the Egyptian word for love, *mry*, see Jan Bergman, “אֶהֱבֶה,” in *TDOT* 1: 99-100. As of the Hebrew word usually used for love, *’ahabh*, see Gerhard Wallis, “אֶהֱבֶה,” in *TDOT* 1: 101-18. Wallis emphasizes the pragmatic and socio-ethical aspects of love affection.

²⁷⁶ Fox writes: “The love poets consistently choose monologue because they are presenting personality and emotion rather than a complete relationship. They create a variety of personalities (often more finely nuanced than the lovers in Canticles) and study each one in isolation. They see love as a state of pleasant harmony within an individual, a state brought about mainly by the presence of the beloved and by sensual contact.” See Michael V. Fox, “Love, Passion, And Perception in Israelite and Egyptian Love Poetry,” 221.

²⁷⁷ For example, in *P. Harris 500*, group A no. 3, boy: “The vegetation (?) of the marsh (?) is bewildering, [The mouth of] my sister is a lotus, her breasts are mandragoras, [her] arms are [branches (?)], [her] — are —, her head is the trap of ‘love-wood,’ and I — the goose! The cord (?) is my, [her ha]jr is the bait in the trap to ensnare (me) (?).” See Michael V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love*, 9. Or in the Song of Songs 4:1-5, boy: “How beautiful you are, my darling, how beautiful! Your eyes are doves seen through your veil. Your hair is like a flock of goats streaming down Mount Gilead. Your teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep, come up from the wash, all of whom bear twins, none of whom miscarries. Like a thread of scarlet are your lips, and your mouth is lovely. Like a slice of pomegranate is your cheek, seen through your veil. Your neck is like the Tower of David, built in courses. A thousand shields are hung upon it, all sorts of warriors’ bucklers. Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a

the power, longing, pleasure, pain, jealousy, and the violence of love manifested in concrete expressions. In “The Crossing” in *The Cairo Love Songs*, in trying to cross to the other side of the river where his beloved is, the boy says: “I found the crocodile (to be) like a mouse and the face of the waters like dry land to my feet. It is her love that makes me strong. She’ll cast a water spell for me!”²⁷⁸ This power of love is so strong that Song of Songs 8:6-7 even speaks of love “... as strong as death, jealousy as hard as Sheol ... Mighty waters cannot extinguish love, nor rivers wash it away. Should one offer all his estate for love, it would be utterly scorned.”²⁷⁹

For Michael Fox, the use of metaphors in love lyrics is very significant. Not only do they help depict the intense, complex, and even paradoxical feelings and thoughts of love, they also preserve room for imagination.²⁸⁰ Noting the “extreme plasticity [of metaphors] and their capacity to refer to several levels of perception at the same time,”²⁸¹ Joan Westenholz points out that if “the same metaphor [may] be used in different contexts with quite different meaning,” it can then be “understood differently by different individuals, without any single understanding being more ‘correct’ than the others.”²⁸²

This frequent usage of metaphor in love songs is not insignificant. While we will discuss the semantic and syntactic characteristics of a metaphor in chapter 2, we see that the metaphors in these love songs can extend and create meanings in the juxtaposition of two terms of different

gazelle, which graze among the lilies.” Ibid., 86-87. Also, see W. G. Lambert, “Devotion: The Language of Religion and Love,” in *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East*. Edited by M. Mindlin, M. J. Geller, and J. E. Wansbrough (London: School of Oriental and African Studies at University of London, 2005), 21-36.

²⁷⁸ See Michael V. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love*, 32.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 167.

²⁸⁰ Fox writes: “What a shared trait [between two terms in a metaphor] does is to bridge the terms of a metaphor and allow their qualities to penetrate one another, but that trait is not the *meaning* of the metaphor. A metaphor depends for its meaning – its full contextual meaning with its new and unparaphrasable connotations – not only on the traits shared by image and referent but also on the ‘metaphoric distance’ between these terms, that is, on the degree of dissonance or incongruity between the juxtaposed elements. Greater metaphoric distance produces greater psychological arousal, a component of aesthetic pleasure. However, distance to the point of detachment of image and referent prevents communication.” See Michael V. Fox, “Love, Passion, And Perception in Israelite and Egyptian Love Poetry,” 226.

²⁸¹ See Joan Goodnick Westenholz, “Love Lyrics from the Ancient Near East,” 2483.

²⁸² Idem.

semantic universes. Here, the newly created meanings can be fluid because the feature of “like and unlike” in the metaphor can help prevent them from being ossified. For example, in saying that love is as strong as death, what imagery or meaning does Song of Songs 8:6 try to evoke or create in juxtaposing the semantic universe of love with that of death? In what sense can love and death be juxtaposed? Moreover, as different contexts may have different feelings and understandings toward love and death, the created meaning from the metaphorical relation will also vary. Consequently, the meanings of a metaphor are contextual and discursive. This “like and unlike” feature of a metaphor is like the hyphen that joins and disjoins the different aspects of honor. It connects and separates honor felt from honor claimed and honor paid. As a result, we cannot reduce honor to only a certain aspect or meaning-producing dimension of honor. As we find that the modes of existence (e.g., autonomy, relationality, and heteronomy) correspond respectively to honor claimed, honor paid, and honor felt, we use the modes of existence to help us analyze various interpretations of Paul’s love in 1 Corinthians, in particular since honor and shame are pivotal values in ancient Mediterranean cultures. Lastly, as the notion of love is tied to *charis* and since *charis* is undergirded by the notion of honor, we suggest that *charis* can perhaps be conceived of in terms of “*charis* felt”-“*charis* claimed”-“*charis* paid,” especially when the notion of *charis* (or gift, grace, favor) has been argued by different scholars as located within or without the sphere of exchange and reciprocity.²⁸³ Here, the modes of existence can also help us analyze different conceptualization of *charis*, not to mention Paul situates his discussion of love in 1 Cor. 13 in the complete discourse unit of 1 Cor. 12:1–14:40 (see chapter 7).

²⁸³ In the US popular cultures, the relationship between love and *charis* is further foregrounded when the altruistic love (*agapē*) and self-interested love (*erōs*) seems to resemble the debates on whether *charis* is altruistic (freely given) or self-interested (in the economy of exchange).

VI. Conclusion

We have learned to exercise a “hermeneutic of suspicion” on the ready-made theologies and missiologies produced by Western theologians who are “genetically” incapable of knowing what it means to live in the world of Buddhist culture, Hindu culture, or Confucian culture.²⁸⁴ – Choan-Seng Song

We call for a “renewed study” of Paul’s love because the felt, bodily, and communal dimensions of 1 Corinthians are often sidelined in Western biblical interpretations. To flesh out these meaning-producing dimensions of the text, we go over different conceptualizations of love. This review highlight the modes of existence in the contextual, hermeneutical, and textual choices that we privilege and assume. This *reading with others* foregrounds the dynamics of the “hermeneutical circle” that Juan Luis Segundo describes as the “*continuing* change in our interpretation of the Bible which is dictated by the *continuing* changes in our *present-day* reality, both individual and societal.”²⁸⁵ This sense of “continuing changes” is expected; after all, we are flesh-and-blood beings. Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Yolanda Tarango even use a spiral figure to highlight how our analysis of both our context and text is always continually in light of each other, from context to text *and* from text to context.²⁸⁶

As human beings, we are “thrown” into the world with others. Our interpretation, as such, cannot help but be contextual. As long as we cannot come to term with our embodied humanness, we cannot be touched by love to feel and practice love. The temptation to be in control of our feelings and actions, which could lead to dominating others who confront such a control, prevents love from addressing, challenging, and transforming us. A love felt reduced and limited

²⁸⁴ Choan-Seng Song, *Third-Eye Theology*, 6.

²⁸⁵ Emphasis added. Segundo continues, “the circular nature of this interpretation stems from the fact that each new reality obliges us to interpret the word of God afresh, to change reality accordingly, and then to go back and reinterpret the word of God again, and so on.” See Juan Luis Segundo, *Liberation of Theology*. Translated by John Drury (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002), 8.

²⁸⁶ The authors speak of four recurrent movements in doing Hispanic women’s liberation theology in terms of strategy, liturgizing, analysis, and sharing our stories. See Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Yolanda Tarango, *Hispanic Women: The Prophetic Voice in the Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 97.

to a love claimed and a love paid cannot be love. While a love felt may expose us to vulnerability, but as Sarah Coakley points out, vulnerability is not “a negation of self, but the place of the self’s transformation and expansion into God.”²⁸⁷ This may still sound naïve and idealistic, but citing Matthew 5:43-45, Martin Luther King, Jr. finds that even loving one’s enemies “is an absolute necessity for our survival.”²⁸⁸ How can it be? While Dr. King offers us his answers from his Civil Rights Movement experience, our common sense tell us that it does not make sense to love one’s enemies. How can we love someone or something that is not only not lovable, but also detestable? Herein lies the paradox embodied by the cross of Christ. The cross which, for Paul, goes beyond the calculation and normalcy of the claimed and paid aspects of honor, is actually the wisdom and power of God (1 Cor. 1:18-25), where “God shows God’s love toward us, in that while we were still sinners Christ died for/concerning us” (Rom. 5:8).

Now, how can we flesh out the felt (or religious) dimension without reducing it to the claimed and paid aspects? That is to say, since the felt dimension is heteronomy-oriented, what kind of hermeneutical framework and critical methodology can help us engage the otherness of the other without reducing it to an object? The challenge is significant because if honor and shame are pivotal values in ancient Mediterranean cultures, they necessarily mark the writing and interpretation of 1 Corinthians. We can neither ignore this vital meaning-producing dimension (especially in such a religious text as 1 Corinthians) nor overemphasize it at the expense of the claimed and paid meaning-producing dimensions. So, how can we maintain the creative tension among the felt, claimed, and paid meaning-producing dimensions? We will address this contextual concern in chapter 2 (the hermeneutical pole) and in the methodological appendix (the textual pole). In chapter 2, we will explain our hermeneutical approach to highlight

²⁸⁷ Sarah Coakley, “Kenōsis and Subversion,” 108.

²⁸⁸ Martin Luther King, Jr., “Loving Your Enemies,” in *Strength to Love* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1963), 49.

the proprioceptive and communal aspects of the text. In the Methodological Appendix, we will show how A. J. Greimas's "Generative Trajectory," which we find embody such a hermeneutics, can help us foreground the dynamic interplay of the semantic (cf. heteronomy) and syntactic (cf. autonomy and relationality) meaning-producing dimensions of the text.

Chapter 2 – An Inter-Corporeal Hermeneutics of Paul’s Discourse of Love: The Inter-twinning of Past, Present, and Future in Typology

[H]ermeneutics never deals *first* with the text (vision of its meaning), but with the intra-worldly being opened to and by the possibility (the avenue for the coming of the interpreter).¹ – Jean-Luc Marion

Texts by definition being semiotic constructs, necessitating the active participation of readers or listeners for their existence, the textual object is dynamic, unstable, elusive. To study it we cannot be content with merely analyzing the text; it is after all the attribution of meaning that constitutes it ... It is naive to believe that we can analyze without interpreting, that we can work and live without lending meaning to the world around us.² – Mieke Bal

I. Introduction

Focusing on the hermeneutical pole of our interpretive process to show how a reading of Paul’s discourse of love in the mode of heteronomy is plausible, we will in this chapter first refer to the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Julia Kristeva, which we find echo the proprioceptive and correlative worldview in Chinese cultures, which as we shall see, is also a prominent feature in ancient Mediterranean cultures. Next, as Paul uses the word *typos* in 1 Cor. 10:6, 11 in addressing the “idol food” issue in 1 Cor. 8:1 –11:1 (see chapter 6), we will argue for a semantic, rather than syntactic, notion of metaphor and typology (cf. see Narrative Semantics in section 3.3.a in the Methodological Appendix) as our hermeneutical lens to flesh out the heteronomous and middle-voice notion of love in 1 Corinthians. This focus on the “semantics” also means that our notion of *habitus* is semantic, unlike the syntactic notion of *habitus* in the works of Pierre Bourdieu. For us, the semantic notions of metaphor and *habitus* are exemplified

¹ Jean-Luc Marion, *Givenness and Hermeneutics*. Translated by Jean-Pierre Lafouge The Père Marquette Lecture in Theology 2013 (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2012), 49. This notion of hermeneutics aims to foreground the dynamics of interpretation, lest it becomes a form of ideology. Here, both the text and the interpreter open up an “avenue” of interpretation *when* they come together. Hermeneutics, in other words, is a “coming together” that cannot be objectified.

² See Mieke Bal, *Murder and Difference: Gender, Genre, and Scholarship on Sisera’s Death*. Translated by Matthew Gumpert (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 135-36.

in Paul's notion of the body of Christ as "parts beyond a part" (see the conclusion section in the Introduction chapter), where Paul speaks of "preaching the gospel" – or "gospelizing" (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) – not in an active voice, as if one is in charge of the gospel, *but* in a middle voice in the sense that one manifests the gospel insofar as one is gospelized. As we will argue that such a middle voice also quality marks the semantic notion of typology, Paul's usage of *typos* is against any form of anti-Judaism.

II. An Embodied Worldview in the Cruciform Love

The language of love is impossible, inadequate, immediately allusive when one would like it to be more straightforward; it is a flight of metaphors – it is literature.³ – Julia Kristeva

The perceptual 'something' is always in the middle of something else, it always forms part of a 'field.' A really homogeneous area offering *nothing to be* cannot be given to *any perception* ... The pure impression is, therefore, not only undiscoverable, but also imperceptible and so inconceivable as an instant of perception ... A visual field is not made up of limited views. But an object seen is made up of bits of matter, and spatial points are external to each other.⁴

– Maurice Merleau-Ponty

The notion that our perception of the world is a perceptual field where "an object seen is made up of bits of matter, and spatial points are external to each other" (Merleau-Ponty) is noteworthy. There is a space and distance between the subject and the others that s/he sees. This distance is not an empty space, however. If we are always already "thrown" into the world with others, our seeing is always already relational. Our seeing is not an isolated vision of just a particular object. It is a "visual field;" a field "not made up of limited views," but of interconnected views. This is why our "perceptual 'something' is always in the middle of

³ Julia Kristeva, *Tales of Love*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 1.

⁴ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Collin Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 4.

something else.” The space between the subject and the others is both connecting and separating; a space that respects the self and the others. Otherwise the seeing is a seeing that sees the others as the reflection of the self. Paul is well aware of such a pitfall in our seeing. He writes: “For now we are seeing through a mirror in enigma, but then [we will see] face to face. For now I know out of a part (ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους), but then I will know fully *insofar as* I am fully known (τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην) (1 Cor. 13:12).

Let us note that καθὼς and καὶ reinforce one another by stressing the comparison when we take καί epexegetically. Paul does not tell us by whom “I will be fully known.” The future passive of ἐπεγνώσθην may be a divine passive. But, as the future deponent of ἐπιγνώσομαι indicates, this passive/middle form can highlight an “intransitive nonreflexivity.”⁵ Thus ἐπιγνώσομαι can signify a kind of knowing that takes place in the knowing itself. By not stating the object of ἐπιγνώσομαι and the agency of ἐπεγνώσθην, Paul embodies an ethic of “intransitive nonreflexivity.” Paul thus says that “now I know out of a part.” The issue is not that I will know fully when the time comes. For Paul, even if “I will know fully,” I will only know fully “insofar as I am fully known” or insofar as I am open to be known fully will I know fully.

Such an intensity and intimacy of knowing can be intimidating and risky. But it is a risk that one needs to take if one wants to know fully. Knowing is a process; it is relational. Our knowing cannot be an objectifying knowing. This is why in 1 Cor. 13:2 by comparing “now” with “then” and “through a mirror in enigma” with “face to face,” Paul qualifies “then” with a “face to face” encounter. Paul does not mention the object of our seeing. What matters is *how* we

⁵ “The middle voice suggests something that goes beyond subject-object formations. It is able to articulate nonreflexive enactments that are not for themselves or for something else. As a formation, it does not need to suggest intention outside of its movement or a movement toward an other. It does not oppose active and passive formations, but it is other than they are. It is the voice of something’s taking place through its own enactment...” See Charles E. Scott, *The Question of Ethics: Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 24.

see. It is a seeing that is seen at the same time. Our seeing should not fix and objectify the others. If we do, the others will protest in our face. A face-to-face seeing exposes each other. Such a face is not an abstract face. It is a flesh-and-blood face. To prevent us from objectifying what we see, Paul writes: “now we see through a mirror in enigma.”

Note that Paul does not say that a seeing through the mirror is bad. Rather, he is talking about a seeing through the mirror *in enigma* (ἐν αἰνίγματι). While scholars generally agree that ancient mirrors can provide good images,⁶ in particular as “Corinth was well known for the production of good quality bronze mirrors,”⁷ many argue that Paul is talking about the reflection of the mirror. That is to say, Paul is juxtaposing the indirectness of our seeing through the mirror with the directness of seeing in face-to-face. However, if the ancient mirrors have religious and philosophical connotations,⁸ then by comparing a mirror-seeing with a face-to-face seeing, Paul highlights a personal and intimate seeing that *also* entails the others (i.e., a face-to-face seeing); a seeing that is not self-centered. Indeed, as Merleau-Ponty writes: “The perceptual ‘something’ is always in the middle of something else” (see the epigraph). Jean-Luc Marion points out the obvious in our everyday life experience when he writes, “The fact of seeing in no way entails a vision, that is to say, what we see most often does not appear.”⁹ As such, the issue is not so much with the medium of seeing as with the attitude and manner of seeing.

⁶ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 499; David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 624; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000), 1068.

⁷ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1068. For ancient documents on the well reputed bronze products of Corinth, see Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth: Texts and Archaeology*. 3rd edition and expanded edition (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2002), 201-18.

⁸ See Mark Pendergrast, *Mirror | Mirror: A History of the Human Love Affair with Reflection* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 1-27; Miranda Anderson, ed., *The Book of the Mirror An Interdisciplinary Collection exploring the Cultural Story of the Mirror* (New Castle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007).

⁹ See Jean-Luc Marion, “What We See and What Appears,” in *Idol Anxiety*. Edited by Josh Ellenbogen and Aaron Tugendhaft (Stanford: Stanford University Press), 153. Marion continues, “Why does what we see not appear? By ‘does not appear’ I mean that it does not draw the gaze, does not focus it, does not captivate it. The gaze passes,

Joseph Fitzmyer writes about 1 Cor. 13:12: “the quality of the mirror is not the issue: it is rather that in a mirror, whether good or poor, one sees only a reflection or image of the thing, not the thing itself.”¹⁰ I want to push this point by underscoring that the problem is not that the reflection is bad. Rather Paul is concerned that believers might mistake the reflection of the thing for the thing itself, and henceforth, stop seeing.¹¹ Whether we can tell the reflection from the thing that the mirror reflects is not as important as stopping seeing. Once we fix our horizon of seeing, we think that what we see is what it is. But, whether what we see is what it is depends on the way we see it. With our seeing intimately tied to our knowledge,¹² which is what 13:12 is about, such a seeing can lead to a wrong knowledge; a knowledge that objectifies and subjugates the others. Indeed, such a seeing that objectifies the others, can in return, objectify us. It is a vicious loop. Paul’s reminder that we now see and know out of a part does not discredit our seeing and knowing. It simply points out that our seeing is perspectival. A face-to-face seeing helps counter an objectifying seeing, where the others can address us and disrupt our gaze and subjectivity. It is not a coincidence that Paul would speak of this face-to-face seeing in the context of love, because a vision of love is a seeing that let the other be the other. It is a seeing

passes over what it sees and moves to the following visible, as if the visible had given up its spatial determination to take on a temporal determination. This means that the visible is not the visible in front of us, but is the visible for a moment and we move on. In this sense, the visible does not appear, the gaze does not even allow it the time to appear, we have already moved on...” Idem.

¹⁰ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 499; also, see Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Translated by James W. Leitch. Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 228; Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First letter to the Corinthians*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010), 658-60.

¹¹ Collins further finds that “Plutarch ... and other ancients used the metaphor of a mirror and the image on it in a way that is similar to Paul’s. They used the metaphor to express the difficulties encountered by humans who try to understand the deity.” See Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*. Sacra Pagina 7 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 486-87.

¹² Besides pointing out that in early Christian usage, “ἐπιγινώσκειν is often used instead of γινώσκειν with no difference in meaning” (703), Bultmann finds that in the Greek usage, “the link between the verbs γινώσκειν and εἰδέναι shows that knowledge is regarded as a mode of seeing, for εἰδέναι means ‘to know on the basis of one’s own observation’” (691). See Rudolf Bultmann, “γινώσκω κτλ.,” in *TDNT* 1: 689-719.

that desires to be seen in seeing. It is a genuine regard for the others, inviting the others addressing oneself in one's seeing.

(i) Maurice Merleau-Ponty: An Embodied Perception of the World

For Merleau-Ponty, as “I am thrown into a nature, and that nature appears not only as outside me ... but it is also discernible at the center of subjectivity,”¹³ it only makes sense that my “body ... is the point of view upon the world.”¹⁴ Thus Merleau-Ponty writes:

To see is to enter a universe of beings which *display themselves*, and they would not do this if they could not be hidden behind each other or behind me. In other words: to look at an object is to inhabit it, and from this habitation to grasp all things in terms of the aspect which they present to it. But in so far as I see those things too, they remain abodes open to my gaze, and, being potentially lodged in them, I already perceive from various angles the central object of my present vision. Thus every object is the mirror of all others.¹⁵

This notion “to look at an object is to inhabit it” is like an embodiment of the middle voice. One is seen in the things that one sees. In fact, one is already seen before s/he begins to see. “I am being potentially lodged in them” in my seeing. I see things from being in relation to them, which are in relation to other things; a relation that connects and separates me from them. In the end, I see things from being among things. As I adjust my “body schema” to see, I see them with my body being in touch with other bodies in the world. Our seeing thus includes seeing and not seeing. What stands out to us is not simply the things themselves but the things in the middle of many other things. What we do not see “here and now” is also a part of the seeing. Merleau-Ponty writes, “Any seeing of an object by me is instantaneously reiterated among all those objects in the world which are *apprehended as co-existent*, because each of them is all that the

¹³ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 403.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 79. He continues, “When I look at the lamp on my table, I attribute to it not only the qualities visible from where I am, but also those which the chimney, the walls, the table can ‘see’; but back of my lamp is nothing but the face which it ‘shows’ to the chimney. I can therefore see an object in so far as objects form a system of a world, and in so far as each one treats the others round it as spectators of its hidden aspects and as guarantee of the permanence of those aspects.” *Idem.*

others ‘see’ of it.”¹⁶ Luce Irigaray further points out the obvious in our seeing: the air. She writes, “Is not air the whole of our habitation as mortals? Is there a dwelling more vast, more spacious, or even more generally peaceful than that of air? Can man live elsewhere than in air? Neither in earth, nor in fire, nor in water is any habitation possible for him.”¹⁷

Quietly the air nourishes. It does not shout out its presence nor demand recognition and respect. Simply there ... and here, it allows us to live, see, think, act, etc. The air is anywhere and everywhere. Between the self and the others is not an empty space, but a space full of air. We never see the others without any medium. The air connects and separates the self from the others. This embodied and relational perception is close to the correlational thinking in Chinese worldview, where everything, material or immaterial, is made of *qi* (meaning: air, breath, energy, etc.). The proprioceptive or felt aspect of our perception is well captured in these words of Merleau-Ponty:

The world is not what I think, but what I live through. I am open to the world, I have no doubt that I am in communication with it, but I do not possess it; it is inexhaustible.¹⁸

In a group-oriented culture, we will further say that “the world is what *we* live through *together*” as world, nature and people characterize each individual. Likewise, our seeing is a communal seeing; a seeing that is possible when I also am seen, as Paul would say. In saying that “the world is not what I think,” Merleau-Ponty finds that “the world is not an object such that I have in my possession the law of its making; it is the natural setting of, and field for, all my thoughts and all my explicit perceptions ... [I am] a subject destined to the world.”¹⁹ If the world is the

¹⁶ Idem. Emphasis added.

¹⁷ Luce Irigaray, *The Forgetting of Air in Martin Heidegger*. Translated by Mary Beth Mader (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 8.

¹⁸ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 403, xix.

¹⁹ Ibid., xi-xii. At the same time, we cannot help but to get a sense of individualism in Merleau-Ponty’s analysis.

natural field for “all my thoughts and all my explicit perceptions,” we are then in a heteronomous relationship with the world and others.

In engaging the Christian Scripture as believers, to what extent are we *of* and *in* the text? Even if we can objectify the text since the text is out “there” and we are “here,” what happens when the “here” meets the “there”? If both the text and we are *of* and *in* the world, then how much can the text as a medium capture in words the world and the writer? Merleau-Ponty writes:

When I begin to reflect my reflection bears upon an unreflective experience; moreover my reflection cannot be unaware of itself as an event, and so it appears to itself in the light of a truly creative act, of a changed structure of consciousness, and yet it has to recognize, as having priority over its own operations, the world which is given to the subject because the subject is given to himself. The real has to be described, not constructed or formed.²⁰

Here, the inter-twining of the subject and the world in her/his reflection of her/his reflection is noteworthy. The reflection is in the mode of the middle voice. It is an event in which “the world is given to the subject because the subject is given to himself.” It is in this middle voice that the “truly creative act” and “changed structure of consciousness” take place. Hence “the real” is not “constructed or formed.” To describe “the real” is, however, difficult because we are already embedded in it. When we speak of our perception, we often focus on the mental and intellectual aspects. We seldom examine our mood and bodily aspect, let alone the different kinds of bodies of different social locations. This notion of the body as “our anchorage in a world”²¹ and “our general medium for having a world”²² is not lost to Frantz Fanon. It is manifested on his face and his very skin. “*Maman*, look, a Negro; I’m scared!”²³

²⁰ Ibid., xi. Also, see Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to A Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. II: Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 151-80.

²¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, 167.

²² Ibid., 169. Merleau-Ponty writes, “Just as nature finds its way to the core of my personal life and becomes inextricably linked with it, so behavior patterns settle into that nature, being deposited in the form of a cultural world.” Ibid., 405. This notion of inter-corporeality is further illustrated in the phenomenon of chiasm of our hands

No longer just another human being, but “a Negro;” a labelled human being; an out-of-place human being; a “Negro.” In the language of Julia Kristeva: an abject; fascinating yet repulsive to the system (see below). Here, a face-to-face regard for the others obviously does not work. Paul thus also has to say that our seeing is out of a part. A partial regard is not a regard. A partial respect is not a respect. Remember: “I will know fully *insofar as* I will be fully known.” This poignant experience of Fanon on the train in Paris shows how our skin color *does* matter in the formation of our social identification and consciousness. The “epidermalization” that Fanon mentions inscribes the gaze of others into our very being. Not only are we alienated from ourselves because of the gaze of the others, we also see ourselves through the gaze of the other. As a result, we police ourselves with the gaze of the others. The gaze becomes a “panopticon” and we become the product and production of the gaze. In the Althusserian language, we are thus “interpellated.” Our body of perception lies elsewhere, at the mercy of others. Yet, this elsewhere is interwoven into our very own body and psyche. We may still feel our sentiment, sensations, etc. But, the felt aspect is replaced by the claimed and paid aspects (see section 3 in chapter 1). It is hard to even think of one’s own identity and agency. What identity? Where to begin? There is no “anchorage.” Our skin, comportment, and accent betray us. It is elsewhere. Herein lies the danger of an objectifying seeing; a seeing that is not willing to be seen in its seeing. Such a seeing that is not addressed in return could become an ideological or an idolatrous seeing.

This kind of feeling undergirds my experience growing up in Kuala Lumpur in the 1980s-90s. While the Chinese culture is group-oriented, it is not monolithic. Most Chinese fled to

touching and sensing each other as Merleau-Ponty speaks of the flesh in terms of the body of the mind and the mind of the body in a chiasm. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, “The Intertwining – The Chiasm,” in *The Visible and the Invisible, Followed by Working Notes*. Edited by Claude Lefort. Translated by Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 130-55 (141).

²³ See Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1967). Also, see Kelly Oliver, “Pathology of Recognition,” in *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 23-49.

Malaysia during the European imperialism, Japanese invasion and massacre, and the Communist vs. Nationalist Chinese struggles in early-mid twentieth century. Because of the need for cheap labor for plantation and mining works in Malaysia, the British also brought many Chinese and Indians to Malaysia. Consequently, we have numerous dialects and sub-cultures in the Chinese community. For various reasons, these dialect groups do not always get along with each another. To make the situation more complex, the British adopted the “divide and rule” strategy along racial lines. Very soon, these racial lines become socio-cultural, political, economic, religious, territorial lines of demarcation.²⁴ The Malays must be Muslims by birth; and because of their longer history in Malaysia and the British support, they hold the political power. Indeed, as the Malays are the predominant force in the government, they are favored for business opportunities, educational scholarships, etc. at the expense of other “races.” A recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* even points out that the “Transparency International said Malaysia scored worst in the 2012 Bribe Payers Survey.”²⁵ The Chinese, known for their business skill, play a more dominant role in the financial areas. The Indians, while many are in the plantation work, many are also in the legal and medical professions. With these three major “races” dominate their respective fields, some sort of “unity” is thus maintained, tenuously, as they need each other to survive and

²⁴ In his research, Fenton notes the ideological constructs of different Malay words such as “bangsa,” “kaum,” and “orang” to denote the concept of “race” in Malaysia. See Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity* (Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2003), 25-50. Also, see Sumit K. Mandal, “Boundaries and Beyond: Whither the Cultural Bases of Political Community in Malaysia,” in *The Politics of Multiculturalism: Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2001), 141-64.

²⁵ <http://blogs.wsj.com/searealtime/2012/12/11/malaysia-tops-bribery-table> (accessed January 10, 2013).

thrive.²⁶ The fragility of harmony, however, surfaces during the general election when politicians gerrymander and play with racial, religious, etc. fears to get the votes.²⁷

As a result of this discriminatory policy, many Chinese with financial means would enroll their children in the private English education system, as the teachers seem more trained than those in the public schools. Since the public school is free, most Chinese would go there, in spite of the reported discrimination against non-Malays. Those who want to retain their Chinese heritage would send their children to a few Chinese secondary schools. This decision is risky. The government does not recognize the credential, despite the fact that many students do far better in the national examinations than their peers in other education systems. Another challenge faced by these students is that they must learn most of the subjects in the school curriculum in three languages: Chinese, Malay, and English. Inherent in these languages are the competing socio-cultural values that the students need to come to terms with, whether they are aware of such implications or not. The situation becomes worse when Malay is the official language, whereas English is the language that shows that one is well educated. Being caught in between Malay and English, the value of the Chinese language is questionable. Yet the students must learn it well. Like their counterparts in Mainland China, they must study Chinese history, literature, and geography.

Given this complex education system, one can imagine its impact on one's consciousness and un/sub-consciousness.²⁸ Growing up in this situation, I was overloaded with mixed feeling

²⁶ For example, see Harold Crouch, *Government and Society in Malaysia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Meredith L. Weiss, *Protest and Possibilities: Civil Society and Coalitions for Political Change in Malaysia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006). In recent years we see more and more *ordinary* Malaysians, despite their "races," cultures, and "religions," work together very closely at different levels for social justice against the government's corruption and power abuse.

²⁷ For example, see http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21577390-after-tainted-election-victory-najib-razak-needs-show-his-reformist-mettle-dangerous?fsrc=scn%2Ftw_ec%2Fa_dangerous_result (accessed May 10, 2013).

²⁸ The ripple effect of education on one's socio-cultural consciousness and identity is well documented. See Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," in *Essays on Ideology*

and information. I could not articulate who I was, other than the fact that I am an (overseas) Chinese Malaysian. There are too many competing values. Kristeva describes these mixed feelings and the issues of identity in terms of the maternal body and abjection, a state of very intense feeling that fascinates and yet repulses us.²⁹ By the end of this section, it will become clear that these ideas of Kristeva are also readily seen in the conflicts in 1 Corinthians.

(ii) Julia Kristeva: The Notion of “Abject”

The abject is seen as a threat to one’s identity and the social order. Kristeva writes: “The abject has only one quality of the object – that of being opposed to *I*.”³⁰ The abject is an excess that cannot be regulated, incorporated, or erased to maintain the integrity of the system. But, why is someone or something abject? Is the quality “of being opposed to *I*” necessarily hostile? Are the cause and the result of abjection necessarily bad? As Kristeva speaks of the excess as “the semiotic” and the rules as “the symbolic,” the semiotic is often treated as the abject. Yet, Kristeva argues, “Abjection preserves what existed in the archaism of pre-objectal relationship, in the immemorial violence with which a body becomes separated from another body in order to be – maintaining that night in which the outline of the signified thing vanishes and where only

(London: Verso, 1984), 1-60; Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. Translated by Richard Nice (London; California; New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990).

²⁹ Kristeva describes abjections as “an extremely strong feeling which is at once somatic and symbolic, and which is above all a revolt of the person against an external menace from which one wants to keep oneself at a distance, but of which one has the impression that it is not only an external menace but that it may menace us from the inside. So it is a desire for separation, for becoming autonomous and also the feeling of an impossibility of doing so...” See *Women Analyze Women: In France, England, and United States*. Edited by Elaine Hoffman Baruch and Lucieenne J. Serrano (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 135-36.

³⁰ See Julia Kristeva, *Power of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 1. While Kristeva also illustrates abjection through food/dietary laws, death/corpse, etc., she underscores that the border between the subject “*I*” and the other is tenuous, constituted by rejecting what is foreign to “*I*.” This otherness, however, was a part of the “*I*” that I need to reject so that I can be constituted. As such, the abject is the remainder that does not disappear entirely from one’s subjectivity. Kristeva writes: “all abjection is in fact recognition of the *want* on which any being, meaning, language, or desire is founded” (ibid., 5). Noting this “*want*” in the constitution of the subject, McAfee highlights, through the Freudian *das Unheimliche* (the uncanny), the haunting of abjection. See Noëlle McAfee, *Julia Kristeva* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 48-50.

the imponderable affect is carried out.”³¹ In other words, the abject that is jettisoned outside of the identity, order, or system is not only marked by an intense violence. It is also marked by “the imponderable affect” of the abject “signified thing.”

For Kristeva, the “semiotic” is the preverbal and pre-Oedipal drives “anterior to sign and syntax”³² (cf. Greimas’s *Fundamental and Narrative Semantics*). It is rhythmic, position-less, and is always in process. The “symbolic,” on the other hand, is that which regulates social identity and positions (cf. Greimas’s *Discursive Semantics/Figurative and Syntax*). While the “semiotic” and the “symbolic” are different from each other, they “are inseparable within the *signifying process* that constitutes language...”³³ Moreover, as “the subject is always *both* semiotic *and* symbolic, no signifying system he produces can be either ‘exclusively’ semiotic or ‘exclusively’ symbolic, and is instead necessarily marked by and indebted to both.”³⁴

Given this notion of the “semiotic,” the “mother’s body becomes the focus of the semiotic as the ‘pre-symbolic’ – a manifestation – especially in art, of what could be called the ‘materiality’ of the symbolic: the voice as rhythm and timbre, the body as movement, gesture, and rhythm.”³⁵ For Kristeva, the mother’s love for her child illustrates the inter-twining of the

³¹ Ibid., 10.

³² Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Introduction by Leon S. Roudiez. Translated by Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 29.

³³ Ibid., 24.

³⁴ Idem.

³⁵ John Lechte, *Julia Kristeva* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 129.

“semiotic” and the “symbolic,”³⁶ as it embodies the tension between “the semiotic” and “the symbolic,” “nature” and “culture,” as well as the “self” and the other.³⁷

This tactic of Kristeva to “reinscribe language in the body” and “the body in language” at the same time, in particular with the body as “the maternal body” that “*prefigures* the law of the father and the onset of the symbolic,”³⁸ aims to show that the symbolic itself is heterogeneous. Unlike the “mirror stage” in Jacques Lacan’s theory,³⁹ in which a baby between six and eighteen months old comes to recognize her/his body through her/his image from the mirror,⁴⁰ the mirror stage according to Kristeva is already symbolic.⁴¹ Because to identify and differentiate oneself as a subject from her/his mirror image implies a symbolic function in which the subject can form a

³⁶ See Julia Kristeva, “Stabat Mater,” in *Tales of Love*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 234-63. She writes: “Silence weighs heavily nonetheless on the corporeal and psychological suffering of childbirth and especially the self-sacrifice involved in becoming anonymous in order to pass on the social norm, which one might repudiate for one’s own sake but within which *one must* include the child in order to educate it along the chain of generations. A suffering lined with jubilation – ambivalence of masochism – on account of which a woman, rather refractory to perversion, in fact allows herself a coded, fundamental, perverse behavior, ultimate guarantee of society, without which society will not reproduce and will not maintain a constancy of standardized household.” *Ibid.*, 260.

³⁷ “The experience of love indissolubly ties together the *symbolic* (what is forbidden, distinguishable, thinkable), the *imaginary* (what the Self imagines in order to sustain and expand itself), and the *real* (that impossible domain where affects aspire to everything and where there is no one to take into account the fact that *I* am only a part). Strangled within this tight knot, reality vanishes: I do not take it into account, and I refer it, if I think of it, to one of the three other realms. That means that in love I never cease to be mistaken as to reality.” See Julia Kristeva, “In Praise of Love,” in *Tales of Love*, 7.

³⁸ Kelly Oliver, *Subjectivity without Subjects: From Abject Fathers to Desiring Mothers* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 55.

³⁹ See Jacques Lacan, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,” in *Ecrits: A Selection*. Translated by Bruce Fink (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2002), 3-9. For an illustration on the notions of the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real, see Alain Vanier, *Lacan*. Translated by Susan Fairfield (New York: Other Press, 2000). It is noteworthy to see Lacanian tripartite relations in Althusser’s definition of ideology as “a ‘representation’ of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.” See Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation),” 36ff. Sean Homer also points this out in *Jacques Lacan* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 112. While Kristeva finds it “extremely difficult, if not impossible, to translate one theory into another theory, because if one does, one ends in confusion and loses the specificity of each author and each approach” (22-23), she thinks that the semiotic could correspond to “phenomena that for Lacan are in both the real and the imaginary” (23). As of the symbolic, it could be Lacan’s symbolic order, but it also refers to the symbolic element in the symbolic order. See Ross Mitchell Guberman, ed., *Julia Kristeva Interviews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

⁴⁰ This perception is, of course, a misrecognition because the image of the baby is not the baby. For Lacan, the symbolic is created from a correspondence between the baby and the image of the baby in the mirror. The symbolic as such polices the gap between the signified and the signifier. As a result of internalizing the *imaginary* “ideal-I” from the mirror image, the baby is thus alienated from her/himself. The subject is thus never at home.

⁴¹ Kelly Oliver, *Subjectivity without Subjects*, 56.

judgment. If “in the course of language acquisition, signified negation ... appears around the age of fifteen months, coinciding with the peak of the ‘mirror stage’ and with holophrastic language acquisition,”⁴² then it suggests that “the formation of the *symbol of negation precedes this [symbolic] function or coincides with its development.*”⁴³ For Kristeva, as Oliver points out, this negativity not only “operates first in the semiotic [maternal] body,” it is also “founded on excess.”⁴⁴ It is not the “castration threat or sense of lack” but the “excess and pleasure that move the child [from the presymbolic] into the realm of the symbolic.”⁴⁵ It would be tragic if the child has to move into the symbolic because of threat. Kristeva suggests that it is because of the love of the mother and the imaginary father (which is the mother’s love), that the child moves into the symbolic or society.⁴⁶

As the maternal body juggles multiple roles, the mother becomes a “bridge between nature and culture, the drives and the Symbolic order.”⁴⁷ Kristeva writes: “The mother’s body is ... what mediates the symbolic law organizing social relations and becomes the ordering principle of the semiotic *chora.*”⁴⁸ With the baby coming into being from the flesh and love of

⁴² Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, 122.

⁴³ Idem.

⁴⁴ Kelly Oliver, *Subjectivity without Subjects*, 56.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 57.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 65-72. Oliver clarifies that for Kristeva, the signification system (i.e., the symbolic order or the Symbolic) “is composed of both semiotic and symbolic elements. So the semiotic is *not strictly* opposed to the Symbolic. Rather, the semiotic is part of the Symbolic. Which is not to say that it is confined within the Symbolic ... The semiotic moves both inside and outside the Symbolic. The semiotic ... does not move within the symbolic. Within signification, *the symbolic is heterogeneous to the semiotic.* The symbolic is the element within the Symbolic against which the semiotic works to produce the dialectical tension that keeps society going.” See Kelly Oliver, *Reading Kristeva: Unraveling the Double-Bind* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 10. Emphasis added.

⁴⁷ Kelly Oliver, *Reading Kristeva*, 66.

⁴⁸ Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, 27. “We borrow the *chora* from Plato’s *Timaeus* to denote an essentially mobile and extremely provisional articulation constituted by movements and their ephemeral stases. We differentiate this uncertain and indeterminate *articulation* from a *disposition* that already depends on representation ... Although our theoretical description of the *chora* is itself part of the discourse of representation that offers it as evidence, the *chora*, as rupture and articulations (rhythm), precedes evidence, verisimilitude, spatiality, and temporality. Our discourse – all discourse – moves with and against the *chora* in the sense that it simultaneously depends upon and refuses it. Although the *chora* can be designated and regulated, it can never be

the mother *and* the father, s/he experiences the “semiotic” and the “symbolic” inside the mother, as the mother experiences “the other *as* the self and the other *in* the self.”⁴⁹ This other is not just the baby. It is also the mother’s desire and love and the flesh and love of the father. The self (mother) is not disintegrated by the other (baby) even though she is changed by the baby.

Just as the baby needs to separate her/himself from the mother in order to be born, s/he also needs to leave the mother in order to become a subject. For this reason the maternal body becomes abject.⁵⁰ This abjection could be bleak for both the child and the mother, if there is no love for them. But there is a connection in this division between the mother and her child;⁵¹ a connection that comes from the mother’s love. It is not a self-centered love, but a love for the self and the other (the child). It is because of such a love that the mother gives birth and weans the baby so that s/he can become a subject. It is because of this love that the mother turns into an abjection what is so dear to her. Oliver writes: “The child must separate from its mother in order to be an autonomous being. It cannot remain dependent on her. It is the mother’s love and her love for her own mother, a narcissistic love from generation to generation, that supports the move into the Symbolic. It is this love that fills language with meaning.”⁵² It is a love that affirms and sustains the self and the other; a love that embodies the “semiotic” *and* the

definitively posited: as a result, one can situate the *chora* and, if necessary, lend it a topology, but one can never give it axiomatic form.” Ibid., 25-26.

⁴⁹ See Kelly Oliver, *Reading Kristeva*, 162.

⁵⁰ “A mother is a continuous separation, a division of the very flesh. And consequently a division of language – and it has always been so.” See Julia Kristeva, “Stabat Mater,” 254.

⁵¹ Kristeva writes: “motherhood destines us to a demented jouissance that is answered, by chance, by the nursling’s laughter in the sunny waters of the ocean. What connection is there between it [my child] and myself? No connection, except for that overflowing laughter where one senses the collapse of some ringing, subtle, fluid identity or other, softly buoyed by the waves.” Ibid., 255-56. Speaking of her own motherhood, Kristeva writes: “Recovered childhood, dreamed peace restored, in sparks, flash of cells, instants of laughter, smiles in the blackness of dreams, at night, opaque joy that roots me in her bed, my mother’s, and projects him, a son, a butterfly soaking up dew from her hand, there, nearby, in the night. Alone: she, I, and he.” Ibid., 247.

⁵² Kelly Oliver, *Reading Kristeva*, 68. Emphasis added.

“symbolic.”⁵³ Recently, Cristina Grenholm also speaks of the vulnerability in the heteronomous love relationship between the pregnant woman and her baby, where “[o]ne person is part of another person, yet they are separate beings.”⁵⁴ This loss of autonomy of the pregnant woman is not an invitation to abuse, but a transformation of the women into a mother who is caring for a new, foreign life inside her that paradoxically troubles and enriches her life at the same time.

When we turn to 1 Corinthians, it appears that the believers in Corinth were caught up in the “symbolic.” They split the “semiotic” from the cross, treat it as a “symbolic” gesture, and thus objectify the cross. They want to be in control and reject the element of vulnerability of the “semiotic” in their new life in Christ. But, as our discussion on motherhood and embodied love show us, the cross is not an exposure to abuse and exploitation but a transformation of life. Wonhee Anne Joh argues, “The cross, read through the semiotic maternal lens, is not only the horror of abjection but also the power of love. It is love that also is inclusive of abjection. The cross is both the power of the symbolic at work in the execution while it is also the irruption of the semiotic as the power of *jeong* [‘a sticky love’].”⁵⁵

As an abjection of the Roman Empire, the cross signifies violence and conquest. But, it also signifies the dignity of life and the power of love confronting the threat of death. What is at stake is not the cross itself, but the *figure* of the cross (that embodies both the “semiotic” and the “symbolic” of the cross).⁵⁶ Paul makes it clear that the cross was not predestined. Unlike the

⁵³ Again, it is important to note: “Neither the semiotic nor the symbolic is original. Each is dependent on the other. Neither completely destroys the other. Kristeva’s writings can themselves be read as an oscillation between the semiotic and symbolic, between rejection and identification.” See Kelly Oliver, *Reading Kristeva*, 11.

⁵⁴ See Cristina Grenholm, *Motherhood and Love: Beyond the Gendered Stereotype of Theology*. Translated by Marie Tåqvist (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2011), 164.

⁵⁵ See Wonhee Anne Joh, *Heart of the Cross: A Postcolonial Christology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 113. For the notion of *jeong*, see the sub-section under relationality in chapter 1.

⁵⁶ For example, Pickett rightly points out that “the symbol of the cross has no intrinsic meaning, rather what it connotes is defined by what ideas and experiences it references in a given context.” See Raymond Pickett, *The Cross in Corinth: The Social Significance of the Death of Jesus*. JSNT Supplement Series 143 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 30.

glorious cross that we find in so many Christian hymns, the cross of Christ was anything but glorious. Does Paul not say, “Had the rulers of this age known the wisdom of God, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Cor. 2:8)? The cross must not be fetishized; after all, the cross and the resurrection are intertwined for Paul (15:36; cf. Phil. 3:10-11; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:1-14). The cross cannot be sublimated. No signifying trick can signify over this void, this cross. In fact, it was for this very quality of crucifixion that the Roman Empire uses it to terrorize any rebellions against the Empire.

The cross was an abjection that distinguishes the loyal Roman citizens from the others. It stigmatizes the crucified and those associated with him. But, the cross, shockingly, also marks believers from non-believers (1 Cor. 1:18). It marks the God of Christ from the gods and goddesses of the Roman Empire.⁵⁷ The importance of the cross may not be evident in early Christian art, as the crucifixion images are scarce compared to the abundant documents on the significance of the cross.⁵⁸ But as Robin Jensen points out, such a scarcity is a matter of categorization.⁵⁹ The crucifixion images were not uncommon in people’s everyday life.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Fay finds that the concept of deity in Greco-Roman society “is a loose term, allowing much flexibility while stressing power and accomplishment. Being a god did not denote responsibility, instead it conferred on the person a special status and the responsibility was imported to the worshippers” See Ron C. Fay, “Greco-Roman Concept of Deity,” in *Paul’s Word*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter. Pauline Studies 4 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 79.

⁵⁸ Jensen writes: “Apart from two intaglio gems, probably dating from the fourth century, and a controversial second-century graffito found in Rome, the earliest known representations of Jesus crucified date to the early fifth century, and are extremely rare until the seventh. Moreover, the earliest certain examples of an image of Christ crucified seem almost incidental – not at all monumental, either in size or scope.” See Robin Margaret Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 131. For various theories proposed to account for such a paucity of images, see pages 133-35.

⁵⁹ “The advent of Christian art is set in the time of the Severan emperors, and its first phase generally coincides with the last century of pagan rule, up to the elevation and conversion of the Emperor Constantine. As stated above, that few clearly recognizable examples of Christian art pre-date this period probably ensues from the evidence itself, rather than results from the vagaries of historical preservation. In other words, the art works were not lost or destroyed, they simply have not been recognized as specifically Christian. The fact that little or no evidence of recognizable or distinct Christian material culture of any kind can be dated to the first two centuries CE suggests that Christians either had selectively adapted the symbols of their pagan neighbors or had acquired very little in the way of distinctive material possessions or art works...” Ibid., 16.

⁶⁰ “Possible indirect references to the passion include such signs and symbols as simple crosses, ‘crypto-crosses’ (anchors, ships’ masts, trees, plows, axes), and *tau*-crosses, More complex figures that may refer symbolically or

Thus in his response to the factions in the church, Paul rhetorically asks believers whether he was crucified for them (1:13). For Paul, the cross is integral to their identity (1:17). But, the believers in Corinth pay a lip service to it. The cross becomes an abjection to them as well. Paul writes: “As you were already filled, you were already made rich, without us you were ruling; and would that you were indeed ruling, so that we may be ruling together with you” (4:8). The Corinthian believers may have “an overrealized eschatology.”⁶¹ But as Paul lists his cross-like experience, including being treated as the scum of the world and the waste of all things (4:13), it appears that the problem is not that believers were already ruling, but that they were ruling without the cross. Their ruling imitates the very ruling that crucifies the Christ.

(iii) Giorgio Agamben: The Notion of “Example”

The cross was abject to the Roman Empire. It goes against their very sense and sensibility. As Martin Hengel points out, “the Roman world was largely unanimous that crucifixion was a horrific, disgusting business.”⁶² In using it against criminals and traitors, the Empire seeks to rein-force peace and unity.⁶³ Using Giorgio Agamben’s language, we take the crucifixion as an “inclusive exclusion” used by the Roman Empire to consolidate its *fides* and sovereignty.⁶⁴ This “inclusive exclusion” was, however, turned into an “exclusive inclusion” by Paul as he highlights it as a return of the repressed that haunts the Empire. What is excluded (i.e., the cross)

typologically to the crucifixion include the image of the Lamb (*agnus Dei*) or a type taken from the Hebrew scriptures – Abraham offering his son Isaac as sacrifice.” Ibid., 137.

⁶¹ See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 357-59.

⁶² See Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion: In the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross*. Translated by John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 37. Hengel notes, “Crucifixion was widespread and frequent, above all in Roman times, but the cultured literary world wanted to have nothing to do with it, and as a rule kept quiet about it.” Ibid., 38.

⁶³ “It is usually assumed that there was no question of Roman citizens being executed on the cross, and that the punishment was limited to slaves and *peregrini*. This is only partly correct. There was an archaic, ancient Roman punishment, hanging on the ‘barren tree’ (*arbor infelix*), which could be imposed even on Romans in cases of serious crime and high treason (*perduellio*). Originally this was probably a way of sacrificing the criminal to the gods of the underworld...” Ibid., 39.

⁶⁴ See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 21-27.

by the Empire to consolidate its power is now used by Paul in such a way that it cannot be objectified by anyone. Agamben explains, “Exception and example constitute the two modes by which a set tries to found and maintain its own coherence. But while the exception is, as we saw, an inclusive exclusion (which thus serves to include what is excluded), the example instead functions as an exclusive inclusion.”⁶⁵ As the alterity that is within the self cannot be cast out from the self, it destabilizes the self. So by making the cross an “example,” Paul renders it unsayable. Believers cannot speak of the cross without un-speaking it.⁶⁶ Words cannot capture the intense feeling and imagery evoked by the cross. As an “example” to imitate, the cross cannot be objectified and monopolized. It can only be experienced and witnessed.

To speak of the cross as “a singular object that presents itself as such”⁶⁷ – that is, as an example – Paul tells us his own cross-like experiences (4:9-13). But, Paul cannot objectify it as if everyone else should undergo what he went through in order to embody the cross. No. Note how he qualifies it before he lists his cross-like experiences. “Who distinguishes (διακρίνει) you? What are you having that did not receive? If you have indeed received (it), why do you boast as if you did not receive it?” (4:7). For Paul, if everything comes from God (cf. 8:6), then we cannot

⁶⁵ Ibid., 21. For Agamben, “What the example shows is its belonging to a class, but for this very reason the example steps out of its class in the very moment in which it exhibits and delimits it ... The example is thus excluded from the normal case not because it does not belong to it but, on the contrary, because it exhibits its own belonging to it ... The mechanism of the exception is different. While the example is excluded from the set insofar as it belongs to it, the exception is included in the normal case precisely because it does not belong to it. And just as belonging to a class can be shown only by an example – that is, outside of the class itself – so non-belonging can be shown only at the center of the class, by an exception ... exception and example are correlative concepts that are ultimately indistinguishable and that come into play every time the very sense of the belonging and commonality of individuals is to be defined.” Ibid., 22.

⁶⁶ Compare the trace of the *Dire* (“Saying”) in the *Dit* (“Said”) in Emmanuel Lévinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. Translated by Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1998), 3-14, 153-62.

⁶⁷ Agamben writes, “On one hand, every example is treated in effect as a real particular case; but on the other, it remains understood that it cannot serve in its particularity. Neither particular nor universal, the example is a singular object that presents itself as such, that *shows* its singularity ... Exemplary is what is not defined by any property, except by being-called. Not being-red, but *being-called-red*; not being-Jakob, but being-called-Jakob defines the example.” See Giorgio Agamben, “Example,” in *The Coming Community*. Translated by Michael Hardt. Theory Out of Bounds, Vol. 1 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 10.

boast about our cross-like experiences (cf. 2 Cor. 1:3-22; 11:16 – 12:10). To do so is to objectify the cross. We should, instead, pay attention and learn from how God works through everyone.

In the Introduction chapter, we noted that the body of Christ is not only “parts beyond a part” (1 Cor. 12:27b). It is also a body broken for everyone (11:24). That is to say, the body of Christ does not reside at a fixed center. It cannot be objectified. It can only be discerned. Paul makes this point in his biography (9:1-27). The problem of the divisions in the church of Corinth is not in the division itself *per se*. What comes to the fore in the so-called “Cephas’s group,” “Apollo’s group,” “Paul’s group,” and even “Christ’s group” in the church (1:12) is the problem of objectifying the self and others, which can lead to dangerous ideology and idolatry.

As a vehement ex-persecutor of the church (15:9; Gal. 1:13-14; cf. Rom. 10:2-4), Paul is well aware of the danger of such objectifying mentality and behaviors. This is why Paul learns to be critical of his own perspective, lest he be caught up in his own horizon of vision. This is why to the Jews Paul became *as* (ὡς) a Jew, not that he is not a Jew (1 Cor. 9:20). In fact, he is proud to be a Jew (Gal. 2:15; Phil. 3:5-6). Paul wants to see how Christ works among the Jews, those under the law, those without the law, the weak, etc. (1 Cor. 9:20-22).⁶⁸ In the words of Daniel Patte, “by becoming weak with them and ‘recognizing them as better than oneself,’ that is, recognizing what they have received from God and helping them to discover it for what it truly is,”⁶⁹ Paul works as a co-worker of God (3:9), lest his perspective limits his vision of Christ.

The metaphoric quality of the conjunction ὡς (“as”) is significant. It extends, retracts, and creates meanings. This is why Paul pleases everyone in every manner (10:33) because he does not know how Christ will work through different people (cf. Matt. 25:31-46). This is why he is

⁶⁸ See Daniel Patte, *Paul’s Faith and the Power of the Gospel: A Structural Introduction to the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 347-50. One will note that my next paragraph echoes Patte’s interpretation of Pauline letters.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 344.

indebted to both the Greeks and the non-Greeks (the barbarians) (Rom. 1:14). Because it is through them that he comes to see, learn, and work with Christ. Without learning from them, he will be entangled in his own perspective. At the same time, however, Paul's vision is not limited to their perspectives either; otherwise he cannot bring the gospel to them. Paul is aware that by doing so, he will probably become an abjection for both non-believers and believers. Such is the price to pay for being called into the interstitial space of the cross. Note how Paul clarifies his language. "To those under the law I become *as* one under the law, *yet not as one* under the law ... To those without the law I become *as* one without the law, *yet not as one* without the law of God but in the law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:20-21).⁷⁰ This clarification is crucial. Without it, Paul will objectify them. Paul is against an essentialization of one's cultures and traditions. Now, what is this law of Christ? What is the criterion of discernment? It is the *logos* of the cross (1:17). This is why when Paul was with the Corinthians, he decided to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified (2:2). Paul is looking for cross-like examples among the Corinthians.

III. An Embodied and Correlative Worldview

And a concrete situation is what is concreated, a grown-together of whatever there are. The concrete situation is what the Taoist called *hun tun*, a natural con-fusion, a primal abundance-together.⁷¹ – Kuang-Ming Wu

In highlighting the semantic features of the cross, Paul struggles with the problems in the church of Corinth that tends to objectify the cross into a mere slogan. For Paul, the cross must be embodied and lived out in the believers' everyday life. The cross cannot be theologized: it is always a scandal (to the Jews) and a foolishness (to the Gentiles) (1:23). It is only within a call

⁷⁰ For an interpretation of this law as the Jewish dietary law, see David J. Rudolph, *A Jew to the Jews: Jewish Contours of Pauline Flexibility in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

⁷¹ Kuang-Ming Wu, *On The "Logic" Of Togetherness: A Cultural Hermeneutics* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 1998), 24.

and response relationship between God and believers that the Christ crucified can be perceived as the power and wisdom of God (1:24). Once the cross is rationalized/theologized, it can be explained away, with the flesh-and-blood crucified Christ relegated to the background. This temptation to theologize the cross – that is, making the cross presentable to both believers and non-believers – is understandable in a non-dualistic worldview in the Greco-Roman cultures.⁷² Indeed, from our discussion of Merleau-Ponty’s embodied perception of the world and Kristeva’s proprioceptive notion of “abject,” it is not a surprise that the cross could become abject to the Corinthian believers. The imagery of the crucified Christ was just too traumatic and shameful for believers to embrace. It has to be repackaged. But, the problem is that once the cross is detached from its “felt” aspect and then represented only in its “claimed” and “paid” aspects (see section 3 in chapter 1), the crucified Christ becomes objectified into a system of knowing that the believers in Corinth can manipulate. Given this syntactic operation on the cross, Paul thus wants to highlight the semantic features of the cross, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its (felt) power (1:17). In our discussion of A. J. Greimas’s “Generative Trajectory” (see section 3.3 in the Methodological Appendix), we show that the “semantics” and the “syntax” are closely intertwined, but they should not be confused. The crucial difference between the “semantics” and “syntax” comes to the fore in our notions of metaphor and typology below, where the works of Mary Gerhart and Allan Russell and Wu are semantics-oriented, and the works of Pierre Bourdieu and Paul Ricoeur are more syntax-oriented.

⁷² See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 3-37. Martin comments that “[i]n the absence of such an ontological dualism, for most people of Greco-Roman culture the human body was of a piece with its environment [where] [t]he self was a precarious, temporary state of affairs, constituted by forces surrounding and pervading the body.” *Ibid.*, 25.

(i) A Semantic Notion of Metaphor

To show why we prioritize a semantic notion of metaphor, let us refer briefly to the correlative worldview in Chinese cultures. As Wu points out, “every Chinese ‘concept’ can be said to be a scene, a pictograph, a compressed story.”⁷³ This pictograph-like “concept” comes from a Chinese worldview that sees everything, whether material and immaterial, as made of *qi* (breath or energy). The visible and invisible worlds are thus a continuum where (1) *yin-yang* (a dynamic complementary system), (2) heaven-earth-humanity (a triadic verticality), (3) five phases (wood, fire, earth, metal, and water), and (4) nine fields or palaces (a horizontal division system) are essential components of a correlative thinking.⁷⁴ So in her reading of Leviticus, in light of the studies of ancient Chinese literature, Mary Douglas highlights the correlative thinking in the literary style of Leviticus that “works through analogies.”⁷⁵ That is to say, “as A is to B, so is X to Y” ($A:B \approx X:Y$). Given this logic, “everything symbolizes the body ... [and] the body symbolizes everything else.”⁷⁶ As a result, “[a]ny culture is a series of related

⁷³ Kuang-Ming Wu, *On Chinese Body Thinking: A Cultural Hermeneutic* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1997), 30. Wu writes: “My sense-organs sense; my inner sense (my heartmind, *hsin*) senses that I sense. Thanks to my eyes I see; thanks to my heartmind I am aware that I see. Being aware, my heartmind senses my senses, thereby integrates my sense experience, what is experienced (as) out there. Sense-organs perceive actuals; mindheart-organ apperceives perceptions. Apperceiving with the mindheart, the self affirms, that is, integrates perceived actuals into a scene, confirming a cohesion of actual scene of the world.” Idem.

⁷⁴ For various views of the correlative thinking, see Yiu-ming Fung, “On the Very Idea of Correlative Thinking.” *Philosophy Compass* 5/4 (2010): 296-306.

⁷⁵ Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 18. Referring to the works by Graham, and Hall and Ames, she writes: “Their thesis is so important for reading Leviticus that it is worth saying more about it. Our logic is based on part-whole relations, the theory of types, causal implications and logical entailments. It organizes experience in theoretical terms. Rational construction based upon it always goes in a direction away from the concrete particular towards the universal: ‘Persons in society are construed rationally to the extent that their idiosyncrasies are abstracted and their general or universal characteristics are made relevant.’” Ibid., 15. The quote comes from David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames, *Thinking Through Confucius*. SUNY Series in Systematic Philosophy (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 137. For details on the correlative thinking, see Angus C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1989), 319-82; idem., *Reason and Spontaneity* (London and Dublin: Curzon Press; Totowa, New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books, 1985).

⁷⁶ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo*. With a new preface by the author (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), 151.

structured structures which comprise social forms, values, cosmology, the whole of knowledge and through which all [bodily] experience is mediated.”⁷⁷

In his studies of the notions of the body in Greco-Roman cultures, Dale Martin agrees with Douglas that “[t]he body is a model which can stand for any bounded system ... The body is a complex structure. The functions of its different parts and their relation afford a source of symbols for other complex structures.”⁷⁸ Martin argues that “in the ancient world, the human body was not *like* a microcosm; it *was* a microcosm – a small version of the universe at large.”⁷⁹ As such, the “construing [of] the body as really (not just figuratively) a microcosm blurs any boundary between the inner body and the outer body.”⁸⁰ It is thus not a surprise that “[t]he body-as-microcosm was not a mere philosophical or literary *topos*; it ruled the care and economy of the self in everyday situations – in medical treatment, for example.”⁸¹ For Chinese, this worldview is rather commonplace. The *yin-yang* principle, heaven-earth-humanity triadic verticality, five phases, and nine fields or palaces form the correlative thinking in social relations, sexuality, language, rituals, medicine, dietary, exercise, home landscaping and interior design, etc. *Everything is interrelated.*

⁷⁷ Ibid., 158.

⁷⁸ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 142. Commenting on Douglas’s argument, Martin writes: “Furthermore, as Mary Douglas says, ‘The social body constrains the way the physical body is perceived’ – and no location of ancient ideology illustrates her point more clearly than Greco-Roman society’s hierarchical construction of the body. See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 30. I cannot find the citation that Martin refers to in Douglas’s *Rules and Meanings*. But an identical citation can be found in Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*. 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 69.

⁷⁹ See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 16. Martin further points out that “[t]he most famous account of the microcosmic body in the ancient world is found in Plato’s *Timaeus*, which portrays not only the human body as a cosmos but, conversely, the cosmos as a body ... Plato followed pre-Socratic philosophers and Hippocratic medical theory in assuming that the human self (body and soul) was composed of the same elements as the universe: air (pneuma), earth, water, and fire. Thus the dynamics that one saw at work in the external cosmos could be read onto and into the human body, the inner body being buffeted by the same weather as the outer body.” Idem.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 17. He continues, “The works of the internal body are not just an imitation of the mechanics of the universe; rather, they are part of it, constantly influenced by it.” Idem.

⁸¹ Ibid., 16.

Now, in pointing out the retro-prospective quality in the etymology of the word “analogy” in Greek, Wu further speaks of “analogy as [a] metaphor.”⁸² From the perspective of a correlative thinking, analogy and metaphor are more or less the same in meaning. But, Gerhart and Russell want to clarify the difference between the two. For them, an analogy is a relation found existing between two terms that are of *resemblance*. So while we may have a new knowledge created as a result of this relation, “the form that this knowledge takes is not very different (in size, scale, general shape, etc.) from that which was known already.”⁸³ A metaphor, on the other hand, is *created* when one “*insists* on making an analogical relationship between two understandings that are *already* formed.”⁸⁴ Through this *insistence*, “an analogy where none existed [is forced], with the result that our world of meanings has been bent out of shape.”⁸⁵

Note the emphasis on “insistence” that creates the metaphor. A metaphor is created out of juxtaposing two terms that do not seem to be of any resemblance but are *somehow* intuitively or felt to be related. This unexplainable intuition is what makes the creation of metaphor semantic, instead of syntactic. However, if the relation between the two terms in a metaphor can be logically deduced, then it is a syntactic metaphor. Unlike an analogy that *syntactically* (or logically) creates new meanings from an existing relation of resemblance without changing the “world of meanings,” a semantic metaphor, according to Gerhart and Russell, can “warp, distort,

⁸² See Kuang-Ming Wu, *On Metaphoring: A Cultural Hermeneutic* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2001), 53. Wu writes: “Metaphor sees that ‘as this A, so that B,’ so A and B are similar, to be gathered in and counted together. The analogic formula, ‘As [A is to B], so [X is to Y]’ is an elaborated form of the metaphoric formula, ‘As C, so Z.’ Analogy is a forwarding metaphor, gathering future unknowns into past known, then, the old known, now warmed up, is logically housecleaned. ‘As known C, so unknown Z; as Z, so C renewed.’” *Ibid.*, 55-56.

⁸³ See Mary Gerhart and Allan Melvin Russell, *Metaphoric Process: The Creation of Scientific and Religious Understanding* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1984), 111. They continue: “Analogies occur in many modes among which are included models such as a scale model (a ship or a building), a representation that purports to be an identity (a model home in a real estate development), or a map which is developed on the basis of a high level of abstraction. A photograph can be thought of as an analogue of that which it pictures. A table of organization can be thought of as an analogue of an administration.” *Idem.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 112. Emphasis added.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 113.

fold, spindle, and perhaps mutilate our world of meanings”⁸⁶ as it intuitively – that is, cannot be explained logically – puts the two terms of different semantic universe into a metaphorical relation.⁸⁷ A saying like “God is love” is thus a metaphor, not an analogy. It juxtaposes two different semantic universes together that do not appear to share any commonality. This is why the “is” in a semantic metaphor is not a predicate but a metaphorical relation. One may already have some idea about God and love, but as we, in a concrete context, juxtapose these two terms together, we change and even create a new “world of meanings” not only of this metaphor but of these two terms as well. The Special Theory of Relativity of Albert Einstein is a case in point when Einstein juxtaposes two incompatible fields together: Newtonian mechanics with Maxwellian electromagnetism.⁸⁸

This description of a metaphor is not unlike Wu’s depiction of an analogy, albeit Wu does not make explicit the semantic feature in his notion of analogy-metaphor. He writes: “The analogic formula, ‘As [A is to B], so [X is to Y]’ is an elaborated form of the metaphoric formula, ‘As C, so Z.’”⁸⁹ For Wu, as the word “logos” is related to “*legein*,” which means “to tell, “to account,” or “to gather,” it implies “a mental gathering of things seen as *similar*. The counting, collecting and cataloguing led to taking account of things collected, then to account for, to reflect on, to reason.”⁹⁰ Now in order to count and catalogue, one needs to examine how to gather and link things together. This examination of the “how” entails both a retrospective and prospective

⁸⁶ Ibid., 114.

⁸⁷ Gerhart and Russell summarize: “The distortion of the fields of meanings by means of the metaphoric process is a structural change which demands that other meanings and understandings have to be changed in the wake of the metaphor. This is what is so different about the metaphoric process. Analogy, on the other hand, is an extension of meaning (as distinct from the creation of new meaning). The increased knowledge from analogy is primarily in terms of the original understandings.” Ibid., 119.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 134-40.

⁸⁹ See Kuang-Ming Wu, *On Metaphoring*, 56.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 54.

reasoning, even though the word *logos* later on refers to an ac-counting of what has happened.⁹¹ But, as the preposition “*ana*” indicates, it speaks of a “going ‘up’ to where we have not been before.”⁹² This retrospective and prospective quality of an analogy thus takes account of the known *logos* of the terms and transforms its “world of meanings.” Wu’s illustration of the analogy can perhaps help us understand better how the correlative thinking work.

Metaphor-analogy has four terms, not three where the second term in the middle repeats itself to mediate the first term to the third; we must instead logically *jump* from one middle term B in $A/B = C/D$, to another *different* middle term D to get to the fourth, C. Metaphor’s proportional equality (‘=’) *is to be* achieved; it is not there ready to be calculated and inspected ... it is precisely its incomplete equation that tips us forward to an adventure for novelty.⁹³

Here, there is a resemblance between Wu’s delineation and the multiple relations in Greimas’s semiotic square. As the “metaphor’s proportional equality is to be achieved,” Douglas is right to point out the ambiguity and ambivalence in the correlative thinking. Instead of a direct and discrete articulation of a logical argument, we are presented in an argument by analogy a series of analogies that consolidate, expand, and even challenge each other in their meaning production.⁹⁴ Angus C. Graham further reminds us:

⁹¹ Tracing the usage and meaning of *logos*, Wu finds the word was used for both backward and forward reasoning before the latter was dropped out of use. He writes: “Later two interesting lines of development further exhibited this unity of opposites: *logos* as *horos*, limit-horizon or definition, and *logos* as *spermatikos*, the seed-power of creation. First, *logos* as (ac)counting requires identification of each things counted, and de-fines a thing as a thing. Secondly, retrospective de-finition is part of Logos’ prospective seeding of creation, the cosmic *ratio*, rationale. Thus retrospective *logos* is the momentum in ordering and rendering future creation intelligible. The Stoics, Philo, and Plotinus used *logos* in this twofold manner.” *Ibid.*, 56.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 59.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

⁹⁴ Douglas writes: “Instead of explaining why an instruction has been given, or even what it means, it adds another similar instruction, and another and another, thus producing its highly schematized effect. The series of analogies locate a particular instance in a context. They expand the meaning. Sometimes the analogies are hierarchized, one within another making inclusive sets, or sometimes they stand in opposed pairs or contrast sets. They serve in a place of causal explanations. If one asks, Why this rule? the answer is that it conforms to that other rule. If, Why both rules? the answer is a larger category of rules in which they are embedded as subsets or from some of which they are distinguished as exceptions ... In Leviticus the patterning of oppositions and inclusions is generally all the explaining that we are going to get. Instead of argument there is analogy.” See Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature*, 18.

It is not that on the borders of logic there is a loose form called argument from analogy, but that all thinking starts from a spontaneous discrimination of the like and the unlike, and tendency to group the similar in categories and expect similar consequences from similar conditions.⁹⁵

The web of connections of one thing with another *and* another cannot be avoided. Everything is embodied and, hence, cannot be disconnected. Bourdieu's notion of the "body as a living memory" provides a good illustration.⁹⁶ However, as Bourdieu emphasizes the social aspects of the body, his notion of *habitus* is syntactic, instead of semantic. He writes:

When the properties and movements of the body are socially qualified, the most fundamental social choices are naturalized and the body, with its properties and its movements, is constituted as an analogical operator establishing all kinds of practical equivalences among the different divisions of the social world ... or more precisely, among the meanings and values associated with the individuals occupying practically equivalent positions in the spaces defined by these divisions. In particular, there is every reason to think that the social determinations attached to a determinate position in the social space tend, through the relationship to one's own body, to shape the dispositions constituting social identity...⁹⁷

We have noted this proprioceptive perception in the works of Merleau-Ponty (cf. the "semantics"), but Bourdieu puts the body at the very center of the social field (cf. the "syntax").⁹⁸ With our body being "constituted as an analogical operator establishing all kinds of practical equivalences among the different divisions of the social world," our bodily compartments and dispositions are then inscribed by the plays of economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capitals. For Bourdieu, these social positions mark our body are tremendous. They shape our bodily hexis or dispositions and mold our perception. Bourdieu calls this bodily site of

⁹⁵ See Angus C. Graham, *Reason and Spontaneity*, 52.

⁹⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 68.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁹⁸ For different notions of *habitus*, see *A History of Habit: From Aristotle to Bourdieu*. Edited by Tom Sparro and Adam Hutchinson (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013).

“internalization of externality” and “externalization of internality” *habitus*.⁹⁹ He defines it as “systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures.”¹⁰⁰

The systems are “predisposed to function as structuring structures” because they are so bodily based that we act and think without thinking why we act and think in this way instead of that way. Once the ways we think and act become our second nature, they become durable and transposable. Bourdieu also speaks of the *habitus* as “a metaphor of the world of objects, which is itself an endless circle of metaphors that mirror each other *ad infinitum*.”¹⁰¹ Here, the description of *habitus* as “a metaphor of the world of objects” points to a syntactic notion of *habitus*. Consequently, the homologation effects of *habitus* are also syntactic (cf. a series of interlinked actantial models in Narrative Syntax).¹⁰² In his words, one’s *habitus* “structures new experiences in accordance with the structures produced by past experiences ... brings about a

⁹⁹ See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 45.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁰² Bourdieu writes: “The genesis of a system of works or practices generated by the same *habitus* (or homologous *habitus*, such as those that underlie the unity of the life-style of a group or a class) cannot be described either as the autonomous development of a unique and always self-identical essence, or as a continuous creation of novelty, because it arises from the necessary yet unpredictable confrontation between the *habitus* and an event that can exercise a pertinent incitement on the *habitus* only if the latter snatches it from the contingency of the accidental and constitutes it as a problem by applying to it the very principles of its solution; and also because the *habitus*, like the ‘art of inventing,’ is what makes it possible to produce an infinite number of practices that are relatively unpredictable (like the corresponding situations) but also limited in their diversity.” *Ibid.*, 55. Let us look at an example that Bourdieu gives. “Because the principle opposing the terms that have been related (for example, the sun and the moon) is not defined and usually comes down to a simple contrariety, analogy ... establishes a relation of homology between relations of opposition (man : woman :: sun : moon), which are themselves indeterminate and overdetermined (hot : cold :: male : female :: day : night :: etc.), applying generative schemes different from those that can be used to generate other homologies into which one or another of the terms in question might enter (man : woman :: east : west, or sun : moon :: dry : wet). This uncertain abstraction is also a false abstraction ... This mode of apprehension never explicitly limits itself to any one aspect of the terms it links, but takes each one, each time, as a whole, exploiting to the full the fact that two ‘realities’ are never entirely alike in all respects but are always alike in some respect, at least indirectly (that is, through the mediation of some common term). This explains, first, why among the different aspects of the indeterminate yet overdetermined symbols it manipulates, ritual practice never clearly opposes aspects symbolizing something to aspects symbolizing nothing, which might therefore be disregarded ...” *Ibid.*, 88-89. Notice the play of “indeterminate yet overdetermined” and the role of ritual in maintaining the tension between the two. For Bourdieu, however, the overdetermined element seems to overpower the indeterminate elements in an analogy or the homologous structure. However, if the relation in analogy is not just that of contrariety, but also of contradiction and implication (as we see in a semiotic square), then the indeterminate element will not be so easily dominated by the overdetermined element.

unique integration, dominated by the earliest experiences...”¹⁰³ Secondly, while Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus* leaves room for contingency and disruption, the description of *habitus* as “an endless circle of metaphors that mirror each other *ad infinitum*” reduces the metaphor into a notion of analogy that Gerhart and Russell mention.

The tension between the semantic and syntactic notions of metaphor can, at times, be seen in David Tracy’s notion of “analogical imagination” – “a language of ordered relationships articulating similarity-in-differences.”¹⁰⁴ For example, Tracy writes:

Any analogical concepts that emerge from that constantly expanding, never-ending dialectical relationship between authentically critical reflection and real participation in the negating, defamiliarizing, disclosing event will be concepts that never lose the tensive power of the negative. If that power is lost, analogical concepts become mere categories of easy likenesses slipping quietly from their status as similarities-in-difference to mere likenesses, falling finally into the sterility of a relaxed univocity and a facilely affirmative harmony.¹⁰⁵

Given what Gerhart and Russell say about metaphor and analogy, there are two ways to read the “constantly expanding, never-ending dialectical relationship between authentically critical reflection and real participation in the negating, defamiliarizing, disclosing event.” We can either understand it in terms of a semantic metaphor or a syntactic analogy. If we understand it as a metaphor, then what the dynamic dialectics highlights is not a representation, but an emergent pattern. The pattern is not an existing pattern waiting to be excavated because as flesh-and-blood human beings who feel, think, and form the pattern, as long as we breathe, the pattern that we formulate also breathes. However, if we understand it as an analogy, then we are treating the

¹⁰³ Ibid. 60. Again, we see the overdetermined element dominating the indeterminate element in analogy.

¹⁰⁴ See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 408.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 410.

pattern as a representation (of the pattern). This representation is a result of thought upon the pattern. Indeed, as Tracy follows Ricoeur's "the symbol gives rise to thought,"¹⁰⁶ he also writes:

The analogies-in-difference will express a whole series of somehow ordered relationships (the relationships within the self, the relationships of the self to other selves, to society, history, the cosmos) all established in and through reflection upon the self's primordial experience of its similarity-in-difference to the event.¹⁰⁷

Note that the dialectic between one's "primordial experience" of the event (cf. Fundamental and Narrative Semantics) and one's critical reflection of it (cf. Fundamental and Narrative Syntax) in the analogy ends up being "all established in and through reflection." The symbol (i.e., "primordial experience") that is semantic-oriented is now at the service of the "syntax" (i.e., "reflection"). The principle of negation in analogy that Tracy underscores is now deprived of its dialectic power.¹⁰⁸

(ii) The Semantic Metaphor as A "Togetherness" in the Middle Voice

If the Jewish culture in the biblical world is proprioceptive or thymic, as Timothy Cargal foregrounds, in which "different realms of human experience" are "perceived in terms of the

¹⁰⁶ See Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*. Translated by Emerson Buchanan (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1969), 347-57. Tracy follows Ricoeur's notion of "the symbol gives rise to thought" faithfully: "The symbol has given rise to thought but thought now returns reflectively to the symbol expressing the event. But the reflective journey of a theological analogical imagination has not been in vain. For the theologian returns to the symbol bearing the fruits of that reflection: a now-ordered series of analogical relationships among God-self-world ordered to and by some focal meaning for the event (e.g., Jesus Christ as Logos), a focal meaning which has proved itself a relatively adequate reflective analogue for understanding the originating religious event and the similarities-indifference that event discloses." See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 411.

¹⁰⁷ See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 410.

¹⁰⁸ He writes, "Negations of any claims to full adequacy (for example, any attempts at exhaustive, univocal meanings in any analogue) are negations to assure that the similarities remain similarities-in-difference, to assure that the analogous relationships of proportion are related to the uncontrollable event, negations to keep the principles of order and harmony from becoming merely affirmative. The negations function as principles of intensification constituted by the tensive event-character of the focal meaning to negate any slackening of the sense of radical mystery, any grasp at control of the event and the similarities-in-difference of the realities (God, self, world) focused upon and interpreted by that event. The negations with their disclosure of radical dissimilarity in similarity by their concentration upon the tensive event-character in the focal meaning will also manifest the genuine similarities disclosed by means of the defamiliarizing difference exposed in the event." *Ibid.*, 409.

value (such as ‘holiness’ or ‘uncleanness’) with which they are associated,”¹⁰⁹ then what is at stake is not an ontological issue (i.e., the realness and trueness of “being”). In a thymic culture, that which “is” real and true is what felt to have a good value. This “felt” quality is not unlike the correlative feeling/perception in a dynamic *yin-yang* holistic worldview, where within *yin* is *yang*, and within *yang*, *yin*. What counts as *yin* is in relation to *yang* in the overall context, and vice versa.¹¹⁰ Given this correlative perception of the world, Wu claims that one’s “[e]xistence is a metaphorical project making sense of percepts, going from the subject to the object.”¹¹¹ From the Chinese perspective, both the subject and the object are interrelated in a metaphorical relationship. Elsewhere Wu calls this existential and metaphorical project a part-whole thinking, where “the whole and its parts mutually indwell and infuse ... while keeping intact their respective integrities.”¹¹² Likewise, Douglas links the correlative thinking with the logic of the part-whole relation.¹¹³ Here, the whole is a natural, concrete, bodily whole. Pointing out the etymology of the word “concrete” in Latin “*concrecere*” (“to grow together”), Wu writes: “Togetherness is a mutuality which by nature is something interactive, an active co-partaking in ontological co-resonance.”¹¹⁴ As such, our existence, according to the Chinese worldview, is “a

¹⁰⁹ See Timothy B. Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora: Discursive Structure and Purpose in the Epistle of James*. SBL Dissertation Series 144 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 44.

¹¹⁰ Hall and Ames write: “Polarity ...has been a major principle of explanation in the initial formulation and evolution of classical Chinese metaphysics. By ‘polarity,’ we wish to indicate a relationship of two events each of which requires the other as a necessary condition for being what it is. Each existent is ‘so of itself’ and does not derive its meaning and order from any transcendent source. The notion of ‘self’ in the locution ‘so of itself’ has a polar relationship with ‘other.’ Each particular is a consequence of every other. And there is no contradiction in saying that each particular is both self-determinate and determined by every other particular, since each of the existing particulars is constitutive of every other as well ... Dualistic explanations of relationships encourage an essentialistic interpretation in which the elements of the world are characterized by discreteness and independence. By contrast, a polar explanation of relationships requires a contextualist interpretation of the world in which events are strictly interdependent.” See David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames, *Thinking Through Confucius*, 67-68.

¹¹¹ Kuang-Ming Wu, *On Chinese Body Thinking*, 44.

¹¹² Kuang-Ming Wu, *On The “Logic” Of Togetherness*, 12. This part-whole relation “describes (*one* in the *other*) being one (*one in the other*), yet remaining two.” Idem.

¹¹³ See Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature*, 15.

¹¹⁴ Kuang-Ming Wu, *On The “Logic” Of Togetherness*, 5. Wu emphasizes that “a togetherness-thinking [is] a thinking that begins at things’ natural wholeness, pristine togetherness, and concrete nexus of things, then proceeds to individual units or elements, which we understand in terms of their communal wholes, inclusive inter-involved

metaphorical project” and an ontological “togetherness” that is not essentialist.¹¹⁵ It is a dynamic togetherness that is yet to be formed together in the togetherness. The togetherness is not an essence or a common property. It is a coming together, a relation. It is in a *face to face* meeting that the otherness of the self and the other take place in the event.¹¹⁶ It is in light of this notion of togetherness that the part-whole thinking is perceived.¹¹⁷

The part-whole relationship does not begin by analyzing the whole into parts and then re-assemble them into a whole.¹¹⁸ The part-whole thinking starts at the together-whole because we are always already together with others in the world. Wu’s notion of the “part-whole” thinking, as such, has the character of relationality within heteronomy. The togetherness is an otherness that cannot be objectified. We thus have reservation about Kei Eun Chang’s connective ethic of τὸ συμφέρον that reflects a political and soteriological notion of a part-whole relation (see the conclusion section in the Introduction chapter). While Chang stresses that “the whole does not ignore the interests of the individual,”¹¹⁹ and that “for Paul, ἐκκλησία is a *part-whole* communal context (‘the body of Christ’) in which τὸ συμφέρον must operate as the standard for proper

togetherness. Mind you, we must distinguish natural whole and communal togetherness from artificial synthetic totality, totalism, or totalization, whether technological or political. This sort of holistic thinking (not a totalistic one) is based on concrete observation of what actually is (and should be) the case: Actuality is first organic togetherness (not totalism) before being analyzed into units and individuals.” Ibid., 11.

¹¹⁵ It is important to note that the notion of togetherness “is not here yet, but is to be constructed by a joint undertaking. The ‘logic’ of togetherness must itself be produced *together*.” Ibid., 3.

¹¹⁶ Just as the other is an other to me, I am also an other to the other. This otherness of the other and of I comes to fore when we come together. The otherness arises in our coming together. I do not possess the otherness of the other. Neither does the other possess mine. It is in the coming together that we receive our and each other’s otherness.

¹¹⁷ Wu writes: “we tend to think the whole-togetherness mutuality in terms of the part-whole relationship. And totalization results; politico-ecological disasters ensue.” See Kuang-Ming Wu, *On The “Logic” Of Togetherness*, 20.

¹¹⁸ “Analysis produces singularities of ‘individuals,’ units which cannot (‘in-’) be ‘divided’ further. We christen them ‘individual integrities,’ implicating ‘autonomy,’ ‘independence,’ even ‘interdependence.’ All this describes how analysis reduces the world of natural togetherness into a chaotic situation. We now have to produce the One (the principle of preestablished harmony?) up there to oversee the intelligibility, and manage orderliness, of random monadic things of the world down here (as seen in structuralist modernism). But then this One overarching principle is now exposed as a sham by deconstructionism. The result is quite confusing; this is the ‘postmodernity’ predicament.” Ibid., 21.

¹¹⁹ See Kei Eun Chang, *The Community, The Individual And The Common Good: Τὸ Ἴδιον and Τὸ Συμφέρον in the Greco-Roman World and Paul* (New York and London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 4.

behavior, individualistically and communally,”¹²⁰ he does not clarify how he conceptualizes the part and the whole. As long as the categorization of the whole and the part is not clarified, the part can be easily assimilated into the whole.

The hospitality to the “unknown” in the correlative thinking and the part-whole relation is crucial to our notion of typology. Without this hospitality, there is no correlative thinking. The pattern in the correlative thinking is not static, as if one size fits all. As we have noted in the conclusion section of the Introduction chapter, this part-whole dynamic is what characterizes the body of Christ as “parts beyond a part.” Not unlike the Derridean “undecidability,” where every decision is singular, the responsibility that comes with discerning the body of Christ is also singular,¹²¹ because the body of Christ is not an objectified body. No wonder Paul went to Corinth with fear and trembling. Just as the more that we learn, the more that we realize we are indeed ignorant, so with Paul too, the more that he responds to his calling, the more he realizes that he needs to be trained even more. Paul thus speaks of seeing and knowing in the context of love in the middle voice.

(iii) “Gospelizing” in the Mode of Middle Voice

When Paul says that he must preach the gospel (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) – or better, gospelize – and woe is to him if he does not, notice the middle voice in the verb “preaching the gospel” and the imperative of ἀνάγκη γάρ μοι ἐπίκειται (9:16). Here, we prefer to use the verb “to gospelize” to highlight its middle voice because in the translation of εὐαγγελίζεσθαι the verb “to preach the gospel” not only indicates that one is in charge of (the preaching of) the gospel, it also suggests

¹²⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹²¹ Derrida writes: “The undecidable is not merely the oscillation or the tension between two decisions. Undecidable – this is the experience of that which, though foreign and heterogeneous to the order of the calculable and the true, must nonetheless – it is of *duty* that one must speak – deliver itself over to the impossible decision while taking account of law and rules. A decision that could not go through the test and ordeal of the undecidable would not be a free decision; it would only be the programmable application or the continuous unfolding of calculable process.” See Jacques Derrida, “Force of Law: *The “Mystical Foundation of Authority,”* in *Acts of Religion*. Edited and with an introduction by Gil Anidjar (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 252.

that one possesses the gospel. But, in his letters, Paul never uses the active voice of “preaching;” he only uses the middle voice. So when Paul writes that he has to gospelize (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) and woe to him if he does not, he is simply saying that (the preaching of) the gospel takes places as he is himself gospelized in the gospelizing process. Paul is not the owner of the (preaching of the) gospel. He learns from the (preaching of the) gospel. This is why Paul speaks of the reward of the (preaching of the) gospel in the (preaching of the) gospel itself. “Now what is my payment (μισθός)? So that in the (preaching of the) gospel (εὐαγγελιζόμενος) I may make the gospel free of charge (ἀδάπανον) so that with regard to my right I do not make use of it (εἰς τὸ μὴ καταχρησασθαι) in the gospel (ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ)” (9:18).

Note that the middle voice of “in the (preaching of the) gospel” shows that the gospel is not owned by anyone. There is no benefactor. The middle voice in “not make use of” the gospel is a case in point. The syntax of εἰς τὸ + infinitive of καταχρησασθαι reinforces the result or purpose of the middle voice. The clause “in the gospel,” likewise, underscores the quality of the middle voice. In short, as the (preaching of the) gospel happens in the (preaching of the) gospel in the sphere of the gospel, one cannot speak of payment, benefactor system, and use. Paul thus says that he does *everything* for the sake of the gospel so that he may become a *co-partner* of it (συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαί) (9:23) (cf. the notion of “togetherness”). This is why Paul would harshly discipline his body and enslave it, lest in his gospelizing he is somehow disqualified (9:27). Hence, after alluding to the story of Israel in the wilderness, he admonishes and encourages believers to be vigilant in their semantic *habitus* (10:12-13) in the sense that they manifest the gospel in discerning and embodying the pattern of the gospel.

Paul is aware that the body of Christ is “parts beyond a part” (12:27) (see the conclusion in the Introduction chapter). Everyone has her/his gift and role. He writes: “I planted, Apollos

watered, but God made it grow so that neither he who plants is anything nor he who waters but God is the one who makes it grow” (3:6-7). For Paul, believers are God’s *co*-workers working with the Lord (3:9). This “togetherness” is seen in subjective genitive in the “church of God.”¹²² The church is always the church of God; a church called to be sanctified in Christ Jesus (1:1-2). The leaders must readily admit that the church is not their church, but God’s church (*ek-klēsia*). It is God who calls. It is not anyone’s flock, but God’s flock. This acknowledgement is extremely critical. Too often it is not the leaders, but the followers who suffer the most from their wrong decisions. Instead of the leaders taking up the cross, the people bear the brunt of the cross. The leaders stay behind the frontlines. But, the Lord of Paul is not such a leader.

This subjective genitive is of utmost importance to Paul. If Paul really sees believers as God’s *co-workers*, then everyone is in communion with God and others at the same time. This is why a cross-like semantic *habitus* is indispensable to both the leaders and the ordinary believers. The cross cannot be objectified. It cannot be systematized into a neat representation. It can only be witnessed and lived. To highlight the cross as an “example” for believers is to underscore the concrete *and* apophatic character of the cross. It stresses that the believer’s relationship with God and the others must be living and interactive. It cannot be objectified, just as the foundation that is Jesus Christ cannot be objectified (3:11). The security that we seek is only experienced in a cross-like relationship with God and the others. Such a dynamic relationship may sound tiring, but it is tiring if we are not in a love relationship. A genuine relationship is not a calculation. It is a love that cares for the self *and* the others at the same time.¹²³ The power of love is felt in the

¹²² For example, Prime and Begg write, “Churches do not exist for our benefit or for our livelihood ... Our goal is not to be well known and respected ... Our goal is not to draw people around us so that they are loyal to us ... Our goal is not to make ourselves indispensable. Such are goals of ownership, whereas ours are goals of stewardship.” See Derek Prime and Alistair Begg, *On Being a Pastor: Understanding Our Calling and Work* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2004), 49-50.

¹²³ bell hooks strongly emphasizes the communal and mutual edification in love in *All About Love: New Visions* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000).

loving. A cross-like semantic *habitus* can thus help the leaders and the ordinary believers *to continue* to grow and mature. It helps them transform their heart and mind and expand their horizon of semantic vision. Paul thus speaks of the trials and tribulations that he undergoes (4:9-13; 9:1-27; 2 Cor. 1:3-11; 4:7-12; 12:10; etc.). Paul's exhortation to believers to imitate him is always qualified by *how* he imitates Christ. Believers imitate Paul *insofar as* (καθὼς καὶ γὰρ) Paul imitates Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). It is not Paul, but Christ, whom believers should imitate. How? Through a cross-like semantic *habitus*. It is not a predestined cross or an exploited cross. It is a cross that embodies a love for the self and the others; a maternal love, Kristeva and Grenholm would say.

Paul was thus upset that the leaders treated believers as if they owned them. Such an objectification betrays the cross. It ossifies one's relationship with God and others. The outcome is dire because believers are future leaders. The problem will be perpetuated and exacerbated. As we find Paul's worldview other-oriented (see chapters 3 and 4), we thus foreground heteronomy and the mutuality it encompasses in our biblical interpretation. We agree with James Aageson that "the process of biblical interpretation ... should be understood as an interaction, similar to a dialogue, between text and interpreter."¹²⁴ In this interaction, the interpreters necessarily approach the texts "with their own views of what constitutes reality, knowledge, and truth."¹²⁵ However, our "views of what constitutes reality, knowledge, and truth" are *discursively* contextual. Aageson contends that the problem in biblical interpretation is "not really a matter of

¹²⁴ James W. Aageson, *Written Also for Our Sake: Paul and the Art of Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 8. He further argues, "Regardless of one's level of training, however, biblical interpretation requires more than sincerity. It demands disciplined dialogue. It also demands a willingness to be a part of the ongoing corporate enterprise of biblical hermeneutics" (ibid., 15). Indeed, "the biblical text is as much a 'subject' engaged in the dialogue as is the interpreter. When the biblical interpreter ... sees the text of the Bible as an inanimate object or as merely a specimen to be analyzed, the interpreter quite naturally diminishes the 'subjectivity' (life) of the text..." Ibid., 13.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 6.

a lack of information”¹²⁶ but *how* our “views of what constitutes reality, knowledge, and truth” process and interpret the information. For the Eastern Orthodox, this “*how*” is integral to our biblical interpretation.¹²⁷ More than a matter of perspective, it is a matter of ethics, as we are not alone by ourselves.¹²⁸ Here, Tracy’s emphasis on the “publicness” of the field of theology in society, academy, and church is applicable to critical biblical studies.¹²⁹

It is this “togetherness” in the proprioceptive and correlative thinking, which displays the quality of the middle voice, that we see manifested in Paul’s notion of typology. As we will show in chapters 3, 4, and 6, this notion of typology comes from our structural semiotic analysis of 1 Corinthians in our examination of how the *figures* are conceptualized inter(con)textually.¹³⁰ The allusion to a same figure, which can be anything, in different texts, does not necessarily mean that it is thematized or conceptualized in the same way. One will need to examine the semantic universe or the symbolic world of each text that uses the same figure.

IV. A Proprioceptive and Correlative Thinking in Typology

What matters to us here is not the fact that each event of the past – once it becomes a figure – announces a future event and is fulfilled in it, but is the transformation of time implied by this typological relation. The problem here does not simply concern the biunivocal correspondence that binds *typos* and *antitypos* together in an exclusively hermeneutic relationship ... rather, it concerns a tension that claps together and transforms past and future, *typos* and *antitypos*, in an

¹²⁶ Idem.

¹²⁷ Vasile Mihoc, “Greek Church Fathers and Orthodox Biblical Hermeneutics,” in *Greek Patristic and Eastern Orthodox Interpretations of Romans*. Romans Through History and Cultures Series 9. Edited by Daniel Patte and Vasile Mihoc (London and New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 1-40.

¹²⁸ In the words of Tracy, “the self is never an isolated, private, worldless phenomenon. Rather the self at every moment is never substance but subject, affected by and affecting both God and world. Self and world are coexistents which can be distinguished, never separated. Both self and world are co-positing by God. They are always-already affected by that God who is Love and, as Love, is, in turn, always-already affected by both self and world.” See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 436.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 3-46.

¹³⁰ A great example is Mieke Bal, *Loving Yusuf: Conceptual Travels from Present to Past* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).

inseparable constellation. The messianic is not just one of two terms in this typological relation, *it is the relation itself*.¹³¹ – Giorgio Agamben

The Greek word “*typos*” is significant to our interpretation of Paul’s notion of love in 1 Corinthians as a heteronomous and a “here and now but not yet” love. The word appears in 1 Cor. 10: 6 and 11 (cf. 1 Thess. 1:7; Phil. 3:17; Rom. 5:14 and 6:17). Most English translations render it as an “example” (*CEB; ESV; NAB; NIV; NJB; NKJ; NRS*) and not a “prefiguration.”¹³² The Vulgate translates it as a “*figura*.” The Chinese Bible translates it as a “warning.” Some commentators interpret it as a “formative model,”¹³³ or an “archetype” or a “prefiguration.”¹³⁴

Here we must be careful not to objectify the terms juxtaposed in a typology. Richard Hays rightly argues, “Typology is before all else a trope, an act of imaginative correlation. If one pole of the typological correlation annihilates the other, the metaphorical tension disappears, and the trope collapses.”¹³⁵ This “metaphorical tension” of “imaginative correlation” between the two poles is extremely crucial to maintain; otherwise a typology can become a one-on-one correspondence. The result of such a reduction not only destroys the discursive function of the “figure,”¹³⁶ it also leads to a supersessionist hermeneutic.¹³⁷ As such, Hays stresses that “First

¹³¹ See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains: A Commentary of the Letter to the Romans*. Translated by Patricia Dailey. Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 74.

¹³² Also, see David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 447; Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First letter to the Corinthians*, 445; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 167; Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 363. Garland argues that *typos* “reveals a pattern or correspondence, observed after the fact, that contains a teaching (cf. Rom. 6:17). The word clearly means ‘example’ in Phil. 3:17; 1 Thess. 1:7; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7.” See David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 459. Ciampa and Rosner find that “[t]he word Paul uses for *examples* (or warnings, or patterns; possibly ‘types’) provides the background for the concept of typology, the understanding that patterns found in persons, actions, events, and institutions can be expected to find correspondence (with some eschatological ‘heightening’) in God’s future redemptive works.” See Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First letter to the Corinthians*, 453. Here, we see that the authors refer to Goppelt in speaking of an “eschatological heightening in God’s future redemptive works.”

¹³³ See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 719.

¹³⁴ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 376-77.

¹³⁵ See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 100.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 101.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 97-99. While Hays repeatedly stresses that the Israelite story alluded by Paul should must not be understood as being superseded by the events in Pauline communities, it is not clear how is it not a supersession

Corinthians 10 should not be read as unqualified deprecation of the historical Israel.”¹³⁸ Rather, a typology is “a framework of literary-historical sensibility that creates the hermeneutical conditions necessary for the metaphorical linkage of scriptural text and contemporary situation.”¹³⁹ Hays, however, does not say whether the “contemporary situation” is limited to the Pauline eschatological community.

By contrast, for Patte, if the “metaphorical linkage” (of a scriptural text and contemporary situation) is metaphorical in nature, then the linkage cannot be foreclosed to any space and time. A typological relation, as such, is *always* partial and *always* revealing, challenging one to *continually* look for similar patterns (or manifestations of a similar theme) in different people, cultures, religions, etc.¹⁴⁰ This is how Scripture can be taken as written also for our sake (cf. 9:10; 10:11). Thus, in 10:1–13, we should not expect the “correlation of events” to be an exact match between the Hebrew Bible citations and the believers’ situations. Instead, we should examine the *theme* and its conceptualization that Paul tries to transform and convey

when he says that the former is fulfilled or understood in light of the latter. For example, Hays writes, “Moses and the Law of Sinai are assigned a temporary supporting role, not the lead, in the drama of God’s redemptive purpose. Thus, the Torah is neither superseded nor nullified but transformed into a witness of the gospel.” Ibid., 157. Another example: “The text was written by some human author long ago, written to and *for* an ancient community of people in Israel, but original writer and readers have become types whose meaning emerges with full clarity only in the church – that is, only in the empirical eschatological community that Paul is engaged in building.” Ibid., 167. Another example: “All that God has ever done in the past converges toward the eschatological community, and all past words of Scripture find their sense rooted in the present graced time. Consequently, Paul can read Moses’ turning to behold the glory of the Lord in Exodus 34 as a parable figuring the experience of the church; the hidden eschatological meaning of the text is disclosed in the eschatological community, for whom the veil is taken away.” Ibid., 170. Many more examples in the work of Hays can be cited, but our question is: is it not a form of supersessionism to argue that the meaning of the Hebrew Scripture “emerges with full clarity only in the church”? On the other hand, it is no less problematic to say that Pauline eschatological community discloses the meaning of the *typos* in the Hebrew Scripture. For example, Hays writes, “The casual imperfect tense of his description (*ēte*) [in 1 Cor. 12:1-2] indicates that Paul thinks of the Corinthian Christians as Gentiles no longer; they have been incorporated into Israel.” Ibid., 96. In such an incorporation, differences are thus erased, where both the Jews and the Gentiles lose their otherness.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 96. Hays argue that “the point of Paul’s metaphor depends on seeing Israel and church as pilgrim people who stand in different times, different chapters of the same story, but in identical relation to the same gracious and righteous God.” Ibid., 99.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 161.

¹⁴⁰ Daniel Patte, *Paul’s Faith and the Power of the Gospel: A Structural Introduction to the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 134-39, 320-23.

through the use of “figures” in the typology. For example, it may be strange for Paul to say that “the spiritual rock following” the Israelites in the wilderness was the Christ (10:5),¹⁴¹ but this usage of figure makes sense when we take note of the theme that the figures of the “rock” and “Christ” try to embody. For example, in Greimas’s notions of “thematization” and “figuratization” (see section 3.3.d in the Methodological Appendix), a figure is (semantically) metaphorical, and as such, we need to see how the “rock” is *and*, vice versa, is not like the “Christ.” This metaphorical quality of a figure is prominent in a proprioceptive and correlative-thinking worldview. The predicate “was” in ἡ πέτρα δὲ ἦν ὁ Χριστός (“the rock was the Christ”) in 10:4 need not be veridictory (or metaphysical). It can be thymic (or proprioceptive or bodily felt). In fact, if the “rock” *was* the “Christ” veridictorily, one could say there is no need for “Christ,” since the “rock” was the “Christ.” On the other hand, one can also find Paul, being anachronistic and supersessionist, to say that the “rock” was “Christ.” However, in juxtaposing these two figures as figures,¹⁴² Paul seeks to transform their meaning effects without erasing their individual characteristics. So when Paul writes that “all our fathers” drank from “the same spiritual drink;” “for they drank from the spiritual accompanying rock, and the rock was the Christ” (10:4), commentators tell us that Paul alludes to the stories in Exodus 17:6 or Numbers 20:7-11. But, these stories do not mention about “all” and “the same” rock. These are added by

¹⁴¹ Thus it is strange for Hays who writes, “The Hebrew text of Deuteronomy 32 repeatedly ascribes to God the title the Rock’ (vv. 4, 15, 18, 30, 31). Though the LXX – regrettably for Paul’s purposes – eliminates the metaphor, translating each of these references with the generic *theos*, Paul surely knows the tradition. However, since he is writing to Greek readers who would not know the Hebrew text, he cannot quote Deuteronomy 32 to support his assertion. To explain to the Corinthians the difference between their Greek Bible and its Hebrew *Vorlage* would interrupt Paul’s argument. In any case, the identification of the rock with Christ is a parenthetical remark, an embellishment of the Israel/church trope. Consequently, rather than digressing to explain the grounds for his imaginative leap, he just leaps ... In this case, it is doubtful that Paul’s readers could have traced the image back to its source in Deuteronomy 32. The Rock echo lies entombed in a Hebrew subtext.” See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 94.

¹⁴² That is to say, a figure is only a figure insofar as we have more than one narrative that uses the same figure. As a result, all the narratives, where the figure appears, are indispensable to the understanding of the figure. The figure, as such, is then an emerging figure as the conceptualization of the figure takes place in the coming together of all the narratives.

Paul to show how *all* believers also have received from the *one* bread (οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν) (10:17). As a result, both the figures of the “rock” and the “Christ” embody a similar theme: be always God-oriented.¹⁴³ Indeed, if God is *pistos* (10:13; cf. 1:9) in helping the people of God, then what cause believers to be so conceited afterward? They have taken God for granted. This is why in 1 Cor. 9, in invoking the figure of the “ox” from Deuteronomy 25 and the figure of the “race” in the Roman Empire,¹⁴⁴ Paul shows how he *still* responds to the calling of God with fear and trembling. We cannot focus on the figure without examining the theme that it seeks to embody.

In light of this illustration of Paul’s usage of *typos* in 1 Cor. 10:6 and 11, it should be clear the typological relation is a relation of “togetherness” where the past, present, and future construct and deconstruct one another simultaneously and discursively (see the “narrative semantics” in section 3.3.a in the Methodological Appendix). Why? Because time is not static. As every present (today) is the future (tomorrow) of the past (yesterday) and the past of the future, every representation of time is a betrayal of time. It objectifies time. But, time keeps ticking away. The past, present, and future are interwoven into one another. The “transformation of time” is a middle-voice transformation that takes place in time itself. Agamben thus argues that this “transformation of time” in typology is a “messianic time [that] is neither the complete

¹⁴³ From the beginning of 1 Corinthians, Paul stresses the centrality of God. It was in God that believers were enriched in *every* way with *every logos* and *every* knowledge (1:5). It was God who chose and made the fool in the world wise, the weak strong, etc. (1:27-28). People could do great things in preaching the gospel, but it was God who made them grow (3:5). People should realize that everything belongs to God (1:30; cf. 3:21-23; 4:7) and thus do everything on the foundation of Christ (3:11). In an honor-and-shame cultural value, this relationship of God and Christ with believers is significant. Whatever believers do, they will affect the honor of God and Christ. So, when Paul heard that believers form their own groups in the *ekklēsia*, he was devastated (1:13). Not only did they shame each other, they also dishonored God and Christ.

¹⁴⁴ Concerning Roman athletic imagery, where the “cult of beauty dominated athletics in antiquity,” argues that Paul “undermines the aesthetic and social canons of athleticism in antiquity: the strong, the beautiful, and the honorable” by honoring the crucified body of Christ. See James R. Harrison, “Paul and the Athletic Ideal in Antiquity: A Case Study in Wrestling with Word and Image,” in *Paul’s World*. Pauline Studies 4. Edited by Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 103. While people would not care for the weak body members, Paul, in imitating God and Christ, cares for them (12:22ff). This self-sacrificial lifestyle of Paul is noteworthy, if Paul indeed came from an aristocratic background. See Ronald F. Hock, “The Problem of Paul’s Social Class: Further Reflections,” in *Paul’s World*, 7-18.

nor the incomplete, neither the past nor the future, but the inversion of both.”¹⁴⁵ Agamben further contends that faith, hope, and love in 1 Cor. 13:13 “are not states of mind, but three arches that bend to sustain and fulfill the messianic experience of time.”¹⁴⁶ It appears that faith, hope, and love embody an inter-twining of the past, present, and future. Time does not tick tock away without a trace. It leaves its marks on our flesh-and-blood body. Our experience tells us that time does not just travel linearly according to our measurement. The past is not a bygone past. It marks the present as well as the future.

For the lover, moreover, the past, present, and future cannot be counted quantitatively. Marion writes, “Erotic time does not pass as long as I wait, for a very clear reason: while I am waiting [for the beloved], still nothing happens; I am waiting precisely because still nothing happens, and, precisely, I am waiting for something to happen. The time of expectation does not pass ... Only my expectation lasts: it suspends the flux of time...”¹⁴⁷ Marion continues, “When I am expecting, I inhabit that which can come upon me from elsewhere [“of which no one knows the day nor the hour”] and without which no present or past would matter to me.”¹⁴⁸ Now if love marks believers and if typology interweaves the past, present, and future, then we cannot ignore the middle-voice and inter-twining character of time in typology. This event mode of time can be *occasionally* found in Leonhard Goppelt’s notion of typology, even though Goppelt treats the typology as a linear prefiguration and fulfillment.

¹⁴⁵ Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains*, 75.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁴⁷ Jean-Luc Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon*. Translated by Stephen E. Lewis (Chicago: the University of Chicago, 2007), 33. In a love relationship, “the future is defined as the time of the expectation of an elsewhere, in which nothing happens; the present, as the time in which elsewhere comes to pass and makes the present of its passage; the past, as the time in which elsewhere has passed beyond the moment of its present and abandons our time to the side of the road, where it withdraws. In every case, time essentially unfolds itself according to the mode of the event, like the unpredictable arrival of an elsewhere, of which no one knows the day nor the hour, and of which the present can only be given as an unexpected and unmerited gift. According to its character as advent, elsewhere is never constituted as a common phenomenon, arranged according to the supposedly dominant point of view of a transcendental *ego*, but instead gives itself by anamorphosis ...” *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

[Paul's] typology is not a hermeneutical method to be *used in a technical way* to interpret the OT. It is a spiritual approach that reveals the connection *ordained* in God's redemptive plan between the relationship of God and man in the OT and that relationship in the NT. The focus oscillates between the present divine-human encounter and the one in the past that is recorded in Scripture. Each points to the other and is interpreted *by* it ... This description cannot be achieved by philosophy or by mythology or even by apocalypticism. The result is not a typological system but is clearly an insight into the important features of God's redemptive act and of God's redemptive plan.¹⁴⁹

We refer to the work of Goppelt because his notion of typology marks a turning point in the study of typology in biblical studies.¹⁵⁰ In his "Preface" to the reprint of his work in 1965, which was a doctoral dissertation submitted "in the winter semester of 1938-39," Goppelt tells us that chapter 10 "Apocalypticism and Typology in Paul," which is where we get this block citation, is an addition to "show how the discussion of this topic [typology] has been carried forward by scholars since this book was written."¹⁵¹ What Goppelt writes in this citation is noteworthy. From what we have learnt about the modes of existence in chapter 1 and the difference between the "semantics" and "syntax" (see section 3.2 in the Methodological Appendix), it is obvious that Goppelt's notion of typology is self-contradictory. We first note that typology "is a spiritual approach." Secondly, the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament point to each other and are interpreted by each other. Thirdly, typology is neither a system nor a technical method; it is "an insight into the important features of God's redemptive act and of

¹⁴⁹ Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*. Translated by Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 223. Also, see page 237. This viewpoint of typology closely resembles that of Gerhard von Rad, as Goppelt and von Rad cite each other for support. See Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures*. Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), 59-65.

¹⁵⁰ See Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*, 1-14. For an overview of the literature on typology, see pages 15-114. Likewise, in his "Foreword" to Goppelt's early work on typology in *Typos*, Ellis finds the book "most clearly demonstrates a typological understanding of Scripture governed the interpretation of NT writers and continued to be followed, more or less closely, by Irenaeus of Lyon (ca. A.D. 125-195) and by the patristic school of Antioch." See E. Earle Ellis, "Foreword," in Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos*, ix.

¹⁵¹ Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos*, xxi. For a short summary on the similarities and differences between typology and apocalypticism, see pages 234-37.

God's redemptive plan."¹⁵² However, Goppelt does not consistently adhere to these features.¹⁵³ Even when he speaks of typology as metaphorical, his view of the metaphor is not dynamic.¹⁵⁴ Indeed, his argument for the nature of the revelation of God's redemptive acts and plan does *not* render his notion of typology dynamic and heteronomous. Rather, it serves to linearly and syntactically bridge the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament as well as of history and faith, which Goppelt finds can be achieved by a notion of typology that "is not dependent on a greater amount of historicity" and "cannot be restricted to an existential understanding."¹⁵⁵ This tension between the "existential understanding" and the "amount of historicity" reveals the ambivalent meanings of *typos*, which Richard Davidson points out is implied in Goppelt's article in the *TDNT*.¹⁵⁶ Davidson writes:

The listing in the lexicon of Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott seems to imply a further ambivalence in the word τύπος. The meaning "hollow mold" or "matrix" is categorized under the main heading, "the effect of a blow or of pressure." The matrix which "leaves its impress" is itself already formed by the effect of an

¹⁵² Speaking of the use of *typos* in 1 Cor. 10:1-11, he argues that "the type does not enable Paul to predict some particular *divine intervention that could be* expected to happen in Corinth; it merely *indicates the characteristics of the divine action* which the church of the last days *could anticipate*." *Ibid.*, 220. In fact, "for Paul the OT type is not interpreted history nor is it historical analogy. It is God's self-manifestation express in historical events that are communicated by the revelatory word and are preserved in the confession. By its nature, this revelation of God is inseparable from the historical events and is not valid as timeless truth. It is valid only in the framework of those events. For this reason, it can be used in other situations only if these historical events are included." *Ibid.*, 232.

¹⁵³ The tension is, in fact, rather ambiguous. Consider Goppelt's approving allusion to Von Rad's argument: "The more emphasis prophecy places on the radical breakdown, the more important it is that the older experiences of salvation arc not obliterated but are 'present in the new in the mysterious dialectic between what is valid and what is obsolete. The prophets set great store by this typological correspondence because they work it out in their prophecies and, in so doing they are very careful to show how the new overtakes and surpasses the old. The new covenant will be better..." *Ibid.*, 227. The citation comes from Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*. 2 Vols. Vol. 2: *The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions*. Translated by D. M. G. Stalker (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), 272.

¹⁵⁴ Goppelt does not explain his notion of the metaphor. At times, he views it as part of the allegorical approach that does not pay attention to the literal and historical notion of the text. At other times, he sees it as part of the typological approach. See Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos*, 18, 147-49, 218, 225, etc.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 233.

¹⁵⁶ Davidson writes, "Goppelt [in] *TDNT* 8:246, appears to imply this when he gives as one of the "basic senses" the meaning "form-giving form." This would seem to indicate that what does the forming is at the same time a product of forming. But Goppelt fails to make this possible dual signification clear when he categorizes what for him constitute the three classifications of meaning (p. 247): (1) "'what is stamped,' 'mark; (2) "'mould,' 'hollow form' which leaves an impress;" and (3) "stamp or impress seen in and for itself as a form." The duality of *Vorbild* and *Nachbild* may be implied in the second category, in that the hollow form is itself a *Nachbild* which serves as a *Vorbild*, but Goppelt does not make this explicit." See Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*, 129 n. 4.

impress. The *Vorbild* is also a *Nachbild*. It appears that sometimes both of these aspects are simultaneously in view.¹⁵⁷

In saying that the “*Vorbild* is also a *Nachbild*,” Davidson highlights the interstitial quality of a *typos* in the personal, temporal, and spatial relations of “before” and “after.” These features of a *typos*, which probably comes from τύπτω (“to strike”),¹⁵⁸ underscore that the *typos* (or the “mold,” “form,” “impression,” “model,” or “pattern”) struck by the blow is *both* a “pattern” of someone (or something) *and for* someone (or something). That is to say, a *typos* is a “pattern” *for* someone *insofar as* it is a “pattern” of someone. From his exegetical analysis of the usage of *typos* in Pauline letters, Davidson finds that both Paul and believers are the *typoi* for others *insofar as* they are the *typoi* of Christ.¹⁵⁹ Typology, in other words, is Christocentric. Davidson argues that the critique of Paul’s language of imitation cannot neglect this “dual signification” of *typos*.¹⁶⁰ Given that Paul is sent by Christ to preach the message of the cross (1 Cor. 1:17), we would even say that typology is cross-oriented. Indeed, as the cross cannot be objectified, it makes *typos* rather dynamic and heteronomous.

In light of this Christocentric orientation of typology that Davidson highlights, we cannot agree with his conclusion that echoes Goppelt’s notion of typology as a “linear dynamics” and an “advance-presentation” or a “prefiguration” of specific and historical event in the Hebrew Bible fulfilled in the eschatological age of the New Testament. He writes:

This description of a “hollow mold,” a τύπος, amazingly encompasses the various linear dynamics of Paul’s hermeneutical approach in 1 Cor. 10. The τύποι (OT historical events) are “shaped” from a “prototype” (the divine intent) in the mind of the Designer. At the same time these τύποι in their function as a hollow mold shape the end (eschatological!) product (the NT events) which ineluctably

¹⁵⁷ Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*, 129.

¹⁵⁸ Leonhard Goppelt, “τύπος, αντίτυπος, τυπικός, ὑποτύπωσις,” in *TDNT* 8:246. For three major meanings that Goppelt gives to *typos* in “non-biblical use,” see n. 156.

¹⁵⁹ See Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*, 147-80. See the diagram on page 180.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 153.

(*devoir-être*) corresponds to the (historical) contours of the τύποι (the OT events) but transcends them by virtue of the (eschatological) fulfillment of the ultimate (Christological/soteriological/ecclesiological) purpose for which the τύποι were intended. Thus the OT events are a *Nachbild* (of the divine design) which serves as a dynamic, shaping, determinative *Vorbild* (of the NT eschatological realities).¹⁶¹

Note that Davidson shifts his focus from the semantic *nature* to the syntactic *function* of the *typos*. The fulfillment of a *typos* may certainly correspond and even transcend the “historical contours” of the events in the Hebrew Bible, but from *whose perspective* are the correspondence and fulfillment determined? The “divine intent” cannot be objectified. A retrospective approach may help us see how a historical event in the Hebrew Bible may correspond to its fulfillment in the New Testament – this approach is not without problems – but note what Davidson writes.

Although the precise nature of the fulfillment is further clarified in the light of the Christ-event, yet Paul insists that the movement with reference to the τύποι is basically prospective and not retrospective. It does not merely involve the retrospective recognition of an historical correspondence but consists of an OT prospective/predictive prefiguration of a specific NT fulfillment.¹⁶²

However, if a *typos* has the character of a *Nachbild* and a *Vorbild*, then we cannot separate the prospective from the retrospective features of a *typos*. Rather, in the words of Agamben, there is “a zone of undecidability” in typology, “in which the past is dislocated into the present and the present is extended into the past.”¹⁶³ The past, present, and future are interwoven. This quality is shown in places where Paul uses the word *typos*. Let us use Goppelt’s example. In the Adam-Christ typology, he writes: “The relationship of Christ to the first Adam [in Rom. 5:12-21] becomes typological only when Christ as the firstfruit of the new creation, steps into the center

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 289.

¹⁶² Ibid., 285.

¹⁶³ Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains*, 74.

and forms new creatures.”¹⁶⁴ Here, the retrospective aspect of *typos* is apparent. It is only in light of Christ that the “relationship of Christ to the first Adam becomes typological.” The prospective quality of a *typos*, likewise, comes to the fore when Goppelt argues that Christ is also “the basis for the shaping of life and the basis of hope for the future.”¹⁶⁵ Goppelt further argues that everything is interpreted through “the witness of the Spirit,” “of the Scripture,” and of “Christ.”¹⁶⁶ Here, again, the hermeneutical question cannot be avoided.

Paul’s saying in 1 Cor. 2:9 comes to mind: “No eyes has seen, no ear has heard, and no heart has understood what God has prepared for those who love him.” Indeed, if no one knows the things of God except the spirit of God (2:11) – hence God has to reveal them to us through God’s spirit (2:10) – then the determination, correspondence, and fulfillment of a *typos* cannot be foreclosed but must remain open and dynamic. The two-fold meanings of *typos* that Goppelt highlights – (1) “‘example,’ ‘model,’ which expresses a rule” and (2) “‘advance presentation’ intimating eschatological event” – are intertwined, even though Goppelt rules out the first and privileges the second meaning.¹⁶⁷

Let us recall Agamben’s notion of an “exclusive inclusion” of an “example” that is “a singular object that presents itself as such, that *shows* its singularity.”¹⁶⁸ This singularity highlights the tension between a *Vorbild* and a *Nachbild* in the *typos*. If a *typos* is both a *Vorbild* and a *Nachbild*, it is also neither a (pure) *Vorbild* nor a (pure) *Nachbild*. In the language of the middle voice, the return of the *typos* from the New Testament to the Hebrew Bible is an eternal recurrence that annuls itself in its fulfillment, again and again, discursively.¹⁶⁹ The *antitypos* in

¹⁶⁴ Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos*, 131.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 133.

¹⁶⁶ *Idem.*

¹⁶⁷ Leonhard Goppelt, “τύπος, ἀντίτυπος, τυπικός, ὑποτύπωσις,” in *TDNT* 8:251-52.

¹⁶⁸ Giorgio Agamben, “Example,” in *The Coming Community*, 10.

¹⁶⁹ For this reading of Nietzsche’s “eternal recurrence,” see Charles E. Scott, *The Question of Ethics*, 13-52.

the New Testament does not merely return and fulfill the *typos* in the Hebrew Bible. The return transforms both the *typos* and the *antitypos*. This is how the “*Vorbild* is also a *Nachbild*.”¹⁷⁰

In pointing out that “Irenaeus’ use of τύπος and his ‘typology’ develop independently of any Pauline hermeneutical sense of the term,”¹⁷¹ Steven DiMattei argues that “Paul’s approach to biblical narrative was guided by the same hermeneutical assumptions that governed Qumran pesharim.”¹⁷² They have the character of “contemporizing eschatological interpretation of prophetic texts” for their community.¹⁷³ The biblical texts were not only “written for our sake” but also “ultimately about ‘us.’”¹⁷⁴ Seen from this hermeneutic framework, “Israel’s historical past is to be interpreted in light of the contemporary circumstances ... with the added belief that the community is currently living in the end times.”¹⁷⁵ Both the texts and the interpreters engage

¹⁷⁰ Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*, 129. Thus we cannot agree with Ellis that “the OT type not only corresponds to the NT antitype but also is complemented and transcended by it.” See E. Earle Ellis, “Foreword,” in *Typos*, x. This notion of typology is a supersessionist hermeneutic that turns the Hebrew Bible into a referencing appendix for the New Testament. Ellis’s criticisms of scholarship that “tended to give the OT a secondary role and to depreciate its significance for understanding the origin of NT teachings” are puzzling (ibid., xi). In criticizing contemporary Marcionite scholarship that rejects the validity of the Hebrew Bible to the Christian faith, Ellis actually embodies a different kind of Marcionite thinking that rejects the value of the Hebrew Bible itself.

¹⁷¹ Steven DiMattei, “Adam, an Image of the Future Economy: Romans 5:14 and Irenaeus’ Christological Exegesis of Genesis 1:26,” in *Greek Patristic and Eastern Orthodox Interpretations of Romans*, 136. DiMattei argues that, contra Goppelt’s assertion, Irenaeus’s uses of *typos* are “dependent on and influenced by: 1) Gnostic uses of τύπος to express cosmological and exegetical relationships between earthly happenings and events in the *Pleroma*; and 2) Irenaeus’ particular exegetical project, namely to demonstrate against the Gnostic economy that there is but one unified history of salvation, linking events of the Old Testament with those of the New.” Ibid., 136-37. DiMattei concludes that “Paul did not equip the early church with either a hermeneutical sense of the term τύπος or a form of typological exegesis. Instead, both the meaning and the use of τύπος in the scriptural exegesis of the early church developed within, and as a result of, unique socioreligious contexts wherein potentially harmful or ‘heretical’ scriptural hermeneutics prompted an ‘orthodox’ response. It is thus unlikely that Paul had already coined a hermeneutical sense of the term τύπος or that he interpreted Scripture typologically, even though, it must be granted, Paul is apologetically invoked as the founder of this approach.” Idem., “Biblical Narratives,” in *As It is Written: Studying Paul’s Use of Scripture*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Stanley. Symposium Series 50 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 73-74.

¹⁷² Steven DiMattei, “Biblical Narratives,” in *As It is Written*, 77. He continues to argue that “it is this hermeneutic that best explains Paul’s approach to biblical narrative.” Idem.

¹⁷³ Idem. Another prominent hermeneutic approach that DiMattei finds at work in Pauline writing is “*haftarah*, by which Torah passages were read through the interpretive lens of prophetic passages,” in which thematic and verbal analogies are linked together to interpret the biblical texts. Ibid., 83. For details on Jewish hermeneutics, see *Back To The Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts*. Edited by Barry W. Holtz (New York: Touchstone, 1984).

¹⁷⁴ Steven DiMattei, “Biblical Narratives,” in *As It is Written*, 87.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 78.

each other dynamically and contextually.¹⁷⁶ God did not just speak and act once upon a time, God still speaks and acts today in the world of the interpreters.

Highlighting the beginning of 1 Cor. 10, the only place where the words *typos* appear in 1 Corinthians, DiMattei argues that “Paul’s opening rhetorical formula – I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, that all our fathers” (10:1) – also mimics Hellenistic conventions for opening a deliberative speech by employing historical *exemplae* for pedagogical aims. Thus there can be little doubt that Paul understands τύποι in 10:6 as synonymous with Hellenistic uses of the term παραδείγματα.”¹⁷⁷ However, following Agamben, we note that the preposition “*para*” (“beside” or “beyond”) of *paradeigmata* (“example”), “the proper place of the example is always beside itself, in the empty space in which its undefinable and unforgettable life unfolds.”¹⁷⁸ Why “the proper place of the example is always beside itself”? Because the example cannot be objectified. It is valid for a specific situation for a particular group of people.

As everything and everyone are metaphorically interrelated, the pattern in correlation can only be dynamic and emergent. In the words of DiMattei, “Past and present, the text and its representation (not to mention its interpretation) seem to coalesce into a single narrative fabric.”¹⁷⁹ This “single narrative fabric” does not mean that the Scripture is closed. DiMattei writes:

The narrative that Paul read[s] in Scripture appears to have been an ongoing narrative, contemporized and historically extended beyond the “biblical” story—a narrative that is not only “written for our sake” but one that is also ultimately about “us.”¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ “In other words, the text bears witness to what is currently happening in Paul’s historical present. Thus for Paul, the appropriate and perhaps the only context within which to read and understand the prophetic text is the contemporized eschatological context. It is in this sense that the question of context remains pertinent to understanding Paul’s approach to biblical narrative.” *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁷⁸ Giorgio Agamben, “Example,” in *The Coming Community*, 10.

¹⁷⁹ Steven DiMattei, “Biblical Narratives,” in *As It is Written*, 82.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 87.

DiMattei stresses that the “ongoing narrative” that contemporizes the Scripture does not “negate the existence of the biblical context, Israel’s historical past.”¹⁸¹ Rather, we need to examine the theme that “the biblical context” seeks to express. The same figure may be used, but it does not mean that the theme is the same. In fact, even if the same theme is found in both the narratives in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, it does not mean that the conceptualization of the theme is the same. This is why in 1 Cor. 10:1-13, we should not be surprised that “Paul’s renarration of the wilderness narrative, the ‘biblical’ details that Paul puts forth are often reshaped to suit the story’s new context and might not be biblical details at all.”¹⁸² Such figures as “baptism,” “food,” “drink,” “rock,” etc. should not be simply treated as *typoi* in the Hebrew Bible that match and get fulfilled by the *antitypoi* in the New Testament.

One thing that stands out in Paul’s allusion to the wilderness story is that believers should not objectify what they have received from God. Paul thus trains himself harshly, lest he be disqualified in his gospelizing (9:24-27). He labors harder than all the apostles (περισσότερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα); the grace of God towards him must not be emptied of its power (κενή ἐγενήθη) (15:10). If he partakes of the bread that is broken which is the body of Christ (10:16), he must also embody such a body that is broken for everyone (cf. 11:24). One becomes what one eats and drinks. This is how a semantic *habitus* is formed gradually. Paul cannot manifest the cross without embody the cross. This is why we said that the gospelizing happens in the gospelizing, in the middle voice of the embodiment of the gospelizing. Believers should see and know that their labor is not emptied of its power in the Lord (οὐκ ἔστιν κενὸς ἐν κυρίῳ) (15:58). In fact, they should do *everything* in love (16:14). For Paul, love is the “most excellent way” (12:31b). It broadens one’s heart and expands one’s vision; in love, the self is drawn out of the

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 86.

¹⁸² Ibid., 91.

self towards the beloved. Paul thus says that it is when one loves [God] that s/he is known by [God] (8:3). It is when one loves that s/he is open towards the other/Other. It is in love that one can feel the love and be inspired by love. To love is to be in love, to be loved in the first place.

This love of God is stressed in 10:1-4 when Paul uses *pantes* (“all”) five times to show “the generosity of God’s grace that **all** ... participate in the privileges and blessings of the redeemed covenant people of God.”¹⁸³ He also says that *all* ate the *same* spiritual food and *all* drank the *same* spiritual drink (10:3-4). However, only some of “our fathers” pleased God. Why did many not please God? Did not *all* “participate in the privileges and blessings” of God? Paul warns believers not to take the grace of God lightly (10:22; cf. 11:22; 2 Cor. 6:1-2). “The one who thinks that s/he can stand, watch out, lest s/he falls” (1 Cor. 10:12).

In a group-oriented culture in which everyone is interrelated, one’s words and deeds affect the entire group. One must be responsible for others too. This worldview may sound odd to an individual-centered culture. But, as one receives one’s body and flesh from her/his parents, one’s body and flesh do not just belong to her/him. They are also her/his parents’. In fact, they are the community’s. In such a culture, an individual is always a self-others-God. The hyphens are broken when one objectifies any part of this hyphenated link. This objectification is obvious when we consider 10:1-13 within its “complete discourse unit” of 8:1–11:1 that deals with the issue of the “idol food” (see chapter 6). It is clear that some believers objectify what they know of God into a system that makes them disregard other believers. But, if *all* believers partake of the *one* loaf of bread (10:17), no one can boast about what s/he has received (4:7). Instead, they should learn from each other; after all, it is God who assigns the gifts and the missions (12:7-11).

Here, the notion of “all” has the character of a “being singular plural” in the sense that it speaks of a universal-singular relation (see Introduction chapter). If everyone receives from God,

¹⁸³ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 725.

then everyone is singular in her/his own way. This singularity is in relation to other singularities. Hence right in the beginning of 1 Corinthians, Paul makes it clear that the Lord is the one whom *everyone* from *everywhere* calls upon (1:2). The Lord is not just someone's Lord, but the Lord of *everyone*. *Everyone* is interrelated in the fellowship, in the body of Christ that is "parts beyond a part" (12:27). Given this exhortation of Paul, it will be ironic if Paul objectifies the wilderness story into a rigid and one-way prefiguration for his situation. Rather, Paul realizes that the story is written as a warning "for us" (ἐγράφη δὲ πρὸς νοουθεσίαν ἡμῶν) (10:11; cf. 9:8-10). The story was not just a story of the past, irrelevant to us. The past is the present as well. God who spoke in the past to "our fathers" still speaks to us today. Goppelt actually hints at the importance of the story that undergirds the *typos* when he points out that "typology is not prominent in his [Paul's] epistles because they contain the doctrine of redemption primarily and include little redemptive history" that we see in the Gospels.¹⁸⁴ But, this "little redemptive history" does not mean that the *typos* is stripped of its story. As we will see in chapters 3 and 4, there are at least two major textual levels in Paul's letter: the narrative or warranting level ("redemptive history") and the dialogic level ("doctrine of redemption"). These two levels are interwoven to support one another; just as the "semantics" and "syntax" work together in the signifying process.

V. Conclusion

As our perception of the world is bodily-oriented, the proprioceptive and relational quality of love is not unlike the middle voice that takes places in loving itself. Because of its metaphorical character, love can be expressed and represented in many ways. Yet, no representation can ever exhaust its meaning potential. As an intense feeling, love cannot be objectified. A relationship that is marked by love, likewise, cannot be objectified. It is not a

¹⁸⁴ See Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos*, 128.

surprise that Paul speaks of typology in the context of the issue of “idol food” in 8:1–11:1 by addressing love in the beginning of the discourse and the language of imitation in the end (see chapter 6). Idolatry takes place when objectification takes place. Paul’s typology echoes his notion of love that is heteronomous and eschatological (“here and now but not yet”) in the sense that it is continuously expanded, realized, deconstructed, and transformed in the body of Christ that is “parts beyond a part.”

Chapter 3 – A Structural Semiotic Exegesis of 1 Corinthians: The Warranting and Dialogic Levels

To make a declaration of love is to move on from the event encounter to embark on a construction of truth.¹ – Alain Badiou

[I]f one grants ... that one can speak of a love, of *Love*, one must also grant that ... love never dwells in us without burning us. To speak about it, even after the fact, is probably possible only on the basis of that burning.² – Julia Kristeva

I. Introduction

Thus far in our previous chapters, we have shown that meaning is always a meaning effect in the sense that it is always relational and multidimensional. We further noted that if we are always already “thrown” into the world with others, not only do we think with our body, our body also thinks. As our perceptions of the world are always embodied, an embodiment that includes making them correlative and metaphorical, our social locations and mood and feeling are also indispensable to meaning production in the process of interpretation. We have also shown that our analysis of the three interpretive poles (e.g., contextual, textual, and hermeneutic) are always primarily framed by one of three modes of existence (i.e., autonomy, relationality, and heteronomy) that we privilege. Depending on the mode of existence that we culturally prioritize, our perception of the world varies. Accordingly our understanding of the theme of love in 1 Corinthians also varies.

For example, in an interpretive framework that privileges the mode of autonomy, love is perceived as self-sacrifice, whether from God or from people, for others (who are in some kind of needy situation) and is often called “charity.” This autonomy-centered view of love, which is

¹ Alain Badiou, *In Praise of Love*. Translated by Peter Bush (London: Serpent’s Tail, 2012), 42.

² Julia Kristeva, “In Praise of Love,” in *Tales of Love*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 4.

indeed a *part* of the love experience, is certainly expressed by Paul in his text, and can be elucidated through a study of 1 Corinthians focused on Paul's (autonomous) theological argument, as commonly found in commentaries that use philological methodological approaches.³ We do not focus on this autonomy-centered view of love, because this approach commonly excludes the other perspectives on love and especially the heteronomy-centered view of love, which for us is essential. The limitations of an autonomy-centered view appear when we know that, in this perspective, love is dangerous because it might disrupt reason and self-control and therefore can be viewed as weak and pathological. In this individual-centered orientation that seeks to minimize risk and vulnerability, love can become non-relational and even indifferent. In guarding against being affected emotionally, the lover may appear to be pitying the beloved. In the case of a charity or almsgiving, such a love can be negatively perceived as if the receiver is at the mercy of the giver. It is not hard to see that this mode of autonomy can make one suspicious of love, as it can be condescending and scheming. While this individual-centered love can be crucial in a situation where an individual's identity needs to be asserted, a vision of love in the mode of relationality or heteronomy may be more ethical and valuable in some other contexts.

By contrast, in an interpretive framework that privileges the mode of relationality, love is perceived as being faithful, loyal, and obedient to the others in a system of reciprocity. This relationality-centered view of love, which is indeed another *part* of the love experience certainly expressed by Paul in his text, as commonly found in studies that use methodologies concerned with relationality, such as rhetoric, political and ideological analysis.⁴ We do not focus on this relationality-centered view of love, because this approach commonly excludes the other

³ For example, see Ceslaus Spicq, *Agape in the New Testament. Vol. 2: Agape in the Epistles of St. Paul, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of St. James, St. Peter, and St. Jude*. Translated by Marie Aquinsa McNamara and Mary Honoria Richter (St. Louis, MO; London: B. Herder Book, 1965), 15-341.

⁴ For example, see Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991).

perspectives on love and especially the heteronomy-centered view of love, which for us is essential. The limitations of a relationality-centered view appear when love becomes a means of command, exchange, and calculation that seeks benefits. While mutuality is certainly indispensable to a healthy love relationship, it is often conceptualized from the perspective of the self (in a competitive relation with others), as if the self must never lose out in such a love relationship. These autonomy-centered and relationality-centered views are to be contrasted with an interpretive framework that privileges the heteronomy-centered perspective, according to which being “thrown” into the world with others is perceived from the perspective of a heteronomous and thymic notion of a dative “I” that marks the flesh-and-blood interpret. A study of Paul’s heteronomy-centered view of love in 1 Corinthians requires a very different kind of critical exegesis aimed at elucidating Paul’s convictional vision which is characterized by its structure, so the need for structural semiotic exegetical method.

Such a study of Paul’s heteronomy-centered view of love in 1 Corinthians requires from us to perform a series of analytical and interpretive tasks to prepare us for a semantic analysis of Paul’s vision of love in 1 Corinthians (a didactic discourse) in chapter 4. In focusing on a syntactic analysis of 1 Corinthians – such as differentiating the warranting level from the dialogic level (see Appendix 1), finding pairs of opposed actions (see Appendix 2), and constructing the story progression in both warranting and dialogic levels (see Appendix 3) – this chapter explains how we come to form our semiotic squares for our semantic analysis.

In the previous chapters, we have emphasized that the independence of the text cannot be sidelined. The text is not at the mercy of the interpreter.⁵ The object of our analysis must not be

⁵ Derrida’s notion of the “double commentary” is noteworthy here because as the text must be rigorously studied in itself, it must also be interpreted, and hence transgressed, for understanding. He writes, “To recognize and respect all its [one’s critical reading] classical exigencies is not easy and requires all the instruments of traditional criticism. Without this recognition and this respect, critical production would risk developing in any direction at all and

objectified. In light of the ethical implications of the hermeneutical and semiotic phenomenon of “textualization,” biblical scholars should be alert to the fact that our interpretations can minister to the life and death of our audience in real life situations.⁶ As scriptural criticism highlights, as long as we are making (1) contextual, (2) textual, and (3) hermeneutical choices in our interpretations of the Scripture, which we cannot help but to do, we are responsible for the choices that we make. I repeatedly mentioned the contextual character of my study. My hermeneutical choices have been mentioned above; I chose to privilege the heteronomy-centered view of Paul’s teaching (especially regarding love), rather than the autonomy-centered and the relationality-centered ones. But here we need to emphasize that, as we interpret, we are also making textual choices, that is, we are choosing certain features of the text as more significant than others; for biblical scholars such textual choices are methodological choices. Many critical studies privilege “behind the text” approaches concerned with the theological argument of the autonomous author, commonly using philological methods to discern “what the author meant to say.” Other critical studies privilege “in front of the text” approaches concerned with the relationality that the text establishes between author and readers/hearers through the use of “rhetorical criticism” or “ideological criticism” and the like. In our own study we privilege “within the text” approaches concerned with the heteronomous dimensions of the text expressed by its figures and the specific ways. In foregrounding certain textual elements and interpretive process, we inevitably relegate to the background those which we do not highlight, but do not deny their existence (see Methodological Appendix).

authorize itself to say almost anything.” See Jacques Derrida, “... That Dangerous Supplement ...,” in *Of Grammatology*. Translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 158; idem, “Afterword: Toward an Ethic of Discussion” (translated by Samuel Weber), in *Limited Inc.* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988), 111-60.

⁶ See James Chukwuma Okoye, “Power and Worship: Revelation in African Perspective,” in *From Every People and Nation: The Book of Revelation in Intercultural Perspective*. Edited by David Rhoads (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 110-26.

This is why scriptural criticism is very helpful as a dynamic hermeneutical and analytical framework that examines the contexts of both the interpreters and the text. It shows that *all* biblical interpretations – whether by scholars, preachers, or ordinary readers – are contextual and that they are contextual *all the way down*. Daniel Patte’s recent argument that, when we recognize the contextual character of own interpretation, we must acknowledge most, if not all, biblical interpretations are *hermeneutically plausible* and *textually legitimate*, further invites various voices to engage one another critically and hospitably.⁷ The main issue is not whether a hermeneutic (or theology or worldview) is plausible – it necessarily is from the perspective of the interpreter. Neither is it about whether an interpretation is textually legitimate – one can agree that biblical scholars carefully choose and apply critical methods, even though we might prefer to use another method. What is at stake is the validity or the value of the interpretation in a *specific* context. An interpretation may be textually legitimate and hermeneutically plausible as well as valid in one context, but it is not necessarily valid in another context. In fact, it is not always valid even in the same context, because this context is always in process of transformation. The value of an interpretation must be examined and determined *each time, again and again*. The context must not be objectified. Similar to the Derridean notion of “undecidability,”⁸ this validity consideration can help prevent an interpretation from being

⁷ See Daniel Patte, “Ethics of Biblical Interpretation,” in *Oxford Encyclopedia of Bible and Ethics* (forthcoming); idem, “A Response to Robert Jewett’s Hermeneia Commentary on Romans,” in *From Rome to Beijing: Symposia on Robert Jewett’s Commentary on Romans*. Edited by K. K. Yeo (Lincoln, NE: Kairos Studies, 2012), 153-67. This acknowledgement may sound radical but it cautions us not to reject any interpretation *entirely*, by recognizing the role of another type of interpretive choices – namely contextual and ethical interpretive choices. It also creates space for ordinary readings of the Scripture, lest we reify a dichotomy between scholarly and popular readings.

⁸ “Undecidability is taken, or mistaken, to mean a pathetic state of apathy, the inability to act, paralyzed by the play of signifiers that dance before our eyes ... But rather than an inability to act, undecidability is the condition of possibility of acting and deciding. For whenever a decision is really a decision, whenever it is more than a programmable, deducible, calculable, computable result of a logarithm, that is because it has passed through ‘the ordeal of undecidability.’” See John D. Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 137.

idolized.⁹ Thus ultimately we will need to assess the value of our interpretation for specific contexts. But prior to this we need not only to acknowledge the hermeneutical choices we made – thus I decided to focus on the theme of love *from the perspective of the heteronomous mode of existence* – but also the analytical/textual choices we may through our choice of a particular critical approach, namely *structural semiotic exegesis*, and how they are related. This exegetical method is chosen precisely because it makes it possible to elucidate Paul’s vision of love as related to this convictional experience, and therefore to clarify Paul’s specific vision of the heteronomous experience of (being in) love as expressed in 1 Corinthians.

II. An Overview of Analytical Steps in Structural Semiotic Exegesis

Most generally, structural semiotic exegesis focuses on “within-the-text” meaning-producing dimensions by contrast with “behind-the-text” and “in-front-of-the-text” meaning producing dimensions. For this purpose, structural semiotic exegesis first requires identifying the complete discourse unit that will be analyzed. The most effective way to proceed is to treat 1 Corinthians in its entirety as a complete discourse unit. This initial identification of the discourse is crucial to trace and map out the (paradigmatic) pattern of the text. In this way there is no hesitation regarding the identification of the beginning and the end of the discourse, otherwise we might unduly include or exclude relations of signs that would affect our configuration of the semantic universe (i.e., the symbolic world or system of convictions) of the discourse. The present chapter will be devoted to an overall structural exegesis of 1 Corinthians. Yet since the analysis of the whole letter as a discourse unit is complex, following its preliminary analysis in

⁹ Derrida clarifies, “I never said that there is indeterminacy of meaning. I think there are interpretations which determine the meaning, and there are some undecidabilities, but undecidability is not indeterminacy. Undecidability is the competition between two determined possibilities or options, two determined duties. See “Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility: A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida,” in *Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy*. Edited by Richard Kearney and Mark Dooley (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 79.

this chapter, we will subdivide the letter into a series of smaller but complete discourse units. Indeed, the semantic universe of the complete discourse units should echo that of the entire letter. As we shall see, our analyses of smaller complete discourse units such as 11:17-34 (chapter 5), 8:1–11:1 (chapter 6), and 12:1–14:40 (chapter 7) will confirm our analysis of the entire letter, 1 Corinthians, even as they sharpen our understanding of Paul’s vision of love as related to his convictional experience. But before proceeding with the structural exegesis of the letter as a whole and then of its subdivisions, we need to review the main steps that we shall follow in our structural semiotic exegesis.

(i) Identifying the Complete Discourse Unit

Even in the case of 1 Corinthians as a whole, we must verify that it is a complete discourse unit (and therefore that, for instance, concluding paragraphs have not been added or removed from it). One way to locate a complete discourse unit is to examine how a theme is introduced and concluded in the text. As a “discourse aims at transforming the views (or old knowledge) of readers,”¹⁰ we should see an inverted parallelism between the beginning and the end of the discourse. This inversion is expected because the enunciator attempts to transform the understanding and conceptualization of the theme by the enunciatee – otherwise the discourse is pointless.¹¹ Furthermore an obvious change of the theme or topic in the text may indicate a new discourse sub-unit, or it could point to a sub-theme under an overarching theme in the discourse. This determination of the main theme and the sub-themes of the discourse can also be confirmed in our analysis of the *explicit* pairs of opposition of actions in the discourse.

¹⁰ See Daniel Patte, *Structural Exegesis for New Testament Critics*. Guides to Biblical Scholarship (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 13. “This process of communication should not merely be conceived as the transmission of something (a message) to somebody, but rather as *producing an effect – a meaning-effect-upon the readers* (the implied reader).” *Idem*.

¹¹ “There is parallelism because both [the introduction and the conclusion] deal with the same theme; this parallelism is inverted because the introduction presents this theme as problematic, while the conclusion presents it as a resolved theme.” *Ibid.*, 14.

(ii) Identifying the Pairs of Opposition of Actions

We have noted that the pairs of opposition of actions can help highlight the convictions of the enunciator (see section 3.3.c in the Methodological Appendix). By focusing mainly on the *explicit* pairs of opposition, we look for obvious actions that are in opposition to other actions: an action being technically defined as the transmission (or not transmission) of an object to a receiver that can be formulated as e.g. (Object \rightarrow Receiver) and an opposition of action as e.g. (Object \rightarrow Receiver) versus (Object $\not\rightarrow$ Receiver), (Object \rightarrow non-Receiver), and (non-Object \rightarrow Receiver). There is no need to focus on obscure pairs of opposed actions. If the opposition is not clear, it may actually crowd and cloud our analysis. Even if they are indeed a pair of opposed actions, these less explicit oppositions of actions usually do not affect our analysis. Note that this identification of pairs of opposed actions is a syntactic analysis; after all, it is a logical operation that opposes one action to another. Such a logical operation resembles the “contradiction” (or the diagonal) relation in the semiotic square. To turn this syntactic analysis into a semantic analysis, which resembles the “contrary” relation in the semiotic square (as the “contrary” relation is a semantic relation), we simply need to adjust this *series* of pairs of opposition of actions, so that instead of interpreting them as “contradiction” relations we interpret them as “contrary” relations.

Now imagine we have a series of pairs of opposition of actions: A_1 versus A_2 , B_1 versus B_2 , C_1 versus C_2 , D_1 versus D_2 , etc., (Figure 1) where actions-1 (A_1 , B_1 , C_1 , D_1 , etc.) are positive actions (the “principal axis”) and actions-2 (A_2 , B_2 , C_2 , D_2 , etc.) are negative actions (the “polemical axis”). We can arrange them into a series of squares of syntactic oppositions of action (Figure 2). Then by focusing on the qualifications of the subjects/agents of each action, we can read these as a series of squares of semantic oppositions – actual semiotic squares – where the syntactic oppositions are in semantic contradiction with each other (A_1 versus A_2) and semantic

contrarities oppose the qualifications of the subjects/agents in successive oppositions B₁ versus A₂).

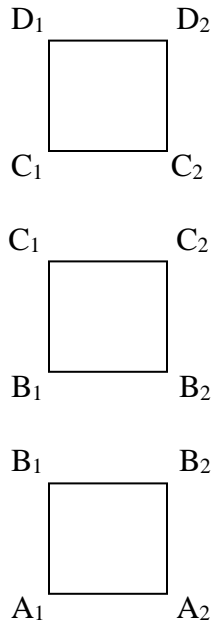


Figure 1

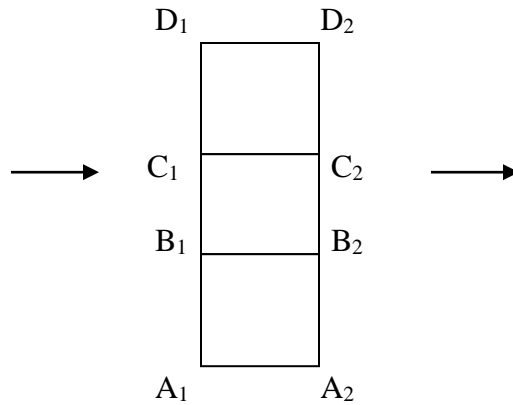


Figure 2

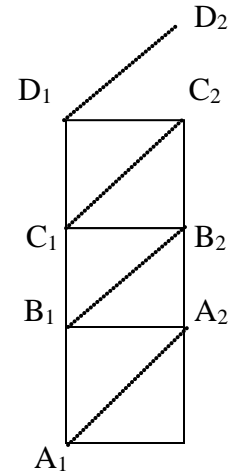


Figure 3

(iii) From A Syntactic Analysis to A Semantic Analysis

What we see from these three Figures is how the pairs of syntactic opposition identified in an analysis of the syntactic unfolding of the discourse are transformed into pairs of semantic oppositions that reflect Paul's conviction, including his vision of love – a semantic analysis so that we can eventually flesh out with the qualifications of the values at the four corners of each semiotic square (as represented in Figure 3). As we examine how these values are interlinked in a semiotic square, we can then tease out the themes emphasized by the text and how each is semantically constructed as part of Paul's system of convictions.¹² It is also important to note the relations of implications (A₁-B₁-C₁-D₁ and A₂-B₂-C₂-D₂ in Figure 3) that represent on the semiotic squares *metaphorical* or *typological* relations. Our notion of metaphor or typology, in

¹² See the demonstration in Daniel Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis*. Guides to Biblical Scholarship (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 53-83.

other words, is marked by a relation that transforms our conceptualization of a certain theme or topic.

(iv) Identifying the Warranting and Dialogic Levels in a Didactic Discourse

When it comes to such a didactic discourse such as 1 Corinthians that aims to persuade, consolidate, or transform the vision of the enunciatee, several more steps to get to the semantic analysis of the semiotic squares are needed. First, we need to recognize that a didactic discourse is, by definition, twice told; it includes an argument, the dialogic level, and its justification, the warranting level (which often has a narrative form) that implicitly or explicitly supports the argument in the dialogic level.¹³ But in this project, we will only focus on the warranting and the dialogic levels as we find the secondary level unsubstantial (see Appendix 1). In the language of J. Christiaan Beker, the warranting level expresses the coherence of the gospel that cannot be compromised, whereas the dialogic level emphasizes the contingency of the gospel that represents the coherence in an effective way for a particular situation.¹⁴ Just as the warranting and the dialogic levels are intertwined, Beker also emphasizes the dialectic relation between coherence and contingency in Paul's letters.¹⁵ From our discussions in the previous chapters, we can say that while the "semiotic" and the "symbolic," the "semantics" and the "syntax," or the "symbol" and the "thought" are intertwined, we should not collapse them together.

¹³ In both the dialogic and warranting levels, we may find secondary levels that further undergird them. But in this project, we will only focus on the warranting and the dialogic levels as we find the secondary level unsubstantial (see Appendix 1). For details, see Daniel Patte, "Method for a Structural Exegesis of Didactic Discourses: Analyses of 1 Thessalonians," *Semeia* 26 (1983): 85-129.

¹⁴ See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980). For a summarized version, see idem, *The Triumph of God: The Essence of Paul's Thought*. Translated by Loren T. Stuckenbruck (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990).

¹⁵ "Is it not the danger of conservative scholarship to absorb contingency into coherence, as if all of Scripture embodies the authoritative, coherent content of the gospel? And is it not the danger of liberal scholarship to transpose coherence into contingency, as if all of Scripture is a contingent structure and determined in its authority by the preference of the times?" See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, xiii-xiv.

As the word “dialogic” indicates, the dialogic level indicates a current conversation that the enunciator has with the enunciatee. The warranting level, on the other hand, is what warrants or undergirds the validity or the persuasiveness of the dialogic level. For example, in 1 Cor. 1:1-2,¹⁶ the clause “called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God” justifies and warrants Paul’s writing to the Corinthian believers; similarly “to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, those called saints” warrants the status of the enunciatees, reminding those who are in the *ekklēsia* of God in Corinth of their calling. By contrast, “Paul ... and Sosthenes our *adelphos*,” “to the *ekklēsia* of God in Corinth,” and “with everyone calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both their Lord and ours” form the dialogic level, identifying the addressers and the addressees. Other obvious indicators that signal the dialogic level are “I give thanks to my God always concerning you” (1:4a), “I give thanks to God that” (1:14a), “For watch out for your calling, *adelphoi*,” (1:26a), “Do you not know that” (3:16a), etc. (see Appendix 1). It is apparent that the dialogic level is about Paul addressing the Corinthians (as if he is in a “face to face” conversation with them) as he wants them to know, believe, or do certain things. The supports or warrants for such an exhortation comes from some past shared stories or experiences that the enunciatee shares with the enunciator; these shared experiences can then serve as a warrant for the enunciator’s appeal, encouragement, warning, and even rebuke. The allusions to the future goals or promise and even some axiomatic or proverbial statements can also be used as warrants.

As the word “didactic” indicates, a didactic discourse follows the flow and the reasoning of the dialogic level. As the discourse aims to transform the old knowledge of the enunciatee, the enunciator – if s/he is a good communicator – needs to structure and organize her/his

¹⁶ “Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Sothenes our *adelphos*, to the *ekklēsia* of God in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, with everyone calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both their Lord and ours.”

presentation in an order that the enunciatee can easily follow and understand. If we overlook the context-specific factors of the didactic discourse, as Beker warns, we might mistake the context-specific argument in the dialogic level as manifesting the convictions in the warranting level (the coherence of Paul's vision). While both the dialogic and warranting levels embody the system of convictions, we will focus on the pattern of convictions in the dialogic level, as it is more discursivized than that of the warranting level.

Without distinguishing the dialogic level from the warranting level in the discourse, we may think that Paul's arguments are at times contradictory or opportunistic (e.g., 9:20-22). Paul certainly tailors his message according to the particular enunciatee, but it does not mean that he changes his convictions. To argue that Paul made such a change, we will need to show that he changes the basic pattern that undergirds his system of convictions. But, if the conceptualization and the configuration of the theme still embody the fundamental pattern of his system of convictions, in spite of various re-presentations of the convictions, we cannot conclude that Paul is opportunistic. We see a similar argument presented by Ernst Käsemann and Günther Bornkamm when they speak of being faithful to the tradition by being "unfaithful" to it (see section 2 in the Methodological Appendix).

Another feature of Paul's didactic discourse that we need to take into account is Paul's use of "I" (the enunciator) and "you" (the enunciatee) are not static. It is not necessarily a rhetorical irony or a ploy for "I" to praise "you" at one place and then to rebuke "you" at another place. To come to this conclusion, we will need to verify it with a synchronic analysis to see how the "I" and the "you" interact with each other in a complete discourse unit.

Once the warranting level and the dialogic level of 1 Corinthians are distinguished, we need to arrange the pairs of opposed actions that we identify in the dialogic and warranting levels

to show how the story progresses. For organizing these pairs of opposed actions (especially in the warranting level which, by definition, is not sequential), we decided to take into account what Paul explicitly underscores as most fundamental, namely love, the most excellent way (12:31b) and to cover sufficient text (and thus several semiotic squares) until we get a general picture of the fundamental pattern that undergirds Paul's system of convictions. Then, since the pattern repeats itself again and again, after a detailed analysis of certain passages, we will analyze other passages more quickly, yet enough to show that the pattern actually repeats itself. Yet, even with such short-cuts, our analysis of the place of love in Paul's system of convictions as expressed in 1 Corinthians requires a close reading of the letter that will expend from this chapter into the next four chapters (chapters 4-7) (see Methodological Appendix).

III. A Structural Semiotic Exegesis of 1 Corinthians

To simplify the presentation of this structural semiotic exegesis, I present the technical aspects of the exegesis in Appendices to this chapter. They provide an overall view of the analysis that can be consulted while reading the presentation of the analysis focused on specific aspects of Paul's text. Thus Appendix 1 summarizes our identification of the warranting and the dialogic levels in 1 Corinthians.

Of course, the table in Appendix 1 is the result of an interpretive process during which we had to make judgment calls in cases where it was not obvious whether a part of the text belonged to the warranting or the dialogic levels. We noted ambivalent cases, when they seem to function on both levels at the same time. For instance, we have included 8:4b-5 at both levels. This passage can be interpreted as an accepted understanding among believers concerning the

idol, and thus as belonging to the warranting level.¹⁷ However, the tension between 8:4b and 8:5 seems to require that we read 8:4b-5 as parts of the dialogic level as Paul tries, through his argument, to complicate such an understanding. For example, in light of 8:5, Paul does not really argue that an idol does not exist.¹⁸ Then we should refrain from positing a dichotomy of body vs. mind to our reading of 8:4b. It is likely that οὐδὲν shows that the idol is insignificant instead of nonexistent.¹⁹ But, on the other hand, if, for Paul, the idol is not significant, in particular given the believers' new orientation of life (8:6), then he might refer to their common understanding – as part of his argument and line of reasoning at the dialogic level. After all Paul does not want believers to objectify their knowledge concerning the idol, since the idol still has impact upon people. Hence, 8:4b-5 can be in both the warranting and the dialogic levels. But this is a rare case. As Appendix 1 shows, one can readily distinguish the line of reasoning of Paul's argument, the dialogic level, from the series of warrants (the warranting level) he uses to justify his points.

¹⁷ 8:4b: “An idol is nothing in the cosmos (οὐδὲν εἰδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ) and that nobody is God but the one God.” 8:5: “For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are many gods and many lords.”

¹⁸ As many Western commentators take οὐδὲν to mean. See Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First letter to the Corinthians*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010), 380; David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 371; Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*. Sacra Pagina 7 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 319. For a discussion on different interpretations of οὐδὲν εἰδωλον, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000), 629-31.

¹⁹ This is an interpretation called for if our perception of the world is always already embodied (which the notion of habitus further illustrates) and if the material and the immaterial worlds are not dualistic in the Greco-Roman cultures as argued by Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 3-37; Kabiro wa Gatumu, *The Pauline Concept of Supernatural Powers: A Reading from the African Worldview*. Foreword by James D. G. Dunn (Milton Keynes; Colorado Springs; India: Paternoster, 2008). One may also point to the parallel construction between οὐδὲν εἰδωλον and οὐδεὶς θεὸς in 8:4b to show that, for Paul, as God certainly exists, the idol, in contrast, therefore does not exist. But this argument needs to explain 8:5 that speaks of “many goods and many lords.” Of course, one can then treat it as Paul is speaking hypothetically here. But, in the Methodological Appendix, we have noted the difference between the (Western) veridictory semiotic that is metaphysics-centered and the (non-Western) thymic semiotic that is feeling-oriented. That is to say, the former primarily focuses on whether an object is real and true, a concern which is secondary to the latter as it focuses on whether the object feels to be good or not. Hence, the issue is not so much about the existence of the idol as about the influence of the idol. Even if the idol, indeed, does not exist, the power of the idol is still vividly felt. The saturated phenomenon of the idol is clearly and publicly felt and experienced in many Asian cultures. One cannot tell whether the idol exists or not. A feeling-oriented worldview cannot be explained away with a logical reasoning. Such an explanation is not only arrogant, it can also be colonialist. We do not need to rehearse the tragedy and history of how Asian religious traditions, beliefs, and practices are treated as primitive, uncivilized, superstitious, etc. by many Westerners.

(i) Explanation for the Story Progression in the Dialogic Level

The analysis of the dialogic level of 1 Corinthians amounts to reconstituting the progression of the theological story posited by this letter going from Paul's basic conviction that faith, hope, and love remain forever (chapter 13) to his interaction with the Corinthians at the time of the writing of the letter (as expressed in chapters 16, 4, and 1, where Paul explains why he writes this letter to the Corinthian believers).²⁰ Let us sketch the progression of the story posited by 1 Corinthians (a progression which is more technically identified through an analysis of the narrative/syntactic oppositions, as presented in Appendices 2 and 3).

As we just suggested, the story begins with the narrative/syntactic oppositions between (+) 13:13a – faith, hope, and love will remain [by contrast with (-) 13:8b-d – prophecy, tongue, gnosis will pass away]; (+) 13:1 – those who speak tongues should have love [by contrast with (-) 13:1 – those speak tongues without love are roaring brass]; (+) 13:2 – those who prophesy, know mysteries, move mountains with love [by contrast with (-)13:2 – those prophesy ... without love]; (+) 13:3 – those give away possession and body with love [by contrast with (-) 13:3 – those who give away ... without love gain nothing].

As Paul presents love as the most excellent way (1 Cor. 12:31b) and that in the end, faith, hope, and love remain, with love as the greatest among them (13:13), love overwhelms the gaze and grasp of anyone. Since love takes place in specific and concrete time and space and yet beyond their constraints, it characterizes Paul's relationship with the other/Other. This intense passion of love is vivid in Paul's confession that no one and nothing can ever separate him from

²⁰ This progression is conventionally presented in the appendix as going from the bottom up. This representation is also convenient analytically to draw the semiotic squares later when we shift the "polemical axis" upward for our semantic analysis of the semiotic squares. As the word "progression" indicates, if some of the pairs of oppositions of actions do not help the progression of the narrative, we will combine them together as a pair of opposed actions that represents a similar action of how an "object" is given to the "receiver." For details, see Daniel Patte, "Method for a Structural Exegesis of Didactic Discourses: Analyses of 1 Thessalonians," *Semeia* 26 (1983): 85-129 (113-16).

the love of Christ (Rom. 8:35-39). The love he has with Christ is seared in the promise and the risk of love. Risk and promise sustain and generate one another in love and passion. So regardless of what one does, if one does it without love, this becomes meaning-less (1 Cor. 13:1-3). Love is performative. It marks and saturates believers, fundamentally. Regardless of how gifted, knowledgeable, and capable Paul may be, if he is not marked by love, he is nothing.

As love cannot be possessed by anyone, since it puts up with *all* things, trusts in *all* things, hopes for *all* things, and endures *all* things (13:7), love cannot be objectified. If love cannot be objectified, then it cannot be calculated and manipulated. It is an irony that believers can do many incredible “things” (e.g., spiritual gifts), which are beyond one’s comprehension and ability, and yet not nurtured and transformed by these “things” that are beyond comprehension. By contrast, when believers end up trying to masquerade themselves with these incredible “things” (even though they are actually beyond their comprehension and ability), they seek to convert these incredible “things” into a capital for their use. However, believers must learn to let go of this masquerade and be empowered by the *logos* of the cross (cf. 1:17-18). But, the masquerade cannot be let go if it is not exposed for what it is.

In the following step in the narrative progression (in 15:42-44) Paul uses the metaphor of the sowing to illustrate that one should not be caught up in the present. Sowing is a strenuous task. Believers cannot sow without taking care of what they sow. They need to provide constant care with patience and hope. Indeed, they should see the present in the light of the future. The seed that is sown is to grow into the plant. What believers sow must die in order to come to life (15:36). This observation is not only notable in Paul’s own experience (15:8-10), it is also characteristic in the life of Jesus Christ, as God gives believers victory “through our Lord Jesus Christ” (15:57).

The following positive actions in the pairs of narrative oppositions in 15:44b, 15:43d, 15:43b, 15:42b, do not involve an actual story progression. They refer to the same state of change, which shows that Paul and the others did not testify falsely that God had indeed raised Christ from the dead (15:12a, 15). Then the narrative progression can resume. The Corinthian believers will be saved if they hold fast to the gospel (15:2a-b). It is in being faithful to the gospel that believers will, likewise, be changed (15:51c). It is by being in the Holy Spirit that people can confess that Jesus is Lord (12:3c). Believers need to get rid of the old yeast in order to become the new batch of dough (5:7a-b); that is, they need to celebrate with “the unleavened bread of purity of motive and truth” (5:8c). The vessel must be clean in order for the clean item put in and through it to remain clean. Believers, in other words, must surrender themselves to God and not be mastered by anything (6:12b). This is what it means: there is “one God the father, from whom are all things and for whom we are, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things are and through whom we are” (8:6). Hence, even if believers know that “the idol is nothing” and that there is one God and one Lord, they should not objectify this knowledge. After all, how can anyone objectify God, “from whom are all things and for whom we are”? How can anyone grasp “Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things are and through whom we are”? This is why in 7:31a, 30c, 30b, 30a, 29d, Paul says that “from now on,” believers must think and act in a paradoxical way. Those who use the cosmos *as if not* using it; those who buy *as if not* possessing it; those who rejoice *as if not* rejoicing; those who wail *as if not* wailing; and those who have wife *as if not* having a wife. The “as if not” auto-withdraws and auto-annuls the actions. It prevents the objectification from taking place.

If believers really confess that there is one God and one Lord (8:6), they must have experienced and realized that they are in Christ Jesus because of God (1:30a). Indeed, if the

logos of the cross was so scandalizing to the people in the Roman Empire, it must be the power of God that the Corinthians could still believe in such a message. If all things, as a result, belong to believers, Christ, and ultimately God (3:22-23; cf. 4:7), then they should not think that they are wiser than God. They should become foolish in the sphere of God so that they could become wise (3:18c). Thus Paul does not even judge himself (4:3). Why? Because he does not have the ability to do. His judgment of himself will not be accurate. Paul makes it clear that he and the other apostles are helpers of Christ (4:1). They are not the owners of the works of God. Rather, believers are the field, the building, and the temple of God (3:9b-c, 17c). In a group-oriented culture, everyone is interrelated. For those who corrupt the temple of God also corrupt themselves in the end. Hence, God will corrupt them, but God will save them too (3:17b). Believers should be blessed by the gift of the Lord (16:23).

In partaking of the Lord's Supper, believers should embody a pattern for their lives similar to the pattern that Jesus exhibited in giving his life for others. This is how believers proclaim the Lord's death and receive the Covenant (11:26). They should examine themselves and not be judged in partaking of the Lord's body and blood (11:31). One can think of the Derridean notion of "undecidability" in the sense that one must make the decision again each time in a new situation. One way to do so is *not* to become comfortable in one's situation. It is when one is *not* comfortable that one pays attention and relies on the wisdom of God. Paul thus urges believers to receive (food) from one another during the Lord's Supper (11:33). Indeed, if everyone receives from God (4:7), then believers should seek the things of the other (10:24b). What they receive from God is only a portion of what God gives to everyone. Believers should not totalize and absolutize what they have received from God. They should seek the things of others, namely, humbly learn from others. Then they will know that not everything is beneficial

and edifying (6:12; 10:23a-b). In fact, what may be edifying in one context is not always edifying in the same context, not to mention it may cause problems in other contexts. Believers will need to discern the situation to prevent objectifying the other/Other.

Just as Paul urges believers to seek the things of others, he also argues that it is those who love God who are known by God (8:3). Love, as such, builds up, whereas the kind of knowledge that objectifies the other/Other makes one puffed up (8:1). Although Paul does not tell us what does love build up, we can imagine that love does not just build up oneself but others as well. Thus, one should not use food to bring oneself close to God (8:8; 6:13). It is the genuine relation that matters. Similar to using knowledge for one's advantage, food cannot be used as a means to an end. One thing is clear, believers must not partake of the Lord's cup and the Lord's table with the demons' cup and the demons' table at the same time (10:21). They should not eat "idol food" if their conscience is bothered by it (10:28-29). Even if they may have knowledge and eat in the idol's temple, their action may cause other believers to stumble (8:9b, 10a). The knowledge that gives freedom to people should not end up bringing destruction to others. Hence Paul will not eat meat if food causes others to stumble (8:13; 10:32). Believers need to become mature in prudence (14:20c). Similarly, in the matter of spiritual gifts, Paul highlights the importance of other-oriented benefits, instead of a self-centered benefit. This is why Paul highlights the importance of the gifts of prophecy, *apocalypse*, *gnosis*, and teaching that can benefit more people (14:6). As the prophecy addresses the people, it edifies people and the church (14:3, 4b). It further causes conviction and worship among unbelievers (14:24-25), as people can understand when believers bless in a language that people can understand (14:16). Speaking in tongue, on the other hand, is a sign for unbelievers (14:22b). Coupled with the gift of interpretation, it can also edify the church (14:5).

Paul is so concerned with the situation of the Corinthian believers because they were his beloved children (4:14b; 10:14). He could have ignored them, not to mention that Paul was often himself in a dire situation. He did not need extra troubles. But, as he exhorts believers to seek the things of the others, he still tries to communicate with them. So even though he is not with them physically, he is with them in spirit (5:3b). He is concerned about them. After all, he was the one who introduced the gospel to them. He is responsible for them, as he is also their apostle as he worked among them (9:2b). The Corinthian believers should notice that what he wrote to them regarding spiritual gifts comes from the Lord (14:37). Indeed, anyone who claims to be spiritual should realize that it is not her/him who examines all things (2:15). One may speak the gifts that are in the teaching of the spirit (2:13b) and the hidden wisdom of God in mystery (2:7a), but this ability comes from the God who reveals them to believers (2:10). It is not believers who do these things *by themselves*; it is the spirit of God who does them through believers. Believers should therefore glorify God with their body (6:20b); the body is for the Lord (6:13d). They should not make the member of Christ a member of the *pornēs* (6:15c). They should have mourned for the *porneia* among them (5:2b), which did not even happen among the Gentiles (5:1b), and took out the wickedness (5:13b). In fact, they should have handed the person who committed the *porneia* with the wife of his father to Satan so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord (5:5). They should seek the things of the others by considering both the situations of the perpetrator and those who are in the church.

Concerning the issues related to marriage, Paul tries to avoid any objectification. First of all, he readily acknowledges that everyone has his/her own gift from God (7:7b). He may have a certain preference, but everyone has her/his gift from God. What matters is that everyone keeps the commandment of God (7:19b) so that s/he may be in a devoted relationship with the Lord

(7:35c). However, because of this undivided devotion and because of the shortness of time, Paul thinks that it is good for the unmarried and the widows to not get married (7:8). The unmarried man and woman can then focus on the Lord (7:32, 34b). They could avoid fleshly tribulation (7:28d). Likewise, the widow is happier if she does not get remarried (7:40). Here Paul is not against marriage. He cautions believers not to push for marriage or abstention from marriage. To do so is to objectify the marriage. To be married or not should not be used and turned into a capital for anyone's advantage. So if people cannot control themselves, it is better for them to get married (7:9c). In marriage, the wife and the husband have authority over the other's body (7:4b, d). They do not live by themselves. They are held responsible to and for the other spouse. If the unbelieving spouse does not want to get a divorce, then the believing spouse should not divorce their partner (7:11-13). One should seek the things of the others; and ultimately, one should seek the things of God. When it comes the issue of slavery, although Paul says that the slave should seek to be freed if possible (7:21b, 23b), he does not say it forcefully against slavery. One may argue that, for Paul, if the worldly wisdom is already invalid by crucifying the Lord of glory, it should be obvious that the calling of God already recalls all the callings of the world.

When it comes to the matter of legal issues, Paul urges believers not to sue against one another (6:7). To do so is to insist on one's right and fail to see that one may be wrong in the conflict. Indeed, if believers surrender themselves to God, why can they not submit the matter to God in the first place? Why can they, like the crucified Christ, not be robbed and unjustified by the others (6:7)? If they want to bring the lawsuit against one another, they should at least conduct it before the holy ones (6:1b, 5). While everyone is called to be holy (cf. 1:2), it is clear that the holy ones are those baptized in the name of Christ. They are the ones washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Jesus and in the spirit of God (6:11). Given the conflicts in the

church, Paul thus says that he wants to find out the power of those who are puffed up (4:19c). For Paul, the power of God is the power of the cross, the power of self-emptying, of seeking the things of the others. Hence, in urging that no schism should occur among believers (1:10e), Paul, “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,” urges them to say the same thing (1:10d). That is to say, to say the same things in light of the message of the cross. Thus, even though Paul may want to visit the Corinthians with a rod, he still wants to visit them with love and consideration (4:21c). After all, Paul gives birth to them. He feels responsible for them. It is the desire wanting them to succeed that Paul writes to them (4:14b). He does not rebuke for the sake of rebuking. He further shows his concerns for others when he urges the Corinthians not to make Timothy afraid when he visits them (16:10a-c). He hopes that he may spend more time with them, instead of just see them in passing (16:7b). Although Apollos will not see him now, Paul mentions that Apollos will visit him when he has the time (16:12d).

In conclusion. Focusing on this syntactic/narrative dimension of 1 Corinthians, we can see how Paul’s view of love can be interpreted as imperative and obligatory, in particular from a functionalist perspective (cf. relationality). The authoritative tone of Paul is further heightened when he associates his notion of love with the *eschaton*, which can then make his exhortation even more unilaterally imposing. Moreover, as Paul is the one who gives the advice, he can appear to be the mouthpiece of God, Holy Spirit, and Jesus. A sense of hierarchy is then strongly suggested. As a result, to disagree with Paul can be rendered as rejecting the words of God, Holy Spirit, and Jesus, despite the fact that Paul repeatedly speaks of himself, in the notion of “togetherness” in a proprioceptive and communal culture, as the helper, co-partner, and co-worker of God.

(ii) Explanation for the Story Progression in the Warranting Level

As the argument in 1 Corinthians follows the line of reasoning of the dialogic level, it is not a surprise that it is more difficult to order the story of progression of the warranting level. We find that in the warranting level there is a series of stories going all over the place, here and there, being alluded and evoked to support the argument flow of the dialogic level. Although in this work we mainly focus on Paul's view of love in his interaction with the Corinthian believers at the dialogic level – since this is also what most biblical scholars focus on – we find it important to go over the warranting level so that the fundamental stories, in particular the cross of Christ, that drive Paul's enunciation with the Corinthian believers can be more readily seen. Here is how the story progression in the warranting level can be constructed, following the results of the technical analysis summarized in Appendices 3.

A dynamic and personal relationship between God and believers is posited at the outset and is prominent in Paul's conviction. In referring to Deuteronomy 25, Paul makes it clear that the story "was written for us" (9:10). God is not a God who can be relegated to the past. God is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. God is the God of the past, present, and future. The past, present, and future are inseparably intertwined, where today is the tomorrow of yesterday and the yesterday of tomorrow. This concern of God for people is noted in Paul's use of the metaphor of the ox from Deuteronomy 25 to indicate that it is people whom God cares about (1 Cor. 9:10a). This care for people then and now are also explicit in Paul's reference to how "our fathers" ate and drank the same spiritual food and drink when they were brought out of Egypt to the land of Canaan (10:3-4). Thus right in the beginning of 1 Corinthians, Paul not only expresses that he holds that believers were enriched in *everything* in God (1:5). The witness of Christ among believers further confirms the believers' relationship with Christ in God (1:6).

Given this concern of God for God's people, it becomes shocking that Christ was crucified for people (1:13b). One may say that God's concern for people is so tremendous that even Christ died for people, but we cannot help but to question how such a tragedy could ever take place. It is perplexing that Jesus even gave thanks to God on the night that he was betrayed as he broke the bread for the disciples (11:24a). What was there to be thankful for?

In his correspondence with the Thessalonian and the Philippian believers, Paul also urged believers to rejoice, pray, and be thankful (1 Thess. 5:16-18; Phil. 4:4-6), even though he himself was in great hardship and danger. In his letters to the Corinthian believers, Paul finds himself empowered through his weakness and tribulations (2 Cor. 1:3-11; 12:7-10; etc.). In 1 Corinthians, Paul tells believers that "we are in danger every hour" (15:30) to the point that Paul even dies every day (15:31a). Paul, obviously, comes to life everyday too. Death and life are intertwined, giving birth to each other. As Paul writes, "in Christ all will be made alive" (15:22b). What matters to Paul is that one is faithful to God, just as God is faithful. If it is God who calls believers into the fellowship of Jesus Christ (1:9b), then the call and response relationship defines the believers' relationship with God. For Paul, if one relies on God, then "the test or temptation (πειρασμός) that overtakes believers is nothing but human. God is faithful, he will not allow you to be tested or tempted beyond what you are capable of..." (10:13). Here, the tension between life and death cannot be reduced and theologized into any system. Faith is a trial. It is a process.

This conviction and experience of Paul is not theoretical and idealistic. To say so would be to disregard his relationship with the other/Other. In light of love, Paul speaks of the end (τὸ τέλειον) and the beginning together; just as the end of winter points to the beginning of spring. As the end implies a delimitation, it also suggests an opening. Indeed, as τὸ τέλειον can also

mean “perfection,” “maturity,” “fulfillment,” and “being in effect,” the end folds itself by unfolding itself to what is yet to come. It marks the dialectic of the end and beginning. Paul thus says that when the end comes, the partial thing will pass away (13:10a). In light of that which is to come, we cannot objectify anything. In the face of the other/Other, the other/Other speaks and disrupts our objectifying gaze (13:12b). The other/Other is the other/Other in our face. Thus Paul makes it clear that it is only when one is fully known that s/he be known (13:12d). If one is not open to the other/Other, one cannot fully know.

Hence, as Paul writes that God prepares for those who love God (2:9d, 10a, 12c), he also says that what God has prepared cannot be seen, heard, and understood, as it is beyond the order of logic and reasoning. But, it is precisely because of this impossibility (according to the order of logic) that Paul testifies that he is who he is because of the grace of God (15:10). In 2:12b, he clarifies that the spirit that believers receive is not the spirit of the cosmos but the spirit from God. Without receiving this spirit from God, believers cannot know the gifts given by God for their benefits. Just as no one can know the things of human without the human’s spirit (2:11b), no one can know the things of God without the spirit of God (2:11d). To know the other/Other, the other/Other, at least, has to be able to speak in her/his/its own voice. We need to be addressed by the other/Other. In fact, as the self is othered/Othered by her/his own spirit, the self is the other/Other. In the words of Julia Kristeva, we are “strangers to ourselves.”²¹

Violence and tragedy grasp and overtake the other/Other when the other/Other is silenced, marginalized, and erased. So, even though the wisdom of God glorifies the Lord (2:8c), the Lord of glory is crucified by the rulers of this age. If the rulers had received the hidden wisdom of God, they would not have crucified Jesus (2:8). The cross is utterly scandalizing and traumatizing. Yet,

²¹ Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

the Lord of glory, because of his love for people, undertakes it. This is why only Jesus can be the foundation of the building, a metaphor for believers. That which is despised and silenced is no longer silent. The abject of the cross, neither a subject nor an object, marks believers, loud and clear. In the language of Giorgio Agamben, what is excluded from the system is highlighted as an “example” that exposes and destabilizes the system that relies on what is excluded from the system.²² Believers, however, want to objectify the abject and shuffle it out of sight. But Paul insists that the kingdom of God is not in the order of *logos* but in the power. It is a power of potentiality and possibility; a power that comes from being open to the other/Other.

The *pistis* of believers has to be in the sphere of the power of God (2:5b);²³ after all, believers are baptized into the name of Christ (1:13c). If it is because of the paschal lamb that believers are unleavened bread (5:7c-d), then believers should not add and decide anything on their own. They are bought with a heavy price (6:20a); a price that is beyond the economy of exchange. As believers are washed, sanctified, and justified “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God” (6:11), they are born again. They are in one body and one spirit with the Lord (6:17). In sending Paul as an apostle to the Gentiles, Christ does not send Paul to baptize. He sends him to gospelize (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) (1:17b).

²² See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 21-22; idem., “Example,” in *The Coming Community*. Translated by Michael Hardt. Theory Out of Bounds, Vol. 1 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 10.

²³ We leave the word *pistis* untranslated because of its polyphonous meanings. It can mean: (1) “that which evokes trust and faith,” (2) “state of believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted, *trust, confidence, faith,*” and (3) “that which is believed, *body of faith/belief/teaching,*” (BDAG, 818-20). As these definitions reveal, *pistis* is related to the notions of “trust,” “faith,” “believing,” and “reliability” and it can be about something or someone. Patte further speaks of “faith” in terms of (1) “faithfulness,” (2) “trust,” (3) “believing a speaker’s words (“believing that”), (4) “faith, knowledge, understanding, and reason,” (5) “movement toward, and experience of, God,” and (6) “gift.” See Daniel Patte, “Faith,” in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Edited by Daniel Patte (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 406-07. Patte also demonstrates that faith can be defined in terms of (1) “believing self-evident truths and fundamental narrative semantics,” (2) “believing a truth on authority: the ‘discursive semantic’ dimension of believing,” (3) “believing as thinking that something is true: the ‘syntactic’ dimension of believing.” See Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts: Greimas’s Structural Semiotics and Biblical Exegesis* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 105-215.

Paul thus decided to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified in his evangelizing (2:2b). This is why he went to the Corinthians in weakness, fear, and much trembling (2:3). The mission is impossible. How can Paul gospelize? He is not the Christ. He is not the owner of the gospel. He is only sent by Christ. Paul is aware that as he represents Christ, such a representation cannot be objectified. The representation is inevitable but it must not be idolized. Herein lies the paradox and the dilemma. Paul must not rely on the persuasion of the *logos* of wisdom. He must rely on “a demonstration of spirit and power” (2:4b). The gospelization must be an embodied performative that breathes in and out of the *logos* of the cross. The *ethos* and *pathos* of the messenger are integral to the *logos* of the gospel.

The gospelization, as such, is a “necessity” for Paul (9:16b). It is an embodiment of a Christ-like life; a stewardship that has been entrusted to Paul (9:17b). There is nothing to boast about. Paul makes it clear that he and Apollos are the *diakonois* of God (3:5d). They are here to serve not to be served. God will provide what they need (9:9, 10b). For Paul, there is no need to make use of his *exousia* among the Corinthian believers (9:12b, 15a). The gospel is free of charge (9:18b). As believers are in a context for an imperishable wreath (9:25c), Paul trains his body so that he may not be disqualified from his mission. Given his clear goal (9:26a), he will only rely on God and boast in God’s provision (9:15c). For him, believers will receive their wages if their work can withstand the test (3:14).

It is also important for Paul that God is the God of *peace* in all the churches (14:33b). The *logos* of God does not just go to certain believers (14:36b). A sense of interdependence is at work here. While Paul follows the tradition of the Hebrew Scripture that the man is not created from the woman (11:8a, 9a), he holds that neither the man nor the woman is independent of each other in the Lord (11:11). In fact, he even writes that *haireseis* are necessary to manifest those

who are approved (11:19). If we are not take this verse literally, it can mean that *haireseis* are not a negative social phenomenon.²⁴ Division can be good or bad, depending on how we conceptualize it. If we conceive of division in a positive sense, then it makes sense that Paul seeks to please everyone in everything (10:33a). If everyone has received something from God, then s/he has something to offer that others cannot. Here, Paul also refers to the social convention about woman not having her hair shaved (11:6c) and the man not covering his head. While we may be tempted to critique Paul for essentializing the man and the woman, we need to remember that having long hair does not necessarily denigrate the woman. The important point is not to objectify and essentialize any situation and any group of people.

For Paul, an adult should get rid of the babbling infant thinking (13:11b). That is to say, the mature believers should be able to form their own thinking instead of simply following what others say and form their own groups against one another in the church. Paul wishes to address the Corinthian believers as spiritual (3:1a), as people who have received the spirit of God in discerning the works of God. Paul wants to give them solid food, but they must be able to receive and digest a variety of food of thoughts (3:2b). In wishing to rule *together with* the Corinthians

²⁴ In fact, the word *haireseis* was not used negatively as a “heresy” or a “division” before the second century CE. The only other place that the term appears in Pauline writings is Galatians 5:20, which includes a series of works of the flesh. The negative usage of *haireseis* in Galatians is not sufficient to show that Paul views *haireseis* negatively in 1 Cor. 11:19. The *LSJ Supplement* (page 41) lists three overarching meanings: (1) choice; (2) purpose, course of action or thought; and (3) proposed condition, proposal. Under (1) choice, it can mean (i) election of magistrates and (ii) inclination. Under (2) purpose, course of action or thought, it can mean (i) system of philosophic principles or those who profess such principles, sect, school; (ii) *corps* of *epheboi*; and (iii) condition in terms of astrology. Under (3) proposed condition, proposal, it carries the meaning of (i) commission; (ii) freewill offering or vow; and (iii) bid at auction. Overall, the term *haireseis* does not have negative connotation. When it comes to the *BDAG* (pages 23-34), it lists two major meanings: (1) sect, party, or school and (2) opinion or dogma. Here, the meanings in the *LSJ Supplement* have become more specific and narrowed down to the school of thoughts and opinions. For example, under (1), it can refer to (i) the *haireseis* of Sadducees or Pharisees or even the *haireseis* of the Nazarenes; or (ii) our today’s negative meaning of *haireseis* in terms of a heretical sect is a much later usage, which *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity* points out was clearly thus employed by Justin Martyr and Irenaeus in the second century CE (page 507); or (iii) dissension or a faction, which *BDAG* lists 1 Cor. 11:19 and Gal. 5:20 as examples. Under (2), it can refer to a way of thinking of an inclination. Now, if we can exclude the later usage of *haireseis*, *haireseis* is not used negatively *per se*. To say that *haireseis* is a negative term, one will need to make a case for it instead of just assuming it. One should not confuse and equate *haireseis* with *schismata* or *erides* (see chapter 5).

(4:8d), Paul further highlights the monopoly engaged and employed by some believers to marginalize other believers in the church. Paul wants to remind them that as everyone has received from God, everyone is interconnected together in the sense that one's individuality is an individuality-with-other-individualities.

In conclusion. Compared with the story progression in the dialogic level, the story progression in the warranting level brings to the fore the importance of cross-like lifestyle in the believers' everyday life.²⁵ In addressing schisms among the Corinthian believers, Paul has to clearly – note the interrogative μή – remind them that it was not him, but Christ who was crucified for/concerning (ὕπέρ) them (1:13b). The crucifixion of Christ is so vital to Paul that he stresses that Christ did not send him to baptize but to gospelize (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) (1:17). As we have noted about the middle voice “to gospelize” – that is, gospelizing takes place in believers being gospelized when gospelizing (see section 3.3 in chapter 2) – the gospel is not an object that can be possessed by anyone. Neither is it an object that believers can theologize, and hence, reason and manipulate. Rather, the gospel is a cross-like lifestyle that believers must continue to embody, after they have, amazingly, responded to the call of God to participate in the fellowship of Jesus Christ. Hence, Paul says that gospelizing does *not* take place in the wisdom of *logos*. If it does, the cross of Christ would be emptied (of its power) (1:7).

²⁵ For example, it is clear in Appendix 2 that, out of fifty-eight pairs of opposed actions, we have ten pairs of opposed actions that are related to the cross of Christ: (1) (+) 1:13b – Christ was crucified for you vs. (-) 1:13b – Paul was not crucified for you [ellipsis], (2) (+) 1:13c – the Corinthians were baptized into the name of Jesus vs. (-) 1:13c – the Corinthians were not baptized into the name of Paul [ellipsis], (3) (+) 1:17b – Christ sent Paul to evangelize not with wisdom of *logos* vs. (-) 1:17a – Christ did not send Paul to baptize, (4) (+) 2:3 – Paul came in weakness, fear, and trembling vs. (-) 2:1 – Paul did not come with superiority of *logos* and wisdom, (5) (+) 2:2b – Paul wants to know Jesus and him crucified among Corinthians vs. (-) 2:2a – Paul does not want to know any other thing among Corinthians, (6) (+) 2:4b – Paul's *logos* and kerygma in demonstration of the spirit and power Paul vs. (-) 2:4a – Paul's *logos* and kerygma not in persuasion of wisdom, (7) (+) 2:5b – *pistis* in the power of God vs. (-) 2:5a – *pistis* not in the wisdom of humans, (8) (+) 2:8 – no crucifixion, if the rulers of this age had received the hidden wisdom vs. (-) 2:8 – crucifixion because the rulers of this age received the hidden wisdom, (9) (+) 2:8c – [implied] wisdom of God glorifies the Lord [v. 8 – “lord of glory”] vs. (-) 2:8c – wisdom of the rulers of this age crucified the lord of glory, and (1) (+) 2:9d, 10a, 12c – God prepared and revealed to those who love him vs. (-) 2:9 – those who do not love God receives not what God prepared.

Note that Paul does *not* say that Christ is predestined to be crucified. To say so is, likewise, to objectify the cross of Christ, as if it is something pre-programmed. By contrast, for Paul, “the rulers of this age” would not have crucified “the Lord of glory” if they had known the wisdom of God that has been hidden (2:7-8). Indeed, it is only shocking that while God gives glory to the Lord, the rulers of this age give crucifixion to him. It is even more shocking that while Christ was crucified, he was crucified *for/concerning* believers. The implication of active voice in the passive voice (“was crucified”) is noteworthy. Christ was not merely a victim. Rather, Christ entrusts himself to God, as it is God who gives glory to him. Hence, Paul tells the Corinthian believers that he was in weakness, fear, and much trembling when he proclaimed to them “the mystery of God” (2:1-13). But, as we noted, how can “the mystery of God” be proclaimed without being objectified – not to mention that mystery, by definition, is apophatic? Thus, Paul discerns and decides to know nothing among them “except Jesus Christ and him crucified” so that “what” he proclaims is in a demonstration of the spirit and power of God, lest the believers’ *pistis* is not in the power of God (2:4-5).

Now, why did the rulers of this age not know the hidden wisdom? Did God not give it to them? Or God gave it to them but they could not receive it? In the next two verses (2:9-10), Paul makes it clear that the gift of God takes place in love, as God has prepared for those who love God. While God may have prepared for those who love God, it does not mean that those who love God will then recognize and receive it. They still need to receive the spirit from God to know the gifts given by God (2:12). In other words, the love relationship between believers and God must be *ongoing* and cannot be objectified; after all, how can the spirit be objectified? This is why Paul too has to only rely on God in his proclamation of “the mystery of God.” Just as the mystery cannot be objectified, the demonstration of the spirit and power of God also cannot be

objectified. This is why it is in weakness, fear, and much trembling that Paul gospelizes, since gospelizing in the persuasive *logos* of wisdom would only objectify the gospel and render the cross of Christ emptied (of its power). The cross of Christ, in short, is a middle voice that cannot be objectified. It can only be lived out in love, as it is in love that believers may be empowered to discern the mystery and works of God among them.

From our story progression in the warranting level, we noted that this intense emphasis on the non-objectification of the cross of Christ is scattered throughout the warranting level. This scattering does not mean that the cross of Christ is not vital to Paul. On the contrary, it is because it is so important to Paul that it is disseminated throughout his letter. Likewise, even though the cross of Christ is not explicitly apparent in the dialogic level, it actually undergirds many of Paul's (dialogic) exhortations to the Corinthian believers. Indeed, in chapter 4, our semantic analysis of Paul's vision of love in the dialogic level will reflect this fundamental role of the cross of Christ in Paul's heteronomous view of love.

IV. Conclusion

In this chapter we have focused on the syntactic/narrative dimension of 1 Corinthians as we explained our story progression in both the warranting and dialogic levels in Paul's didactic discourse. As we noted about A. J. Greimas's "actantial model" in the Methodological Appendix, how the "subject" gives (or does not give) an "object" to the "receiver" and how the "receiver" receives (or does not receive) the "object" from the "subject" are not solely syntactic. The "subject" is not only helped (or opposed) by her/his knowledge, ability, and will in giving the "object" to the "receiver," s/he is also affected by the (often unmentioned) "sender" that makes her/him to do such a giving action. Same thing can be said about the "receiver." And, when the

“object” is “something” that cannot be objectified and quantified, the relationship and identity of the “giver,” “receiver,” and “object” can be unclear. In the case of love, for example, it is not easy to determine to whom the “giver” is giving “what” to the “receiver.” Because in being attracted to the beloved, the lover (i.e., the “giver”) could actually be the “receiver” who responds to such an attraction. Moreover, “what” does the “giver” give to the “receiver”? Love? Her/himself? Etc. This is why to flesh out Paul’s vision of love, we will in the next chapter turn to a semantic analysis of the semiotic squares that are related to Paul’s mention of love in 1 Corinthians.

Appendix 1: The Textual Levels of 1 Corinthians

Primary Warranting or Narrative Level	Interpretative Warranting Level	Dialogic Level (address and exhortation)
<p>1:1b – called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God</p> <p>1:2b – to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, those called saints</p> <p>1:4b-9 – for the grace of God given to you in Christ Jesus [1:5] because in everything you were enriched in him [God], in every <i>logos</i> and every <i>gnosis</i> [1:6] just as the <i>martyrion</i> of Christ was confirmed among you [1:7] – so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the <i>apocalypse</i> of our Lord Jesus Christ [1:8] who also will keep you strong to the end to be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ [1:9] God is <i>pistos</i>, through whom you were called into the <i>koinoia</i> of his son Jesus Christ our Lord.</p> <p>1:11 – For it was made known to me about you, my <i>adelphoi</i>, by the Chloe’s household that there are strife among you.</p> <p>1:13 – Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified on your behalf? Or into the name of Paul were you baptized?</p> <p>1:14b-17 – I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius [1:15] so that nobody may say that you were baptized into my name [1:16] And also I baptized Stephanas</p>		<p>1:1-2 – Paul ... and Sothenes our <i>adelphos</i></p> <p>1:2a – to the <i>ekklēsia</i> of God in Corinth</p> <p>1:2c – with everyone calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both their Lord and ours</p> <p>1:3 – Grace to you all and peace from God our father and Lord Jesus Christ.</p> <p>1:4a – I give thanks to my God always concerning you</p> <p>1:10 – I am calling you to my side, <i>adelphoi</i>, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you all may say the same thing and that there may not be <i>schismata</i> among you, and that you may restore each other in the same mind and in the same opinion</p> <p>1:12 – What I am saying is this: each of you says “I belong to nobody but Paul,” and “I belong to nobody but Apollos,” and “I belong to nobody but Cephas,” and “I belong to nobody but Christ”</p> <p>1:14a – I give thanks to God that</p>

<p>household, the rest I did not know if I baptized anyone else [1:17] for Christ did not send me to baptize but to evangelize, not in wisdom of logos in order that the cross of Christ may not be emptied.</p> <p>1:26b-29 – <i>not</i> many were wise according to flesh, not many powerful, not many well born [1:27] – but the moron things of the cosmos God chose to shame [κατασχύνη] the wise, and the weak things of the cosmos God chose to shame [κατασχύνη] the strong things [1:28] and the ignoble things of the cosmos and the despised things God chose, the things that are not [τά μὴ ὄντα] to bring to nothing [καταργήση] the things that are [τὰ ὄντα] [1:29] so that every flesh may not boast in front of God.</p> <p>1:30b-31 – who became wisdom for us from God, both justice and holiness, and redemption [1:31] so that as it was written, ‘the one who boasts in the Lord let him</p>	<p>1:18-21 – For the <i>logos</i> of the cross is [ἐστίν] moron to the destroyed, but to us who are saved it is [ἐστίν] the power of God [1:19] for it was written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the understanding of the understanding ones I will set against [1:20] where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Did God not moronize the wisdom of the cosmos? [1:21] for since in the wisdom of God the cosmos did not know God through its wisdom, God was pleased, through the moron of the kerygma, to save those who believed.</p> <p>1:25 – because [ὅτι] the moron of God is wiser than that of humans and the weakness of God is stronger [ἰσχυρότερον] than that of human.</p>	<p>1:22-24 – whereas the Jews ask for signs and the Greeks seek wisdom [1:23] we proclaim Christ the crucified, to the Jews a scandal, to the gentiles a moron [1:24] but to us who are called, both to the Jews and the Greek, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God</p> <p>1:26a – For watch out for your calling, <i>adelphoi</i>,</p> <p>1:30a – Out of him [God] you are in Christ Jesus</p>
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<p>boast.’</p> <p>2:1b-5 – I came proclaiming to you the mystery thing of God not with the superiority of <i>logos</i> or wisdom [2:2] for I decided [ἔκρινα] to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified [2:3] and in weakness and in fear and in much trembling I was with you [2:4] also my <i>logos</i> and my <i>kerygma</i> was not in persuasive <i>logos</i> of wisdom but in demonstration of the spirit and power [2:5] so that your <i>pistis</i> was not in the wisdom of humans but in the power of God.</p> <p>2:7b-12 – which God predestined before the ages for our glory [2:8] which none of the rulers of this age knew, for if they had known, they would not have crucified the lord of glory [2:9] – but as it was written: what the eye did not see and ear did not hear and upon the heart of human did not understand, what God prepared for those who loved him [2:10] – to us/for our benefit God revealed through his spirit, for the spirit searches all things, even the depths of God [2:11] – for who among humans knew [οἶδεν] the things of human except the spirit of human that is in him? So also nobody knew [ἔγνωκεν] the things of God except the spirit of God [2:12] – we received not the spirit of the cosmos but the spirit from God so that we might know the gifts given by God to us/for our benefit</p> <p>2:16a – for who knew [ἔγνω] the mind of the Lord, who will instruct him?</p>		<p>2:1a – And when I came [Κάγω ἔλθὼν] to you, <i>adelphoi</i>,</p> <p>2:6-7a – But we speak [λαλοῦμεν] wisdom among the mature [τοῖς τελείοις], wisdom not of this age nor of the rulers of this age who are coming to nothing [καταργουμένων] [2:7a] but we speak wisdom of God, hidden in mystery</p> <p>2:13-15 – which [= the gifts] we also speak, not in teaching <i>logos</i> of human wisdom but in teaching of the spirit, because to the spiritual people [πνευματικοῖς] we interpret the spiritual things [2:14] and the physical [ψυχικός] human does not receive the things of the spirit of God for to him they are moron and he is not able to know because spiritually the things are examined [ἀνακρίνεται] [2:15] but the spiritual [πνευματικὸς] person examines [ἀνακρίνει] all things, and he is not examined [ἀνακρίνεται] by anyone</p> <p>2:16b – But we have the mind of Christ.</p>
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<p>3:1-2c – And I, <i>adelphoi</i>, I was not able to speak to you as to the spiritual people [πνευματικοῖς] but as to the fleshly people [σαρκίνοις], as babbling infants in Christ. [3:2] I gave you milk, not food, for you were not able [cf. 14:20 – be babbling infants]</p> <p>3:5c-8 – as the Lord assigned to each person [3:6] I planted, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow [3:7] so neither the planter is anything nor the waterer but the grower is God [3:8] the planter and the waterer are one, each will receive his own wage according to his own labor</p> <p>3:10a-b– According to the grace of God that was given to me as a wise architect I set up foundation and other builds upon it</p> <p>3:11 – For nobody is able to set up other foundation besides what is laid, who is Jesus Christ</p> <p>3:13b-15 – for the day will make it manifest because in fire it will be revealed and what sort of work of each person is the fire will test it [3:14] If the work which anyone built upon remains, s/he will receive her/his wage [3:15] if the work of anyone is burnt down, s/he will be punished, but s/he will be saved, as if through fire.</p> <p>3:16b – the temple [ναός] of God you [ἐστε] are and the spirit of God dwells among you [ὁμίῳν]?</p> <p>3:17c – for the temple of God is holy</p>		<p>3:2d-5b – and even now you are still not able [3:3] For you are still fleshly [σαρκικοί], for insofar as there are factionalism [ζῆλος] and strife among you, are you not fleshly [σαρκικοί] and behaving according to human ways [κατὰ ἄνθρωπον] [3:4] for whenever someone says: I belong to nobody but Paul, but another: I belong to nobody but Apollos, are you not humans [ἄνθρωποι]? [3:5a-b] But who is Apollos? And who is Paul? They are <i>diakonoi</i> through whom you believed</p> <p>3:9 – for we are the co-workers [συνεργοί] of God, you are the field of God, the building of God</p> <p>3:10c – Let each person watch out how he builds upon it</p> <p>3:12-13a – And if anyone builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, worthy stones, wood, hay, straw [3:13a] the work of each person will become visible [φανερὸν]</p> <p>3:16a – Do you not know [οἴδατε] that</p> <p>3:17a-b – If anyone corrupts [φθειρεῖ] the temple of God, God will corrupt him,</p>
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<p>3:19-20 – for the wisdom of this cosmos is moron at the side of God for it was written: he seizes the wise in their cunning [3:20] and again: the Lord knows the reasoning of the wise that they are useless.</p> <p>4:5b-6 – who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make visible the plan of the hearts. Then the praise will be to each person from God [4:6] These things [ταῦτα], <i>adelphoi</i>, I applied [μετεσχημάτισα] to myself and Apollos for your sake so that by us you may learn “not to beyond what is written” [τὸ μὴ ὑπὲρ ἃ γέγραπται] so that you are not puffed up in favor of one against another.</p> <p>4:7b-13 – What do you have that you did not receive? If indeed you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive? [4:8] Already you have been filled, already you became rich, without us you became king; and would that you became king so that we may become king with you. [4:9] For I think that God exhibited us apostles last as the condemned to death because [ὄτι] we became the play to the cosmos, to angels and to humans [4:10] We are <i>moron</i> for the sake of</p>		<p>3:17d-18 – you yourselves are [temple][οἷτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς] [3:18] Let nobody deceive himself. If anyone thinks that he is wise among you in this age, let him be moron so that he may become wise</p> <p>3:21-23 – so let nobody boast among humans for all things belong to nobody but you [πάντα ... ὑμῶν ἐστίν] [3:22] whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or cosmos or life or death, or the present or the future, all things belong to nobody but you [πάντα ὑμῶν] [3:23] and you belong to nobody but Christ, and Christ belong to nobody but God.</p> <p>4:1-5a – In this way let human regard us as helpers [ὑπηρέτας] of Christ and stewards [οἰκονόμους] of the mysteries of God [4:2] The following/the preceding [ὧδε λοιπὸν] is required among the stewards so that s/he is found <i>pistos</i> [4:3] to me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you [ὑφ’ ὑμῶν] or by human courts, but I do not even judge myself. 4:4 – for nothing against me that I am aware of but not in this way I am justified, and the one who judges me is the Lord [4:5a] Therefore do not judge anything before the time until the Lord comes</p> <p>4:7a – For who judges/distinguishes [διακρίνει] you?</p>
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<p>Christ, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are in honor, but we are in shame [4:11] until the current hour we hunger and thirst and we are poorly dressed and roughly treated and unsettled [4:12] and we labor as we work with our own hands; though reviled we bless, though persecuted we endure [4:13] though defamed we encourage, as the refuse of the cosmos we became, the dirt of all things until now.</p> <p>4:15 – For you may have numerous <i>pedagogues</i> [παιδαγωγούς] in Christ but [you have] not many fathers for in Christ Jesus through the gospel I gave you birth</p> <p>4:17 – Because of this reason [διὰ τοῦτο] I sent [ἔπεμψα] Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful <i>teknon</i> in the Lord and who will remind [ἀναμνήσει] you my ways of life in Christ Jesus, just as I teach everywhere in all the <i>ekklēsia</i></p> <p>4:20 – for not in the logos the kingdom of God is but in the power.</p>		<p>4:14 – Not because of shaming you I am writing these things but because of admonishing [you] as my beloved <i>tekna</i>.</p> <p>4:16 – I am therefore calling you to my side, become my imitator</p> <p>4:18-19 – As if I am not coming to you some became puffed up [ἐφουσιώθυσάν] [4:19] but I will go quickly to you, if the Lord wants, and I will come to know not the logos of those who puffed up [πεφουσιωμένων] but the power.</p> <p>4:21 – what do you want: in rod I come to you or in love and spirit of gentleness?</p> <p>5:1-6ab– Actually (Ὀλως) <i>porneia</i> is reported among you, and such <i>porneia</i> is not even among the gentiles that (ὥστε) a man has the wife of his father [5:2] and you are puffed up [πεφουσιωμένοι] and not rather mourn so that he might be lifted out from the midst of you the one who did this deed? [5:3] for though absent in the body I am present in the spirit, already I have judged as if present the man who did this [5:4] in the name of the Lord Jesus when you gather together and my spirit is with the power of the our Lord Jesus [5:5] to hand over such man to satan into destruction of his flesh so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord [5:6a-b] it is not good your boasting [καύχημα]. Do you not</p>
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<p>5:6c – a little yeast ferments the entire batch of dough.</p> <p>5:7c-d – just as you are unleavened. For the paschal lamb, our Lord, was sacrificed.</p> <p>5:9 – I wrote to you in the letter not to associate yourselves with the <i>pornoi</i></p> <p>5:12b-13a – Are you not judging those inside? God will judge those outside.</p> <p>6:2b-c – the holy ones will judge the cosmos? And if the cosmos is judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the least matters?</p> <p>6:3b – we will judge angels, let alone [μήτι γέ] the daily stuffs.</p>		<p>know that</p> <p>5:7a-b – Cleanse out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch</p> <p>5:8 – Therefore let us celebrate not with old yeast or with yeast of badness and wickedness but with the unleavened bread of “purity of motive” and truth.”</p> <p>5:10-12a – not at all with the <i>pornoi</i> of this cosmos or the greedy and the robbers or the idolaters since then you ought to go out of this cosmos [5:11] But now (νῦν δε) I wrote to you not to associate yourselves if anyone is called <i>adelphos</i> is a <i> pornos</i> or a greedy person or an idolater or reviler or drunkard or robber, with such a person do not eat together [5:12a] For what is it to me to judge those outside?</p> <p>5:13b – Take out the wicked from among you.</p> <p>6:1-2a – When some of you have a lawsuit against the other, does he dare to bring the suit to the unjust and not to the holy ones? [6:2a] Or do you not know that</p> <p>6:3a – Do you not know that</p> <p>6:4-9a – Accordingly if you have legal suits of daily stuffs, do you set them before those who are despised in the <i>ekklēsia</i>? [6:5] To your shame I am saying to you. In this way is there nobody among you wise who will be able to discern [διακρίναι] among his <i>adelphoi</i>? [6:6] but <i>adelphos</i> goes to law against <i>adelphos</i> and this before the <i>apistoi</i> [6:7] Actually it is already a defeat to you that you sue against one another. Why not rather be unjustified? Why not rather be</p>
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<p>6:9b – the unjust will not inherit the kingdom of God</p> <p>6:11 – But these things some of you were. But you were washed, sanctified, and made just in the name of Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God.</p> <p>6:14 – And God raised the Lord and he will also raise us through his power.</p> <p>6:15b – your bodies are the members of Christ?</p> <p>6:16b-17 – the one who joins himself with the <i>pornēs</i> is one body? For they will be, it says, the two into one flesh [6:17] he who joins himself with the Lord is one spirit.</p> <p>6:19b-20a – your [plural] body is a temple of the holy spirit among you which you have from God, and you are not of your own? [6:20a] For you were bought with a price/honor</p>		<p>robbed [ἀποστερεῖσθε]? [6:8] but you unjustify and rob [ἀποστερεῖτε], and especially [καὶ τοῦτο] <i>adelphoi</i> [6:9a] Or do you not know that</p> <p>6:9c-10 – Do not be led astray; neither <i>pornoi</i> nor idolaters nor adulterers nor <i>malakoi</i> nor <i>arsenokoitai</i> [6:10] nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God.</p> <p>6:12-13 – All things are permitted to me but not all things are beneficial. All things are permitted to me but I will not be mastered by anything [6:13] the food for the stomach and the stomach for the food, but God will bring to nothing both one and the other [cf. 8:8]. The body is not for the benefit of <i>porneia</i> but for the benefit of the Lord, and the Lord is for the benefit of the body.</p> <p>6:15a – Do you not know that</p> <p>6:15c-16a – Shall I then take up the members of Christ and make them members of a <i>pornēs</i>? Never! [6:16a] Or do you not know that</p> <p>6:18-19a – Flee from <i>porneia</i>. Every sin that a person does is outside his body, but the one who commits <i>porneia</i> sins into [εἰς] is own body [6:19a] Or do you not know that</p> <p>6:20b – glorify, indeed, God with [ἐν] your body.</p> <p>7:1-13 – Now concerning what you wrote: it is good for a human to not touch a woman [7:2] But because of <i>porneiai</i>, let each man have his wife and let each woman her own husband [7:3] to the wife, the husband should give the [conjugal] obligation, likewise the wife to her husband [7:4] the wife does not have authority of her own body</p>
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<p>7:14 – for the husband who is an <i>apistos</i> was sanctified by the wife and the <i>apistos</i> wife was sanctified by the <i>adelphos</i>; otherwise [ἐπεὶ ἄρα] your children are unclean, but now they are holy.</p> <p>7:15d – but in peace God has called us</p> <p>7:17a-b – but [εἰ μὴ] to each person as the Lord assigned, as God has called each person</p>		<p>but the husband, and likewise the husband does not have authority over his body but the wife [7:5] do not deprive/rob [ἀποστερεῖτε] each other, except by agreement for a time so that you may devote yourselves to prayer and again you may be together [ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ] so that satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control [7:6] I am saying this as a concession not as a command [7:7] I want all humans to be like me but each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another [7:8] Now I am speaking to the unmarried and the widows, it is good for them if they remain as I do [7:9] if they cannot control themselves, let them get married, it is better to get married than to be burnt [7:10] And to the already married I instruct, not I but the Lord, that the wife not to be separated from her husband [7:11] if she is separated, let her remain unmarried or let her be reconciled to her husband – and the husband should not divorce his wife [7:12] And to the rest I myself say, not the Lord, if any <i>adelphos</i> has a wife who is an <i>apistos</i> and she agrees to live with him, let him not divorce her [7:13] and if any woman has an <i>apistos</i> husband and he agrees to live with her, let her not divorce her husband.</p> <p>7:15a-c – But if the <i>apistos</i> husband separates himself, let him separate; the <i>adelphos</i> or the <i>adelphē</i> has not been enslaved in such situations.</p> <p>7:16 – for what do you know, wife, if you will save your husband? Or what do you know, husband, if you will save your wife?</p> <p>7:17c-21 – in this way let the person walk. And in this way in all the <i>ekklēsiai</i> do I command [7:18] someone was called when circumcised, let him not conceal the mark of circumcision; in uncircumcision someone was called, let him not be circumcised [7:19] circumcision is nothing and non-circumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God [7:20] each person in the calling in which he was called, let the person remain in that [7:21] a slave you were called, may it not concern you; but if it happens to be able to</p>
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<p>7:22-23a – For the slave called in the Lord is a freedman of the Lord, likewise, the freedman is the slave of Christ when called. [7:23a] You were bought at a price</p> <p>7:25d – as a <i>pistos</i> shown mercy by the Lord.</p> <p>7:26b – because of present necessity</p> <p>7:29b – because the <i>kairos</i> is shortened [συνεσταλμένος]</p> <p>7:31b – for the <i>schema</i> of this cosmos is passing away [παράγει]</p>		<p>become free, rather make use [imperative] of it</p> <p>7:23b-25ac – do not become slaves of people [7:24] Each in what you were called, <i>adelphoi</i>, let her/him remain in that at the side of God [7:25a-c] Now, concerning the ‘virgins,’ I do not have the command of the Lord but I am giving my opinion</p> <p>7:26a – I therefore think that it is good that</p> <p>7:26c-29a – it is good for a person to be in this way [7:27] have you been bound to your wife, do not seek release; have you been released from your wife, do not seek a wife [7:28] but if you marry, you do not sin, and if a ‘virgin’ marries, she does not sin. But such people will have tribulation with regard to the flesh, and I spare you [7:29a] This is what I am saying, <i>adelphoi</i></p> <p>7:29c-31a – from now on (τὸ λοιπόν), let the ones who have wives as if they do not have [7:30] and let those who bewail as if they do not bewail and let those who rejoice as if they do not rejoice and let those who buy as if they do not possess [7:31] and let those who make use of the cosmos as if they do not fully make use</p> <p>7:32-40 – And I want you to be without concerns. The unmarried man concerns about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord [7:33] but the married man concerns about the things of the cosmos, how he may please his wife [7:34] and he has been divided. But the unmarried woman and the “virgin” are concern about the things of the Lord so that she may be holy both in the body and in the spirit. But the married woman concerns about the things of the cosmos, how she may please her husband [7:35] this for your own benefit I am saying so that a noose/restraint to you I do not throw over but for a proper [εὐσχημον] and devoted thing to the Lord without distraction [7:36] and if anyone thinks that he is behaving dishonorably [ἀσχημονεῖν] to his</p>
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<p>[8:4b-5 can also be a warrant] 8:4b – “an idol is nothing in the cosmos and that nobody is God but the one God” [8:5] For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are many gods and many lords</p> <p>8:11b – the <i>adelphos</i> for the sake of whom Christ died.</p>		<p>‘virgin,’ and if his passion is strong and in this way it is obligated, what he wants let him do, he does not sin, let them marry [7:37] but he who stood firm in his very heart, and not having necessity, but has power over his own want and this he has decided in his own heart, to keep her as his ‘virgin,’ he will do well [7:38] so that he who marries his own ‘virgin’ does well and he who does not will do better [7:39] A wife has been bound as long as her husband lives. If the husband dies she is a free woman to whom she wants to marry, only in the Lord [7:40] she is happier if in this way she remains, according to my opinion. And I think I have the spirit of God</p> <p>8:1-11a– Now concerning the food offered to idols, we know that “we <i>all</i> have <i>gnosis</i>.” <i>Gnosis</i> puffs up, but love builds up [8:2] If anyone thinks that he knew something, not yet did he know as he ought to know [8:3] but if someone loves God, he has been known by God [8:4a] Thus concerning eating food offered to idols, we know that</p> <p>[8:4b] “an idol is nothing in the cosmos and that nobody is God but the one God” [8:5] For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are many gods and many lords [8:6] but for us there is one God the father, from whom are all things and for whom we are, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things are and through whom we are [8:7] – But not in everyone is the <i>gnosis</i>. Some are accustomed, until now, to the idol eat as if food offered to idol, and their conscience being weak is defiled [μολύνεται] [8:8] Food will not offer us to God. Neither are we lacking if we eat nor are we abundant if we eat [8:9] Watch out not somehow this <i>exousia</i> of yours becomes a stumbling block [πρόσκομμα] to the weak [8:10] for if someone sees you, who has <i>gnosis</i>, eating [κατακείμενον] in the idol’s temple, his conscience being weak, will he not be built up to eat food offered to idols? [8:11a] for the weak person is destroyed in your <i>gnosis</i></p> <p>8:12-13 – in this way sinning against the <i>adelphoi</i> and striking their conscience when it is weak you sin against Christ [8:13] Therefore if food</p>
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<p>9:1 – Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the work of mine in the Lord?</p> <p>9:4-12 – Do we not have <i>exousia</i> to eat and to drink? [9:5] do we not have <i>exousia</i> to bring along <i>adelphē</i>-wife as also the rest of apostles and the <i>adelphoi</i> of the Lord and Cephas? [9:6] or only I and Barnabas do not have the <i>exousia</i> not to work? [9:7] – Who serves as a soldier with his own wages? Who plants a vineyard but cannot eat his own fruit? Or who tends a flock and cannot eat from the milk of the flock? [9:8] Not according to human I am saying these things or does the law not say these things? [9:9] for in the law of Moses has been written: you shall not muzzle an ox that is threshing, is God concerns about the oxen [9:10] or certainly because of us he says? For because of us it was written it ought to be in hope that the plower plows and the thresher in hope of sharing [9:11] if we among you sowed the spiritual things, shall we not reap greatly your fleshly things? [9:12] if others share your <i>exousia</i>, do we not more? But we did not make use of this <i>exousia</i>, but we endure [στέγομεν] all things lest we may cause certain hindrances to the gospel of Christ.</p> <p>9:13b-23 – those who do the temple works eat from the temple and those who serve regularly at the altar share the altar offering? [9:14] in this way also the Lord commanded to those who proclaim the gospel live out of the gospel [9:15] But I have not made use of any of the things. And I did not write these stuffs so that it will be for my advantage in this way; for it is better for me to die than anyone may empty my boast [9:16] for if I evangelize, it is not for me a boasting for the necessity presses upon me; for woe to me if I do not evangelize [9:17] for if willingly I do this, I have wage; if not willingly, I have</p>		<p>scandalizes my <i>adelphos</i> I do not eat meat forever so that I do not scandalize my <i>adelphos</i>.</p> <p>9:2-3 – If to others I am not an apostle, but to you indeed I am; for you are my seal of apostleship in the Lord [9:3] This is my ἀπολογία to those who judge [ἀνακρίνουσιν] me</p> <p>9:13a – Do you not know that</p>
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<p>been entrusted [πεπίστευμαι] the stewardship [9:18] what then is my wage? So that when evangelize I may make the gospel free of charge not to make full use of my <i>exousia</i> in the gospel [9:19] For although I am free from all to all I made myself a slave so that I may gain more. [9:20] And I became to the Jews as a Jew so that I might gain Jews; to those under law as under law, not that I myself under law so that I might gain those under law [9:21] to those without law as a person without law, not being without law of God but in the law of Christ, so that I might gain those without law [9:22] I became to those who are weak a weak person so that those who are weak I might gain; to all people I became all so that I might by all means save some [9:23] All these things I do for the sake of the gospel so that I might become a participant [συγκοινωνός] of the gospel.</p> <p>9:24b-27 – while all the runners run in a stadium, one actually gets the prize; in this way you run to win [9:25] every person who engages in contest controls all things, while they receive a perishable wreath, we receive imperishable wreath [9:26] I therefore in this way run as not uncertainly, I box in this way as not a person beating air [9:27] but I treat my body harshly and I bring it to subjection, lest somehow after preaching to others I myself may become disqualified.</p> <p>10:1b-5 – all our fathers were under the cloud and all went through the sea [10:2] and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea [10:3] and all ate the same spiritual food [10:4] and all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual accompanying rock, and the rock was the Christ [10:5] But God was not pleased with most of them [10:6] Now these things became patterns [τύποι] for us that we do not desire [ἐπιθυμητὰς] bad things just as those desired [ἐπεθύμησαν].</p> <p>10:7b-c – as some of them were, as it is written, ‘the people sat down to eat and drink and they got up to dance’</p>		<p>9:24a – Do you not know that</p> <p>10:1a – For I do not want you to be ignorant, <i>adelphoi</i></p> <p>10:7a – Do not become idolaters</p>
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<p>10:8b-c – just as some of them committed <i>porneia</i> and in one day twenty-three thousands fell.</p> <p>10:9b-c – just as some of them tested and were destroyed by the snakes.</p> <p>10:10b-c – as some of them grumbled and were destroyed by the Destroyer.</p> <p>10:13 – trial/temptation has not grasped you except what is common to human [ἀνθρώπινος]. God is <i>pistos</i>, he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able but he will make, with the trial/temptation, a way out of it to be able to bear</p> <p>10:16-18 – The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a fellowship [κοινωνία] of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a fellowship [κοινωνία] of the body of Christ? [10:17] Because one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all share from the one bread [10:18] Consider [βλέπετε] earthly [κατὰ σάρκα] Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices fellow-partners [κοινωνοὶ] of the altar?</p>		<p>10:8a – Let us not commit <i>porneia</i></p> <p>10:9a – Let us not test the Lord</p> <p>10:10a – Do not grumble</p> <p>10:11-12 – Now these things came about to them typologically [τυπικῶς] and it was written as a warning for us, for whom the end of the ages has come [10:12] Therefore the person who thinks that he has stood, let him watch out not to fall</p> <p>10:14-15 – Therefore my beloved [ἀγαπητοί], flee from idolatry [10:15] as I am speaking to prudent people; judge for yourselves what I say.</p> <p>10:19-25 – What then am I saying? That food offered to idols is anything or that idol is anything? [10:20] but that what they offer, they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to become partners [κοινωνοὺς] of demons. [10:21] you are not able to drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons, you are not able to partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons [10:22] or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than him? [10:23] everything is permitted but not everything brings benefit; everything is permitted but not everything builds up. [10:24] Let nobody seek her/his own thing but the thing of other [10:25] Eat all sold in the meat market without judging [ἀνακρίνοντες] anything because of the</p>
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<p>10:26 – for the earth is of the Lord and the fullness of it</p> <p>10:33 – just as I am pleasing everyone in everything not seeking my own benefit but of others so that they may be saved.</p> <p>11:1b – just as I am of Christ</p> <p>11:2b – just as I have passed down</p> <p>11:3b-c – the head of all men is Christ, and the head of woman is the man [ὁ ἀνὴρ], and the head of Christ is God</p> <p>11:6c – if it is shameful for the woman to have her hair cut off or to have her shaved</p> <p>11:7b-10 – since he is [ὑπάρχων] the image and glory of God and woman is the glory of man [11:8] For it is not man from woman but</p>		<p>conscience.</p> <p>10:27-32 – if someone of the <i>apistos</i> calls you and you want to go, eat everything set before you without judging [ἀνακρίνοντες] anything because of conscience [10:28] if someone says to you that this is sacrificed to idols, do not eat for the sake of that person who made known [to you] and for the sake of conscience [10:29] I am saying not your conscience [συνείδησιν δὲ λέγω οὐχὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ] but of the other person, for why my freedom is judged by other’s conscience? [10:30] if I am partaking with thanksgiving [χάριτι] why am I defamed by what I give thanks [εὐχαριστῶ]? [10:31] so whether you eat or drink or do something, everything do for the glory of God [10:32] become blameless people to the Jews and the Greeks and the <i>ekklēsia</i> of God</p> <p>11:1a – Become imitators of me</p> <p>11:2a – I praise you because you remember me in everything</p> <p>11:2c – and you hold on to the traditions</p> <p>11:3a – Now I want you to know that</p> <p>11:4-6b – every man when praying or when prophesying having the head down [κατὰ κεφαλῆς] dishonors [καταισχύνει] his head [11:5] every woman when praying or when prophesying uncovered [ἀκατακαλύπτῳ] dishonors her head; for it is one and the same thing with respect to having been shaven [11:6b] for if a woman does not cover herself [κατακαλύπτεται], let her cut her hair off</p> <p>11:6d-7a – let her be covered [11:7a] a man, on the other hand, ought not to have his head covered</p>
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<p>woman from man [11:9] and for man was not created [ἐκτίσθη] through the woman but woman through the man [τὸν ἄνδρα] [11:10] Because of this reason woman must have authority over her head for the sake of the angels [διὰ τοὺς ἀγγέλους] 11:11 – However neither woman is apart from the man nor man is apart from woman in the Lord</p> <p>11:12a – For just as the woman is from [ἐκ] the man,</p> <p>11:14-15 – does not nature itself teach you that while a man wearing long hair is a dishonor to him [11:15] a woman wearing long hair is a glory to her? Because her long hair has been given to her for covering?</p> <p>[11:19 can also be a warrant] [11:19] for it is necessary that <i>haireseis</i> are among you so that those tested may become visible among you [cf. 12:22]</p> <p>11:23-25 – For I received from the Lord, which I passed to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night that he was betrayed he took bread [11:24] and after giving thanks he broke it and said: this is my body on behalf of you; do this for my remembrance [11:25] likewise the cup after the dinner he said: this cup the new covenant is in my blood; do this as often as you drink for my remembrance</p>		<p>[11:11 can also be in the dialogic level] 11:11 – However neither woman is apart from the man nor man is apart from woman in the Lord</p> <p>11:12b-13 – in this way now the man is through [διὰ] the woman; and everything is from [ἐκ] God. [11:13] Among you judge for yourselves; is it proper that an uncovered woman pray to God?</p> <p>11:16-22 – But if anyone thinks that it is contentious, we do not have such custom nor do the <i>ekklēsiai</i> of God [11:17] In the following instructions I do not praise you because you come together not for the better but for the worse [11:18] for in the first place when you gather together in the <i>ekklēsia</i> I hear <i>schismata</i> among you and I partly believe it [11:19] for it is necessary that <i>haireseis</i> are among you so that those tested may become visible among you [cf. 12:22] [11:20] therefore when you gather at the same place [ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό] it is not the Lord's supper that you eat [11:21] for each person takes [προλαμβάνει] his own supper as he eats [ἐν τῷ φαγεῖν] and while one is hungry the other is drunk [11:22] do you not have houses [οἰκίας] to eat and to drink? Or the <i>ekklēsiai</i> of God are you considering down [καταφρονεῖτε]? Are you also shaming [κατασχύνετε] those who do not have? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this matter I do not praise</p> <p>11:26-34 – For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes [11:27] Therefore whoever eats this bread or drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, he will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord [11:28] Let a person examine himself and in this way from the bread let him eat</p>
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<p>12:2b – when you were gentiles [ἔθνη] led to mute idols because you were led astray [ἀπαγόμενοι]</p> <p>12:4-6– There are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit [12:5] and there are varieties of services [διακονιῶν] but the same Lord [12:6] and there are varieties of workings, but the same God who works all things in everyone</p> <p>12:12-13 – For just as the body is one and it has many members, and all the members of the body being many is one body, in this way is Christ [12:13] for by one spirit we all were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks or slaves or free, we all were given drink by one spirit</p>	<p>12:14-26 – For the body is not one member but many [12:15] if the foot should say that “I am not a hand I am not a part of the body” not because of this [παρὰ τοῦτο] it is not a part of the body? [12:16]</p>	<p>and from the cup let him drink [11:29] for he who eats and he who drinks not discerning [διακρίνων] the body eats and drinks judgment [κρίμα] upon himself [11:30] This is the reason among you many are weak and ill and many are dead [11:31] but if we had discerned [διεκρίνομεν] ourselves we would not have been judged [ἐκρινόμεθα] [11:33] therefore, my <i>adelphoi</i>, when you come together to eat, receive from [ἐκδέχεσθε] one another [11:34] If anyone is hungry, let him eat in the house [οἶκῳ], lest you come together into judgment. When I come I will instruct the rest of stuffs.</p> <p>12:1-2a – Now concerning the spiritual matters, <i>adelphoi</i>, I do not want you to be ignorant [12:2a] You know that</p> <p>12:3 – Therefore I am making it known to you that nobody speaking in the spirit of God says “anathema Jesus” and nobody is able to say “Jesus is Lord” except in the holy spirit.</p> <p>12:7-11 – to each person has been given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good [12:8] for while to one through the spirit has been given logos of wisdom, to another logos of gnosis according to the same spirit [12:9] to another <i>pistis</i> by the same spirit, but to other the gifts of healing by the one spirit [12:10] to other the workings of the powers, but to other prophecy, to other the discerning of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues [12:11] All these things the one and the same spirit works in when it distributes to each person individually as it wants.</p>
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and if the ear should say that “I am not an eye, I am not part of the body, not because of this it is not part of the body? [12:17] if the whole body is eye, where is hearing? If the whole is hearing, where is sense of smell? [12:18] but now God set up the members, each one of them in the body as he wanted [12:19] if all were one member, where is the body? [12:20] now many are the members, but one body [12:21] the eye is not able to say to the hand: I have no need for you or again the head to the feet: I have no need of you [12:22] but much more [πολλῷ μᾶλλον] the members of the body that seem to be weak are necessary [12:23] and what we think are dishonorable members of the body to them we give more, and our unrepresentable/private [ἀσχήμονα] members have more presentability [εὐσχημοσύνην] [12:24] but our presentable members do not have need but God united the body giving more honor to the lacking member [12:25] so that there may not be *schisma* in the body but the members may care the same for each other [12:26] and if one member suffers, the whole members suffer together; if one member is glorified, the whole members rejoice together.

12:28-29 – and while some God appointed in the *ekklēsia* first as apostles, second prophets, third teachers, and then powers, then gifts of healing, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues [12:29] are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all powers? [12:30] are all having gifts of healing? Are all speaking with tongues? Are all interpreting?

12:27 – You [plural] are the body of Christ and members individually [μέλη ἐκ μέρους]

[12:31] Seek the greater gifts and still I will show you a far better way [καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν]

<p>13:10-12 – But when the fulfillment comes, the partial thing will probably pass away [future more vivid]. [13:11] When I was a babbling infant, I spoke as a babbling infant, I thought like a babbling infant, I reasoned like a babbling infant [cf. 3:1ff, do not be babbling infants] When I have become a man [άνήρ] I have gotten rid of babbling infant stuffs. [13:12] For until now I see through the mirror in enigma, but then face to face; until now I know partially, but then I shall know fully [ἐπιγνώσομαι] just as am known fully [ἐπεγνώσθην]</p>		<p>13:1-9 – If with the tongues of people and even of angels I speak, but love I do not have, I have become a roaring brass or a clanging cymbal. [13:2] And if I have a prophecy and I know all the mysteries and all the <i>gnosis</i> and even have all the <i>pistis</i> to remove the mountains, but love I do not have, I am nothing. [13:3] Indeed if I give away all my possessions and give my body over to boast [καυχῆσωμαι vs. καθήσομαι?], but love I do not have, I gain nothing [13:4] Love is forbearing, love is merciful, it does not show bad zeal, it does not boast [περπερεύεται] nor become puffed up [13:5] it does not behave dishonorably [ἀσχημονεῖ], it does not seek things for itself, it does not get provoked to wrath [παροξύνεται], it does not take into account the bad thing [13:6] it does not rejoice at the unjust but rejoices in truth [13:7] it endures/covers [στέγει] all things, it believes/trusts/entrust [πιστεύει] all things, it hopes all things, endures all things. [13:8] love never falls [πίπτει] but whether prophecy, they will pass away [καταργηθήσονται], or tongue, they will cease [παύσονται], or <i>gnosis</i> it will pass away [καταργηθήσεται]. [13:9] For we know partially [ἐκ μέρους] and prophecy partially [ἐκ μέρους].</p> <p>13:13 – So now faith, hope, and love remain, these three things; and the greater of these is love.</p> <p>14:1-6 – Pursue love, seek the spiritual matters, especially [μᾶλλον δὲ] so that you may prophesy.” [14:2] For the one who speaks in tongue does not speak to people but to God for nobody hears him, but he speaks the mystery in spirit. [14:3] and the one who prophesies speaks to people for building up and encouragement and comfort [14:4] the one speaking in tongue builds up himself and the one prophesying builds up <i>ekklēsia</i> [14:5] I want you all to speak in tongues, especially [μᾶλλον δὲ] so that [ἵνα] you may</p>
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<p>14:7-11 – Likewise lifeless stuffs giving sound, whether a flute or a harp, if it does not give distinction to the tones, how will the flute or the harp be made known? [14:8] and if trumpet gives indistinct sound, who will be prepared for war? [14:9] in this way also you, through the tongue, if you give not easily recognizable logos, how will what is said be made known? For you are speaking into the air [14:10] perhaps [εἰ τύχοι] there are many kinds of sounds [φωνῶν] in cosmos and nothing is silent [ἄφωνον] [14:11] so if I do not know the meaning [δύναμιν] of the sound, I will be a “barbarian” to the speaker and the speaker a “barbarian” to me.</p> <p>14:21– In the law it is written, ‘By the foreign tongues and by the lips of others I will speak to this people and even in this way they will not listen to me, says the Lord.’</p>		<p>prophesy; greater is the one who prophesies than the one who speaks in tongues unless [ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ] [someone] interprets so that the <i>ekklēsia</i> may receive building up. [14:6] Now then, <i>adelphoi</i>, if I come to you speaking in tongue, what will I benefit you unless I speak to you <i>apocalypse</i> or in <i>gnosis</i> or in prophecy or in teaching?</p> <p>14:12-21 – in this way also you, since you are zealots of spiritual matters, seek the building up of the <i>ekklēsiai</i> so that you may abound [14:13] therefore the one speaking tongue let him pray so that he may interpret [14:14] for if I pray in tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful [14:15] what then [τί οὖν ἔστιν]? I shall pray with the spirit, and I shall also pray with the mind; I shall sing with the spirit, and I shall also sing with the mind [14:16] since if you bless in the spirit, how will the one with the position of an inquirer say “amen” to your thanksgiving since he does not know what you say? [14:17] for while you give thanks well but the other is not built up [14:18] I give thanks to God more than all of you I speak in tongues [14:19] but in <i>ekklēsia</i> I want to speak five logos with my mind so that I may also instruct others than mystery logos in a tongue. [14:20] – <i>Adelphoi</i>, do not become children [παιδία] in regard to prudence (ταῖς φρεσίν), but in regard to bad thing, be a babbling infant and in regard to prudence (ταῖς δὲ φρεσίν) become mature [τέλειοι] [cf. 3:1ff – babbling infant]</p> <p>14:22-32 – Therefore tongues as a sign not for those who believe but for those who do not believe while prophecy is not for unbelievers but for believers [14:23] If now the whole <i>ekklēsia</i> comes to the same place [ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ] and we all</p>
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<p>14:33 – for God is not of disorder but of peace as in all the <i>ekklēsiai</i> of the holy ones</p> <p>14:34d – just as the law says</p> <p>14:36 – or the logos of God came from you, or it came to you [plural] only?</p>		<p>speaking in tongues, the inquirers or <i>apistoi</i> come in, will they not say that you are crazy [μαίνεσθε]? [14:24] but if we all prophesy, and some <i>apistos</i> or inquirer comes in, he will be convicted [ἐλέγχεται] by everyone, he will be judged [ἀνακρίνεται] by all [14:25] the hidden things of his heart become manifest, and in this way falling upon his face he will worship God proclaiming that really God is among you [14:26] What is it now [τί οὖν ἐστίν], <i>adelphoi</i>? When you come together, each has a song of praise, a teaching, an <i>apocalypse</i>, a tongue, an interpretation; let all become for building up [14:27] whether someone speaks in tongues, two or the most, three at a time, and each in turn, also let one interpret [14:28] if there is no interpreter, let him be silent in <i>ekklēsia</i>, let him speak to himself and to God [14:29] let two or three prophets speak and let the others discern [14:30] if it is revealed to other who is sitting, let the first one be silent [14:31] for you are all able to prophesy one by one so that all may learn and all may be encouraged [14:32] and the spirit of prophets are subjected to prophets</p> <p>14:34a-c – the women in the <i>ekklēsiai</i> let them be silent, for is it not allowed for them to speak, but let them be subjected,</p> <p>14:35 – and if they want to ask something, in the house let them ask their own husbands, for it is shameful for a woman to speak in <i>ekklēsia</i></p> <p>14:37-40 – if anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord [14:38] if someone disregards [ἀγνοεῖ], he is disregarded [14:39] Therefore, <i>adelphoi</i>, seek prophecy and do not hinder speaking in tongue [14:40] but let everything become properly and according to order.</p> <p>15:1-2 – I am making it known to you, <i>adelphoi</i>, the gospel which I proclaimed/ evangelized you, and which you received and in which you stood [15:2] and through which you are saved with</p>
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<p>15:3-11 – For I passed over to you in the first place which I received, that Christ died for our sins [ὐπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν] according to the writings [15:4] and that he was buried and that he was raised on the third day according to the writings [15:5] and that he appeared to Cephas then to the twelve [15:6] then he appeared to more than five hundred <i>adelphoi</i> at once, most of them remain until now, but some fell asleep [15:7] then he appeared to James [Ἰακώβω] then to all the apostles [15:8] last of everyone, as if were to one untimely born/miscarried, he appeared also to me [15:9] for I am [Ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰμι] the least of the apostles who is not worthy to be called [καλεῖσθαι] as apostle, because I persecuted the <i>ekklēsia</i> of God [15:10] by the gift of God I am who I am, and his gift toward me did not become empty but I labored more than all of them, and it was not I but the gift of God was with me [15:11] now whether I or they, in this way we proclaim and in this way you believed.</p> <p>15:20b-32 –the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep [15:21] for since through human is death, also through human resurrection of the dead [15:22] for as in Adam all die, in this way also in Christ all will be made alive [15:23] each in his own group: the first fruits Christ, then those belong to nobody but Christ in his presence [παρουσία] [15:24] then in the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the father, when he</p>		<p>certain <i>logos</i> I proclaimed/evangelized you, if you hold on, lest [ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ] you believed in vain</p> <p>15:12-20a – If Christ is preached that from the dead he was raised, how some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? [15:13] If there is no resurrection of the dead Christ has not been raised [15:14] And if Christ has not been raised, empty then is our kerygma, empty also is your <i>pistis</i> [15:15] Then we are found to be false-witness of God, because [ὄτι] we witnessed against God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise, if indeed the dead are not raised [15:16] for if the dead are not raised, Christ has not been raised [15:17] if Christ has not been raised, futile is your <i>pistis</i> [15:18] then those who fell asleep in Christ perished [15:19] if in this life, in Christ we are only those who hoped, pitiable all humans are [15:20a] Now Christ has been raised from the dead</p>
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<p>abolishes every rule and every authority and power [15:25] for it is necessary that he rules until 'he put all his enemies under his feet' [15:26] the last enemy abolished is death [15:27] 'for he [God?] subjected everything under his feet' and when it says that 'everything has been subjected' it is clear that except him who subjected to him everything [15:28] when subjected to him is everything, then the Son himself will be subjected to him who subject everything to him so that God may be everything among everyone [15:29] for otherwise what will those baptized on behalf of the dead do; if actually the dead are not raised, why are they baptized on behalf of them? [15:30] and why are we in danger every hour? [15:31] everyday I die, your boasting, <i>adelphoi</i>, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord [15:32] if according to human I fought against wild animals in Ephesus, what benefit is to me? If dead are not raised, let us eat and let us drink, for tomorrow we die</p> <p>15:33b – 'bad association corrupt (morally) good habits'</p> <p>[15:36b-38 can also be a warrant] what you sow is not made alive unless it dies [15:37] and what you sow, you are not sowing the-body-to-become but a naked grain perhaps [εἰ τύχοι] of wheat or of some others [15:38] and God gives to it a body as he wanted, and to each of the seeds its own body</p> <p>15:39-41 – not every flesh is the same flesh but other [flesh] of humans, other flesh of domesticated animals, other flesh of birds, and other [flesh] of fish [15:40] and heavenly bodies, also earthly bodies, but on the one hand another glory of the heavenly, and on the other hand another [glory] of the earthly [15:41] another glory of sun, and another glory of moon, and another glory of stars, for star differs from stars in glory</p>		<p>15:33a – Do not be led astray</p> <p>15-34-38 – come to your senses [ἐκνήχαστε] justly and do not sin, for some have ignorance about God, to your shame I am saying to you [15:35] But some will say, 'How are the dead raised? And to what sort of body do they have? [15:36] senseless people [ἄφρων], what you sow is not made alive unless it dies [15:37] and what you sow, you are not sowing the-body-to-become but a naked grain perhaps [εἰ τύχοι] of wheat or of some others [15:38] and God gives to it a body as he wanted, and to each of the seeds its own body</p> <p>15:42-44 – in this way is the resurrection of the dead it is sown in corruption, it is raised in un-corruption [15:43] it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power [15:44] it is sown a <i>psychikon</i> body, it is</p>
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<p>15:45-49 – in this way it has been written, ‘the first human Adam became a soul that lives [ψυχὴν ζῶσαν], the last Adam a spirit that makes life [πνεῦμα ζωοποιῶν] [15:46] but not the first is spiritual but the physical, then the spiritual [15:47] the first human made out of earth, the second human out of heaven [15:48] as the man made of earth, such are those made of earth too, and as the heavenly man, such are those heavenly men also [15:49] and just as we have borne the image of the human made of earth, we also bear the image of the heavenly human.</p> <p>15:54d-55 – death is swallowed into victory [15:55] where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?</p> <p>16:1b – as I instructed to the <i>ekklēsiai</i> of Galatia</p>		<p>raised a <i>pneumatikon</i> body. If there is a <i>psychikon</i> body, there is also <i>pneumatikon</i> [body]</p> <p>15:50-54c – This I am saying, <i>adelphoi</i>, that flesh and blood are not able to inherit the kingdom of God, nor the corruption inherits the un-corruption [15:51] Behold, I am telling you a mystery: we all will not fall asleep, we all will be changed [15:52] in an indivisible time [ἐν ἰσχύει], in the blink of an eye, in the last trumpet sound, for it will trumpet and the dead will be raised uncorrupted and we will be changed [15:53] for this corrupted thing to put on un-corruption and this mortal thing to put on immortality [15:54c] when this corrupted thing put on un-corruption and this mortal thing put on immortality, then the logos that has been written will come to pass</p> <p>15:56-58 – the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law [15:57] but thanks [χάρις] to God who gives you victory through our Lord Jesus Christ [15:58] Therefore, my beloved <i>adelphoi</i>, become firm, immovable, abound in the work of the Lord always, knowing [εἰδότες] that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.</p> <p>16:1a – Now concerning the collections of money for the holy ones</p> <p>16:1-10c – in this way also you will do [16:2] on the first Sabbath each of you let him set aside himself when storing what he may prosper so that when I come collections may not be made [16:3] when I arrive, whom you approve, through the letters I will send them to bring your gift to Jerusalem [16:4] if it is worthwhile for me to go, they will go with me [16:5] I will go to you when</p>
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<p>16:10d – for he [Timothy] does the work of the Lord as I am.</p> <p>16:15c-d – the household of Stephanas that it is the first fruit of Archaia and into the service of the holy ones they devoted themselves to</p> <p>16:17b-18a – because they made complete your absence [16:18a] for they refreshed my spirit and yours</p>		<p>I pass through Macedonia, for I am passing through Macedonia [16:6] perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter so that you may help me on my journey wherever I go [16:7] for I do not want to see you now in passing, I hope to spend some time with you if the Lord permits [16:8] I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost [16:9] for a large and effective door has opened for me and there are many opponents [16:10a-c] If Timothy comes, watch out, so that fearlessly he may be with you</p> <p>16:11-15b – therefore let no one despise him. Help him on his journey in peace so that he may come to me. For I am waiting for him with the <i>adelphoi</i> [16:12] Now concerning Apollos the <i>adelphos</i>, many times I called him to my side so that he may come to us with the <i>adelphoi</i> but it was certainly was not his will that he comes now; he will come when he has opportunity [16:13] Watch out, stand firm in faith, be courageous [ἀνδρίζεσθε], be strong [16:14] let everything of yours become in love [16:15b] I call you to my side, <i>adelphoi</i> – you know that</p> <p>16:16-17a – so that you may be subjected to such people and to every co-worker and laborer [16:17a] I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus</p> <p>16:18b-24 – acknowledge therefore such people [16:19] the <i>ekklēsiai</i> of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca with the <i>ekklēsia</i> at their house greet you in the Lord a lot [16:20] all the <i>adelphoi</i> greet you. Greet each other with a holy kiss [16:21] I, Paul, the one greeting with my hand [16:22] if anyone does not like [φιλεῖ] the Lord, let him be <i>anathema</i>. <i>Maranatha</i> [16:23] the gift of the Lord Jesus with you [16:24] my love with you all in Christ Jesus.</p>
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Appendix 2 – Pairs of Opposition of Actions in 1 Corinthians

I. The Dialogic Level

(+) 1:10d – Paul urges the Corinthians to say the same thing	Corinthians (same thing → selves)
(-) 1:12, 3:4b-c – Corinthians say different things	Corinthians (different things → selves)
(+) 1:10e – Paul urges no <i>schismata</i>	Corinthians (no <i>schismata</i> → selves)
(-) 3:3b – jealousy (ζήλος) and strife among Corinthians	Corinthians (jealousy and strife → selves)
(-) 11:18 – <i>schismata</i> among Corinthians when gathering together	Corinthians (<i>schismata</i> → selves)
(+) 1:30a – the Corinthians in Christ belong to God	God (people → Christ)
(-) 3:4a – “I belong to nobody but Paul”	Paul’s group (people → Paul’s group)
(-) 3:4b – “I belong to nobody but Apollos”	Apollos’ group (people → Apollos’ group)
(+) 2:7a – “we” speak of hidden wisdom of God in mystery	“we” (hidden wisdom → the mature)
(-) 2:6 – “we” speak of wisdom not of this age or rulers of this age	- “we” (other wisdom → the mature)
(+) 2:13b – “we” speak of gifts in teaching of the spirit	spirit (spiritual words → “we”)
(-) 2:13a – “we” speak of gifts not in teaching of human wisdom	- human (human words → “we”)
(+) 2:15 – the spiritual examines all things	spiritual people (discernment → people)
(-) 2:14 – the physical cannot know (hence cannot examine)	physical people (no discernment → people)
(+) 3:9 b-c, 3:17d – Corinthians are the field, building, and temple of God	Corinthians (selves → God)
(-) 10:20c – Paul does NOT want Corinthians to become partners of demons	Corinthians (selves → demons)
(+) 3:17b – God corrupts yet saves those who corrupt the temple	God (corruption + salvation → people)
(-) 3:17a – people corrupt the temple of God	People (corruption → God)
(+) 3:18c – people should think that they are moron	people (moron → selves)
(-) 3:18b – people who think that they are wise in this age	people (wise → selves)
(+) 3:22-23 – all things belong to people, to Christ, and to God	Christ (people → God)
(-) 3:4a – “I belong to nobody but Paul”	Paul’s group (people → Paul’s group)
(-) 3:4b – “I belong to nobody but Apollos”	Apollos’ group (people → Apollos’ group)
(+) 4:1 – “we” are helpers of Christ and stewards	(vocation of Christ’s helper → “we”)
(-) 3:4 – “we” are helpers and stewards of Apollos and Paul	(vocation of Apollos & Paul’s helper → “we”)
(+) 4:3 – Paul doesn’t even judge himself	Paul (no judgment → Paul)
(-) 4:3a-b – a small thing for Paul to be judged by people	Corinthians or human courts (judgment → Paul)
(+) 4:5a – the Lord will judge when the time comes	Lord (judgment → people)
(-) 4:5a – people should not judge before the Lord comes	- people (no judgment → people)
(+) 4:14b – Paul wrote to admonish	Paul (admonition → Corinthians)
(-) 4:14a – Paul did not write to shame	- Paul (shaming → Corinthians)
(+) 4:14b, 10:14 – Paul addresses the Corinthians as beloved children	Paul (beloved <i>tekna</i> → Corinthians)
(-) 3:2d-3a – [implied] Paul addresses the Corinthians as babbling infants	Paul (babbling infants → Corinthians)
(+) 4:19c – Paul finds out about the power	Corinthians (power → Paul)
(-) 4:19b – Paul finds out about the logos	Corinthians (logos → Paul)

(+) 4:21c – Paul wishes to go with love and spirit of gentleness	Paul (love and spirit of gentleness → Corinthians)
(-) 4:21b – Paul doesn't want to go with rod	- Paul (rod → Corinthians)
(+) 5:1b – no such <i>porneia</i> among pagans	pagans (no such <i>porneia</i> → people)
(-) 5:1a – has such <i>porneia</i> among Corinthians	Corinthians (such <i>porneia</i> → people)
(+) 5:2b – the Corinthians should have mourned	Corinthians (mourning → Corinthians)
(-) 5:2a – the Corinthians were puffed up	- Corinthians (puff up → Corinthians)
(+) 5:3b – Paul is present in the spirit	spirit (presence → Paul)
(-) 5:3a – Paul is absent in the body	body (absence → Paul)
(+) 5:5a – hand the person who commits <i>porneia</i> over to satan	Corinthians (the person → satan)
(-) 5:1-2 – the Corinthians did not take out the person who commits <i>porneia</i>	- Corinthians (the person → <i>ekklesia</i>)
(+) 5:7a-b – get rid of the old yeast to become a new batch	Corinthians (new yeast → selves)
(-) 5:8a – do not celebrate with old yeast	- Corinthians (old yeast → selves)
(+) 5:8c – celebrate with unleavened bread of purity of motive and truth	Corinthians (unleavened bread → selves)
(-) 5:8b – do not celebrate with yeast of badness and wickedness	Corinthians (bad and wicked yeast → selves)
(+) 5:13b – Paul urged the Corinthians to take out wickedness	Paul (concerns about wickedness → Corinthians)
(-) 5:2 – the Corinthians were puffed up about the deed	Corinthians (proud about wickedness → Corinthians)
(+) 6:1b – should bring the lawsuits before the holy ones	Corinthians (lawsuit hearing → the holy ones)
(-) 6:1a – should not bring the lawsuits to the unjust	Corinthians (lawsuit hearing → the unjust)
(+) 6:5 – should bring the lawsuits before respected <i>adelphoi</i>	Corinthians (lawsuits hearing → <i>adelphoi</i>)
(-) 6:6 – should not bring the lawsuits to the <i>apistoi</i>	Corinthians (lawsuits hearing → <i>apistoi</i>)
(+) 6:7 – should not have lawsuit against each other	(no law suits → <i>adelphoi</i>)
(-) 6:6 – sue against each other	(law suits → <i>adelphoi</i>)
(+) 6:7 – the Corinthians be unjustified and robbed	Corinthians (being unjustified and robbed → Corinthians)
(-) 6:8 – the Corinthians unjustify and rob each other	Corinthians (unjustifying and robbing → Corinthians)
(+) 6:12a – [implied] certain things are beneficial to me	something (benefit → “I”)
(-) 6:12a – some things are not beneficial to me	something (no benefit → “I”)
(+) 6:12b – should not be mastered by anything	people (self-mastery → selves)
(-) 6:12a, c – all things are permitted	people (all permission → selves)
(+) 6:13a, 8:8a [implied], 10:31 – food will not offer us to God	“we” (glory → God)
(-) 6:13b, 8:8a – food will offer us to God	“we” (food → God), (food → “stomach” = “we”)
(+) 6:13d – the body is for the Lord	Corinthians (body → Lord)
(-) 6:13c – the body is not for <i>porneia</i>	Corinthians (body → <i>porneia</i>)
(+) 6:15c – should not make the members of Christ members of a <i>pornes</i>	Corinthians (members → Christ)
(-) 6:15c – [implied] make the members of Christ members of a <i>pornes</i>	Corinthians (members → <i>pornes</i>)
(+) 6:18b – every sin is outside the body	body (outside → sin) [relatively “+”]
(-) 6:18c – <i>porneia</i> sins into the body	body (inside → sin)
(+) 6:20b – glorify God with body	body (glory → God)
(-) 6:13c – [implied] the body is not for <i>porneia</i>	body (<i>porneia</i> → God)

(+) 7:4b - the husband has authority over his wife's body	wife (body → husband)
(-) 7:4a - the wife does not have authority over her own body	- wife (body → self)
(+) 7:4d - the wife has authority over her husband's body	husband (body → wife)
(-) 7:4c - the husband does not have authority over his body	- husband (body → self)
(+) 7:7b - God gives each his/her own gift	God (individual gift → each person)
(-) 7:7a - [implied] God does not give everyone same gift, as Paul's	- God (same gift → each person)
(+) 7:8 - it's good for the unmarried and widows to stay so	unmarried and widows (no marriage → self)
(-) 7:9 - let the unmarried and widows marry if they cannot control	unmarried and widows (marriage → self)
(+) 7:9c - it's better to get married	unmarried and widows (married result → selves)
(-) 7:9d - it's better not to get burnt	- unmarried and widows (burnt result → selves)
(+) 7:11, 27a - the <i>adelphoi</i> should not seek release from [<i>pistoi</i> ?] wives	<i>adelphos</i> (no divorce → <i>pistos</i> wife)
(-) 7:27b - the <i>adelphos</i> released from his [<i>pistos</i> ?] wife	<i>adelphos</i> (divorce → <i>pistos</i> wife)
(+) 7:12 - the <i>pistos</i> husband should not divorce his <i>apistos</i> wife	<i>pistos</i> husband (no divorce → <i>apistos</i> wife)
(-) 7:15c - [implied] the <i>pistos</i> husband let his <i>apistos</i> wife separated	<i>pistos</i> husband (divorce → <i>apistos</i> wife)
(+) 7:13 - the <i>pistos</i> wife should not divorce her <i>apistos</i> husband	<i>pistos</i> wife (no divorce → <i>apistos</i> husband)
(-) 7:15a-b - the <i>pistos</i> wife can let her <i>apistos</i> husband separated	<i>pistos</i> wife (divorce → <i>apistos</i> husband)
(+) 7:19b - keeping God's commandment is meaningful	(observance of God's commandment → selves)
(-) 7:19a - circumcision and non-circumcision are not meaningful	- (circumcision and non-circumcision → selves)
(+) 7:21b, 23b - if possible, become a freed person	receive freedom → selves)
(-) 7:23b - [implied] do not become slaves of people	(receive slavery → selves)
(+) 7:28d - people who don't get married will avoid fleshly tribulation	people (no fleshly tribulation → selves)
(-) 7:28a-c - people who get married will have flesh tribulation	people (fleshly tribulation → selves)
(+) 7:29d - from "now on" people who have wives won't have wives	husbands (no wives → selves)
(-) 7:29c - before "now" people who have wives have wives	husbands (wives → selves)
(+) 7:30a - those who bewail as if not wailing	wailers (no wailing → selves)
(-) 7:30a - [implied] those who bewail are bewailing	wailers (wailing → selves)
(+) 7:30b - those who rejoice as if not rejoicing	those who rejoice (no joy → selves)
(-) 7:30b - [implied] those who rejoice are rejoicing	those who rejoice (joy → selves)
(+) 7:30c - those who buy as if not possessing	buyers (no possession → selves)
(-) 7:30c - [implied] those who buy are possessing	buyers (possession → selves)
(+) 7:31a - those who use cosmos as if not using	users (no cosmos usage → selves)
(-) 7:31a - [implied] those who use cosmos are using	users (cosmos usage → selves)
(+) 7:32 - unmarried man concerns about the Lord's and pleasing Lord	unmarried man (please → Lord)
(-) 7:33 - married man concerns about the cosmos and pleasing wife	married man (please → wife)
(+) 7:34b - unmarried woman concerns about the Lord's to be holy	unmarried woman (concern → Lord)
(-) 7:34c - the married woman concerns about the cosmos and husband	married woman (concern → husband)
(+) 7:35c - Paul gives a proper matter to the Lord to Corinthians	Paul (proper and devoted matter → Corinthians)
(-) 7:35b - Paul does not want to throw a restraint to Corinthians	Paul (noose/restraint → Corinthians)

- (+) 7:38b – a man who does not marry his virgin do better man (virgin → self)
 (-) 7:38a – a man who marries his virgin does well - man (virgin → self)
- (+) 7:40 – a wife is happier if not remarried after her husband died wife (no remarrying → self)
 (-) 7:38 – a wife is free to remarry in the Lord after her husband died - wife (remarrying → self)
- (+) 8:1e – love builds up love (building up → people)
 (-) 8:1d – *gnosis* puffs up *gnosis* (puff up → people)
- (+) 8:3 – those who love God are known by God God (knowledge → self = God)
 (-) 8:2 – people who think they know actually do not yet know - people (claimed knowledge → selves = people)
- (+) 8:4-6 – We know that the “idol is nothing” and that “there is no God but one;” that there is one God, the Father ... and one Lord, Jesus Christ ... We (all this knowledge → self)
 (-) 8:7 – Others do not have this knowledge others (not all this knowledge → self)
- (+) 8:6 – for “us” there is one God the father and one Lord Jesus Christ (one God and one Lord → “us” = people)
 (-) 8:5 – there are many gods and many lords (many gods and many lords → “other” = people)
- (+) 8:9b, 10a – *gnosis* gives *exousia* to eat in idol’s temple *gnosis* (freedom/right → people)
 (-) 8:9c, 11a – *gnosis* and *exousia* cause stumbling and destruction *gnosis* (destruction → people)
- (+) 8:13, 10:32 – not eating idol-food to not scandalize people Paul (no scandal → people)
 (-) 8:9-11a – eating becomes a stumbling block to people “strong” people (stumbling block → people)
- (+) 9:2b – Paul is an apostle to the Corinthians Corinthians (recognition → Paul)
 (-) 9:2a – Paul may not be an apostle to other people others (no recognition → Paul)
- (+) 10:20b – earthly Israel offered sacrifice to God earthly Israel (sacrifice → God)
 (-) 10:20a – earthly Israel offered sacrifice to demons earthly Israel (sacrifice → demons)
- (+) 10:21a – “you are not able to drink the Lord’s cup and the demons’ cup” Corinthians (the Lord’s cup → selves)
 (-) 10:21a – “you are not able to drink the Lord’s cup and the demons’ cup” Corinthians (the demons’ cup → selves)
- (+) 10:21b – “not to share the Lord’s table and the demons’ table” Corinthians (the Lord’s table → selves)
 (-) 10:21b – “not to share the Lord’s table and the demons’ table” Corinthians (the demons’ table → selves)
- (+) 10:23a – [implied] not everything brings benefit (benefit → people)
 (-) 10:23a – not everything brings benefit (no benefit → people)
- (+) 10:23b – [implied] not everything builds up (edification → people)
 (-) 10:23b – not everything builds up (no edification → people)
- (+) 10:24b – people seek the thing of other Corinthians (thing of other → selves)
 (-) 10:24a – people seek their own thing Corinthians (own thing → selves)
- (+) 10:28-29 – do not eat for the sake of other’s conscience (not eating → selves)
 (-) 10:25, 27 – eat without judging anything for the sake of conscience (eating → Corinthians)
- (+) 11:4, 7a – [implied] when prophesying, no head covering honors the “head” man (no head covering → self)
 (-) 11:4 – when prophesying, head covering is a dishonor - man (head covering → self)
- (+) 11:5-6b, 6d – [implied] when prophesying, head covering honors the “head” woman (head covering → self)
 (-) 11:5-6b – when prophesying, no head covering dishonors the “head” - woman (no head covering → self)

- (+) 11:26 – proclaim the Lord’s death, remember it, receive the Covenant ... those corrected in the Lord’s Supper
(union of Lord’s death and covenantal vocation → selves)
- (-) 11:30 – those did not pass the test become weak, ill, and dead (weakness, ill, death → selves)
- (+) 11:31 – not judged if discerning at the Lord’s Supper discerning people (no judgment → selves)
- (-) 11:29 – judged if did not discern at the Lord’s Supper non-discerning people (judgment → selves)
- (+) 11:33 – receive from one another in coming together those receive from one another (Lord’s Supper → selves)
- (-) 11:20-21 – individually eating own supper those do not receive from one another (individual supper → selves)
- (+) 12:3c – people in the holy spirit say Jesus is Lord people in the holy spirit (Lordship → Jesus)
- (-) 12:3b – people saying anathema people not in the spirit of God (anathema → Jesus)
- (+) 13:1 – [implied] I should have love when speaking in tongues (love → self)
- (-) 13:1 – I become a roaring brass when speaking in tongues without love (roaring brass, clanging cymbal → self)
- (+) 13:2 – [implied] I prophesy, know all mysteries, and move mountains with love (love → self)
- (-) 13:2 – I prophesy, know all mysteries, and move mountains without love (nothing → self)
- (+) 13:3 – [implied] I give away all possession and body with love (love → self)
- (-) 13:3 – I give away all possession and body without love gain nothing (nothing → self)
- (+) 13:4a-b, 6b-8a – (endurance, mercy, rejoicing in truth, enduring all things, faithful/trusting all things, hoping all things, enduring all things, never falling → love)
- (-) 13:4c-6a – (jealousy, boasting, puff up, shaming, self-seeking, anger, calculating bad thing, rejoicing in injustice → love)
- (+) 13:13a – faith, hope, and love remain (eternity → love)
- (-) 13:8b-d – prophecy, tongue, *gnosis* will pass away (impermanence → prophecy, tongue, *gnosis*)
- (+) 14:3 – s/he who prophesies speaks to people prophet (understanding → people)
- (-) 14:2 – s/he who speaks in tongue does not speak to people tongue speaker (no understanding → people)
- (+) 14:3, 4b – the person prophesying builds up *ekklesia* prophet (building up → *ekklesia*)
- (-) 14:4a – the person speaking in tongue builds up himself tongue speaker (building up → self)
- (+) 14:5 – tongues and interpretation will build up *ekklesia* (building up → *ekklesia*)
- (-) 14:5 – [implied] tongue [alone] will not build up (no building up → *ekklesia*)
- (+) 14:6b – prophecy, teaching, *gnosis*, *apocalypse* will benefit (benefit → *ekklesia*)
- (-) 14:6a – speaking in tongues will not benefit (no benefit → *ekklesia*)
- (+) 14:16 – [implied] people will understand if blessing in mind blessing in the mind (understanding → people)
- (-) 14:16 – people will not understand if blessing spirit blessing in spirit (no understanding → people)
- (+) 14:20c – become mature in prudence Corinthians (maturity → selves)
- (-) 14:20a – do not become children in prudence Corinthians (childishness → selves)
- (+) 14:20b – be babbling infants in bad things (babbling infant in bad things → selves)
- (-) 3:3 – [implied] do not be babbling infants (babbling infant in good things → selves)
- (+) 14:22b – tongues are a sign for unbelievers people who speak tongues (sign → people)
- (-) 14:22a – tongues are not a sign for believers people who speak tongues (no sign → people)
- (+) 14:24-25 – prophecy causes conviction, judgment and worship (conviction, judgment, worship → unbelievers)
- (-) 14:23 – tongues cause unbelievers to think believers are mad (misunderstanding → unbelievers)

- (+) 14:37 – prophet or spiritual should acknowledge Paul’s command (acknowledgement → Paul)
 (-) 14:38 – people should not disregard Paul’s command as from the Lord (disregard → Paul)
- (+) 15:2a-b – Corinthians are saved by the gospel when they hold it fast gospel (salvation → Corinthians)
 (-) 15:2c – the Corinthians believed in vain if they don’t the gospel fast Corinthians (vanity → Corinthians)
- (+) 15:12a – Christ is preached as raised from the dead God (resurrection of the Christ → people)
 (-) 15:12b – Corinthians deny resurrection of the dead Corinthians (no resurrection of the dead → people)
- (+) 15:15 – [implied] we did not testify falsely that God raised Christ We (true testimony → God)
 (-) 15:15a-b – we testified falsely that God raised Christ We (false testimony → God)
- (+) 15:36 – “what you sow is not made alive unless it dies” death (life → what sown)
 (-) 15:36 – [implied] what you sow is not made alive unless it dies” no death (death → what sown)
- (+) 15:42b – raised in un-corruption the state of raised (un-corruption → people)
 (-) 15:42a – sown in corruption the state of not raised (corruption → people)
- (+) 15:43b – raised in glory the state of raised (glory → people)
 (-) 15:43a – sown in dishonor the state of not raised (dishonor → people)
- (+) 15:43d – raised in power the state of raised (power → people)
 (-) 15:43c – sown in weakness the state of not raised (weakness → people)
- (+) 15:44b – raised a spiritual body the state of raised (spiritual body → people)
 (-) 15:44a – sown a physical body the state of not raised (physical body → people)
- (+) 15:51c – we will all be changed time (change → “we”)
 (-) 15:51b – we will all not fall asleep time (sleep → “we”)
- (+) 15:57 – God gives victory through Lord Jesus Christ God (victory → people)
 (-) 15:56 – the sting of death is sin sin (death → people)
- (+) 16:7b – Paul wants to spend some time Paul (longer visit → Corinthians)
 (-) 16:7a – Paul does not want to visit in passing - Paul (short visit → Corinthians)
- (+) 16:10a-c – Corinthians should not let Timothy fearful Corinthians (respect → Timothy)
 (-) 16:11- Corinthians should not despise Timothy Corinthians (despise → Timothy)
- (+) 16:12d – Apollos will go to Paul when he has the opportunity Apollos (accompaniment → Paul)
 (-) 16:12c – Apollos is not willing to go to Paul now Apollos Apollos (no accompaniment → Paul)
- (+) 16:23 – people receiving the gift of the Lord Jesus (gift of the Lord Jesus → people)
 (-) 16:22a – people receiving the anathema (anathema → people)

II. The Warranting Level

- (+) 1:5 – Corinthians were enriched in everything in God God (gifts → Corinthians)
 (+) 4:7b – whatever Corinthians possess comes not from themselves God (gifts → Corinthians)
 (-) 4:7c – Corinthians acted as if possession is not the result of receiving - (self-generated possessions → selves)
- (+) 1:6 – testimony of Christ was confirmed among Corinthians for Paul (testimony of Christ → Paul)
 (-) 1:11 – strife reported by Chloe’s household Chloe’s household (strife report → Paul)

- (+) 1:9b – God called the Corinthians into the fellowship of Jesus Christ God (fellowship → Corinthians)
 (-) 1:12b-e – different groups grouped themselves different groups (groups → Corinthians)
- (+) 1:13b – Christ was crucified for you Christ (crucifixion → Corinthians)
 (-) 1:13b – Paul was not crucified for you [ellipsis] Paul (no crucifixion → Corinthians)
- (+) 1:13c – the Corinthians were baptized into the name of Jesus Jesus (baptism → Corinthians)
 (-) 1:13c – the Corinthians were not baptized into the name of Paul [ellipsis] Paul (no baptism → Corinthians)
- (+) 1:17b – Christ sent Paul to evangelize not with wisdom of logos Christ (mission of evangelism → Paul)
 (-) 1:17a – Christ did not send Paul to baptize Christ (mission of baptism → Paul)
- (+) 2:3 – Paul came in weakness, fear, and trembling Paul (weakness, fear, trembling → Corinthians)
 (-) 2:1 – Paul did not come with superiority of logos and wisdom Paul (eloquence and wisdom → Corinthians)
- (+) 2:2b – Paul wants to know Jesus and him crucified among Corinthians Paul (Christ and crucified → self)
 (-) 2:2a – Paul does not want to know any other thing among Corinthians - Paul (something else → self)
- (+) 2:4b – Paul’s logos and kerygma in demonstration of the spirit and power Paul (demonstration → Corinthians)
 (-) 2:4a – Paul’s logos and kerygma not in persuasion of wisdom - Paul (persuasive logos of wisdom → Corinthians)
- (+) 2:5b – *pistis* in the power of God Paul (God’s power → Corinthians)
 (-) 2:5a – *pistis* not in the wisdom of humans Paul (human’s wisdom → Corinthians)
- (+) 2:8 – no crucifixion, if the rulers of this age had received the hidden wisdom (no crucifixion → Jesus)
 (-) 2:8 – crucifixion because the rulers of this age received the hidden wisdom (crucifixion → Jesus)
- (+) 2:8c – [implied] wisdom of God glorifies the Lord [v. 8 – “lord of glory”] God (glory → Lord)
 (-) 2:8c – wisdom of the rulers of this age crucified the lord of glory rulers of this age (crucifixion → Lord)
- (+) 2:9d, 10a, 12c – God prepared and revealed to those who love him (revelation → those who love God)
 (-) 2:9 – those who do not love God receives not what God prepared (no revelation → those who do not love God)
- (+) 2:11b – the human’s spirit within her/him knows the things of her/him spirit of human (human things → human)
 (-) 2:11a – nobody knows the things of human human (no human things → human)
- (+) 2:11d – the spirit of God knows the things of God spirit of God (divine things → human)
 (-) 2:11c – nobody knows the things of God human (no divine things → human)
- (+) 2:12b – “we” received the spirit from God God (spirit from God → “we”)
 (-) 2:12a – “we” did not receive the spirit of the cosmos - cosmos (spirit of the cosmos → “we”)
- (+) 2:12b – “we” received the spirit from God God (spirit from God → people)
 (-) 2:14 – the physical cannot receive the things of the spirit of God the physical (not the spirit of God → people)
- (+) 3:1a – Paul could not address the Corinthians as spiritual people Paul (teaching → spiritual Corinthians)
 (-) 3:1b – Paul addressed the Corinthians as fleshly people, babbling infants - Paul (teaching → fleshly Corinthians)
- (+) 3:2b – Paul could not give solid food to the Corinthians Paul (solid food → Corinthians)
 (-) 3:2a – Paul gave milk to Corinthians Paul (milk → Corinthians)
- (+) 3:5d – Paul and Apollos are *diakonoi* Lord (*diakonoi* → Apollos and Paul)
 (-) 3:5a-b – [implied] the Corinthians misrecognize Paul and Apollos (someone important → Apollos and Paul)
- (+) 3:11b – only Jesus can set up foundation Jesus (foundation → people)
 (-) 3:11a – nobody can set up other foundation besides what is laid people (no foundation → people)

- (+) 3:14 – if anyone’s work remains, s/he will receive wage God (wage & salvation → people)
 (-) 3:15 – if anyone’s work burnt down, s/he will be punished, though saved God (punishment & salvation → people)
- (+) 4:8d – “we” and Corinthians became king Corinthians (kingship → Corinthians and “we”)
 (-) 4:8c – Corinthians alone became king Corinthians (kingship → selves)
- (+) 4:20b – the kingdom of God is in power (power → kingdom of God)
 (-) 4:20a – the kingdom of God is not in the logos (logos → kingdom of God)
- (+) 5:7c-d – Corinthians are unleavened paschal lamb (unleavened bread → people)
 (-) 5:6c – a little yeast ferments the entire batch of dough yeast (leavened bread → people)
- (+) 6:11b-d – Corinthians washed and justified in the Lord and God Lord and God (washing → Corinthians)
 (-) 6:11a – Corinthians not washed and were wicked (no washing → Corinthians)
- (+) 6:17 – the person who joined with the Lord is one spirit Corinthians (selves → Christ)
 (-) 6:16b – the person who joined with the *pornes* is one body Corinthians (selves → *pornes*)
- (+) 6:17 - Corinthians become one spirit with the Lord Lord (spirit → Corinthians)
 (-) 6:16c – Corinthians become one flesh with the *pornes* *pornes* (flesh → Corinthians)
- (+) 6:20a – the Corinthians were bought with a price Corinthians (ownership → God)
 (-) 6:19 – the Corinthians do not belong to themselves Corinthians (ownership → Corinthians)
- (+) 9:9, 10b – thresher threshes in hope to share people (food → ox)
 (-) 9:9 – you shall not muzzle an ox that is threshing people (muzzle → ox)
- (+) 9:10a – God is concerned about us God (concern → “we”)
 (-) 9:9 – God is not concern about the oxen God (no concern → oxen)
- (+) 9:12b, 15a – we did not make use of our authority/right among you “we” (no authority/right → selves)
 (-) 9:12a, 10b, 14 – others made use of their authority/right among you others (authority/right → selves)
- (+) 9:15c – Paul would rather die than to lose his boast (death → Paul)
 (-) 9:15d – Paul does not want anyone to empty him of his boast - other (empty of boast → Paul)
- (+) 9:16b - it is because of necessity that Paul evangelizes gospel (necessity → Paul)
 (-) 9:16a – it is not because of boasting that Paul evangelizes - gospel (boasting → Paul)
 (-) 9:16c – it is because of woe that Paul evangelizes - gospel (woe → Paul)
- (+) 9:17b – evangelism is a stewardship, unwillingly speaking + gospel (stewardship responsibility → Paul)
 (-) 9:17a – Paul would receive a wage if he evangelizes willingly - gospel (wage → Paul)
- (+) 9:18b – Paul wants to make the gospel free of charge to people Paul (gospel free of charge → people)
 (-) 9:18c – Paul does not want to make use of his evangelism wage - Paul (gospel not free for people → people)
- (+) 9:25c – we are in contest for an imperishable wreath (imperishable wreath → “we”)
 (-) 9:25b – the runners in contest for a perishable wreath - (perishable wreath → “we”)
- (+) 9:26a – Paul does not run without an aim (goal → Paul)
 (-) 9:26b – Paul is beating the air - (air → Paul)
- (+) 9:27a – Paul brings his body to subjection so that he is not disqualified Paul (qualification → self)
 (-) 9:27b – Paul does not want to be disqualified - Paul (disqualification → self)

- (+) 10:13a – no trial has grasped you, except the common one (common trial/temptation → Corinthians)
 (-) 10:13a – uncommon trial has grasped you - (uncommon trial/temptation → Corinthians)
- (+) 10:3-4 – “our fathers” ate and drank the spiritual food and drink Christ (spiritual food and drink → “our fathers”)
 (-) 10:8b-c – some of “our fathers” committed *porneia* and died *porneia* (death → “our fathers”)
 (-) 10:9b-c – some of “our fathers” tested God and destroyed by snakes testing (destruction → “our fathers”)
 (-) 10:10b-c – some of “our fathers” grumbled and destroyed grumbling (destruction → “our fathers”)
- (+) 10:33a – Paul pleases everyone in everything Paul (please → everyone)
 (-) 10:33b – Paul does not seek his own benefit - Paul (please → self)
 (-) 10:5, 7b-c – some of “our fathers” ate and drank and danced - “our fathers” (please → selves)
- (+) 11:6c – [implied] woman should not have hair cut off or shaven hair (honor → woman)
 (+) 11:15 – long hair gives woman glory because it covers long hair (glory → woman)
 (-) 11:6c – it is shameful for woman to have her hair cut off or shaven no hair (shame → woman)
- (+) 11:8a, 9a – in the beginning, the man is not created through the woman man (origin → woman)
 (-) 11:8b, 9b – [implied] in the beginning, woman is created through the man -woman (no origin → woman)
- (+) 11:11 – in the Lord man does not exist independently of woman woman (origin/authority → man)
 (+) 11:11 – in the Lord, woman does not exist independently of man man (origin/authority → woman)
 (-implied) 11:11 – NOT in the Lord, man exists independently of woman -woman (origin/authority -/→ man)
 (-implied) 11:11 – NOT in the Lord, woman exists independently of man -man (origin/authority -/→ woman)
 Note: These pairs of opposed actions can also be in the dialogic level
- (+) 11:14 – [implied] short hair, not covering the head [cf. 11:7a], is an honor to man short hair (honor → man)
 (-) 11:14 – nature shows that man with long hair is a dishonor because it covers long hair (dishonor → man)
- (+) 11:19 – *haireseis* is a necessity among Corinthians to reveal the approved ones (existence → *haireseis*)
 (-) 1:11 – strife among Corinthians (existence → strife)
- (+) 11:24a – Jesus gave thanks Jesus (thanksgiving → God)
 (-) 11:23 – people betrayed Jesus and God people (betrayal → God)
- (+) 13:10a – when the fulfillment comes, the partial will pass away future (fulfillment → “we”)
 (-) 13:10b – when the fulfillment comes, the partial will pass away present (partial fulfillment → “we”)
- (+) 13:11b – adult get rid of babbling infant stuffs adult (grown-up speech, thought, reasoning → self)
 (-) 13:11a – babbling infant act and think like a babbling infant infant (infant speech, thought, reasoning → self)
- (+) 13:12b – will see face to face future (face to face vision → self)
 (-) 13:12a – now see through the mirror in enigma present (mirror vision → self)
- (+) 13:12d – will know fully future (full knowledge → self)
 (-) 13:12c – now know partially present (partial knowledge → self)
- (+) 14:33b – God is of peace in all the *ekklesiai* God (peace → *ekklesiai* of the holy ones)
 (-) 14:33a – God is not of disorder God (disorder → *ekklesiai* of the holy ones)
- (+) 14:36b – the logos of God did not go to Corinthians only God (the logos of God → people)
 (-) 14:36a – the logos of God did not come from Corinthians Corinthians (the logos of God → people)
- (+) 15:10 – “by the gift of God I am who I am” – an apostle gift of God (Paul the apostle → *ekklesia* of God)
 (-) 15:9c – Paul persecuted the *ekklesia* of God - (Paul the persecutor → *ekklesia* of God)

(+) 15:22b – in Christ all will be made alive	Jesus (life → all people)
(-) 15:22a – in Adam all die [present tense]	Adam (death → all people)
(+) 15:30 – we are in danger every hour	(danger → “we”)
(-) 15:32d – let us eat and drink	(food and drink → “we”)
(+) 15:31a – I die every day (= I am raised everyday)	(resurrection → people)
(-) 15:29b – the dead are not raised [present tense]	(no resurrection → people)

Appendix 3 – The Story Progression in 1 Corinthians

I. The Dialogic Level (Paul’s interaction with the Corinthians)

- (+) 16:12d – Apollos goes to Paul when he has the opportunity (-) 16:12c – Apollos is not willing to go to Paul now
 (+) 16:7b – Paul wants to spend some time with the Corinthians (-) 16:7a – Paul does not want to visit in passing
 (+) 16:10a-c – should not let Timothy be afraid (-) 16:11- Corinthians should not despise Timothy
 (+) 4:14b – Paul wrote these things to admonish (-) 4:14a – Paul did not write to shame
 (+) 4:21c – Paul wants to visit with love and consideration (-) 4:21b – Paul did not want to visit with a rod
 (+) 1:10d – Paul urges Corinthians to say the same thing (-) 3:4b-c – the Corinthians say different things
 (+) 1:10e – Paul urges no *schismata* (-) 3:3b, 11:18 – jealousy/strife among Corinthians
 (+) 4:19c – Paul wants to find out about/to receive the power (-) 4:19b – Paul does not want talk
 (+) 6:1b, 5 – bring the lawsuits before the holy ones (-) 6:1a, 6 – bring the lawsuits to the unjust and the *apistoi*
 (+) 6:7 – should rather be unjustified and robbed (-) 6:8 – the Corinthians unjustify and rob each other
 (+) 6:7 – should not have lawsuit against each other (-) 6:6 – sue against each other
 (+) 7:21b, 23b – if possible, become a freed person (-) 7:23b – [implied] do not become slaves of people
 (+) 7:13 – the wife should not divorce her *apistos* husband (-) 7:15a-b – the wife divorces her *apistos* husband
 (+) 7:12 – the *pistos* husband should not divorce his *apistos* wife (-) 7:15c – the husband divorces his *apistos* wife
 (+) 7:11, 27a – should not seek release from [*pistoi*?] wives (-) 7:27b – *adelphos* released from his [*pistos*?] wife
 (+) 7:4b – the husband has authority over his wife’s body (-) 7:4a – the wife has authority over her own body
 (+) 7:4d – the wife has authority over her husband’s body (-) 7:4c – the husband has authority over his body
 (+) 7:9c – it is relatively better to get married (-) 7:9d – it is better not to get burnt
 (+) 7:38b – a man who does not marry his virgin do better (-) 7:38a – a man who marries his virgin does well
 (+) 7:40 – the widow is happier if not remarried (-) 7:38 – the widow is free to remarry in the Lord
 (+) 7:28d – the unmarried will avoid fleshly tribulation (-) 7:28a-c – the married people will have flesh tribulation
 (+) 7:34b – the unmarried woman focuses on the Lord (-) 7:34c – the married woman focuses on her husband
 (+) 7:32 – the unmarried man pleases the Lord (-) 7:33 – the married man pleases the wife
 (+) 7:8 – it’s good for the unmarried and widows to remain so (-) 7:9 – let the unmarried and widows marry if they...
 (+) 7:35c – Paul presents the Corinthians properly to the Lord (-) 7:35b – Paul does not want to restrain Corinthians
 (+) 7:19b – keeping the commandment is meaningful (-) 7:19a – circumcision and non-circumcision not meaningful
 (+) 7:7b – God gives each his/her own gift (-) 7:7a – [implied] God gives everyone the same gift
 (+) 5:5a – hand over the person who did *porneia* to satan (-) 5:1-2 – not taking out the person committing *porneia*
 (+) 5:13b – should take out wickedness (-) 5:2 – the Corinthians were puffed up about the deed
 (+) 5:1b – no such *porneia* among the Gentiles (-) 5:1a – has such *porneia* among Corinthians
 (+) 5:2b – should have mourned for such *porneia* (-) 5:2a – the Corinthians were puffed up
 (+) 6:15c – do not become a member of a *pornēs* (-) 6:15c – [implied] becoming a member of a *pornēs*
 (+) 6:13d – the body is for the Lord (-) 6:13c – the body is not for *porneia*
 (+) 6:20b – should glorify God with body (plural) (-) 6:13c – [implied?] the body is not for *porneia*
 (+) 2:7a – “we” speak of hidden wisdom of God in mystery (-) 2:6 – “we” speak of wisdom not of this age
 (+) 2:13b – “we” speak of gifts in the teaching of the spirit (-) 2:13a – “we” speak of gifts not in the human wisdom
 (+) 2:15 – the spiritual examines all things (-) 2:14 – the physical cannot know and examine
 (+) 14:37 – should acknowledge Paul’s command... (-) 14:38 – should not disregard Paul’s command ...
 (+) 9:2b – Paul is an apostle to the Corinthians (-) 9:2a – Paul may not be an apostle to other people
 (+) 5:3b – Paul is present in the spirit (-) 5:3a – Paul is absent in the body
 (+) 4:14b, 10:14 – the Corinthians are Paul’s beloved children (-) 3:2d-3a – Paul calls Corinthians babbling infants
 (+) 14:5 – tongues and interpretation build up the *ekklesia* (-) 14:5 – [implied] tongue [alone] will not build up
 (+) 14:22b – tongues are a sign for unbelievers (status?) (-) 14:22a – tongues are not a sign for believers

- (+) 14:16 – people understand if blessing with the mind (-) 14:16 – people will not understand if blessing in spirit
 (+) 14:24-25 – prophecy causes conviction and worship (-) 14:23 – speaking in tongues causes confusion
 (+) 14:3, 4b – the one prophesies builds up *ekklesia* (-) 14:4a – the one speaks in tongue builds up her/himself
 (+) 14:3 – the one prophesies speaks to people (-) 14:2 – the one speaks in tongue does not speak to people
 (+) 14:6b – prophecy... *gnosis*, *apocalypse* benefit Corinthians (-) 14:6a – speaking in tongues not beneficial
 (+) 14:20c – should become mature in prudence (-) 14:20a – do not become children in prudence
 (+) 8:13, 10:32 – should not scandalize people when eating idol-food (-) 8:9-11a – eating scandalize people
 (+) 8:9b, 10a – those with *gnosis* eat in idol’s temple (-) 8:9c, 11a – *gnosis* and *exousia* cause stumbling-destruction
 (+) 10:28-29 – should not eat idol-food because of conscience (-) 10:25, 27 – conscience judged when eating
 (+) 10:21 – should not drink the Lord’s cup and the demons’ cup (-) 10:21 – [implied] drink the Lord’s and demons’
 (+) 8:8; 6:13 – food will not offer us to God (-) 8:8 [implied] – food will offer us to God
 (+) 8:1e – love builds up (-) 8:1d – *gnosis* puffs up
 (+) 8:3 – those who love God are known by God (-) 8:2 – people who think they know actually do not yet know
 (+) 6:12, 10:23a, 10:23b – not everything is beneficial and edifying (-) 6:12ac, 10:23 – everything is permitted
 (+) 10:24b – should seek the thing of other (-) 10:24a – people seek their own thing
 (+) 11:33 – should receive from one another (-) 11:20-21 – individually eating own supper
 (+) 11:31 – not judged if discern the Lord’s body (-) 11:29 – judged if do not discern the Lord’s body
 (+) 11:26 – should proclaim the Lord’s death ... the Covenant (-) 11:30 – those fail the test become weak, ill, dead
 (+) 16:23 – should receive the gift of the Lord (-) 16:22a – people receive anathema
 (+) 3:17b – God corrupts yet saves those who corrupt the temple (-) 3:17a – people corrupt the temple of God
 (+) 3:9 b-c, 3:17c – Corinthians are God’s building/temple (-) 10:20c – Corinthians should not be demon-partners
 (+) 4:1 – Paul and other apostles are helpers of Christ (-) 3:4 – Corinthians are helpers of Apollos, or Paul
 (+) 4:3 – Paul does not even judge himself (-) 4:3a-b – it’s a small thing for Paul to be judged
 (+) 3:18c – the Corinthians should think that they are fools in God (-) 3:18b – people think that they are wise
 (+) 3:22-23 – all things belong to the Corinthians, Christ, and God (-) 3:4a-b – I belong to Paul, or Apollos
 (+) 1:30a – the Corinthians are in Christ because of God (-) 1:12 – I belong to Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or Christ
 (+) 7:29d – from “now on” those having wives as if not having wives (-) 7:29d – those having wives have wives
 (+) 7:30a – from “now on” those wailing as if not wailing (-) 7:30a – those wailing are bewailing
 (+) 7:30b – from “now on” those rejoicing as if not rejoicing (-) 7:30b – those rejoicing rejoice
 (+) 7:30c – from “now on” those buying as if not possessing (-) 7:30c – those possessing what they buy
 (+) 7:31a – from “now on” those using the cosmos as if not using (-) 7:31a – those using the cosmos are using
 (+) 8:4-6 – We know that the “idol is nothing,” that “there is no God (-) 8:7 – Others do not have this knowledge
 but one,” and that there is one God, the Father ... and one Lord, Jesus Christ...
 (+) 8:6 – for “us” there is one God...and one Lord Jesus Christ (-) 8:5 – there are many gods and many lords
 (+) 6:12b – should not be mastered by anything (-) 6:12a, c – all things are permitted
 (+) 5:8c – celebrate with unleavened bread of purity.... (-) 5:8b – do not celebrate with yeast of wickedness
 (+) 5:7a-b – get rid of the old yeast to become a new batch (-) 5:8a – do not celebrate with old yeast
 (+) 12:3c – people in the Holy Spirit say Jesus is Lord (-) 12:3b – people say anathema concerning the Lord
 (+) 15:51c – “we” will all be changed (-) 15:51b – we will all not fall asleep
 (+) 15:2a-b – the Corinthians are saved if hold fast to the gospel (-) 15:2c – the Corinthians believe in vain otherwise
 (+) 15:15 – [implied] we did not testify falsely that God raised Christ (-) 15:15a-b – we testified falsely
 (+) 15:12a – Christ is preached as raised from the dead (-) 15:12b – Corinthians say there is no resurrection
 (+) 15:42b – raised in un-corruption (-) 15:42a – sown in corruption
 (+) 15:43b – raised in glory (-) 15:43a – sown in dishonor
 (+) 15:43d – raised in power (-) 15:43c – sown in weakness
 (+) 15:44b – raised a spiritual body (-) 15:44a – sown a physical body
 (+) 15:57 – God gives victory through Lord Jesus Christ (-) 15:56 – the sting of death is sin
 (+) 15:36 – “what you sow is not made alive unless it dies” (-) 15:36 – what you sow is dead if it does not die
 (+) 13:3 – I give away possession and body with love (-) 13:3 – I give away ... without love gain nothing

- (+) 13:2 – I prophesy, know mysteries, move mountains with love (-) 13:2 – I prophesy ... without love
 (+) 13:1 – I speak in tongues with love (-) 13:1 – I become a roaring brass when I speak in tongues without love
 (+) 13:13a – faith, hope, and love will remain (-) 13:8b-d – prophecy, tongue, *gnosis* will pass away

II. The Warranting Level (The Past and Future Stories)

- (+) 4:8d – Paul wished to be king with the Corinthians (-) 4:8c – the Corinthians became king by themselves
 (+) 3:2b – Paul wished to give solid food to the Corinthians (-) 3:2a – Paul gave milk to Corinthians
 (+) 3:1a – Paul wished to address the Corinthians as spiritual (-) 3:1b – Paul addressed Corinthians as fleshly
 (+) 13:11b – an adult should get rid of the infant thinking (-) 13:11a – a babbling infant act and think like an infant
 (+) 11:14 – [implied] short hair, not covering the head, is an honor to man (-) 11:14 – man with long hair is a shame
 (+) 11:6c – [implied] woman not to have the hair cut off (-) 11:6c – it is shameful for woman to have the hair cut off
 (+) 10:33a – Paul seeks to please everyone in everything (-) 10:33b – Paul does not seek his own benefit
 (+) 11:19 – *haireseis* are necessary to reveal the approved (-) 1:11 – strife among the Corinthians
 (+) 11:11 – in the Lord, woman not independent of man (-) 11:11 – [implied] woman independent of man
 (+) 11:11 – in the Lord, man not independent of woman (-) 11:11 – [implied] man independent of woman
 (+) 11:8a, 9a – man is not from the woman (-) 11:8b, 9b – [implied] woman created through the man
 (+) 14:36b – the *logos* of God did not go to some believers only (-) 14:36a – the *logos* of God is not from believers
 (+) 14:33b – God is the God of peace in all the *ekklesiai* (-) 14:33a – God is not of disorder
 (+) 3:14 – if one’s work remains, one receives the wage (-) 3:15 – if one’s work burnt down, one suffers but saved
 (+) 9:15c – Paul would rather die than to lose his boast (-) 9:15d – Paul does not want his boast be emptied
 (+) 9:26a – Paul does not want to run without an aim (-) 9:26b – Paul is beating the air
 (+) 9:27a – Paul trains his body to be qualified (-) 9:27b – Paul does not want to be disqualified
 (+) 9:25c – “we” compete for an imperishable wreath (-) 9:25b – the runners run for a perishable wreath
 (+) 9:18b – Paul makes the gospel free of charge (-) 9:18c – Paul does not want to make use of his *exousia*
 (+) 9:12b, 15a – “we” did not use our *exousia* among you (-) 9:12a, 10b, 14 – others made use of their *exousia*
 (+) 9:9, 10b – thresher threshes in the hope to share (-) 9:9 – you shall not muzzle an ox that is threshing
 (+) 3:5d – Paul and Apollos are [only] *diakonois* of God (-) 3:5a-b – believers misrecognize Paul and Apollos
 (+) 9:17b – evangelism is a stewardship... (-) 9:17a – Paul receiving a wage if he evangelizes willingly
 (+) 9:16b – Paul evangelizes because of “necessity” (-) 9:16a – Paul does not evangelize because of boasting
 (-) 9:16c – woe is to Paul if he does not evangelize
 (+) 2:4b – Paul’s *logos*... in the spirit and power (-) 2:4a – Paul’s *logos*... not in persuasion of wisdom
 (+) 2:3 – Paul went to the Corinthians in weakness... (-) 2:1 – Paul did not go with the superiority of *logos*...
 (+) 2:2b – Paul decided to know nothing but Jesus Christ (-) 2:2a – Paul does not want to know any other thing
 (+) 1:17b – Christ sent Paul to evangelize... (-) 1:17a – Christ did not send Paul to baptize
 (+) 6:17 – believers become one spirit with the Lord (-) 6:16b – believers become one body with the *pornēs*
 (+) 6:17 – believers should be joined with the Lord (-) 6:16c – believers become one flesh with the *pornēs*
 (+) 6:11b-d – believers were washed... in the Lord and God (-) 6:11a – [implied] believers were not washed...
 (+) 6:20a – believers were bought with a price (-) 6:19 – believers do not belong to themselves
 (+) 5:7c-d – believers are unleavened because of the paschal lamb (-) 5:6c – a little yeast ferments the entire dough
 (+) 1:13c – believers baptized into the name of Jesus (-) 1:13c – believers not baptized into the name of Paul
 (+) 2:5b – the *pistis* should be in the power of God (-) 2:5a – the *pistis* not in the wisdom of humans
 (+) 4:20b – the kingdom of God is in the power (-) 4:20a – the kingdom of God is not in the *logos*
 (+) 3:11b – only Jesus can set up the foundation (-) 3:11a – nobody can set up the foundation
 (+) 2:8 – no crucifixion, if received the hidden wisdom (-) 2:8 – crucifixion when not receiving the hidden wisdom
 (+) 2:8c – [implied] the wisdom of God glorifies the Lord (-) 2:8c – the wisdom of the rulers crucified the Lord
 (+) 2:11d – the spirit of God knows the things of God (-) 2:11c – nobody knows the things of God
 (+) 2:11b – only the human’s spirit knows her/his own things (-) 2:11a – nobody knows the things of human

- (+) 2:12b – receiving the spirit of God to recognize God’s gifts (-) 2:12a – not receiving the spirit of the cosmos
 (+) 2:12b – “we” received the spirit from God (-) 2:14 – the physical cannot receive the things of the spirit of God
 (+) 15:10 – “by the gift of God I am who I am” – an apostle (-) 15:9c – Paul persecuted the *ekklesia* of God
 (+) 2:9d, 10a, 12c – God prepared for those who love God (-) 2:9 – those who do not love God do not receive
 (+) 13:12d – when the end comes, I will know fully (-) 13:12c – now I know partially
 (+) 13:12b – when the end comes, I will see face to face (-) 13:12a – now I see through the mirror in enigma
 (+) 13:10a – when the end comes, the partial will pass away (-) 13:10b – when the end comes, the partial is gone
 (+) 10:13a – no trial has grasped you, except the common one (-) 10:13a – uncommon trial has grasped you
 (+) 1:9b – God called believers into the fellowship of Jesus (-) 1:12b-e – different groups grouped themselves
 (+) 15:22b – in Christ all will be made alive (-) 15:22a – in Adam all die [present tense]
 (+) 15:31a – Paul dies every day (= Paul is raised everyday) (-) 15:29b – the dead are not raised [present tense]
 (+) 15:30 – “we” are in danger every hour (-) 15:32d – let us eat and drink
 (+) 11:24a – Jesus thanked God when breaking the bread (-) 11:23 – people betrayed Jesus and God
 (+) 1:13b – Christ was crucified for people (-) 1:13b – Paul was not crucified for people
 (+) 1:6 – Christ’s testimony was confirmed among believers (-) 1:11 – strife was reported by Chloe’s household
 (+) 1:5 – believers were enriched in everything in God (-) 4:7c – believers acted as if receiving nothing from God
 (+) 10:3-4 – “our fathers” ate the same spiritual food (-) 10:8b-c – some of “our fathers” committed *porneia* and die
 (-) 10:9b-c – some of “our fathers” tested God and destroyed by snakes
 (-) 10:10b-c – some of “our fathers” grumbled and destroyed
 (+) 9:10a – God is concerned about people (-) 9:9 – God is not concerned about the oxen

Chapter 4 – A Semantic Analysis of Paul’s Vision of Love in 1 Corinthians Heteronomy, Vigilance, and Fidelity

This is the paradox of love: where there is much love there is much pain; where there is little love there is little pain ... In love heaven and earth coexist. In it good and evil struggle for domination. And in love the divine purges and redeems the love that is self-serving and abusive.¹ – C. S. Song

I. Introduction

This chapter presents a semantic analysis of Paul’s notion of love in 1 Corinthians that seeks to elucidate Paul’s vision of love as related to his convictional experience. On the basis of such a textual analysis and interpretation of its results, we will argue that Paul’s experience and vision of love are non-objectifying: charismatic, messianic, performative, and typological. This heteronomous view of love is expressed in Paul’s text by the fact that love is always presented in the middle-voice mode of a “present progressive tense,” as Franz Rosenzweig points out in his remarkable description of love as “being in love” – a common description of the heteronomous experience love.² Rosenzweig continues: “Love balks at making a portrait of the lover; the

¹ C. S. Song, *The Believing Heart: An Invitation to Story Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 267.

² As Rosenzweig points out this middle-voice mode is a characteristic of discourse about everyday experience of love: “the love of the lover is implanted in the moment of its origin, and because it is so, it must deny all other moments, it must deny all of life; in its essence, it is unfaithful, for its essence is in the moment; and so, in order to be faithful, it must renew itself every moment, and every moment must become the first glance of love. Only through this totality in every present moment can it grasp the whole of created life, but through this, it really can do it; it can do it by traversing this whole with ever new meaning and by shining its rays and its life upon now this and now that single thing – a progress that begins anew every day, and never needs to come to its end; at every moment, because it is wholly present, it thinks it has reached the height beyond which there is none higher – and yet, each new day it learns again that it has never loved as much as today the part of life which it loves; every day love loves a little more that which it loves. This constant increase is the form of permanence in love, in that and because it is the most extreme non-permanence and its fidelity is devoted solely to the present, singular moment: from the deepest infidelity, and from this alone, it can thus become permanent fidelity; for only the non-permanence of the moment renders it capable of living every moment as new and thus of carrying the flame of love through the vast nocturnal- and twilight-kingdom of created life. It increases because it does not want to cease being new; it wants always to be new in order to be able to be permanent; it can only be permanent by living entirely in the non-permanent, in the moment, and it must be permanent so that the lover may be not merely the empty bearer of an ephemeral emotion, but living soul. This, too, is the way God loves.” See Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*. Translated by Barbara E. Galli (London and Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 176.

portrait would harden the living face into a dead one.”³ This hardening of “the living face into a dead one” also applies to the portrait making of the beloved. Love as “being in love” is an ongoing, living, and dynamic relationship that embodies an intertwining of the past, present, and the future.⁴ Such a love transforms the past into the present with hope and faith for what is yet to come. This quality of love echoes the notion of typology as presented in chapter 2 and its manifestation, as part of the Narrative Semantics (see section 3.3.a in the Methodological Appendix)

II. A Semantic Analysis of Paul’s Vision of Love in 1 Corinthians

When the story progression is established as we did in chapter 3 for the dialogic level and when the narrative/syntactic significance of each key theme (understood in a functionalist way, since it makes the story progress) is made clear, we need to recognize the semantic value of each key theme as represented by the qualifications that enable the subjects to perform their actions as compared with the qualifications of comparable (in relation of implication) or contrary or contradictory subjects. In this chapter, since we want to flesh out Paul’s interaction with the Corinthian believers in his notion of love, we will focus on the semiotic squares formed by the qualifications of the subjects that make the story progress, analyzing them to flesh out the fundamental pattern that undergirds Paul’s system of convictions. But the analysis of these squares is not mechanical; it is an exploration of the figurative dimensions of 1 Corinthians,

³ Ibid., 177.

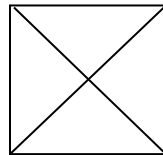
⁴ Every saying of “I love You” is already doubly late as an expression of love. Yet it redresses the lateness. The saying of “I love You” expresses one’s feeling toward the beloved. The mediation of language, however, cannot capture the time and the immediate feeling of “I love You.” Hence, the saying of “I love You” is doubly late. Yet, the saying of “I love You” remedies the lack of love of the lover towards the beloved. As such, the saying restores the past. It promises that “I will love You more than I did in the past.”

which demands much literary sensitivity. In the following semiotic squares, we will mainly focus on the ones that mention love.

(i) Semiotic Square 1: Performative-Love

In chapter 3, we have noted that we begin our story progression with Paul saying that love is “the most excellent way” (καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὁδὸν) (12:31b; cf. 14:1; Rom. 8:35-39). The first two pairs of opposed actions – pairs of syntactic oppositions – are (from the bottom up): (+) 1 Cor. 13:13a (faith, hope, and love will remain) vs. (-) 13:8b-d (prophecy, tongue, *gnosis* will pass away) and (+) 13:1 (I speak in tongues with love) vs. (-) 13:1 (I become a roaring gong or a clanging cymbal when I do not speak in tongues with love). Organized as semantic oppositions,⁵ these produce the following semiotic square.

13:2 – (implied) I should have love when I have prophecies, know all mysteries and all *gnosis*, and have all *pistis* to remove mountains (S₁)



13:1 – I become a roaring gong or a clanging cymbal when I do not speak in tongues with love (S₂)

13:1 – (implied) I should have love when I speak in tongues (non-S₂)

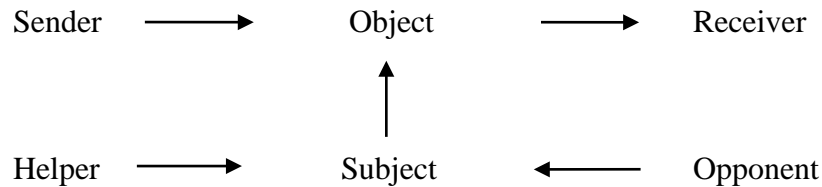
13:8b-d – prophecy, tongue, and *gnosis* will pass away (non-S₁)

The above semiotic square might appear for many readers as difficult to interpret. But a few explanations are enough to show how useful this conceptualization of semantic relations is, in the same way that the logical square has been in philosophy/metaphysics for centuries. It is a matter of analyzing the values at the corners of semiotic square. For this purpose, I use the “actantial model” to see how an action is (or is not) performed (see section 3.3.c in the Methodological Appendix).⁶ If the “subject” is to give an “object” to the receiver, then we

⁵ To use syntactic oppositions for our semantic analysis, we shift the “polemical axis” upward (as we explained in note 20 in chapter 3).

⁶ This syntactic analysis, manifested by the actantial model, has the character of semantics, since the “sender” is often assumed and not mentioned and the “opponent” and “helper” can be mood, bodily drive, and feeling that

should examine who are the “helper” and the “opponent” that affect the execution of an action, which include such factors as having or not having appropriate knowledge and ability of different kinds; we should as well examine who are the “sender” and the “receiver” that affect having or not having an appropriate “vision” (conveyed by the “sender”) and “will” established by the “subject’s” relationship to the “receiver” (often defined by the “sender”).



In 13:2, as one’s knowledge, ability, will, and vision (as related to prophecy, mysteries, *gnosis*, and *pistis*) are qualified by love, they should embody and express love. Without love as the “helper,” the “subject” cannot give the “gifts of prophecy, knowing all mysteries and all *gnosis*, and having all the *pistis* to remove the mountains with love”⁷ to the “receiver.” So, even if the “subject” may “have” the gifts, as long as s/he does “not have” love, the gifts lose their significance and signification.

The contrast between “having” and “not having” is ironic. If it is the same spirit who gives the gifts (12:4), if God gives to those who love God (2:9), and if it is by the spirit from God that believers perceive the gifts of God (2:12), then it does not make sense for believers to perform the gifts without “having” love. When the gifts are severed from their source, they become superficial and distorted. The performance of the gifts, as a result, renders the “subject”

cannot be articulated, which then can also be the “sender” that cause the “subject” to give an “object” to the “receiver.”

⁷ It is important to note that *pistis* can be defined in terms of (1) “believing self-evident truths and fundamental narrative semantics,” (2) “believing a truth on authority: the ‘discursive semantic’ dimension of believing,” (3) ‘believing as thinking that something is true: the ‘syntactic’ dimension of believing.” See Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts: Greimas’s Structural Semiotics and Biblical Exegesis* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 105-215.

meaning-less. Paul writes: ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐδέν εἰμι (“but if I do not have love, I am nothing”). The “subject” ends up as a “nothing,” when s/he “has” the gifts but not the love.

The gifts are not the “root problem” – that which causes the problems. The root problem is the lack of love. We are not told what cause the lack of love. But, if God gives to those who love God, then the relationship between believers and God and Christ have probably deteriorated. In exhorting believers to “have” love, Paul wants them to return to the fundamental that marks their relationship with God and Christ. He does not want them to focus on the manifestations of the spirit (i.e., the gifts) at the expense of the spirit that gives the gifts (12:7). The gifts that are supposed to express love to the “receiver” should not end up replacing love.

The intertwining of love and the gifts of prophesying, knowing, and having all *pistis* to remove the mountains delineates a love that is performative, charismatic, and messianic. Paul not only makes it clear that the love is beyond the order of logic (cf. 2:9; 8:3).⁸ He also ties it to a God who gives to those who love God. This gift, moreover, is messianic or Christ-oriented (2:7-12). Without receiving the spirit from God, believers cannot see and receive the gifts of God. Through love, believers will not mistake the wisdom and power of God for the weakness and foolishness of God, and crucify the Lord of glory.

This charismatic and messianic character of love comes to the fore in the gifts mentioned in 13:2. Prophecy, all the knowledge of mystery,⁹ and all the *pistis* to remove the mountains are

⁸ As Paul cites Isaiah 64:4 in 1 Cor. 2:9 (in the warranting level) to say that what God has prepared for those who love God cannot be seen by the eyes, heard by the ears, and understood by the heart. In other words, the gifts of God for those who love God cannot be received in the order of logic and reasoning. Thus, it is crucial that “we received not the spirit of the cosmos but the spirit from God so that we might know the gifts given by God to us” (2:12).

⁹ The relationality of “knowing” is significant because in 13:2 Paul talks about “knowing” all mysteries. Two words capture our attention. First, the word “knowing” (οἶδα) that underscores a sense of intimacy. *BDAG* shows that the word can mean (1) “to have information about,” (2) “be intimately acquainted with or stand in a close relation to,” (3) “to know/understand how,” (4) “to grasp the meaning of something,” (5) “to remember, *recollect, recall, be aware of,*” and (6) “to recognize merit, *respect, honor*” (*BDAG*, 693-94). As Seesemann points out, it is hard to establish a substantial distinction between γινώσκω and οἶδα. See Heinrich Seesemann, “οἶδα,” in *TDNT* 5: 116-19. Secondly, the word “mysteries.” If “mystery” (μυστήριον) means (1) “the unmanifested or private counsel of God”

not only beyond human ability and grasp, but are also gifts impossible to have without God, as the modifier “all” highlights. Actually when the gifts are performed without love, the giver becomes *meaningless*.

The gifts point to the spirit and one’s relationship with God and Christ. The gifts are not owned by believers, who cannot use and manipulate them for their own gains. The gifts are given by the same spirit for the common good (12:4, 7). Since each receives her/his gift from the same spirit who assigns the gifts accordingly (12:11), believers must not rank and divide the gifts as they did by dividing the church into factions (1:12).¹⁰ When believers only focus on the gifts, they miss out the spirit who gives the gifts. As they rank the gifts, they discriminate against other gifts. Consequently, not only do they objectify the gifts, they also objectify others who receive different gifts as well as the spirit who gives the gifts. Here, we can see why Paul stresses the temporality of the gifts as he foregrounds love as the fundamental ingredient that characterizes them. Indeed, if it is in love that God prepares for those who love God, then love is that which makes believers meaning-full.

In light of this intertwining relation of love, spirit, and gift, it is odd that one could have received gifts without love. Either one has never loved God, which then renders the gifts from God suspicious, or one loses love after receiving the gifts. Whatever the scenario might be, love undergirds the gifts and is their foundation. Without love, the gifts are empty and superficial. When the love (of God) does not undergird the gift, the gift of God becomes incomprehensible. What God gives to those who love God can only be received in love and the spirit from God.

and (2) “that which transcends normal understanding” (*BDAG*, 662) – the relationality and heteronomy of μυστήριον are apparent in verses where the word appears (1 Cor. 2:1, 7; 4:1; 13:2; 14:2; and 15:51) – then how can we speak of knowing something that is unknowable, let alone knowing *all* the mysteries? Such a “knowing” is only possible in an intimate relationship with God (2:10-13). Indeed, if Paul thinks that whatever believers have come from God (4:7; cf. 1:5-7, 8:6; 2 Cor. 5:18; Rom. 11:36), then the relationality and heteronomy of speaking in tongues, prophecy, “knowing,” and *pistis* in 1 Cor. 13:2 come to fore.

¹⁰ Concerning this factionalism, Paul uses a similar language. He argues that it is the Lord who assigns to each person her/his mission (3:4-8).

This is why those who speak in tongues without love become a roaring gong or a clanging cymbal.¹¹ Their speaking in tongues becomes a noise. In not communicating clearly, believers leave a bad impression about the gift of speaking in tongues. It causes people to misunderstand the church of God and God (14:23); after all, it is the spirit who bestows the gifts to believers (12:10-11). It is noteworthy that Paul is not against speaking in tongues (14:39); he himself speaks in tongues (14:18-19). Rather, if to speak in tongues is to speak to God (14:2, 28), then believers should not speak in tongues to each other. It can mislead unbelievers who visit the church to think that believers are out of their mind (μαίνεσθε) (14:23). In fact, if to speak in tongues is to speak mysteries by the spirit (14:2), then those who speak in tongues are not totally in control of their gift. If no one can know the things of human except the spirit of human that is in her/him (2:11), then the gift of speaking in tongues actually de-subjectifies those who speak in tongues. The one who speaks in tongues is both the “subject” and the “receiver” of the gift, as her/his spirit speaks through her/his body.

The gift of speaking in tongues is a sign for unbelievers (14:22), but it is a sign of communicating with God. As a sign of communicating with God, the confusion caused by the speaking in tongues in public can be misunderstood as attributed to the doing of God. Paul thus

¹¹ While Conzelmann suggests that they could be instruments used in the ecstatic cults – see Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Translated by James W. Leitch (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 221 – Harris argues that the *chalkos* is not a musical instrument or device but an acoustical device used in the theater for echoing and resonating purposes. As such, the use of *chalkos* aims to show the emptiness and meaninglessness of the speaking in tongues. Harris writes, “Theaters throughout Italy were originally largely constructed of wood, and hence had reverberative properties suitable for sound propagation. In case of need the actor could turn to the large hung double doors and project his voice back to the audience. But as wood gave way in the first century B.C. to stone construction, the theaters became acoustically dead and better ways were needed to project voices and music over the theater. About this time most of the cities of Italy, as well as Greece proper, adopted resonating jars, which were large containers cast of bronze or, in the case of poorer communities fired earthen ware, which were located in niches around the periphery of the back of the theater.” See William Harris, “Echoing Bronze,” *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 70 (1981): 1184; idem., “‘Sounding Brass’ and Hellenistic Technology: Ancient Acoustical Device Clarifies Paul’s Well-Known Metaphor,” *Biblical Archaeology Society Review* 8/1 (1982) 38–41; William W. Klein, “Noisy Gong or Acoustic Vase? A Note on 1 Corinthians 13.1,” *New Testament Studies* 32 (1986) 286–89. Contra Harris and Klein, see Anatheia Portier-Young, “Tongues and Cymbals: Contextualizing 1 Corinthians 13:1,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 35 (2005) 99–105.

has to clarify that God is not a God of disorder but of peace (14:33). Such a sign, moreover, could carry certain social and symbolic capitals, as it can imply that God acknowledges believers by giving them such gifts.¹² Therefore, in order to make public this private and personal conversation with God, believers should at least get God's approval. They need to interpret it properly. This basic courtesy is missing among believers. Thus for Paul, even if the gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of speaking in tongues, since it can edify the church (14:3-5), the one who prophesies still needs to assume responsibility for what s/he says (14:32).

Each gift is a communal gift; it is not a self-centered gift used for one's own agenda. Each gift is the fruit of the believers' love-relationship with God as God gives to those who love God (cf. Gal. 5:22). Love, as such, marks and sustains the relationship between those believers and God. Because of love, believers are always already in relations with the others as they are called by God into the fellowship of Jesus (1 Cor. 1:9). Without being concerned for the others, the one who speaks in tongues becomes a roaring gong or a clanging cymbal. The gift of God cannot be possessed and manipulated; it is a double-edged sword, depending on how believers use it. In emphasizing that one must speak in tongues with love, Paul suggests that love can prevent the misuse of the gift. It appears that love is other-oriented in the sense that it makes one concerned with the situation of her/his speaking in tongues. The gift of speaking in tongues, as such, is context sensitive; it is not appropriate for all situations.

Let us move to the next value of the semiotic square, the implied non-S₂ (13:1, those who speak in tongues should have love), which is in a contradictory relation with S₂ (13:1, those who

¹² For different critical interpretations that seek to address the contradiction in 14:22-23, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000), 1122-127.

speak in tongues without love are a roaring gong or a clanging cymbal).¹³ As non-S₂ is in a relation of implication with S₁ (those with gifts should have love), we can see that for Paul, love indeed helps believers not to objectify and use the gifts of God for their own gains and purposes. The gifts of prophecy, of knowing all mysteries and *gnosis*, and of having all *pistis* to move mountains are not an end in themselves. They point to a relation between God and believers. The gift is a relation. It is a transformative relation between God and believers as well as among believers. The gifts, as such, signify a responsibility; more specifically a responsibility to respond to God and others as well as the responsibility to enable others to respond to the gifts. Here, a sense of other-orientation that marks the gifts becomes prominent. The gifts transform both the self and the others in their relationship with each other and with God.

This notion that the gifts are not an end in themselves comes to the fore in our last value of the semiotic square, non-S₁ (13:8b-d – prophecy, tongue, and *gnosis* will pass away). The middle voice in 13:8 that highlights a sense of neither an active nor a passive voice further modifies this notion of the gift. Paul writes, “Love never falls (*πίπτει*) but whether prophecy, they will pass away (*καταργηθήσονται*), or tongue, they will cease (*παύσονται*), or *gnosis* it will pass away (*καταργηθήσεται*).” In other words, there is a sense of auto-deconstruction inherent in the gifts. The gifts will annul themselves in due time. This self-annulment of the gifts is in a sharp contrast with the believers’ overemphasis of the gifts. Note that Paul does not say that love abolishes prophecy, tongue, or *gnosis*. By juxtaposing love with these gifts, Paul suggests that the gifts cannot be objectified. The gifts are not an end in themselves. They always point to something else. This is why the gifts are auto-deconstructive.

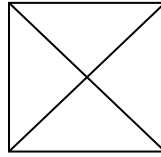
¹³ In this particular case, both the position formulation (S_s) and the negative formulation (non-S_s) are expressed by the same verse, 13:1.

In summary. In light of the qualities that we see embodied in these four values of the semiotic squares, what hold them together? Because Paul stresses a dynamic “having” of love in performing the gifts, we propose a notion of “performative-love.” That is to say, the otherness of the gifts can remain other (as given by God and received through the spirit from God) if it is marked by a love that is other/Other-oriented. It is this heteronomous character of love that prevents the gifts from being objectified. For example, when one is in love, one does not think that “since I have already said that ‘I love you’ yesterday, I do not need to say it again today and tomorrow.” No. The saying of “I love you” is elicited and responded repeatedly, as if it is never sufficient; as if love can never be assured. In short, the language of love is a “present progressive.” The promise that “I will love you, tomorrow” is a promise with responsibility: the promise that I will be able to respond to love, and thus to respond to the other/Other.

Performative-love, in short, is an expression of a sense of heteronomy. It is a love that is a “concern for other/Other.” If believers have love, they will be concerned for others. They do not just perform the gifts. They will be mindful of the dynamic situations of the others. They will not just speak in tongues. They will speak in tongues wanting others to understand what they try to convey. It is in this sense of “concern for other/Other” that the gifts are open to the unknown which then render them auto-deconstructive in the passing of time and space. For Paul, this concern for the context can create a sense of order and peace among believers. This “concern for other/Other” is not a self-sacrifice. It is a form of self-care, as it saturates one with meanings. Here, we can distill the above semiotic square to the following semiotic square that highlights a performative-love that is other/Other-oriented, context sensitive, and communicative.

Performative-Love: discursive, other-oriented, and meaningful (13:2)

Self-Centered: superficial, noisy, not context sensitive, and not communicative (13:1)



Non-Self-Centered: communicative and discursive (13:1)

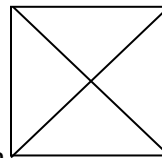
Non-Performative-Love: temporary and delimited (13:8b-d)

(ii) Semiotic Square 2: “Letting Go”

From our analysis of the first semiotic square, we note that the juxtaposition of various values in the relations of contrary, contradiction, and implication help us slow down and read the Scripture from different angles. As it makes us examine how an action is (and is not) carried out, it also helps us think of different ways to link the values together. And, as the contrary values of the first semiotic square become the sub-contrary values of the second semiotic square (and vice versa), they are re-viewed in light of other values in the second semiotic square.

13:3 – (implied) I should have love in giving away all possessions and body (S₁): Letting Go

13:2 – I do not have love when I prophecy, know all mysteries and all *gnosis*, and have all *pistis* to remove mountains (S₂): Controlling



13:2 – (implied) I should have love when I prophecy, know all mysteries and all *gnosis*, and have all *pistis* to remove mountains (non-S₂): Non-Controlling: Collaborating

13:1 – I become a roaring gong or a clanging cymbal when I speak in tongues without love (non-S₁): Non-Letting-Go: Representing God

The debates on the textual variants of *καυχῆσθαι* (“to boast”) and *καυθήσθαι* (“to be burnt”) in 1 Cor. 13:3 do not affect our analysis of this second semiotic square,¹⁴ since we focus

¹⁴ For an overview of the debate, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1042-043. In listing seven possible readings: (1) *καυχῆσθαι*, (2) *καυθήσθαι*, (3) *καυθήσωμαι*, (4) *καυθῆ*, (5) *καθήσθαι*, (6) *καυθήσεται*, and (7) *καυθήσῃται*, Caragounis finds that since the main difference is between *καυχῶμαι* and *καίομαι*, where *καυθήσθαι* is a form of *καυθήσθαι* because of the “evolution of the morphology, syntax, and especially the phonology (i.e. the pronunciation) of the Greek language ...” (563), he argues for a reading of *καυθήσθαι* in 1 Cor.

on the qualification of the subject of the act of the giving itself. Like what we see in 13:1-2, Paul in 13:3 uses an “I” as the “subject” who does the extreme giving. He does not indicate the “sender” and the “receiver.” The focus is on *how* the “subject” gives the “object,” and how this giving is further modified by love.

Let us first note that 13:1-2 are about what believers “have,” whereas 13:3 is about giving away or letting go of what they “have.” For Paul, whether in “having” or “giving away,” love must characterize the actions. So unless the “subject” can be “in control of” love, the actions of “having” and “giving away” are not in the control of the “subject.” When love is missing in the “giving away,” then the giving can become problematic, as it will result in οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι (see the discussion below).

This lack of control – and hence, the “subject” cannot speak of possessing what s/he has – is further highlighted by the fact that the objects of “having” (or the gifts) are beyond human ability and grasp. Paul makes it clear that whatever the Corinthian believers have actually come from God; there is nothing for them to boast about (4:7). Indeed, if believers are bought at a price (6:20; 7:23), then their body and their possessions are not theirs to give away, as if they own them.¹⁵ This is why when Paul was commissioned to gospelize, he says that there is nothing for him to boast about (9:16-17).

13:3 as he shows that the “grammatical monstrosity” of a future subjunctive is actually grammatically explainable. See Chrys C. Caragounis, *The Development of Greek and the New Testament: Morphology, Syntax, Phonology, and Textual Transmission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 547-64.

¹⁵ Martin writes, “*Agorazein* refers not to the sale of a slave to a god by which the slave is actually freed, but to the ordinary sale of a slave by one owner to another owner. Therefore, when Christ buys a person, the salvific element of the metaphor is not in the movement from slavery to freedom but in the movement from a lower level of slavery (as the slave of just anybody or the slave of sin) to a higher level of slavery (as the slave of Christ).” See Dale B. Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 63. This socio-economic relation between Christ and believers can also be conceived of in terms of the call, as the context of 7:23 makes clear. In fact, in his analysis of Romans 1:1a, Patte illustrates how Paul as a “slave of Christ Jesus” can be conceptualized in at least three major ways, depending on the referential framework that the interpreter privileges. See Daniel Patte, “Three Types of Identity Formation For Paul As Servant of Christ Jesus in Romans,” in *Reading Paul in Context: Explorations in Identity Formation: Essays in Honour of*

This emphasis on “letting go” continues the sense of performative-love and heteronomy in the first semiotic square. The notion of performative challenges one to be sensitive to the situation of the “receiver.” That is to say, the “subject” must be critical of her/his presuppositions so that s/he can avoid insisting on her/his way of “giving.” This explains why even if the acts of giving away one’s possessions and body are an extreme form of self-sacrifice, the outcome is οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι if it is performed without love.

Concerning the phrase οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι in 13:3, most translations render it as the giver gaining or receiving no benefit (*CEB, ESV, NIV, NKJV, and NRSV*). Anthony Thiselton, on the other hand, proposes that ὠφελοῦμαι is “the passive of ὀφείλω, *I owe, I ought*, with an accusative.”¹⁶ So instead of “advantage” or “benefit” from ὠφελέω as most commentators find,¹⁷ we can render οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι as “I am obligated to nobody” or “I owe nobody anything.” While Thiselton does not show grammatically how ὠφελοῦμαι comes from ὀφείλω (cf. BDF §67.2, §359.1), the idea of an indebted love is prominent in Romans 13:8.¹⁸

Here, we do not privilege ὠφελέω (“I help,” “I benefit,” or “I am of use to”) over ὀφείλω (“I owe”). We want to highlight the middle voice of ὠφελοῦμαι. Recall that the middle voice signifies a sense of “intransitive nonreflexivity.”¹⁹ So here we can render οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι as

William S. Campbell. Edited by Kathy Ehrensperger and J. Brian Tucker (London and New York: T&T Clark International, 2010), 209-28.

¹⁶ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1045. The word ὀφείλω has three major meanings: (1) “to be indebted to someone in a financial sense,” (2) “to be under obligation to meet certain social or moral expectations,” and (3) “to be constrained by circumstance” (*BDAG*, 742).

¹⁷ For example, see Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*. *Sacra Pagina 7* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 477; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 494.

¹⁸ Paul writes: “Do not be indebted to anyone of anything (μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε) except to love one another because the one who loves the other has fulfilled the law.” For an illustration, see Monya A. Stubbs, “Subjection, Reflection, Resistance: An African American Reading of the Three-Dimensional Process of Empowerment in Romans 13 and the Free-Market Economy,” in *Navigating Romans through Cultures: Challenging Readings by Charting a New Course*. Edited by Yeo Khiok-khng (K.K.) (London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 171-97.

¹⁹ “The middle voice suggests something that goes beyond subject-object formations. It is able to articulate nonreflexive enactments that are not for themselves or for something else. As a formation, it does not need to

the benefit that takes place in the benefiting itself, or the obligation that takes places in the obliging itself, which means that the relationship between the giver and the receiver happens in the “benefiting” or the “obliging” itself. In emphasizing love as undergirding this form of an extreme giving, Paul seems to suggest a love that is middle-voice oriented. So when the giving is performed without love, the middle voice of ὠφελοῦμαι cannot take place. The result becomes οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι. It is difficult to articulate this middle voice in our translation of οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι. Perhaps we can render it as my giving “causes me to be of no value to anyone (or to anything).” The point is that the act of “letting go” is not a calculation or an exchange; otherwise it is not a genuine “letting go.”

Therefore, in this analysis of the semantic connotations expressed figuratively in this passage, it is problematic to say that if the giving is done without love, then the giver does not gain or benefit anything, or the giving is of no advantage to the giver, as many translations and commentators do. For Paul’s vision, one’s giving is not an egoistic giving; after all, believers are bought at a price and everything that they have is from God. The middle voice of ὠφελοῦμαι transforms both the giver and the receiver. The giving is not to be objectified into a strategy (by contrast with the functionalism of the interpretation focused on the narrative/syntactic dimension of the text). Neither does it objectify the giver nor the receiver. As a result, it prevents the giving from being objectified into a calculation that can bring benefits to the giver.²⁰ It prevents the

suggest intention outside of its movement or a movement toward an other. It does not oppose active and passive formations, but it is other than they are. It is the voice of something’s taking place through its own enactment...” See Charles E. Scott, *The Question of Ethics: Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 24.

²⁰ For various notions of the gift, see *The Gift: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Edited by Aafke E. Komter (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996); *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*. Edited by Alan D. Schrift (London and New York: Routledge, 1997). In this volume, Schrift does not include the works of Marion who has a sustained debate with Derrida. See “On the Gift: A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion: Moderated by Richard Kearney,” in *God, The Gift, and Postmodernism*. Edited by John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 54-78; John D. Caputo, “Apostles of the Impossible: On God and the Gift in Derrida and Marion,” in *God, The Gift, and Postmodernism*, 185-222. For

giving from becoming a form of a strategic gaining, as is the case in particular if we translate οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι as “I gain nothing” (*NAB, NIV, NIB, RSV, NRSV*) or “it profits me nothing” (*KJV, NKJV, NAS*). Such a giving turns the giving with love into an economy of exchange. Love becomes a part of the transaction, which contradicts Paul’s vision of love that portrays love as not seeking things for oneself and not taking into account of the bad things (13:5-6). Rather, one lets go and gives away her/his possessions and body because *what* one has received empowers her/his to give *everything*, including one’s very own body.²¹

Contrary to this value of “letting go” in 13:3 (S₁), the negative value of 13:2 (S₂) signals a control of believers in prophesying, knowing all mysteries and all *gnosis*, and having all *pistis* to remove the mountains. As these gifts and activities are only possible with the gift/grace of God, believers need to work with God when performing these activities (cf. 3:9). They are not the owners of the gifts. They are the channels through which the gifts are manifested and become beneficial to believers.

(iii) Semiotic Square 3: Risk and Promise

Continuing with the values of the previous semiotic square, we find that “letting go” does not condone abuse or invite exploitation. Note that Paul does not say *how* “what you sow” dies. Paul simply says “what *you* sow (σὺ δε σπείρεις) is not made alive unless it dies” (15:36). Paul does not indicate the “subject” that gives “death” (the “object”) to “what you sow” (the “receiver”). Alternatively, the “object” can be “what you sow” that needs to receive death, and as such cannot be objectified. One cannot objectify what one sows. The emphasis on “you” seems to highlight a self-criticism of one’s investment. Moreover, in using a series of metaphors, Paul

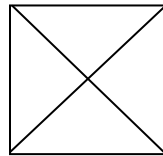
various notions of the gift in antiquity, see *The Gift in Antiquity*. Edited by Michael L. Satlow (UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

²¹ The “ἵνα-clause [in 13:3] constitutes the complement of the verb παραδῶ, i.e. its purpose, not its motive.” See Chrys C. Caragounis, *The Development of Greek and the New Testament*, 561-62.

tries to give believers a vision of what is beyond what one has sown. If whatever has been given away is given away, then one should move on. This letting go, however, is not an act that believers can do on their own. It must take place in Christ. The verb παραδῶ (“hand over” or “give away”) appears fifteen times in Pauline letters.²² In 1 Corinthians, whether it is about handing over the man who has the wife of his father to satan (5:5), Paul handing over the teaching to believers (11:2, 23; 15:3), Jesus being handed over (11:23), or Jesus handing over the kingdom to God the father (15:24), the handing over conveys a sense of trust in God.

15:36 – (implied) what you sow is made alive if it dies (S₁): Risky but promising

13:3 – I give away all possessions and body without love (S₂): Calculative



13:3 – (implied) I should have love in giving away all possessions and body = letting go (non-S₂): Non-Calculative

13:2 – I do not have love when I have prophecy, know all mysteries and all *gnosis*, and have all *pistis* to remove mountains (non-S₁): Non-Risky

It is certainly risky to “let go” and be exposed to foreign elements in a new situation. But, without “letting go” of one’s “comfort zone,” one cannot see beyond one’s vision horizon. Of course, there is no guarantee that the “letting go” is beneficial. It can exacerbate the current situation. The “letting go,” as such, is an act of faith; a faith that the end is not the end itself but a threshold to a new beginning. Indeed, it is a faith that “what you sow is not made alive unless it dies” (15:36). We need to take Paul’s saying that “I die every day” (καθ’ ἡμέραν ἀποθνήσκω)

²² Rom 1:24, 26, 28; 4:25; 6:17; and 8:32; 1 Cor. 5:5; 11:2, 23 (x2); 13:3; 15:3, 24; 2 Cor. 4:11; and Gal. 2:20. Rom 1:24, 26, 28 are about God handing over those who knew God but dishonored God. Rom. 4:25, 8:32; 1 Cor. 11:23, 2 Cor. 4:11; and Gal. 2:20 are about Jesus being handed over for our trespasses. Rom. 6:17; 1 Cor. 11:2, 23, 15:3 are about the teaching handed over by Paul to believers. 1 Cor. 5:5 is about handing over the wrongdoer to satan for the destruction of his flesh so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. Lastly, 1 Cor. 15:24 is about Jesus handing over the kingdom to God in the end.

(15:31) seriously.²³ If Paul dies every day, then he also comes to life every day.²⁴ Death is not the end.²⁵ Paul is not advocating a stance of terminating one's life. It is life that Paul is

²³ Whether Paul is speaking of “dying” symbolically or not is not our concern here. We can certainly link the language of dying in 15:30 with Paul fighting against the wild beasts in Ephesus in 15:32. Concerning this fight against the wild beasts, Malherbe takes it symbolically as a part of a Hellenistic moralist discourse that speaks of fighting against one's passion. See Abraham J. Malherbe, “The Beasts at Ephesus,” in *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989), 79-89.

²⁴ We are not getting into the theme of resurrection, but it is important to note that in the biblical worldview the visible and invisible worlds are a continuum in which the spirit (whether the deceased or spiritual being) and living human beings interact with each other. This should be clear in 1 Cor. 15:3-8 because the resurrected Christ appeared (ὄφθη) and interacted with Cephas, the twelve, some five hundred *adelphoi*, James, all the apostles, and Paul (15:5-8; cf. the transfigured body of Jesus in Mark 9:2-8). The appearance was a public and communal event; it was not an individualistic and private event. We may want to interrogate the notion of “appearance,” but it is clear that the visible and the invisible worlds are not disjointed. For many Chinese in Malaysia, this phenomenon of the deceased and the spirit interacting with the living people is not uncommon (cf. 1 Sam. 28:1-28). That is to say, the community is not just a community of the living. It is a community of both the living and the deceased. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to examine the notion and mode of resurrection of “the dead” (e.g., ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν and ἐκ νεκρῶν in 15:12), or the notion of *sōma* (“body”) of the resurrection, we agree with Martin that “the ancients [in the Greco-Roman cultures] by and large view the self as a continuum of substances” with its own hierarchy. See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 21. Many, in fact, see the body as the microcosm, where even the inner body corresponds to the outer body (e.g., the body reflects the soul or one's physiognomy reflects one's character) (ibid., 15-21). Given this worldview, it is not surprising, as Martin thinks, that while the philosophers and the educated in Greco-Roman cultures despise the resurrection of the body/corpse, as opposed to the “superstition” (i.e., *deisidaimonia* or “fear of the gods”) held by ordinary people, they still speak of “heavenly entities as bodies (*sōmata*)” (ibid., 108-20). Because, if Plato's *Timaeus* portrays the body as the cosmos and the cosmos as the body (ibid., 16), then the earthly body and the heavenly body are in a dynamic *yin-yang* relationship, in particular if “human beings, or perhaps only their souls, become stars or some similar heavenly bodies after death” (ibid., 117). Indeed, if nature comprises corporeality and noncorporeality as well as “things that exist (*sunt*) and things that do not exist (*non sunt*)” according to the Stoics (ibid., 9), then Paul's illustration of the resurrected body through “agricultural” (1 Cor. 15:36-38), “zoological” (15:39), and “astronomical” (15:40-44) imageries are not just analogies. See Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians* 477; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 586. The imageries speak “literally” of the characteristics of the resurrected body. A good illustration is 15:36-37, where the wheat plant (if the seed is a wheat), though no longer a wheat seed, is still the wheat. Here, in explaining his notion of “The Semitic Totality Concept,” where individuality and totality/solidarity echo one another as “[a]ll reality is organized in a series of totalities within totalities. The final totality that unifies and comprehends the rest is God himself” (61), Dahl writes: “But if I say, This is the *same man* I met in London seven years ago, I mean he is the *same person* (in Pauline terms the same ‘body’), knowing that the particular cells of his ‘body’ (in the modern sense) have completely changed since then” (94). See M. E. Dahl, *The Resurrection of the Body: A Study of 1 Corinthians 15* (London: SCM Press, 1962). For Dahl, this “somatic identity” is prominent in the Hebrew Bible. He writes: “When it comes to human personality, we should not be surprised to find that man [sic], too, is a totality, which embraces all that a man is an ever shall be. It is not so much that man is *made of* ‘dust of the earth’; he *is* dust, which presumably means that, in man, matter has, by the in-breathing of God, acquired the characteristics of self-conscious being. The Old Testament has no word for ‘body’ because this totality concept makes it unnecessary. The Hebrew mind never produces anything quite like an abstraction; ‘soul’ and ‘heart’ and ‘flesh’ each mean the totality of man considered from different aspects, and they comprehend concepts like mouth, eyes, lips, hands, feet, reins, belly, bones and so on, in such a way that each of these tends to refer, not to a physical organ or limb so much as to the whole man acting in a certain way.” Ibid., 71-72.

²⁵ In light of the “culture of death” in imperial Rome, Harrison writes, “In consigning humanity to the slavery of sin, the apostle strips the Roman ruler of the *virtus* that made him god-like, while simultaneously denying the ruler's critics the satisfaction that the fear of death at Rome could be explained solely by reference to the Julio-Claudian house, or that freedom from a ruler's tyranny could be achieved by suicide, or by achieving fame fighting in the arena. Rather, death, the sting of sin (1 Cor 15:55-56), had entered the world, corrupting the pristine glory of God's

emphasizing here. Dying and coming to life are intertwined (cf. Phil. 3:10-11; Gal. 2:19-20; Rom. 6:1-14). This sense of death and rebirth in every day is stressed in the present indicative of “dying” (ἀποθνῄσκω) and the adverbial phrase “day by day” (καθ’ ἡμέραν).

The rupture between the end and the beginning is not an abrupt discontinuation from one stage to another. In using the metaphor of a seed, Paul suggests a form of continuity in terms of a discontinuity. The words of Käsemann are pertinent here, as he argues that the “continuity with the past is preserved by shattering the received terminology, the received imagery, the received theology – in short, by shattering the tradition.”²⁶ The shattering of the tradition is not a disregard or a dismissal of the tradition. It is to prevent the tradition from being objectified, so much so that it cannot be engaged. In being passed down from one generation to another, the tradition is already dynamic and discursive. To shatter the tradition is to prevent it from being forgotten and left behind as a relic collecting dust. In the words of Jacques Derrida, to be faithful to one’s heritage is to be unfaithful to it by “relaunching it otherwise and keeping it alive.”²⁷ The shattering of the tradition delineates a transforming relation of the past to the present and the future.²⁸ Paul does not focus on the seed or the plant that the seed will yield. He is concerned with the process. It is the sowing, dying, and coming to life that concern Paul.

creation (Rom 5:12; cf. 1:20, 23a; Gen 3:17–19) and frustrating its original purpose (Rom 8:20; Gen 1:31; Ps 19:1–4).” See James R. Harrison, “Paul and the ‘Social Relations’ of Death at Rome (Romans 5:14, 17, 21),” in *Paul and His Social Relations*. Pauline Studies 7. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Land (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 119.

²⁶ See Ernst Käsemann, “The Problem of the Historical Jesus,” in *Essays on New Testament Themes*. Studies in Biblical Theology 41. Translated by W. J. Montague (London: SCM Press, 1971), 21.

²⁷ Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, “Choosing One’s Heritage,” in *For What Tomorrow ... : A Dialogue*. Translated by Jeff Fort (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 4.

²⁸ Commenting on Paul’s notion of the typology, Agamben writes: “What matters to us here is not the fact that each event of the past – once it becomes a figure – announces a future event and is fulfilled in it, but is the transformation of time implied by this typological relation. The problem here does not simply concern the biunivocal correspondence that binds *typos* and *antitypos* together in an exclusively hermeneutic relationship ... rather, it concerns a tension that claps together and transforms past and future, *typos* and *antitypos*, in an inseparable constellation. The messianic is not just one of two terms in this typological relation, *it is the relation itself*.” See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains: A Commentary of the Letter to the Romans*. Translated by Patricia Dailey. Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2005), 74.

On the other hand, there is a discontinuity between the seed and the plant, but the plant is the transformation of the seed. The transformation is, in fact, inherent in the seed. The death of the seed is not the end; it is the beginning of the plant. The present is a type of the future and the future is a type of the present. Consequently, one needs to be careful with the kind of seed that one sows (cf. Gal. 6:7-8; cf. 2 Cor. 9:6), as we see in the language of sanctification in 1 Corinthians (e.g., 1:2, 30; 5:6-8; 6:11; etc.). In addition, regardless of whether the seed is good or bad, one still needs to let go of it. One should not cling on to the seed as if it is everything that there is. There is always something more, but opportunity presents itself through letting go and being open toward what is yet to come. While every seed has its own kind of body given by God, it is God who decides what kind of body that God wants to give (1 Cor. 15:37-38). In other words, as the potentiality is inherent in the present, it is also beyond our grasp. If it was within our grasp, the potentiality would no longer be a potentiality but an actualization, a realization, and a discursivized manifestation in a concrete context.

For Paul, the present (i.e., the seed) is full of potentialities.²⁹ This potentiality of the seed prevents us from saying that the seed must die.³⁰ Paul does not say that the crucifixion must take

²⁹ Ibid., 37-42. Speaking of a potentiality in terms of an impotentiality, Agamben concludes: "Contrary to the traditional idea of potentiality that is annulled in actuality, here we are confronted with a potentiality that conserves itself and saves itself in actuality. Here potentiality, so to speak, survives actuality and, in this way, *gives itself to itself*." See idem, "On Potentiality," in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*. Edited and translated with an Introduction by Daniel Heller-Rozaen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 184. Also, see idem, "Bartleby," in *The Coming Community*. Translated by Michael Hardt. Theory Out of Bounds, Vol. 1 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 35-37.

³⁰ "The same model is used by Jesus in the Fourth Gospel (John 12:24) to denote the contrast between 'letting go of self in death' ... and a new, glorified state ... Here in 15:36, however, Paul is not emphasizing the necessity of death, but 'the fact of transformation through death and revivification.'" See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1263-264. The quote that Thiselton cites comes from C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. 2nd ed. (London: Black, 1971), 370. Fee also makes a similar argument: "The first clause is reminiscent of John 12:24, but the point is different here. There the emphasis is on the necessity of death for fruit. Despite several contemporary scholars who would see the necessity of death as the point here too, that concern is not picked up anywhere in the succeeding argument, and vv. 50-53 stand quite against it. Paul's concern is with death as the precondition of life, not in the sense that *all must die* but in the sense that the seed itself demonstrates that *out of death* a new expression of life springs forth. God's purposes are not thwarted by death; as with the seed, what is sown in death is brought forth into life. His point, therefore, in response to their scepticism as to the resurrection is that it is possible for the dead to rise again, as their own experience of sowing grain gives evidence."

place. He actually argues against it (2:8). It is crucial to note that the end is not death but life. What matters to Paul is the relationship of believers with God and with each other. There is no need to be so concerned with the details of what the seed will become. That which is yet to come is implicated in the present, just as today is the tomorrow of yesterday and the yesterday of tomorrow. For Paul, the present is a dynamic present. The present is the present insofar as it is viewed in light of the past and of what is yet to come.

With this orientation towards life, the giving of one's possessions and body cannot be viewed as a part of an economy of exchange. The extreme acts of giving have the character of risk that prevents the calculation and objectification of death and life. No one knows whether s/he will come to life. The present middle-passive indicative of "being made alive" (ζωοποιεῖται) in the general condition of 15:36 – "it will not be made alive unless it dies" (οὐ ζωοποιεῖται ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ) – further highlights the uncertainty of "being made alive." However, as the threat of death does not overpower love (cf. 15:55-57), the extreme giving can only take place in love, as love is not limited by the outcome of such a giving.

(iv) Semiotic Square 4: A Christ-oriented Relation

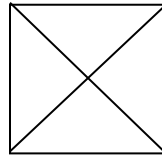
As 15:57 and 15:36 imply each other in this new semiotic square, the victory (the "object") that God (the "sender" and "subject") gives us (the "receiver") through Jesus (the "subject") is made alive when it dies. That is to say, the victory must not be objectified. It is not a victory that is done for us once upon a time. It is still taking place today. Notice how Paul qualifies God in 15:57: "τῷ δὲ θεῷ χάρις τῷ διδόντι ἡμῖν τὸ νίκος διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ." For Paul, God is the God who gives us victory. The present active participle of giving (διδόντι) shows that God *still* gives us victory "through our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul thus

See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 781.

concludes with 15:58, “Therefore (Ὡστε), my beloved *adelphoi*, become firm, immovable, abound in the work of the Lord always, knowing (εἰδότες) that the labor of yours is not empty (κενὸς) in the Lord.”

15:57 – God gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (S₁): Christ-oriented

15:36 – (implied) what you sow is not made alive (S₂): A Self-centered reasoning



15:36 – what you sow is made alive when it dies (non-S₂): A Non-Self-Centered reasoning

13:3 – I give away all possessions and body without love (non-S₁): Non-Christ-oriented

Here, one’s thanksgiving to God is not simply an acknowledgement of the grace of God upon believers. In arguing that “[i]n the body of Paul’s letters, the centrality of God is precisely the basis underlying his frequent calls to thanksgiving,”³¹ David Pao finds that to give thanks is not only to “remember a past act of kindness,” but that it “is also offered for the future acts of God.”³² Thiselton further points out that “the basis of victory is a present gift, providing grounds for present exultation and thanksgiving.”³³ The act of thanksgiving, as such, is not only a recognition of the works of God among believers until now. It is also a confession and a trust that God is faithful to God’s promise to deliver believers from trial and tribulation (cf. 1:9; 10:13). Giving thanks is an act of worship, remembrance, trust, and submission.³⁴ As it is

³¹ See David W. Pao, “Gospel Within the Constraints of An Epistolary Form: Pauline Introductory Thanksgiving And Paul’s Theology of Thanksgiving,” in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams. Pauline Studies Series 6 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), 102.

³² Ibid.,124.

³³ He continues, “It is not a mere present of future certainty about resurrection; it also expresses the present gift of grace to believers for whom the destructive potential of sin, the law, and death as a terrifying prospect has been broken. The present reality is that the sting of death had been drawn out by Christ’s victory. Believers already in some measure share in this victory, even though the final appropriation of all that this entails has yet to be appropriated and experienced fully at the last day.” See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1304.

³⁴ See David W. Pao, *Thanksgiving: An Investigation of a Pauline Theme*. New Studies in Biblical Theology 13 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002).

through Jesus that God gives victory to believers, the believers' relationship with God and Christ is indispensable to their recognition and receiving of the gift of God. This is why Paul exhorts believers to *always* "abound in the work of the Lord."

Now, if victory is given by God through Jesus Christ, then Jesus must address the issues of the law and sin (15:56); otherwise there is no victory over death. For Paul, Jesus "died for" our sins "according to the Scripture" (15:3; cf. Gal. 1:4; Rom 5:6, 8) *and* was raised on the third day "according to the Scripture" (1 Cor. 15:4). In addition to theological explanations, the various meanings of the preposition "hyper" (ὑπέρ) also give rise to numerous interpretations of the phrase "died for" (ἀπέθανεν ὑπέρ). While we will limit our brief discussion to the footnote, we want to highlight Derrida's comment: "No one can die for me if 'for me' means instead of me, in my place."³⁵ That is to say, if each person is singular, then s/he is irreplaceable, and hence, no one can die "in my place" for me, depriving me of my singularity, responsibility, and responsibility as a singular individual. It is in this sense that we find Daniel Patte's interpretation of ὑπέρ as "concerning" makes more sense,³⁶ as it not only exposes and conscientizes the

³⁵ See Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*. Translated by David Wills (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 41.

³⁶ For anyone to insist that Jesus must die in order for our sins to be forgiven, s/he will need to explain the Gospel stories that speak of Jesus forgiving sins without having his blood shed (e.g., Mark 2:5). For a discussion on the idea of atonement implied in how we translate ὑπέρ, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 475-49, 1191-92. TeSelle and Patte highlight that we have at least three major notions of atonement in Christian theology and traditions. (1) "Ransom and redemption from bondage or healing," (2) "Honor and juridical satisfaction," and (3) "Moral transformation." For details, see Eugene TeSelle and Daniel Patte, "Atonement," in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*, 81-82. The preposition ὑπέρ is usually translated as "for the sake of," and when it is used with the case of genitive, it functions as (1) "a marker indicating that an activity or event is in some entity's interest, *for, in behalf of, for the sake of someone/something,*" (2) a "marker of the moving cause or reason, *because of, for the sake of,*" and (3) a "marker of general content, whether of a discourse or mental activity, *about, concerning*" (BDAG, 1030-031). Most English translations (ASV, ESV, KJV, NKJV, NAB, NAS, NIB, NIV, NIRV, NJB, NLT, RSV, NRSV) render ὑπέρ in terms of the meanings that we see in (1) and (2).

Patte, however, renders ὑπέρ as "concerning." As such, Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς in 1 Cor. 15:3 means that Christ died (in that particular circumstance) concerning our sins according to the Scripture. In other words, the cross and the resurrection of Jesus *as well as* the Scripture expose and defeat the power and the law of sin (cf. Rom. 8:2); otherwise we will still be in the power of sins (15:17). The Scripture not only points to God's faithfulness to God's promise, it also highlights the role of Scripture in the believer's relationship with God. Hence, the celebration of Lord's Supper in every gathering is indispensable as the partaking of the bread and the cup is an embodiment and proclamation of the death of Jesus until he comes again (11:26). See

enunciates to the contradiction entailed in the system that crucified, it also empowers them to respond to the crucifixion executed by the Roman Empire.

On the other hand, the phrase “according to the Scripture” (κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς) points to the Scripture as a promise, just as the seed has the character of a promise. This promise is not necessarily a form of predestination (cf. 2:8), as our third semiotic square highlights the value of risk. This value of risk is not simply about taking risk. Our fourth semiotic square shows that, for Paul, the risk taking is God-oriented and community-oriented. It is not about demanding success in taking risk. Rather, it is about entrusting oneself to the guidance of Christ and God. Paul makes this clear in 15:57. What undergirds the sowing, dying, and coming to life of the seed into a plant is one’s relationship with God and Christ. One does not simply sow; one sows in Christ. Likewise, the seed does not just die; it dies in Christ; so on and so forth.

Daniel Patte, *Paul’s Faith and the Power of the Gospel: A Structural Introduction to the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1983), 222-31, 277-87. Also, see Ciliers Breytenbach, “The ‘For Us’ Phrases in Pauline Soteriology,” in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology*. Supplements to Novum Testamentum 121. Edited by Jan G. van der Watt (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 175.

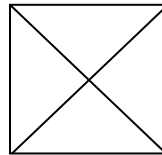
In a language similar to Nancy’s notion of “implosion” from within the structure – see Jean-Luc Nancy, *Dis-Enclosure: The Deconstruction of Christianity*. Translated by Bettina Bergo, Gabriel Malenfant, and Michael B. Smith (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008) – Patte further shows how the law revealed by God was absolutized by people into an idol as if the law was *the* complete revelation of God. As this idol is built upon God’s revelation, it appears to be credible; it is not simply a false illusion. To destroy an idolatrous system that orients our value system, one can do it “from the outside” or “from the inside.” To do it “from the outside” will, however, destroy everything in the system. It will, moreover, be like throwing the baby out with the bathwater as one discounts the revelation of God that has been distorted. A more constructive but risky approach is a “from the inside” tactic. Thus when Paul writes that “Christ bought us out of the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us ...” (Gal. 3:13; cf. 2 Cor. 5:21) or “God sent his own son in the likeness of the sinful flesh and concerning sins he condemns the sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3), he stresses the sacrifices that Jesus undertook in imploding the idolatrous system from within. That is to say, Jesus became the curse according to the law so that we may see that the law was actually distorted. If the law was not distorted and Jesus was indeed cursed, then he would not have been raised from the dead by God. But, the fact that Jesus was cursed by the law and yet raised by God shows the law itself is incoherent. Without this contradiction, people will not realize that the revelation of God through the law is distorted. This is what it means that “God sent his own son in the likeness of the sinful flesh” so that we may see the contradiction in our notion of sin and so that God may judge it. This exposure and victory over sin, however, must be done through a Christ-like manner, as one needs to trust God and be sent “in the likeness of the sinful flesh.”

Such a death, moreover, is not a “half-way” death. It is a death in which one surrenders oneself wholeheartedly to God and Christ.³⁷ Paul thus exhorts believers to come to their senses and not to sin (15:34). So the challenge is not with dying, but with dying whole-heartedly. It is not a “half-way” dying that is a calculative move trying to test the water to see whether one should “die” or not. This calculation is understandable; after all, the stake is high. The issue, however, is not about whether believers die or not or give away all their possessions and body. The issue is about whether they do so *with love*. Love should be the motivating force. The issue is about whether they are God-centered in Christ.

(v) Semiotic Square 5: Non-Objectifiable

15:44b – a *pneumatikon* body is raised (S₁):
Non-Objectifiable

15:56a – the sting of death is sin (S₂):
Imprisoning



15:57 – God gives victory through Lord Jesus Christ (non-S₂): Non-Imprisoning
(Liberating)

15:36 – (implied) what you sow is not made alive (non-S₁): Objectifiable (not transformed)

In writing: “It is sown a *psychikon* (NRSV: physical; NIV: natural) body, it is raised a *pneumatikon* (NRSV; NIV: spiritual) body. If there is a *psychikon* body, there is also a *pneumatikon* [body]” (15:44),³⁸ Paul seems to suggest a bodily entity of the spirit, not unlike our physical body. It is important to note that in Greco-Roman cultures, the material and immaterial worlds are a continuum. The dichotomy between body and mind and between material and immaterial world is a (Western) Cartesian construction. Another observation that we can make

³⁷ For example, Paul writes: “We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh” (2 Cor. 4:8-11; NRSV).

³⁸ The word “body” (σῶμα) is a neuter noun and it can mean (1) the “body of a human being or animal,” which can be a dead or living body, (2) “slaves” (the plural of σῶμα: σώματα), (3) “plant and seed structure,” (4) the “substantive reality, *the thing itself*,” and (5) “a unified group of people” (BDAG, 983-84).

about this verse is that Paul does not make a rigid opposition between the *psychikon* body and the *pneumatikon* body.³⁹ If it is God who gives to each a body as God desires (15:38), we cannot conclude that the *psychikon* body is bad, unless we want to argue that God creates the bad body. Paul, however, does speak negatively of the *psychikos* person who does not receive the spirit of God (2:14). Rather, it is under certain circumstances that the *psychikon* body is described negatively. What is clear in 15:42-44 is that the *psychikon* body is associated with what is sown in corruption (ἐν φθορᾷ), dishonor (ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ), and weakness (ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ), whereas the *pneumatikon* body is with what is raised in incorruption (ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ), glory (ἐν δόξῃ), and potentiality (ἐν δυνάμει).⁴⁰ Instead of saying that the sowing and the raising are oppositional, it is more accurate to speak of the sowing and raising as a part of a continuum.⁴¹

In 15:57, God and Jesus are portrayed as the “subjects” and “helpers” who transform the *psychikon* body into a *pneumatikon* body, whereas sin is the “opponent.” In 15:56, although Paul writes that the potentiality of sin is the law (ἡ δὲ δύναμις τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ νόμος), we should be careful not to conclude that the law is therefore sinful. Such a negative view of the law is further reinforced if we translate *dynamis* (δύναμις) as “power” (*CEB, ESV, NAB, NIV, NJB, and NRSV*). While we should note the various conceptions of “power” (e.g., “power over,” “power with,” and “power-less”), we should not forget that the primary meanings of *dynamis* are “potentiality,” “capacity,” or “capability.” So if we translate 15:56b as “the potentiality of sin is the law,”

³⁹ For a possible Hellenistic Jewish notion of the *psychikos* person and the *pneumatikos* person, see Richard A. Horsley, *1 Corinthians*. Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 210-13.

⁴⁰ As the word *dynamis* (δύναμις) can mean (1) “potential for functioning in some way: *power, might, strength, force, capability*,” (2) “ability to carry out something: *ability, capability*,” (3) “a deed that exhibits ability to function powerfully: *deed of power, miracle, wonder*,” (4) “something that serves as an adjunct of power: *resource*,” (5) “an entity or being, whether human or transcendent, that functions in a remarkable manner,” and (6) “the capacity to convey thought” (*BDAG*, 262-63), it is better to translate it as “capability,” “capacity,” or “potentiality,” which also has the meaning of “power” and “resource.” For an implication of this understanding of *dynamis*, see Richard Kearney, *The God Who May Be: A Hermeneutics of Religion* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001).

⁴¹ Paul writes: “The first human was made out of earth, the second human out of heaven. As the human was made of earth, such are those made of earth too; and as the heavenly human, such are those heavenly humans too. Just as we have borne the image of the human made of earth, we also bear the image of the heavenly human” (15:47-49).

instead of “the power of sin is the law,” then the law is *not necessarily* the *dynamis* of sin. The law is the site where sin works, thus the potentiality of sin. That is to say, when the law is distorted by sin and used as what empowers it, it can help sin to become “the sting of death.”

It is not clear here how the law could be abused. But, from the succession of semiotic squares, it appears that the law (“what you sow”) is not made alive unless it dies. In other words, when the law is objectified or idolized as if it cannot die, it can become the *dynamis* of sin. Death is important here. In showing the limit of the law, death highlights its temporality and contextuality. As such, it can help prevent us from essentializing the law. Thus in saying that if there is a *psychikon* body, there is also a *pneumatikon* body (15:44), Paul exhorts believers not to fixate on any kind of body but to realize that there are many kinds of bodies (15:38-41).

Likewise, on the issue of death, Paul reminds believers that while death is brought about by sin, it does not mean that it is necessarily the outcome of sin. In the case of Jesus, for example, death was used to bring about life, not unlike what we see in the case of “what you sow does not come to life unless it dies” (15:36). Indeed, by saying that God gives victory to believers through Jesus, Paul juxtaposes two kinds of “death.” Not only does Paul challenge believers to re-examine the kind of “death” that Jesus went through. He also questions the kind of law that sentenced Jesus to crucifixion. If God gives victory to believers through Jesus, then does it mean that God uses the law to give victory? But, how does God use the law to give victory? Does it mean that God approves the law that condemns Jesus? Certainly not! Paul, after all, censures the world for rejecting the wisdom of God in its own wisdom (1:21). Paul makes it clear that “if the rulers of this age knew (the wisdom of God), they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (2:8). There is something wrong with the social norms and the laws, whether the Roman laws, Jewish laws, or the natural laws.

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to delve into this complex question, we argue that the death of Jesus becomes the death of the law. That is to say, the law that condemns Jesus becomes the law that condemns itself in condemning Jesus. (Recall our discussion of the notion of “exception” of Giorgio Agamben in section 2.3 in chapter 2).⁴² Paul highlights this point when he writes, “For since in the wisdom of God the cosmos did not know God through its wisdom, God was pleased, through the foolishness of the kerygma, to save those who believed” (2:21). As “the *psychikos* does not receive the things of the spirit of God for they are foolish to him” (2:14), it is thus vital for the *psychikon* body to be transformed into a *pneumatikon* body. Without this transformation, believers will not be able to receive the wisdom and power (or potentiality) of God to see or recognize that God is actually at work through Jesus.

Thus by reminding believers of their calling (1:26-29),⁴³ Paul urges them to examine their own situation to see whether God indeed calls into question the social norms that have marginalized those who are deemed foolish, weak, and ignoble the society. But, just as God chose “the things that are not (τὰ μὴ ὄντα) to bring to nothing the things that are (τὰ ὄντα)” (1:28), God raised what is sown in corruption, dishonor, and weakness into incorruption, glory, and potentiality, respectively (15:42-43). In light of their own situations, believers should realize that the law must not be objectified. For Paul, when something or someone is objectified, her/his/its otherness will be reduced. As her/his/its potentiality is constrained, s/he/it cannot change and grow anymore. There is no more room for engagement and transformation.

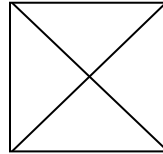
⁴² For example, see Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

⁴³ Paul writes, “For watch out for your calling (Βλέπετε γὰρ τὴν κληῖσιν ὑμῶν), *adelphoi*, not many were wise according to flesh (κατὰ σάρκα), not many were powerful (δυνατοί), not many were well born (εὐγενεῖς), but the foolish things of the cosmos God chose to shame the wise, and the weak things of the cosmos God chose to shame the strong things, and the ignoble things of the cosmos and the despised things God chose, the things that are not (τὰ μὴ ὄντα) to bring to nothing (καταργήσῃ) the things that are (τὰ ὄντα) so that every flesh may not boast in front of God” (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

(vi) Semiotic Square 6: Up-lifting and Empowering

15:43d, 43b, 42b – raised in potentiality, glory, and incorruption (S₁): Empowering

15:43a, 43c, 44a – sown as a *psychikon* body, in weakness and dishonor (S₂): Delimiting



15:44b, 43d, 43b – raised as a *pneumatikon* body, in potentiality and glory (non-S₂): Non-Delimiting

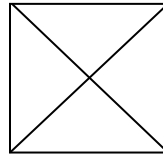
15:56, 44a, 43c – the sting of death is sin, sown in weakness and dishonor (non-S₁): Non-Empowering

In this semiotic square, we combine three pairs of opposed actions together because they do not contribute to the story progression (see Appendix 3 of chapter 3). Overall, we find that the values of the previous semiotic square are more or less repeated in this sixth semiotic square. Yet the value of liberation and empowerment is more stressed and that the contrast between the *psychikon* body and the *pneumatikon* body is further highlighted. The *psychikon* body that is sown (downward) in corruption, weakness, and dishonor is contrasted with the *pneumatikon* body that is raised (upward) in potentiality, glory, and incorruption.

There is a sense of hope and faith, if not of idealism, in the face of sin, weakness, dishonor, and death. In referring to the stories of the first Adam and the last Adam (15:45-49), Paul wants believers to see that as they bear the images of both figures, they need to be vigilant and hopeful at the same time, lest they cannot inherit the kingdom of God (15:50). Paul tries to paint an inviting and encouraging picture for believers so that they will not limit their potentiality in being transformed by God through Christ.

(vii) Semiotic Square 7: Being Faithful to the Grace of God

15:12a – Christ is preached as raised from the dead (S₁): Being faithful to the grace of God



15:42a – sown in corruption (S₂): Static (remaining in the same condition without improvement)

15:43d- 43b, 42b – raised in potentiality, glory, and incorruption (non-S₂): Non-Static

15:43a, 43c, 44a – sown as a *psychikon* body, in weakness and dishonor (non-S₁): Non-Faithful (i.e., waste the grace of God)

For Paul, the resurrection of Christ is of utmost importance to the *pistis* of believers. For him, “if Christ has not been raised (οὐκ ἐγήγερται), then empty (κενὸν) is our kerygma, empty (κενῆ) also is your *pistis*” (15:14; cf. 15:2). Again in 15:17, Paul mentions that “if Christ has not been raised, then empty (ματαία) is your *pistis*.” The perfect passive indicative of “has been raised” shows that the resurrection of Jesus continues to have its effect. However, in making his case for the resurrection of Christ, Paul begins intriguingly by saying, “If there is no resurrection of the dead, Christ has not been raised” (εἰ δὲ ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται) (15:13). Likewise, in 15:16, Paul writes, “If the dead are not raised, Christ has not been raised” (γὰρ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται).

What is intriguing about Paul’s argument is that he says, “If there is no resurrection of the dead (ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν), Christ has not been raised” (15:13). Could Paul be arguing that “Christ has been raised” is supported by “the resurrection of the dead”?⁴⁴ We may right away reject this possibility because Paul did not mention the dead being resurrected. Implicit but integral to this rejection is a deeply ingrained assumption about the corpse of Jesus transformed

⁴⁴ Regarding the notion of the dead (νεκρός), Martin argues that Paul’s language of the “resurrection of the dead” refers to the resuscitation of the corpse, a popular understanding of the uneducated at the church that is found ridiculous by the “strong” in the church. See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 107-8. Thiselton, however, argues that Martin’s “lexicographical claim about νεκρός [as the corpse] may also be overstated. In the LXX (the Bible of the Church at Corinth) the Greek term often means *the dead* without necessarily alluding to a rotting corpse...” See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1217.

into a divine body. But what does Paul mean by “the dead”? To many Chinese, the “deceased” are not necessarily “the dead.” They are “dead” when they are no longer relevant to the family. That is to say, the notion of “dead” is conceptualized not in terms of biology, but of relationship. So without clarifying how people become “dead,” we cannot speak of how they come to life again.⁴⁵ While these questions are not the primary inquiry of this chapter, they must be clarified within the framework of a non-Cartesian worldview of the Greco-Roman cultures.

Just based on the simple present condition in 15:13 and 15:16, even if the *protasis* (“if...”) indicates nothing about the reality or the probability of the *apodosis* (“then...”), the verses suggest that “the resurrection of the dead” does *somehow* happen; otherwise the argument would lose its force of persuasion.⁴⁶ Moreover, if Christ is the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep (15:20),⁴⁷ and if Paul dies every day (15:31), which suggests that he also comes to life every day, then is it not possible that “the dead” can also refer to a kind of death that Paul experiences?

This experience of dying and coming to life is crucial to Paul’s preaching of the gospel. In light of his radical transformation from a fervent persecutor of the church to an apostle of

⁴⁵ Could “the resurrection of the dead” signify the transformation of a *psychikon* body into a *pneumatikon* body, in particular if Jesus is the life-giving spirit (15:45)?

⁴⁶ Many commentators take 15:13 and 16 as parts of Paul’s rhetoric. They begin with the assumption that the physical body of Jesus must have been made alive (even though we only have the “appearance” story in the Gospels and we are not told about the “resurrected body” of Jesus), and as such, the dead must likewise be raised accordingly. Paul, however, does not follow this logic. He reverses the order. Fee writes, “This [verse 13] may possibly mean that a general repudiation of the resurrection would thereby render a single instance to be impossible; more likely Paul already has in mind the causal connection between Christ’s resurrection and that of believers. That is, to deny the resurrection of the dead is to deny the resurrection of the one who makes any and all resurrections possible. At this point, however, Paul chooses not to refute their position on the basis of vv. 1-11, that is, since Christ has been raised, as he preached and they believed, there must be a resurrection of the dead.” See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 741. Likewise, Fitzmyer: “Paul’s philosophical argument now begins, as he tries to reduce the denial *ad absurdum*: If there is no ‘resurrection of the dead,’ then Christ’s resurrection is unthinkable, indeed impossible!” See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 563.

⁴⁷ This notion of Christ as the first-fruits of those raised from the dead seems to contradict what we read in Matthew 27:53 that says that when Jesus gave up his spirit on the cross, the tombs were opened, and the many bodies of the holy ones who had slept were raised (καὶ τὰ μνημεῖα ἀνεώχθησαν καὶ πολλὰ σώματα τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἁγίων ἠγέρθησαν).” That is to say, before the “official” resurrection of Jesus, which happened three days after his crucifixion, the holy ones were already raised. Instead of Jesus, they were the first fruits. Of course, here we come to our conceptualization of “resurrection,” which is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Christ Jesus, Paul calls Christ's appearance to him the grace of God. Calling himself the least of the apostles not worthy to be called (καλεῖσθαι) to be an apostle (15:9), Paul labors harder than other apostles so that the grace of God for him is not in vain (15:10). This strong sense of fidelity to the grace of God marks Paul's response to God's calling. Since the Corinthian believers first believed in this proclamation of the gospel (15:11) and even experienced the grace of God (1:4-9), the denial of the resurrection of the dead (15:12) would reject the very fundamental that once characterized their relationship with Paul and other apostles through whom God and Christ have worked. It is to call into question the very foundation of one's *pistis*.

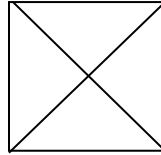
As we mentioned, 15:13 and 15:16 could imply that, for Paul, the Corinthian believers have somehow been raised. The believers' rejection of the preaching of the resurrection of Christ would then suggest their rejection of Paul's experience, of the Scripture (15:4), of the witness of God and Christ (as Paul preaches and manifests the gospel with the grace of God), as well as their earlier experience when receiving the proclamation of the gospel (15:11). As a result, such believers remain in corruption, weakness, and dishonor. It is through the fidelity to the experience of God in Christ that what is sown as a *psychikon* body can be raised as a *pneumatikon* body. This is why Paul exhorts believers to "become firm, immovable, abound in the work of the Lord always, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (15:58).

(viii) Semiotic Square 8: Contextualizing

So far, we see that the basic values that undergird Paul's argument are related to love (which he says is the most excellent way in 12:31b) and the resurrection of Christ (without which the *pistis* of believers is vain). We can continue with our analysis of several more semiotic squares that are immediately connected to semiotic square 7, but since they are not directly

related to Paul’s conception of love, we will limit our presentation to the pairs of opposed actions in the dialogic level that address love (see Appendix 3 of chapter 3).

8:3 – those who love God are known by God (S₁): Contextualizing (risk and promise: a renewed understanding)



6:12a-c; 10:23 – everything is permitted (to me) (S₂): Particularizing and Universalizing one’s own context and interest

6:12a; 10:23a-b – (implied) certain things are beneficial (to me) (non-S₂): Non-Particularizing-and-Universalizing one’s own context and interest

10:24a – (implied) people seek their own thing (non-S₁): Non-Contextualizing (Security and self-affirmation and aggrandizement)

In this semiotic square, love and knowing are intimately related and, from the perspective of our earlier discussion of 1 Corinthians 13 and 15, love needs to be viewed as having several actantial roles. In 8:3, the “subjects” (τις, anyone or “those” – in the plural to use inclusive language) may love God in the sense that God is the “receiver” of the “object” love. But this should not be understood as meaning that they do objectify God. While the “subjects” may give love (the “object”) to God, they are actually *helped* by “love” in loving God. Love is also a “helper.” Furthermore, if love moves the “subjects” to love, then love is also the “sender.” Furthermore, if the “subjects” are drawn out by love and by God, then love and God are not under their subjection. When the “subjects” are “in love,” not only are they subjected to love, they are also the “receivers” of their own love.

In being drawn out of themselves toward God, the “subjects” are not in control of themselves. This love movement toward God further de-subjectifies the “subjects” when Paul refrains from saying that they will know God in loving God. On the contrary, they are known by God. The “subjects,” as a result, are doubly de-subjectified. As love sends and helps the “subjects” to give love and themselves to God, God is also moved by love in knowing the

“subjects.” God, however, does not objectify them in knowing them. This non-objectifying character of God’s knowing comes to the fore when we consider the textual variants and the middle voice of knowing (ἐγνωσται) in 8:3 to be the most authentic text.⁴⁸

Following our earlier comments regarding the “intransitive nonreflexivity” of the middle voice, we need to argue here that the verb ἐγνωσται is a knowing that takes place in the knowing itself, *in between* the subject of knowing and the object of knowing. The knowing, as such, is a process that has its own spirit; a process not unlike the characteristics of a conversation that Hans-Georg Gadamer propounds.⁴⁹ This quality of the middle voice exemplifies the performative and charismatic qualities of love that Paul envisions (see “Semiotic Square 1” above). Qualified by love, the knowing is not a grasping or an objectification of the other/Other. Paul thus says in 8:2-3, “If anyone thinks that he knew something, he did not yet know as he ought to know. But, if someone loves [God], he has been known [by God].” Paul is concerned that the knowing be objectified and turned into a system of categorization that orders, manipulates, and marginalizes the other/Other, as we see happen in the “idol food” conflict (see chapter 6). Because such a knowing is distorted into an abusive power, Paul warns believers,

⁴⁸ For example, Thiselton writes, “The verb ἐγνωσται may be constructed either as middle (expressing personal interest or the involvement of the subject of the verb in a reflexive sense) or as a passive (known). To retain the ambiguity, we may translate the shorter text: **But if anyone loves, he or she has experienced true ‘knowing.’** Thus κ^* and 33 also omit ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ. Conzelmann describes this shorter reading as ‘a very pregnant text;’ Fee observes that ‘this shorter text (i.e., εἰ δὲ τις ἀγαπᾷ, οὗτος ἐγνωσται) brings Paul’s point home so powerfully that it is most likely what he originally wrote;’ and Spicq considers it ‘very probably authentic.’ Against p⁴⁶ and Clement, p¹⁵, κ^2 , A, B, D, F, the Latin and Syriac VSS, and Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Augustine include τὸν θεόν and also (except for κ^* and 33) ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ. The UBS 4th ed. accepts the longer reading with ‘A’ grading. Metzger defends this on the grounds that ‘the absence of τὸν θεόν ... was regarded by the Committee to be the result of formal assimilation to ver 2.’ ...” See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 625. We make this citation to show that the discussions have yet to consider the “intransitive nonreflexivity” character of the middle voice, which renders the verb ἐγνωσται as “knowing that takes place in the knowing itself.” This translation is close to that of Thiselton, with the exception that the “true knowing” is not reflexive. This exception stresses that the “knowing” cannot be opted by the “subject” of knowing. Because as the “true knowing” is not reflexive, it does not return to the gaze of the “subject.” This “nonreflexivity” of the “true knowing” is further confirmed when we see that the knowing by God is not a knowing that grasps the other, but a knowing that takes places in Christ dying for the other.

⁴⁹ See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. Second, revised edition. Translation revised by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 385.

“Watch out that this right of yours (ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὕτη) not somehow becomes a stumbling block (πρόσκομμα) to the weak” (8:9).

This notion of risk and vulnerability in being drawn out of oneself towards the beloved in the matter of knowing is further stressed in 13:12.⁵⁰ As we have noted in chapter 2, the premise of knowing fully (note the middle voice) is “I am fully known.” It is *insofar as* I am fully known that I come to know fully. But, to know what? The other/Other? Myself (as a result of becoming vulnerable)? Paul does not say. But, it is in being drawn out of myself (i.e., cleared of my own perspective that tries to grasp the other/Other), that I can know in a way that the other/Other can be the other/Other without being co-opted into my knowing.

This quality of risk and vulnerability in knowing echoes our analysis of the second and third semiotic squares above regarding 13:3 and 15:36. It is also reflected in 6:12 and 10:23 that challenges an egotistic perspective. Paul writes, “All things are permitted to me (μοι ἔξεστιν) but not all things are beneficial (οὐ πάντα συμφέρει). All things are permitted to me but I will not be mastered (ἐξουσιασθήσομαι) by anything” (6:12).⁵¹ While Paul does not mention to whom are “not all things beneficial,” his caution that “I will not be mastered by anything” points out the problem with saying that “all things are permitted to me.” Because if “all things are permitted to me,” then “I” do not need to care about anyone. This carelessness towards the other/Other is fine if “I” am self-sufficient and do not need anyone’s help. But, if “I” am always related to someone and even indebted to her/him (to whatever degree it may be), then to say that “all things are permitted to me” is to treat the other/Other as a means to an end. One’s relationship with the

⁵⁰ Paul writes, “For until now I see through the mirror in enigma, but then face to face; until now I know partially, but then I shall know fully (ἐπιγνώσομαι), just as I am fully known (καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην).”

⁵¹ Thiselton points out the “wordplay on the two forms derived from ἐκ + εἰμι. ἔξεστι (indicate) relates to ἐξουσία (participle) and hence to the first singular future passive indicative of ἐξουσιασθήσομαι, from ἐξουσιάζω. The noun ἐξουσία often [means] *authority*, but means no less *the right to act* because the agent possesses ἐξουσία in the sense of *freedom of choice*. In the active voice ἐξουσιάζω means *to control someone else’s rights, power, or freedom of choice*. Hence the passive voice (as used here) can mean *I will not be mastered by* (NIV), or *dominated by* (NRSV, NJB)...” See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 461.

other/Other becomes an economy of exchange. This self-centered attitude is at odds with a group-oriented culture, where only a very few have the means to do so. Here, it is important to note that immediately before 6:12, Paul in 6:11 reminds believers that they were “washed, sanctified, and made just in the name of Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God.” In fact, this is how Paul addresses the Corinthian believers: “to the church of God in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, those called saints...” (1:2). All things are certainly permitted to God and Jesus, yet they focus on the washing, sanctification, and justification of people. Indeed, Jesus even died for people (8:11).

It may be tempting to overemphasize the value of reason and self-control in the autonomy of an individual (see chapter 1). But, for Paul, the sense of self-mastery is oriented toward God and Christ (6:13). The saying that “I will not be mastered by anything” is not against heteronomy. On the contrary, it highlights one’s reliance upon God and Christ to be not “mastered by anything.” Thus when Paul reiterates 6:12 in 10:23, not only does he repeat the phrase “not all things are beneficial (συμφέρει),” in particular the word συμφέρει, he also says that “not all things build up (οικοδομεῖ),” which echoes 8:1, “*Gnosis* puffs up, but love builds up (οικοδομεῖ).” Love, in other words, is not only indispensable to “building up” the other/Other and brings everyone and everything together (συμ-φέρει),⁵² it is also what moves believers towards God and God towards believers (2:9; 8:3).

This imagery of building and bringing everything together are interrelated with love. To build something is to bring things together. But, how to bring things together is the challenge. As the foundation that provides the support to the building is Christ (3:11), the building must be built Christ-like or in the pattern of a cross-like lifestyle, as Paul tells the Corinthian believers that when he was with them, he only focused on “Jesus Christ and him crucified” (2:2).

⁵² Note that Paul describes the Corinthian believers as “the field of God, the building of God (οικοδομή)” in 3:9.

Socio-politically and religiously, the cross was a scandal in ancient Mediterranean cultures. In the Roman Empire, the cross was certainly the most horrific, despicable, and shameful execution that even the Roman “cultured literary world wanted to have nothing to do with it, and as a rule kept quiet about it.”⁵³ As that which should not be mentioned, the cross was used to maintain the *Pax Romana* of the Empire. However, the cross was *also*, shockingly, used by Paul to highlight the power and wisdom of God. Who would have known that the wisdom of God that the wisdom of the world had rejected (1:21) and that the rulers of this age had crucified (2:8) was “Jesus Christ and him crucified”? Here, one should not reason that Jesus was predestined to be crucified. To say so is to say that God predestined the world and the rulers of this age to reject Jesus. Rather, Jesus was rejected and crucified because of the ignorance of the world (2:8) and because of his love for people. In contradiction to those who seek their own things (10:24), the preposition “dia” (διά) + accusative in 8:11, meaning “for the sake of,” shows that Jesus did not seek his own things but the things of others. The cross, in other words, was the embodiment of vulnerability and care for others. It was the risk that Jesus was willing to take for the sake of others. This other-orientation of the cross shows that the cross cannot be objectified. For Paul, the crucifixion of Jesus was not the killing of the Son by the Father. It was not a child abuse. Neither was it sadistic (by the Father) nor masochistic (by the Son). Rather, it was for the sake of others that Jesus died (ἀπέθανεν) (notice the active voice in 8:11). If it was because of the love of life that Christ took the path of the cross (8:11; cf. 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Rom. 5:6-8), then we cannot address συμφέρει (“bringing together”) and οικοδομεῖ (“building up”) without highlighting this cruciform love.

⁵³ Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion: In the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross*. Translated by John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 38.

The connection of “love builds up” (1 Cor. 8:1), “not everything builds up” (10:23), “believers are the building of God” (3:9), Jesus Christ as the foundation of the building (3:10-11) – which shows why Paul decided to know nothing among the Corinthian believers “except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (2:2) – reflects the importance of the cross in Paul’s vision of love. Paul’s exhortation in 10:24, “Let no one seek her/his own thing but the thing of the other” on the issue of the “idol food” conflict, likewise, echoes Paul’s notion of a love that “does not seek things for itself” (13:5). As Kei Eun Chang stresses, the common good (τὸ συμφέρον) is vitally important to Paul’s ethico-political and soteriological vision of the body of Christ.⁵⁴ Our discussion of the “togetherness” of *sym* (συμ) in συμφέρει (see section 3.2 in chapter 2) further underscores that it is in the coming together of various groups of people that differences and similarities are foregrounded. Differences and similarities are not an essence in themselves.

As we have repeatedly emphasized, a context is contextual all the way down. A context is always other-oriented, fluid, and dynamic. It must not be objectified and ossified. To essentialize a context is to de-contextualize it, depriving it of its dynamics and discursiveness. It is in the coming together, in a face-to-face encounter that love and knowing take place. Recall Paul’s saying in 13:12 that “I will fully know” only insofar as “I am fully known.” Thus Paul urges believers not to seek their own things (cf. Phil. 2:3; Rom. 12:3). In seeking their own things, believers cannot see beyond their horizons. They will only further reinforce it. But, when one seeks the things of the other/Other, in particular as one is in love and is drawn out of oneself towards the beloved, one’s perspective can then be broadened and deepened.

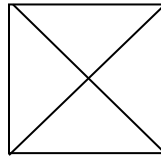
⁵⁴ See Kei Eun Chang, *The Community, The Individual And The Common Good: Τὸ Ἰδίον and Τὸ Συμφέρον in the Greco-Roman World and Paul* (New York and London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013).

(ix) Semiotic Square 9: A Response-ability Labor

Noting that φυσιοῖ (“to be inflated”) “is a Pauline word,”⁵⁵ Raymond Collins points out that the word “was common in Hellenistic rhetoric where it was used to characterize those whose self-conceit was such that it led to partisanship.”⁵⁶ This “airy” and “free-floating” imagery of knowledge “puffing up” contrasts sharply with the “down to earth” and painstaking imagery of love “building up” (8:1; cf. 4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; and 13:4).

8:1e – love builds up (S₁): A Response-Ability Labor

8:2 – those who think they know actually do not yet know (S₂): A Non-Relational Knowing



8:3 – those who love God are known by God (non-S₂): A Relational Knowing

6:12a-c, 10:23 – everything is permitted (to me) (non-S₁): A Non-Response-Ability Labor

Building a building is a hard and a dedicated work. A building that is not built well can get people hurt and killed. It takes planning, skill, patience, labor, persistency, constant review, responsibility, and consideration to build a safe and comfortable place. As the building of God (θεοῦ οἰκοδομή) (3:9), believers too must use love to build themselves into a well-rounded person. As an entrusted steward (οικονόμος) of the mysteries of God (4:2) and a wise architect (ἀρχιτέκτων) (3:10), Paul cannot help but to proclaim the gospel with much fear and trembling.⁵⁷ Believers, likewise, need to be careful in building themselves (3:9-15). Once the building is built wrong, it must be deconstructed and built again. One must start over again. One should thus begin well so that one does not need to undo and redo what one has done.

⁵⁵ Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 180.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁵⁷ Because it is impossible to communicate the mysteries of God without somehow reducing it, Paul must rely on God to convey them to believers.

Similarly, the more massive a building believers want to become, the stronger a foundation they must lay. No building can stand on a weak foundation. The foundation must be able to support the building. To build themselves into a building of God, believers must use Christ as the foundation (3:11). A long-lasting building requires a long-lasting foundation and good building materials. This is why the believers' *pistis* (i.e., "faith," "faithfulness," "trust," or "obedience") cannot be in human wisdom; it must be in the power of God (2:5), namely, the *logos* of the cross (1:18). Once this foundation is laid, believers must not waste it by using flimsy materials to build the building. Whatever they build will be tested to make sure that it can last. As the foundation is equipped with the potentiality for believers to build all kinds of buildings, they should use valuable materials to make the building impressive and to make their life worthy of the grace of God (cf. 15:10; 9:26-27).

In this building project, Paul cannot simply lay the foundation. First, as the foundation can only be Jesus Christ and him crucified (2:2-3), it must be laid with the help of God and Christ so that the building can be built by the locals to meet their own needs (cf. 9:19-23; 10:33). Secondly, as Paul is one of the co-workers of God (3:9), one of the building-stewards of the mysteries of God (οἰκονόμους μυστηρίων θεοῦ) who must be found *pistos* (4:1-2), as he has already been entrusted with the building-stewardship (οἰκονομίαν πεπίστευμαι) (9:17), Paul must really work hard to rely on God in doing his mission, not to mention the mysteries of God can only be conveyed by God. Here, Paul's language of "laboring" (3:8; 4:12; 15:10, 58; 16:16) is prominent. In making himself a slave to all people (9:19) and disciplining himself harshly for his mission (9:25-27), Paul continues to show that "the kingdom of God" is not in the sphere of *logos* but in power (οὐ γὰρ λόγῳ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει) (4:20). The kingdom has its own *ethos*; one cannot do whatever one desires. In saying that believers have already become

king by themselves (4:8), Paul suggests that they have even usurped the place of God and Christ. But, if the power of God is manifested through the crucified Messiah (1:24, 30), then the building that believers are should embody the mark of the crucified Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 4:10), as they were called by God to participate in the fellowship of Jesus. Otherwise they would have already rejected the *logos* of the cross as foolishness (1 Cor. 1:18). So not just Paul himself, but also believers need to continue to labor in their *pistis* (15:58; cf. 1 Thess. 1:2-10; Rom. 5:1-5). Whatever believers build must be tested by fire (1 Cor. 3:13). Thus in being baptized into the name of Christ (1:13), they need to be Christ-like (11:1), put on Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 13:12, 14; 2 Cor. 5:1-5; cf. 1 Cor. 15:53-54),⁵⁸ and to be transformed accordingly (cf. 1 Cor. 11:27-32; Rom. 12:1-3).

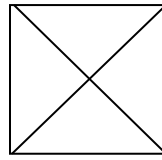
From these imageries of building a strong and good building, we can see that love, which manifests similar qualities (1 Cor. 13:4-8), indeed builds up. One cannot simply build a building in any way that one wants, in particular if one is building the building of God. In a group-oriented culture, one is always already in relations with others. Not only is one the “fruit” of love of one’s parents, one also receives her/his flesh and body from them, whether one likes it or not. One’s life is not one’s alone; it also belongs to one’s family and friends. Whatever that one does affects these people. One must be aware and be responsible for one’s words and deeds, lest they disable people from being able to respond to the love of God towards them.

(x) Semiotic Square 10: No Fixed Representation

In this semiotic square, since only 8:1e (non-S₂) mentions love, a semantic analysis of this semiotic square will not offer us much insight about Paul’s view of love. We will thus just focus on the relation of contradiction between 8:1d (S₂) and 8:1e (non-S₂).

⁵⁸ See Jung Hoon Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus* (London and New York: T&T Clark International, 2004).

8:8; 6:13 – food will not offer us to God (S₁): No Representation that can replace the real conditions of life



8:1d – *gnosis* puffs up (S₂): Delimiting: a kind of knowledge that contracts one's horizon of vision

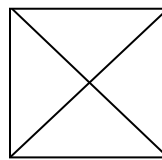
8:1e – love builds up (non-S₂): Non delimiting: a kind of love that expands one's horizon of vision

8:2 – those who think they know do not yet know (non-S₁): A representation that replaces the real conditions of life

In this relation, love that builds up has to be practical, substantial, and connective. In fact, love cannot be indifferent but must pay attention to various situations. By contrast, *gnosis* about the “idol food” can classify and separate people into different categories, once it shifts its focus from people's situation to the food. So, instead of building people up in their relationship with God, it objectifies and alienates people from each other and from God. Instead of going before God without any intermediary, believers need to go through the food system. As a result, God is also included into this signifying system. Food becomes the currency that defines believers and God. For Paul, even if food may define one's relationship with other/Other, it must not be turned into a universal and fixed evaluative system that prevents one from interacting and knowing the other/Other in person in her/his/its concrete situation.

(xi) Semiotic Square 11: Christ-like

4:21c – Paul wants to visit the Corinthian believers in love and a spirit of gentleness (S₁): Christ-like



3:4b-c – the Corinthian believers say that they belong to different groups (S₂): Self-centered

1:10d – Paul urges the Corinthian believers to say the same thing (non-S₂): Non-Self-centered

3:3b; 11:18 – jealousy and strive are among the Corinthian believers (non-S₁): Non-Christ-like

In our final two semiotic squares, we come to the end of our story progression. In saying that he wants to visit the Corinthian believers in love and a spirit of gentleness (ἐν ἀγάπῃ πνεύματι τε πραύτητος),⁵⁹ Paul wants them to receive love and a spirit of gentleness from his visit. He does not want them to receive a rod from him (4:21) and to seem to be imposingly authoritative. However, as the kingdom of God is not in *logos* but in power (4:20), one's relationship with Christ and God should then embody the power of God (2:5), that is, the *logos* of the cross (1:18). Thus, even if Paul wants to visit the believers, he cannot just go. The Lord has to approve it first (4:19). As such, it is not entirely up to Paul to discipline or to treat them with love and gentleness.

Indeed, if “Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1:24), and if it is out of God that believers are “in Christ Jesus who became wisdom” for their benefit by God (1:30), then they are in the power of God when called by God “into the fellowship of God’s Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (1:9). Thus when Paul calls believers to his side (παρακάλεῖν), it is “through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” that he encourages them *all* to say the same thing (τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε), not to have factions (σχίσματα) among themselves, and be restored in the same mind and in the same thought (κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοί καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ) (1:10).⁶⁰

Note that it is “through the name of our Lord Jesus” that Paul urges and persuades believers; the very name that “everyone” from “every place” calls upon as her/his Lord (1:2). This is the fundamental characteristic of a believer: one who is “sanctified in Christ Jesus” and calls upon “the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:2). If Paul “decided to know nothing among

⁵⁹ The word *πραύτης* means “the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one’s self-importance, gentleness, humility, courtesy, considerateness, meekness” (BDAG, 861).

⁶⁰ The word *νοῦς* can mean: (1) “the faculty of intellectual perception,” (2) “way of thinking,” and (3) “result of thinking” (e.g., “thought, opinion, decree” (BDAG, 680). The word *γνώμη* can mean: (1) “that which is purposed or intended,” (2) “a viewpoint of or way of thinking about a matter” (e.g., “opinion, judgment, way of thinking”), (3) “the act of expressing agreement with a body of data” (e.g., “approval”), and (4) “a declaration that expresses formal consideration of a matter” (e.g., “declaration, decision, resolution”) (BDAG, 202-3).

you [i.e., the Corinthians] except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (2:2), then it is through acknowledging the lordship of Jesus and his crucifixion that Paul asks the Corinthian believers to “say the same thing” and to be restored “in the same mind and in the same thought.” This exhortation is not too demanding; after all, believers already did the impossible. As they were empowered by the Holy Spirit to confess that Jesus is Lord (12:3) and received the spirit from God (2:12), they did not reject the scandal and the *logos* of the cross as foolishness but received it as the power of God (1:18). If they have already accepted Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God (1:24) and were even enriched in God in everything, “in every *logos* and every *gnosis*” (1:5), then it should not be impossible for them to “say the same thing.” As Paul makes it clear in 12:4-6, there are many gifts but the same spirit, many services (*διακονιῶν*) but the same Lord, and many workings (*ἐνεργημάτων*) but the same God, to “say the same thing” does not mean to erase differences. The body of Christ is one, but it is “parts beyond a part” (12:27). In 3:8, for example, Paul writes, “the planter (i.e., Paul) and the waterer (i.e., Apollos) are one (*ἓν*),⁶¹ each will receive his own wage according to his own labor.”

In other words, to say “the same thing” and “be restored in the same mind and in the same thought” should be done in a Christ-like way; after all, Christ is the foundation of the building of God (i.e., believers) (3:9-11). Thus, Paul “became all kinds of people” as he interacts with them in proclaiming the gospel of Christ (9:22). He pleases everyone in everything, not seeking his own benefits but of others so that they may be saved (10:33). So, if believers want to form their own groups, they should do so in a Christ-like manner. If they want to strive and be

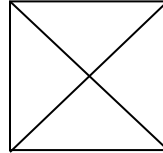
⁶¹ Concerning this notion of “one,” Thiselton writes, “Exegetes and translators show some disagreement, however, about whether **one** (*ἓν*, neuter form of *εἷς*, *μία*, *ἓν*, adjectival singular numeral, **one** [person] ... **one** [thing]) signifies here one in status (*equal*, RSV; *there is no difference between ...*, TEV) or one in task and goal (*have a common purpose*, NRSV; *work as a team*, REB; *are working for the same end*, Basic English). The AV/KJN and RV simply reproduce the Greek, *are one*, while the NJB has a useful double play in rendering *It is all one who does the planting and who does the watering*. This flows beautifully, has great force, and much to commend it since the Greek leaves open whether purpose or status is in view, and probably embraces both.” See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 303.

zealous, they should also do so in a Christ-like way. If Christ is the foundation that cannot be objectified, as Christ is crucified and the resurrected Messiah, then the “unity” among believers must also be Christ-like.

(xii) Semiotic Square 12: A Christ-oriented Honor

4:14b – Paul wrote the letter to admonish the Corinthian believers (S₁): A Christ-oriented Honor

4:21b – Paul did not want to visit the Corinthian believers with a rod (S₂): A Self-centered Authority



4:21c – Paul wants to visit believers in love and a spirit of gentleness (non-S₂): A Non-Self-centered Authority

3:4b-c – the Corinthian believers say that they belong to different groups (non-S₁): A Non-Christ-oriented Honor

As the person who gives birth to the Corinthian believers *in Christ Jesus through the gospel* (4:15),⁶² Paul’s reputation and honor are naturally intertwined with that of the group of believers. In saying that they are his work *in the Lord* and the seal of his apostleship *in the Lord* (9:1-2), Paul not only makes himself vulnerable to the charges of others against believers. He also implicates the reputation and honor of the Lord, as it is God and Christ who send him and entrust him with the responsibility to oversee the believers’ building project (3:10; 4:1-2; 9:17). Thus, in saying that it is “in Christ Jesus through the gospel” that he gives birth to believers, Paul

⁶² In highlighting five aspects of a father-child relationship in Jewish and non-Jewish ancient texts (e.g., “hierarchy,” “authority,” “imitation,” “affection,” and “education”), Burke finds that Paul “employs the father-child metaphor in order to unite the Corinthians under himself as their common *pater*. As the founding-father of the community Paul expects his children to heed his position, submit to his authority, follow his example, obey his instructions and be aware of his love for them.” See Trevor J. Burke, “Paul’s Role As ‘Father’ To His Corinthian ‘Children’ in Socio-Historical Context (1 Corinthians 4:14-21),” in *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies On A Community in Conflict. Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall*. Edited by Trevor J. Burke and J. Keith Elliott (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 113. This might be an appropriate understanding of the father – child relationship in the narrative – dialogic dimension of the letter. But from the perspective of the semantic relationships that posit Paul’s convictional vision, we envision the “unity” differently. We find that Paul’s usage of a familial metaphor points out that if believers are Paul’s beloved children born in Christ Jesus through the gospel, then no individual believers can have privileges over the others (cf. 1 Cor. 4:6). In Christ, everyone is interdependent. The body of Christ is “parts beyond a part” (12:27) with each individuality in relation to other individualities. While individuality is certainly important in itself, we cannot speak of it without other individualities. It is in light of plurality (i.e., many individualities) that we can speak of an individuality. By itself, an individuality cannot be identified. It is when individuals come together that we can speak of individuality and plurality.

shows that believers are not his children alone. As he points out in 3:9, he and the other apostles are the co-workers of God. Hence, even if Paul wants to visit believers, he needs to seek the Lord's approval. It is also not up to him alone to decide whether to visit them with a rod or with love and a spirit of gentleness.

In a group-oriented culture where everyone's honor is tied together, one can see why some Corinthian believers do not want to be associated with other believers in the church of God. They do not want their reputation and honor be affected by those whom they do not like. They want to form their own groups and be separated from them. Here, the use of genitive + εἰμι in 3:4 (Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου, ἕτερος δέ, Ἐγὼ Ἀπολλῶ) and 1:12 (Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου, Ἐγὼ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ, Ἐγὼ δὲ Κηφᾶ, Ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ) is noteworthy.⁶³ For Donald Mastronarde, while the use of predicate in dative of possession "emphasizes having vs. not having something," the use of predicate in genitive of possession "emphasizes that something belongs to X and not to anybody else."⁶⁴ So as the Corinthian believers assert that "Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου ... Ἐγὼ Ἀπολλῶ...", they seem to be stressing that "I belong to nobody but Paul ... I belong to nobody but Apollos." The emphatic "I" in one's association and dissociation with the others is remarkable. It simultaneously marks a clear, distinct, and rigid boundary between the self and the

⁶³ While treating this genitive as a genitive of possession, Wallace in his footnote on 1:12 writes, "Not altogether common in this example is the possessive gen. in the predicate, making an assertion about the subject." See Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 83. In pointing out that no one has yet "produced one example of an ancient political slogan which has the same formula (personal pronoun + εἰμι [or ellipsed] + genitive of a proper name)," Mitchell further highlights the nuances in interpreting 1:12. In listing Dem. Or. 9.56 ("Ἦσαν ... τινὲς μὲν Φιλίππου) and Andoc. 1.53 (εἶναι τούτων τῶν ἀνδρῶν) to show "a comparable use of the genitive of possession or relation to refer to party membership," Mitchell also refers to *BDF* 162.7 that "classifies 1 Cor. 1:12 (and 3:4, 21; 6:19; Acts 27:23) as a 'genitive of relationship' meaning 'I belong to' (also *BAGD*, 225)." See Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991), 84.

⁶⁴ Donald J. Mastronarde, *Introduction to Attic Greek* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1993), 73.

others.⁶⁵ Paul's admonition to believers thus exposes the power relations among believers. Through the language of honor and shame (4:14), the reminder that they were born through the gospel in Christ Jesus (4:15), the mention of Timothy as Paul's beloved and *pistos* child in the Lord (4:17), and the emphasis that the kingdom of God is in the power of God (i.e., the *logos* of the cross) (4:20), Paul wants believers to realize that however much they may want to do to separate themselves from others, their honor is always already marked by the cross. As they have experienced and received so much grace from God and Jesus (1:4-5), they should be cross-oriented. To make their own group according to their own wisdom is to reject the cross and to cut themselves off from the grace, wisdom, and power of God. It is for this reason that Paul wants to visit believers so that they can be reminded that the kingdom of God is not in *logos* but in the power of the cross (4:18-20).

V. Conclusion

Let us now summarize the values that we have fleshed out through our analyses of the semiotic squares. For this we will focus on the relations of "implication" from the first to the last semiotic square.⁶⁶ The values that we find undergird Paul's love are (in the order of the semiotic squares): (1) performative (i.e., other-oriented, messianic, and charismatic) and communicative, (2) letting go and collaborative, (3) risky (but promising) and non-calculative, (4) Christ-oriented

⁶⁵ In making these claims, believers do not want to be vulnerable to the possibility that their honor being tainted by their association with other believers. But, if they were already shamed by the society in being part of the fellowship and the body of a crucified Messiah, then why were they still so caught up in the social norms that not only marginalized them but also condemned their Lord? This concern for their own interests and honor marks a sharp contrast with the other-orientation of God, Christ, Paul and other apostles who risked being exposed to shame and violence in bringing them the gospel. If they are even willing to become vulnerable in associating themselves with all kinds of people, then how could believers later on turn away from such a *habitus*? Do they now feel ashamed of the other/Other that they want to form their own groups to preserve and enhance their reputation and honor?

⁶⁶ The first four semiotic squares are related to the concept of love. Although semiotic squares 5-7 (which immediately follow semiotic squares 1-4 in our story progression) are not related to love, we analyzed them to show that they display similar characteristics that we see in the concept of love in semiotic squares 1-4. Then, we skipped over other semiotic squares in the story progression to focus on those that address love. Here, a similar pattern is found related to that of the semiotic squares 1-4.

and a non-self-centered reasoning, (5) contextual (risky but promising) and not universalizing a particular context, (6) perseverance (in hard work and response-ability) and a relational knowing, (7) something that cannot be represented and delimited, (8) Christ-like and non-self-centered, and (9) a Christ-oriented honor and a non-self-centered authority.

In semiotic square 1, the first thing that caught our attention is Paul shows that love is performative in the sense that it is other-oriented by highlighting the contrast between those who “have” or “have-not” love when performing the spiritual gifts. Love is other-oriented because, when the lover is drawn out of her/himself toward the beloved, the beloved becomes the center of attention of the lover. While Paul adapts Isaiah 64:3 (LXX) to say that God has prepared for those who love God (1 Cor. 2:9) and that believers received “not the spirit of the cosmos but the spirit from God so that we might know the gifts given by God for our benefit” (2:12), he notes in 12:7 that “to each person has been given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good” and that despite the varieties of gifts, it is the same spirit who works and distributes gifts to each person individually as it wants (12:4, 11).

The spiritual gifts mentioned in the first semiotic square, in other words, are not only the gifts of God to those who love God. They are also to be perceived and received in love. So when the gifts are not undergirded by love, not only can they not convey the love of God, they can also make the performers of the gifts meaning-less. In the example of the speaking in tongues turned into a meaningless noise, we see that love keeps the performers on their toes to be sensitive to the works of God and the situation of the audience.

In case when love is objectified, that is turned into an object that can be possessed and used for one’s own agenda, the value of “letting go” comes to the fore in semiotic square 2. This “letting go” in love is not an irresponsible “letting go.” Neither is it a calculative “letting go” that

serves one's own interest. The extreme giving away all of one's possessions and even of one's body shows that such a "letting go" is an act of faith that entrusts oneself into God's guidance. Without an intimate relationship with God that empowers the giver, s/he is not able to discern how to collaborate with God. The giver must not be self-centered in the acts; otherwise the giving away may cause hurt and abuse. This concern that the "letting go" could become dangerous is a major concern to Paul, as we found mentioned again in semiotic squares 3-4.

In saying that "what *you* sow is not made alive unless it dies (σὺ δ' σπείρεις, οὐ ζωοποιεῖται ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ)" (15:36), Paul emphasizes a sense of continuity and discontinuity at the same time. That is to say, while one must not insist on one's plan and calculation ("what *you* sow"), the potentiality of what is yet to come is already inherent in the present (note the middle-passive voice in ζωοποιεῖται). To let go does not mean no planning. On the contrary, one needs to plan but the outcome of the plan is beyond one's control. This is why the notion of risk and promise in semiotic square 3 is further qualified by a Christ-oriented framework in semiotic square 4. "What you sow is not made alive unless it dies" has to be perceived in the example of God giving us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul writes, "τῷ δὲ θεῷ χάρις τῷ διδόντι ἡμῖν τὸ νῖκος διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ" (15:57). God may give us victory, but we need to be able to recognize and receive it (hence, the thanksgiving). Without receiving the spirit from God and living in the power of God that is manifested in the *logos* of the cross (1:24, 30; 2:12), we cannot discern and see how God works through "our Lord Jesus Christ." The victory that God gives to us is still happening today (note the present active participle of διδόντι that qualifies God). It is not a one-time victory that happened in the past. To receive the victory, however, believers must continue to embody the *logos* of the cross in their daily life. The letting go is not a random and an irresponsible letting go. It is a discerning letting go that is cross-

oriented (15:31, 36). Again, this explanation of letting go shows that love cannot be objectified. It is in the mode of a present progressive tense. It is a middle-voice quality. It takes place in a concrete situation (“what you sow”) but goes beyond it at the same time (“is not made alive unless it dies”).

Now, let us move to semiotic squares 8-12 that mention love. The textual variants and the middle voice in 8:3 are noteworthy: εἰ δέ τις ἀγαπᾷ [τὸν θεόν], οὗτος ἔγνωσται [αὐτοῦ] (“if anyone loves God, this person is already known by Him”). While the form of ἔγνωσται can be either a passive or a middle voice, the omissions of “God” and “by Him” in some manuscripts show that ἔγνωσται can be treated as a middle voice. Indeed, as no one can tell the “object” of love (since τὸν θεόν is bracketed) and the “subject” who loves the one who loves (since αὐτοῦ is bracketed), verse 8:3 further shows that ἔγνωσται is a knowing that takes place in the knowing itself, sustained by love. This is why Paul in 8:2 says that “if anyone thinks that he already knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.” The knowing cannot be objectified. It happens in the happening, not unlike Gadamer’s notion of falling into conversation, as people in dialogue are guided by the spirit of conversation.⁶⁷

Paul in his vision of love, likewise, says that “I shall know fully *insofar as* I am known fully” (13:12). While the object of my knowing and the subject who knows me are not mentioned, the subject “I” is not in control of the knowing. The subject, on the contrary, is “de-subjectified” into an object in the process of knowing. It is *insofar as* I am open to being known in knowing the other/Other that I will come to know. This de-subjectifying of the “I” contrasts sharply with the egotistical claim that “everything is permitted” to me in 6:12 and 10:23. This de-subjectifying takes place in love because the lover is not only a subject of giving love, s/he is

⁶⁷ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 385.

also the object moved by love to give love and her/himself to the beloved. As such, the lover is also the receiver of the love that moves her/him toward the beloved.

Thus in urging believers to seek the things of the other/Other (10:24), Paul is not saying that one should not take care of oneself. Neither is Paul prioritizing the other/Other at the expense of the self. To do so might objectify the other/Other. In saying that the knowing already takes places when one loves, Paul conveys that the self and the other/Other implicate each other in the process of knowing one another. In a group-oriented culture, this simultaneous focus on the self and the other/Other can challenge social norms. Because the identity of the self is usually embedded in the collective identity of the group that s/he is associated with,⁶⁸ the self can be marginalized and erased in the name of the group interest. The middle-voice of knowing in love, however, problematizes such a mode of thinking. So in trying to find a value that can connect all the values of semiotic square 8 together, we decided to use “contextualizing” to describe Paul’s notion of love, which while foregrounding a particular context of love, does not universalize it, because this would essentialize and de-contextualize it. As a dynamic and concrete love that is always on the move (with the lover drawn out of her/himself towards the beloved), love is like a rhythmic heartbeat (using the language of Jean-Luc Nancy)⁶⁹ that constructs and deconstructs itself in each beating of the heart.

The constructive and deconstructive qualities of love are prominent in semiotic square 9 that analyzes how Paul contrasts love with *gnosis* when he writes that “*gnosis* puffs up, but love builds up” (8:1). The imagery of building a solid and safe building that is comfortable for people

⁶⁸ For example, Malina points out that people in a communal society tend to “define themselves rather exclusively in terms of the groups in which they [are] embedded; their total self-awareness emphatically depends upon such group embeddedness.” See Bruce J. Malina, *The Social World of Jesus and the Gospels* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 41.

⁶⁹ See Jean-Luc Nancy, “Shattered Love,” in *The Inoperative Community*. Theory and History of Literature 76. Edited by Peter Connor. Translated by Lisa Garbus and Simona Sawhney (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 82-109.

to live in shows that love also requires planning, persistency, responsibility, re-evaluation, and hard work. As buildings of God (3:9), believers not only should take advantage of the strong foundation that Christ is (3:11), they should also use very good-quality materials to build themselves so that their buildings may stand strong even under the test of fire (3:12-15). The builder should have a long-term goal and a broad vision when building their building. As the foundation offers them an unlimited range of potentiality to build upon it, they should continue to expand their horizon of vision. This expansion takes place in love. Because when one is in love, one will keep thinking and coming up with creative ideas of how to surprise and please the beloved. Just as each beating of the heart is rhythmic, love does not return to itself without being changed and transformed. It excites and empowers the lover to see the building as fun, instead of just toil and labor. Not only does it make the lover concerned with the beloved (cf. 7:32-35), it also makes the lover to be anxious concerning the possible response of the beloved towards what s/he does and does not say and do. Herein lies the response-ability of love.

Thus it is not surprising to find in semiotic square 10 that love can be neither represented nor delimited. For Paul, if food can be used to identify and define people, then it can represent, replace, and even obscure the believers' real conditions of life. Indeed, it can even be used to discriminate and marginalize people, as it happened to the Corinthian believers in the "idol food" conflict (8:9). Once the value and the situation of the people are subjected to the evaluation of a classification, God can be portrayed as more concerned about food than about people. As a result, food can become a signifying system that not only mediates the relationship between believers and God but also identifies and places God in the system. When God is thus defined by the system, those responsible for the classification of food become deified. But Paul makes it clear

that only love can build us up (8:1). Because love is performative (and hence, context-specific), it pushes us to examine each context carefully in our love.⁷⁰

In semiotic square 11, Paul debates whether he should visit the Corinthian believers with a rod or in love and a spirit of gentleness (ἀγάπη πνεύματι τε πραΰτητος) (4:21). It is noteworthy that Paul also says that he wants to visit them quickly, *if the Lord willing* (4:19). This orientation toward the Lord comes to the fore when Paul, “through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,” urges believers to say the same thing and be restored in the same mind and the same thought (1:10). Love, in other words, is Christ-oriented. As noted, it is not possible for everyone to say the same thing. But, if every believer from every place calls upon “the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and our Lord” (1:2), then to say the same thing “through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” is to be Christ-like. Indeed, if believers are the building of God (3:9) and the temple of God (3:16), where Christ is the foundation (3:11), then they need to embody the *logos* of the cross, which is the power of God (1:18) that characterizes the kingdom of God (4:20). But,

⁷⁰ The temptation to classify people and things can lead to the discrimination of people. In reminding the Corinthian believers that they are his beloved children to whom he gives birth in Christ through the gospel (4:15; 9:1), Paul shows that they are not the children of him alone. It is in Christ Jesus and it is through the gospel that Paul gives birth to them. Paul also shows that since they are born through the gospel in Christ Jesus, they should not discriminate against anyone. As they are all called by God into the fellowship of Jesus (1:9), they have received the spirit from God (2:12) and the gifts of the spirit (12:7). They should learn and receive from one another the gift of God (cf. Phil. 2:3; Rom. 12:3).

For Paul, no individual believer or gift can be privileged at the expense of the others. Like the body of Christ that is “parts beyond a part” (12:27), every believer and gift is indispensable. For example, regardless of how great and amazing believer-A may be, the love of believer-B can never be given by believer-A. Only believer-B can give the kind of love that only believer-B can give. Likewise, regardless of how attractive and brilliant believer-B may be, only believer-A can give the kind of love that no one but believer-A can give. At the same time, however, it is crucial to note that neither believer-A nor believer-B is by her/himself, as if there are no other believers. A love relationship is not just between two individuals; it is also between the friends and families of two individuals. Therefore in saying that believers are his beloved children, Paul brings to the fore the individuality-plurality character of love. That is to say, an individuality by itself cannot be identified as an individuality. It is only in relation to other individualities (i.e., plurality) that we can tell one individuality from another individuality. Here, plurality is not an essence either. It is in the coming together of individualities that we have a plurality. The coming together, in other words, is what love does as it connects and separates the lover from the beloved. Without the space between the lover and the beloved, there is no love since there is no possibility of movement between the two. There needs to be a space for the movement of love to take place.

the fact that believers form their own groups shows that they are not cross-oriented; they want to separate themselves from other believers.

In a group-oriented culture in which the values of honor and shame have the function of today's "credit rating,"⁷¹ where "life has no value" without honor,⁷² it appears that some believers are wary that their honor may be affected by the reputation of those they do not like. This sensitivity toward honor and shame is explicit in 4:14 as Paul clarifies that he does not write to shame them but to warn them as his beloved children. Believers are not children of Paul alone; they are also God's and Christ's as it is in Christ that they are born through the gospel. Being entrusted with the responsibility to oversee how believers build themselves into the building of God (3:10; 4:1; 9:17), Paul needs to make sure that the foundation is Christ and that the building materials are of good quality so that the building can withstand the test of fire.

For Paul and the Corinthian believers, if Christ is the everlasting foundation, then they should embody the *logos* of the cross; after all, Paul only focused on "Jesus Christ and him crucified" when he was with them (2:2). In fact, this is what believers did when they first believed in the gospel; otherwise the witness of Christ would not be confirmed among them (1:6). By associating themselves with the most shameful and despicable cross, believers were already shamed. Yet, for whatever reason, it appears that some believers later on wanted to salvage their honor. In forming their own groups, they steered away from a cross-oriented lifestyle. They resumed the kind of honor that not only marginalized them in the first place, but also rejected and crucified their Lord of glory. But, for believers, how can the social norm and its honor be honorable if it rejects God and Christ? How can the building that they build be strong if they

⁷¹ Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 45.

⁷² Carolyn Osiek, *What Are They Saying about the Social Setting of the New Testament?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 27.

want to build upon a non-Christ foundation? Or do they still build upon the Christ but want to embellish it to be less shameful to the society? Is it a part of an evangelistic tactic to repackage the crucified Christ so that it can be less offensive to society? Paul does not give us any clear answer. What is of utmost importance to him is that believers must be Christ-oriented.

With this overview of our semantic analysis of Paul's vision of love in 1 Corinthians, we will in the next three chapters (chapters 5-7) focus on 11:17-34, 8:1-11:1, and 12:1-14:40. In these smaller complete discourse units, we will find them manifest similar pattern of Paul's convictions that we have discussed in this chapter.

**Chapter 5 – Refiguring Heresy:
A Semantic *Habitus* of Receiving from One Another in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34**

Eating transforms food so that it becomes a vital part of our bodies, and, simultaneously, the embodied individual is also transformed by the act of eating. The body can become strong and healthy, weak or ill, by eating or abstaining from food. Eating can vitalize the body, but it can also make it sick and even bring about death. But eating not only brings about physiological or biological change; it is also a means of psychological, affective, and even spiritual transformation. Eating and drinking certain products and substances triggers particular moods, enkindles various degrees of emotion, and awakens memories.¹

– Angel F. Méndez Montoya

If love is communal in nature, it must be particular in its orientation. This means that theology, which is described as love between God and human being in action, must be informed by historical and situational particularity.² – C. S. Song

I. Introduction

For many Chinese, the importance of the familial, communal, socio-cultural, and ethico-political aspects of food and eating together can hardly be overstated.³ The issues of eating (e.g., with whom, where, and when does one eat what kind of food) are crucial to the construction and maintenance of one's relationship with the other/Other. Moreover, as the human body, social body (including one's ancestors), natural body, and cosmic body reflect one another in a *yin-yang* correlative mode of thinking (see chapter 2), to care for one's body is to care for the other's body. This analogical relation among the human, social, natural, and cosmic bodies is not uncommon in Greco-Roman cultures in politics, social status, sex, dietary, social beliefs and

¹ Angel F. Méndez Montoya, *The Theology of Food: Eating And the Eucharist*. Illuminations: Theory and Religion (Chichester, UK; Oxford, UK; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 1-2.

² Choan-Seng Song, *Third-Eye Theology: Theology in Formation in Asian Settings*. Rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 108.

³ See Frederick J. Simoons, *Food in China: A Cultural and Historical Inquiry* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 1991). For an overview of the function and role of food and religion in the making sense of one's meaning of life in the world, see Corrie E. Norman, "Religion and Food," in *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*. 3 vols. Vol. 3: *Obesity to Zoroastrianism, Index*. Edited by Solomon H. Katz (New York: Scribner/Thompson Gale, 2003), 171-76. Also, see *Kinship and Food in South East Asia*. Edited by Monica Janowski and Fiona Kerlogue. Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (Copenhagen, Denmark: NIAS Press, 2007).

practices.⁴ As semioticians, sociologists, and anthropologists have also noted how food as a signifying system (which can affect the production, distribution, and consumption of certain kind of food, instead of others) can shape the configuration and representation of certain social relations in the society,⁵ the conflict at the Lord's meal in 1 Cor. 11:17-34 is not just a theological issue. Neither is it a simple matter of "where," "when," and "who" get to eat "what" when believers gather together at a patron-believer's house, which can host about thirty to forty people.⁶ Rather, as Dennis Smith points out, how the Lord's meal is observed can have concrete impact on the behaviors of believers.⁷

However, we disagree that an exhortation to wait for one another (11:33), as most translations claim (e.g., *CEB*, *KJV*, *NAS*, *NJB*, *RSV*, etc.),⁸ can address the schism in the church

⁴ See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995).

⁵ See the articles by scholars of various disciplines in *Food and Culture: A Reader*. Edited by Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik. 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2013). Here, the editors agree with M.F.K. Fisher "that food touches everything and is the foundation of every economy, marking social differences, boundaries, bonds, and contradictions – an endlessly evolving enactment of gender, family, and community relationships." Ibid, 3.

⁶ In his analysis, Murphy-O'Connor finds that for a well-off person's house in the Roman society, "the average size of the atrium is 55 sq. metres and that of the triclinium 36 sq. metres. Not all this area, however, was usable. The effective space in the triclinium was limited by the couches around the walls; the rooms surveyed would not have accommodated more than nine, and this is the usual number. The impluvium in the centre of the atrium would not only have diminished the space by one-ninth, but would also have restricted movement; circulation was possible only around the outside of the square. Thus, the maximum number that the atrium could hold was fifty, but this assumes that there were no decorative urns, etc. to take up space, and that everyone stayed in one place; the true figure would probably be between thirty and forty." See Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "House Churches and the Eucharist," in *Key to First Corinthians: Revisiting the Major Issues* (Oxford, UK; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 183.

⁷ "As Paul develops his arguments, he will refer to the power of the meal to create *social bonding* and define *social boundaries*. His arguments for social ethics within the community will draw on banquet traditions of *social obligation* toward one's meal companions. He will respond to issues of *social stratification* at the table but will especially develop the theme of *social equality*." See Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), 175.

⁸ Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Translated by James W. Leitch. Edited by George W. MacRae (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1975), 193; Charles K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Harper's New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 276; Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992), 265; Marion L. Soards, *New International Biblical Commentary: 1 Corinthians* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), 249-50; Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1993), 405; Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*. Sacra Pagina Series 7 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 422; Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 558-59; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Yale

of God (11:18) that leads to some getting drunk while others hungry at the Lord's meal (11:21). From our analysis of the semiotic squares in this chapter, as we interpret the words αἵρέσεις (*haireseis*; singular: *hairesis*) (NRSV: "factions") (11:19), προλαμβάνει (NRSV: "goes ahead") (11:21), and ἐκδέχεσθε (NRSV: "wait for") (11:33) differently from most translations, we argue that Paul does not just urge believers to wait for one another or to welcome (or receive) one another at the Lord's meal. He also tells them to receive (food) *from one another*. This act of receiving (food) from one another – that is, of eating each other's food as in the case of a potluck⁹ – not only can challenge and change the semantic *habitus* of believers at a bodily and social level. It can also conscientize and expose believers to their real conditions of life and the system of power relations that contributes to the kind of food that they can afford to buy, make, and eat. This sharing and eating the food of each other echoes Paul's vision of love. Among the

Bible 32 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 448; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 899; etc.

⁹ While Smith points out this feature of the Lord's meal, he does not pursue this line of argument. He first writes, "The community meal was a full-course dinner, as indicated by 1 Corinthians, in which the *deipnon*, or dinner course, is followed by the symposium. The same text also records the problem that some were getting too much to eat and drink while others were not getting enough. This tells us that the meal was intended, at least, to provide adequate food. We do not know how the meal was arranged, but we can guess at some of its features. The householder/patron would presumably be the host. The food, however, may have been provided by everyone bringing a portion, somewhat like our potluck dinner today. This is a format used in some Greco-Roman clubs and is suggested by the language of 1 Corinthians 14, where everyone is said to have brought as their contribution to the occasion not food but an expression of worship. It is also suggested by the phrase 'one's own meal,' which Paul uses to refer to the abuses at the banquet. How the meal could have devolved from a community meal to a meal of individuals is not dear, but one suggestion is that those who brought food for the community table ate it themselves instead of sharing it." See Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist*, 178. A few pages later, he writes, "And whatever the problem with the 'individual meal,' Paul felt it could be resolved by eating together. Consequently, while the differentiations in food may have implied a difference in status connected with social class either because some were free to start eating earlier than others or because some simply brought more food for themselves, these differentiations were not of such gravity to be a concern in themselves. Rather, they were indicative of a more serious problem, in which a sense of status as applied especially to spiritual gifts was threatening Paul's concept of a proper meal community, which was characterized by unity." *Ibid.*, 196. If the Lord's meal is a potluck, then believers will need to eat each other's food. And, if food is a signifying system contributing to the construction and maintenance of power relations in the church, then eating each other's food can conscientize believers to the real conditions of life of each other, which can further expose the system of power relations at work that make some more well-off than the others.

characteristics of love that we highlighted in chapter 4,¹⁰ it is the values of letting go, collaboration, and a Christ-oriented honor that come to the fore in 11:17-34. For Paul, if everyone has received the gifts of God (1:4-6; 4:7; 12:7), then no one should discriminate against the other (cf. Phil. 2:3-4; Rom. 12:2-3). Believers need to learn and receive from one another, lest they get caught up in their own gifts and not be nourished to discern how God works in various situations. As Justin Ukpong writes about the theology and practice of many missionaries who went to Nigeria: “[D]id Christian missionaries bring Christ to the Gentiles? Was Christ not already present among these people even before the arrival of the missionaries?”¹¹ The issue is not to bring the gospel, as if one owns it; rather, the issue is to discern the gospel so that one can be a co-worker of God.

II. The Issues of Translation

Therefore, my *adelphoi*, when you come together to eat, *receive (food) from one another* (1 Cor. 11:33).

We begin this section by first noting that, for many biblical scholars, the translations of *προλαμβάνει* in 1 Cor. 11:21 and of *ἐκδέχεσθε* in 11:33 are tied together. In the next section, we will address the notion of “heresy” which is related to our translation of *ἐκδέχεσθε*. We argue that Paul not only ambiguously uses the term *haireseis* (NRSV: “factions”) in 11:19 to mark its difference from *schismata* (NRSV: “divisions”) in 11:19, but also try to highlight the dynamics of unity and diversity in the church of God, just as he seeks to stress that all believers are the body

¹⁰ From our structural semiotic analysis of love in chapter 4, we find that Paul’s notion of love display the following characteristics: “(1) performative (i.e., other-oriented, messianic, and charismatic) and communicative, (2) letting go and collaborative, (3) risky (but promising) and non-calculative, (4) Christ-oriented and a non-self-centered reasoning, (5) contextual (risky but promising) and not universalizing a particular context, (6) perseverance (in hard work and response-ability) and a relational knowing, (7) something that cannot be represented and delimited, (8) Christ-like and non-self-centered, and (9) a Christ-oriented honor and a non-self-centered authority.”

¹¹ Justin Ukpong, “Luke,” in *Global Bible Commentary*. Edited by Daniel Patte, J. Severino Croatto, Nicole Wilkinson Duran, Teresa Okure, and Archie Chi Chung Lee (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2004), 387.

of Christ *insofar as* “parts beyond a part” (12:27). Indeed, just as the notions of singularity and plurality come into play with each other in the notion of “togetherness” (see chapter 2) – note the repetition of the middle-passive voice of συνέρχομαι (“coming together”) in 11:17, 18, 20, 33, and 34 – it is also necessary (δεῖ) that *haireseis* exist among believers so that the tested (οἱ δόκιμοι) may become visible (φανεροὶ γένωνται) among them (11:19). Contrary to most biblical scholars, we do not take the word *haireseis* negatively. We want to highlight its basic and primary meaning as “choices,”¹² which comes from the verb αἰρέω (“to take” or “to choose” in the middle voice).

Having thus presented our argument, we agree with Gordon Fee that the meaning of ἐκδέχεσθε as “to wait for” often assumes that προλαμβάνει means “to eat beforehand.”¹³ David Garland, likewise, argues that to translate “the command ἐκδέχεσθε in 11:33 as ‘wait for one another’ provides further support” to translate προλαμβάνει as “to take beforehand.”¹⁴ Although Gerd Theissen strongly argues for a temporal meaning of the preposition προ in προλαμβάνει and calls our attention to the material conditions of the meal gathering,¹⁵ where the quality and

¹² For example, Desjardins writes, “The term αἵρεσις, at least before it has been transformed simply into ‘heresies’ by Christian and Jewish heresiology, referred to variant perspectives (beliefs, dispositions, scholarly and medical points of view) within a recognized unity. Different ways of being Jewish, for instance, were called αἵρεσις (and this applied initially to Christians as well as Pharisees); as were different ways of understanding and treating sickness, and different ways of understanding truth (at times even within one φιλοσοφία). Belonging to a αἵρεσις did not make you ‘sectarian’ in the sense that it separated you from your roots; rather, it distinguished you from others, and all the αἵρέσεις were part of a larger matrix.” See Michel Desjardins, “Bauer and Beyond: On Recent Scholarly Discussions of Αἵρεσις in the Early Christian Era,” in *The Second Century: A Journal of Early Christian Studies* 8.2 (Summer 1991): 80. Patte and TeSelle also point out that the word *hairesis* was not used negatively before Justin Martyr and Irenaeus. See Daniel Patte and Eugene TeSelle, “Heresy,” in *Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Edited by Daniel Patte (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 507-08.

¹³ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 567.

¹⁴ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 540. For this rendering of προλαμβάνει as “to eat beforehand,” see Charles K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 262; Marion L. Soards, *New International Biblical Commentary: 1 Corinthians*, 234; Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 389, 405; and Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 545.

¹⁵ In light of Plutarch’s *Quaestiones Convivales* 2.10.1, Pliny the Younger’s *Epistulae* 2.6, Martial’s *Epigrammata* 3.60, Theissen writes, “We notice that 1 Cor. 11:21 is a statement, v. 33 an exhortation. For that reason, in the case

quantity of food as well as the order of meal distribution varies according to the social status of the guests,¹⁶ προλαμβάνει can also mean to devour” as some have contended.¹⁷ In fact, in showing that προλαμβάνει “had lost its temporal force by the first century,”¹⁸ Bruce Winter contends that προ can intensify its meaning, as we see in the *Koine* Greek word προδίδωμι, “where δίδωμι can mean ‘give up’ while προδίδωμι means ‘betray.’”¹⁹ In his analysis of the usage of προλαμβάνει in the context of eating, Winter finds that it does not mean “to take before,” “to take,” or “to receive.” It means “to devour.”²⁰ While Fee also makes a similar argument, he cautions that “one cannot rule out a temporal sense” of the word.²¹ Garland, however, is right to say that “the temporal dimension of the verb [προλαμβάνει] loses all its force if the verb ἐκδέχεσθαι in 11:33 does not mean ‘to wait.’”²²

In our analysis of 11:17-34, it is important that our translations of ἐκδέχεσθε and προλαμβάνει do not hinge upon one another. If we argue that the meaning of ἐκδέχεσθε depends on how we translate προλαμβάνει, then it is circular to claim that ἐκδέχεσθε should mean “to wait” simply because προλαμβάνει should mean “to eat beforehand.” Even if ἐκδέχεσθε does mean “to wait,” waiting for one another at the meal gathering will not fundamentally address the problem of some getting drunk while others hungry at the Lord’s meal (11:21). If Theissen’s

of a conflict v. 21 gets the nod for reconstructing the situation, especially as v. 33 would then become a meaningful warning if addressed to those who went ahead first with their private meal.” See Gerd Theissen, “Social Integration and Sacramental Activity: An Analysis of 1 Cor. 11:17-34,” in *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth*. Edited and translated and with an introduction by John H. Schütz (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982), 151.

¹⁶ Ibid., 153-63.

¹⁷ Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids, MI: Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2001), 144-48; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 542; Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians*. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1989), 197; Richard A. Horsley, *1 Corinthians*. Abingdon New Testament Commentary Series (Abingdon, TN: Nashville, 1998), 159; David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 540-42.

¹⁸ Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, 146.

¹⁹ Ibid., 148.

²⁰ Idem.

²¹ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 542.

²² David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 541.

sociological analysis is accurate that those who get drunk are the well-to-do believers,²³ then even if everyone eats at the same time, the well-to-do believers would still eat their quality food, while the less well-to-do their own food. There is no genuine exchange and interaction.

Here, we are not suggesting that waiting for one another is a useless advice. Rather, if the issues concern the conflict between the well-to-do and less well-to-do believers, then telling believers to wait for one another does not address the system that contributes to the conflict. As Smith,²⁴ Hal Taussig,²⁵ and others have underscored the power of ritual at the meal gathering, a ritual has tremendous power over people's behavior and worldview. It should not be viewed as primitive, superstitious, and mechanical. With its liminal character, a ritual can transform one's usual ways of thinking and doing things. Indeed, as a rhythmic and performative activity, a ritualization can endow an ordinary time and space with special meaning.²⁶ Moreover, if Bruno Blumenfeld is correct that by the Hellenistic period, *oikos* ("house") "expands its sphere and increases in significance"²⁷ and "effectively substitutes for the *polis* ["city"] in meaning and extension,"²⁸ then the church meeting at the house may become "a household institution, find[ing] its meaning as part of the *oikos*."²⁹ As a "shriveled *polis*"³⁰ that is "conjoined to a divine *basilea*,"³¹ the house that hosts the church may carry certain reputation.

²³ Gerd Theissen, "Social Integration and Sacramental Activity: An Analysis of 1 Cor. 11:17-34," 151.

²⁴ Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist*, 173-217.

²⁵ "When people gathered for meals in first-century Mediterranean cultures, the event was laden with meaning. Meals were highly stylized occasions that carried significant social coding, identity formation, and meaning making. Participating in a meal entailed entering into a social dynamic that confirmed, challenged, and negotiated both who the group as a whole was and who the individuals within in it were." See Hal Taussig, *In the Beginning was the Meal: Social Experimentation and Early Christian Identity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 22.

²⁶ In the words of Bell, "Ritualization is fundamentally a way of doing things to trigger the perception that these practices are distinct and the associations that they engender are special." See Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 220.

²⁷ Bruno Blumenfeld, *The Political Paul: Justice, Democracy and Kingship in a Hellenistic Framework* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 113.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 114.

²⁹ *Idem.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 113.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 107.

Indeed, as male and female believers share the same space of the house,³² where people of different social status and ethnic groups gather together,³³ how the Lord's meal is observed can shape the formation of the believers' semantic *habitus*. Not only does Smith highlight how the Lord's Meal is observed can contribute to the construction and maintenance of the group's "social boundaries," "social bonding," "social obligation," "social stratification," and "social equality,"³⁴ Taussig also shows that the Lord's meal can provide a safe space for early believers to try out their new identities as believers of Christ in the Roman Empire.³⁵ Hence, when Paul asks those who get drunk to eat at home before the meal gathering (11:34), his exhortation can shame them. For Paul, even if the Lord's meal takes place at the house, it should not be treated lightly.³⁶ Believers should not confuse the ritualized space of church with the everyday space of the house.³⁷ So even if the command "to wait for" one another may not be effective, the

³² Økland notes that while the "Greek and Roman women were closely associated with domestic space" (64), "it is impossible to know if domestic space was established as private and as female through domestic female discourse. As far as we can know, domestic space was established as private and female through the same public discourse that established the public space as male" (65). See Jorunn Økland, *Women in Their Place: Paul and the Corinthian Discourse of Gender and Sanctuary Space*. JSNT 269 (London: T & T Clark, 2004). Following Wallace-Hadrill, Økland stresses that the "private and public should not be seen as dichotomies in a Roman context. Second, greater privacy represented an advance towards intimacy with the paterfamilias, not with the matron. Thus 'privateness' was not necessarily linked to the notion of the house as female space. Third, greater privacy also represented greater significance and power. Fourth, confidential business and planning of political strategies also counted as 'intimacy.' The Roman house was not private by modern standards. Since one man's private in this way was another man's public space, public or private must be deemed a matter of perspective" (ibid., 65-66). See Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "The Social Structure of the Roman House," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 56: 43-97.

³³ In pointing out the similarities between the Lord's meal and Greco-Roman meal gatherings, Smith argues that "when any group of people in the ancient Mediterranean world met for social or religious purposes, their gatherings tended to be centered on a common meal or banquet ... the banquet was one social institution that cut across ethnic, religious, and social lines..." See Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist*, 1-2.

³⁴ Ibid., 9-12, 172-217.

³⁵ "These meals – because of their already established socially formative place in the Hellenistic world – evoked social experimentation. They allowed early Christians to try out new behaviors in dialogue with their vision of the realm of God. The meals became a laboratory in which a range of expressive vocabularies explored alternative social visions." See Hal Taussig, *In the Beginning was the Meal*, 20.

³⁶ Although Paul uses the term *oikia* at 11:22 and *oikos* at 11:34, Økland finds that "[t]he strictly juridical use of οἶκος as the term including property and goods, and οἰκία as the term designating the house and the household (i.e. the dwellers) seem quite useless when we get down to Paul's days ... It seems then, that there is no distinguishable difference in meaning in Paul's use of οἶκος and οἰκία." See Jorunn Økland, *Women in Their Place*, 138.

³⁷ Ibid., 135-49.

instruction still has certain effects. It is, however, problematic to argue that the meaning of ἐκδέχεσθε should depend on the temporal aspect of προλαμβάνει.

At the same time, some scholars also suggest that ἐκδέχεσθε can mean “to receive” or “to welcome.” So while Ben Witherington, III argues that it is “perfectly possible” to render ἐκδέχεσθε as “to wait for,”³⁸ he points out that the term “often has the sense of ‘welcome’ or ‘entertain’ when it is used in the context of an act of hospitality (cf. 3 Macc. 5:26; Josephus *Ant.* 7.351).”³⁹ Fee makes a similar point that ἐκδέχεσθε “carries its primary meaning of ‘receive,’ which it often does in the context of hospitality.”⁴⁰ Also citing 3 Macc. 5:26 and Josephus *Ant.* 7.351, Richard Hays writes, “Paul is telling the Corinthians not just to wait for one another but to *receive* one another as guests (cf. Rom. 15:7) when they come together.”⁴¹ Likewise, Richard Horsley argues that ἐκδέχεσθε should be rendered as “to receive” instead of “to wait.”⁴² As Garland further finds that “when used of persons, [ἐκδέχεσθε] usually means ‘to take or receive from another’ or ‘to entertain’ (MM 192),”⁴³ he argues, following Winter, that it is by receiving one another and “sharing their resources will they [i.e., believers] alleviate the acute embarrassment of the ‘have-nots’ ... and capture the spirit of Jesus’ sacrifice.”⁴⁴

While I agree with Winter that Paul urges believers to welcome and receive one another “in the sense of sharing food and drink,”⁴⁵ I want to stress that such a receiving is not one directional. Indeed, if ἐκδέχεσθε “in the LXX was used to express the concept of hospitality, not

³⁸ Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1995), 248.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 249. Witherington thinks that the term “more likely” means “to welcome” in the sense that “all [believers] should partake together, with no distinction in rank or food.” *Ibid.*, 252.

⁴⁰ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 567.

⁴¹ Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians*, 202.

⁴² Richard A. Horsley, *1 Corinthians*, 159.

⁴³ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 554. MM refers to *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources*. Edited by James Hope Moulton and George Milligan (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914).

⁴⁴ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 555.

⁴⁵ Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, 151.

only in its simple form δέχομαι in most of its composite forms including ἐκδέχομαι (3 Macc. 5:26),⁴⁶ then the preposition ἐκ (“from,” or “out of”) and the reciprocal pronoun ἀλλήλους (“each other”) in 1 Cor. 11:33 may accentuate Paul’s exhortation to both the well-to-do and less well-to-do believers to receive food from one another. Garland actually briefly points to this meaning of ἐκδέχεσθε. Moreover, while older-generation scholars like Thomas Charles Edwards and George G. Findlay find that the classical Greek and LXX use ἐκδέχομαι to mean “to receive,” they contend that it is only used in the sense of “receiving from another.”⁴⁷ Even if Roy Ciampa and Brian Rosner contend that ἐκδέχομαι “does not seem to be used with the sense of receiving another person with hospitality but when it has to do with ‘receiving’ is a matter of receiving something from someone,”⁴⁸ it fits with our suggestion that Paul asks believers to receive food (“something”) from one another (“someone”). In other words, it is by receiving and eating the food of each other that believers receive and welcome one another.

Not only should the well-to-do believers receive and welcome the less well-to-do at the dining table by sharing resources with them, as Winter suggests,⁴⁹ they should also receive *from* them. They are not giving charity to others as if they do not need anything from them. Such an attitude of giving is arrogant and condescending. Rather, Paul wants believers to interact with one another to see that they need each other to be in the body of Christ. Because if every believer is integral to the body of Christ and if everyone has something to contribute to the church (cf.

⁴⁶ Idem.

⁴⁷ Thomas Charles Edwards, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. 2nd ed. (New York: A. C. Armstrong, 1886), 303; George G. Findlay, “St Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians,” in *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*. Edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (London and New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), 884.

⁴⁸ Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 558.

⁴⁹ Winter writes, “By receiving one another they share their resources with those who ‘have not’ and thus alleviate the acute embarrassment felt by those who came without food to the Lord’s Dinner” (151). As of those who refused to receive one another, “their own action invalidated it [the Lord’s Dinner] because they acted towards the needs of others in exactly the opposite way Jesus did” (152). See Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*.

14:26),⁵⁰ then believers need to receive from one another the gifts that s/he has received from God in Christ (cf. 4:7; 12:7).⁵¹ Since no one receives every gift, the gift that one receives from God can complement the gift that others receive. It is by such sharing and receiving from one another that believers realize that they need one another (cf. 12:21).

If the suffering of one part of the body affects the entire body (12:26), then all the body members should honor each other (12:22-25). This relationship among the parts in the whole is expected in a group-oriented honor-and-shame culture. As individuals are defined by the group(s) that they are associated with, the reputation of the group and its members are intertwined.⁵² Paul, however, *does not* say that the weak and the less honorable body members are less honorable *in relation to* what is honorable. Rather, Paul instructs believers to treat the less honorable body member with more honor, just as God gives more honor to the body member that lacks it (12:23-24). This language of honor and shame is also prominent in 11:17-34, as some believers shame others and the church of God *in relation to* their privileged position. This is why Paul writes that the *haireseis* must exist among believers so that the tested (οἱ δοκιμοί) may become visible (φανεροὶ γένωνται) among them (11:19).

III. The Notion of “Heresy”

In 11:8-19, as Paul censures *schismata* (NRSV: “divisions”) in the church of God (cf. 1:10-13), he intriguingly writes that *haireseis* (NRSV: “factions”) are necessary (δεῖ) among

⁵⁰ As Paul writes in 1 Cor. 14:26, “What then, *adelphoi*? Whenever you gather together, each of you has a hymn, a teaching, a revelation, an interpretation. Let everything be done for building up,” Paul obviously thinks that every believer can contribute to the building up of the church.

⁵¹ For instance, right from the beginning of *First Corinthians*, Paul makes it clear that believers have been enriched in Christ in everything, in every *logos* and every *gnosis* (1:5) to a point that they are not lacking in any gift (1:7). Likewise, Paul reminds believers that whatever they have, they have received in from God (4:7).

⁵² For example, Malina argues that individuals in the ancient Mediterranean world “owe [to their groups] loyalty, respect, and obedience of a kind which commits their individual honor without limit and without compromise.” See Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 45.

believers so that the approved (οἱ δόκιμοι) might appear. But, if divisions can threaten the group unity,⁵³ why *must* *haireseis* exist among believers? If *haireseis* and divisions are destructive⁵⁴ and the church and *haireseis* are incompatible, then how do we understand δεῖ?⁵⁵ Was Paul being pessimistic, realistic, or sarcastic? However, if the notion of *haireseis* is different from that of *schismata*, could Paul have a positive view of *haireseis*? This possibility is considerable when the usages of *haireseis* prior to the second century CE are positive or neutral. Even Paul's notion of "community" could be built upon *haireseis*. We argue that Paul uses the term ambiguously to try to transform the power relations in the church by using the "body" figure in both 11:23-26 and 12:12-27 to foreground a Christ-like way of living.

Let us first examine δεῖ. Walter Grundmann argues that "the LXX, Josephus, other Jewish Hellenistic and even the NT"⁵⁶ adopted the Greek and Hellenistic sense of necessity, but used it to indicate "the will of God declared in the message," instead of "the neutral necessity of fate."⁵⁷ Given the eschatological notion of δεῖ, Grundmann suggests that it implies a mysterious and committed God at work in fulfilling the eschatological event.⁵⁸ This view of δεῖ indicating a personal will of God is common among ancient writers. Whether one stresses the inevitability or the purpose of *haireseis*, it is a part of the divine eschatological event. So for instance, John Chrysostom attributes *haireseis* to the sayings of Jesus and explains that they "did not come

⁵³ For example, see Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 65-70, 263-66.

⁵⁴ Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*. ICC (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 240. Also, see Charles K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 261; Canon Leon Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 156; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 538 n. 34; Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 263; and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 433.

⁵⁵ Heinrich Schlier, "ἀρρεσις," in *TDNT* 1: 180-85.

⁵⁶ Walter Grundmann "δεῖ," in *TDNT* 2: 22.

⁵⁷ Idem (for both citations). Soards also thinks that "in the vast majority of NT occurrences [δεῖ] means 'it must be' or 'it is necessary' because of the presence, action, and will of God." See Marion L. Soards, *New International Biblical Commentary: 1 Corinthians*, 233.

⁵⁸ Walter Grundmann "δεῖ," in *TDNT* 2: 23

about because Christ foretold them; rather he foretold them because they were inevitable.”⁵⁹ A similar explanation is given in the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* 2.17 and 16.21.⁶⁰ Ambrosiaster, on the other hand, maintains that “Paul did not want heresies or choose them, but he foresaw the future and knew that they would come.”⁶¹ In the *Dialogue with Trypho* 35, Justin Martyr clarifies that *schismata* and *haireseis* are end-time phenomena foretold by Jesus and argues that they can help Christians to be more faithful to Christ.⁶² Likewise, Clement of Alexandria teaches that *haireseis* can “make us [genuine Christians] get down to the toil of discovering [the truth].”⁶³ Augustine, too, propounds that the necessity of *haireseis* shows a God who “uses even evil for good purposes.”⁶⁴ Regardless of how we understand the relationship between δεῖ and *haireseis*, these after-first-century-CE ancient writers treat *haireseis* negatively.⁶⁵ Most modern Western biblical scholars follow this line of interpretation. The difference is that while they agree that *haireseis* are bad,⁶⁶ they differ on how δεῖ and *haireseis* are related to the approved ones (οἱ δόκιμοι) in 11:19.

Joseph Fitzmyer,⁶⁷ Hays,⁶⁸ Fee,⁶⁹ Canon Morris,⁷⁰ etc. interpret οἱ δόκιμοι positively as the ones who withstood and passed the test. But, Raymond Collins,⁷¹ Horsley,⁷² Ciampa and

⁵⁹ John Chrysostom, “Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians 27.3,” in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* 1.12.158. Quoted from *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: 1-2 Corinthians*. Edited by Gerald Bray (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 111.

⁶⁰ See “The Clementine Homilies” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 8: 232. Translated by Thomas Smith. Also, “The Clementine Homilies” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 8:317. Translated by Donaldson.

⁶¹ Ambrosiaster, “Commentary on Paul’s Epistles,” in *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 81.125. Quoted from *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, 110.

⁶² Justin Martyr, “Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, A Jew,” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 1: 212.

⁶³ *1 Corinthians: Interpreted by Early Christian Commentators*. Edited and translated by Judith L. Kovacs (Grand Rapids, MI: Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2005), 186.

⁶⁴ *1 Corinthians: Interpreted by Early Christian Commentators*, 185.

⁶⁵ Besides *Dialogue with Trypho* 35, chapters twenty-three and twenty-four of *The Didascalia Apostolorum* also link divisions and *haireseis* together. See *The Didascalia apostolorum in English*. Edited by Margaret Dunlop Gibson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1903), 102-105, 105-107.

⁶⁶ Different from most scholars, Kistemaker argues that *haireseis* were those approved by God. As such, he takes *haireseis* as what was supposed to happen because the *haireseis* should not mingle with the disproved ones. See Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 387.

⁶⁷ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 433.

⁶⁸ Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthian*, 195.

Rosner,⁷³ and Garland⁷⁴ argue that Paul was being ironic in his use of οἱ δόκιμοι. While Thiselton posits that Paul might be ironic, he thinks that such an interpretation of οἱ δόκιμοι “construes Paul’s pastoral response as unusually sharp and sarcastic.”⁷⁵ So for him, “the second part of the verse [11:19] ... most probably derives from the sayings of Jesus.”⁷⁶ Jerome Murphy-O’Connor agrees that 11:19 (without the phrase “among you”) did not originate with Paul. But, he argues that it comes from the Corinthian believers. He suggests that Paul added “among you” in the slogan to prevent believers from justifying *haireseis* as eschatologically inevitable.⁷⁷

Whether Paul is genuine or ironic in using οἱ δόκιμοι, this study argues that *haireseis* need not be rendered negatively. In light of the “body” figure in 11:23-26 and 12:12-27, we argue that Paul points out that *haireseis* are social phenomena of choices in the church. For Paul, *haireseis*, that is, different choices, are not necessarily oppositional and divisive. They can be iconoclastic in helping believers not to remain static and contented in their faith. As Winter argues about the syntax in 11:24, τοῦτο μου ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν (“this is *my* body that is for you”),⁷⁸ it appears that Paul foregrounds the personal pronoun μου to exhort believers to embody the life of Christ, instead of being self-centered. As such, it makes sense that in the end of 11:17-34, Paul urges believers to receive *from* one another (11:33). If they are not Christ-oriented and do not each other’s gift in Christ, believers will not be able to receive from one

⁶⁹ Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 538.

⁷⁰ Canon Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians*, 156.

⁷¹ Collins thinks that Paul might speak of *hoi dokimoi* as “the hybrists ... within the community.” See Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 422.

⁷² Richard A. Horsley, *1 Corinthians*, 158.

⁷³ Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 544.

⁷⁴ David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 538. Following Campbell’s interpretation of *hoi dokimoi* as dignitaries, Garland thinks that *dei* and *hoi dokimoi* are incompatible. See R. Alastair Campbell, “Does Paul Acquiesce in Divisions at the Lord’s Table,” *Novum Testamentum* 33 (1991): 61-70.

⁷⁵ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 859.

⁷⁶ *Idem.*

⁷⁷ Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Divisions are Necessary (1 Corinthians 11:19),” in *Celebrating Paul: Festschrift in Honor of Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, O.P., and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J.* Edited by Peter Spitaler (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2011), 9-14.

⁷⁸ Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, 154.

another. By telling them to do so at the meal gathering, Paul hopes that the power of ritual can help transform their semantic *habitus*.

Now, let us examine the meaning of *haireseis*. The only other occurrence of *haireseis* in Pauline letters is Gal. 5:20, where Paul lists *haireseis*, along with other vices, as one of the works of the flesh (τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός) (5:19). Note that *haireseis* is not a doctrinal vice. Given this only other usage in the Pauline corpus, we cannot conclude that Paul uses *haireseis* negatively in 1 Cor. 11:19. The difficulty is enhanced when *haireseis* is used in the New Testament writings with positive, negative, and neutral meanings (e.g., Acts 5:17, 15:5, 24:5 and 14, 26:5, 28:22, and 2 Peter 2:1).⁷⁹ This polyvalence of *haireseis* shows that we need to examine how Paul uses *haireseis* in 1 Cor. 11:17-34. This is why a structural semiotic analysis that fleshes out Paul's conviction in 11:17-34 becomes important to our understanding of *haireseis*. For a review of the great variety of interpretations see Appendix A to this chapter.

IV. A Structural Semiotic Analysis of 1 Cor. 11:17-34

In chapters 2 and 4, we mentioned that, according to semiotic theories, the semantic analysis of the entire 1 Corinthians and of the individual complete discourse units in 1 Corinthians should display a consistent semantic universe – if Paul is indeed the author of the entire 1 Corinthians. Now, to perform a structural semiotic analysis of a chosen passage, we need to first examine whether the passage is a complete discourse unit.⁸⁰ This initial analysis is crucial,

⁷⁹ Also, see Titus 3:10, “Reject the *hairetikos* man after first and second warning,” where the adjective *hairetikos* is related to *hairesis*. The *haireseis* in 2 Peter 2:1 refers to wrong opinions or teachings: “But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. Some will secretly introduce destructive *haireseis*, even rejecting the sovereign Lord who bought them, bringing swift destruction against themselves.” See “ἄρπεις,” in *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources*, 13.

⁸⁰ For an introduction to structural exegesis, see Daniel Patte, *Structural Exegesis for New Testament Critics* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990) and Aline Patte and Daniel Patte, *Structural Exegesis: From Theory to Practice: Exegesis of Mark 15 and 16: Hermeneutical Implications* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1978). For

lest we include or exclude parts of the text that are not pertinent to our identification of the semantic universe of the passage. One way to identify the complete discourse unit is to locate the inverted parallelism that signifies the beginning and end of the passage. This identification can highlight the theme of the passage. Next, our semantic analysis of the semiotic squares of the passage, formed by transforming the opposed actions found in the passage, can further tease out how the theme is conceptualized and manifested.

(i) “In Coming Together”: An Inverted Parallelism and Its Theme

In 11:17-19, Paul broaches a new issue when he writes, “In the following instructions I do not praise you because it is not for the better but for the worse when you come together (συνέρχεσθε). First of all, when you gather together (συνερχομένων ὑμῶν) in the *ekklēsia* I heard *schismata* among you and I partly believe it. Because it is necessary that *haireseis* exist among you so that the tested (οἱ δόκιμοι) may become visible (φανεροὶ γίνωνται) among you.”

This conflict in the meal gathering is obviously different from the issue of head covering during the worship in 11:2-16. So, we know that 11:17 signals the beginning of a new discussion. The end of this discussion is 11:33-34 because beginning with 12:1, Paul introduces the issue of spiritual gifts which lasts till the end of chapter 14. Now, if 11:17-34 addresses a new issue, then we can expect Paul to provide a solution in the end of the passage. Indeed, this solution comes to the fore in 11:33-34: “Therefore (ὥστε), my *adelphoi*, when you gather together (συνερχόμενοι) to eat (εἰς τὸ φαγεῖν), receive (food) from one another (ἀλλήλους ἐκδέχεσθε). If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you gather together (συνέρχησθε) for judgment. The rest I will set in order when I come.” Here, the inverted parallelism between 11:17-19 and 11:33-34

details on semiotic theory that undergirds structural exegesis, see Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts: Greimas’s Structural Semiotics and Biblical Exegesis* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990).

indicates that 11:17-34 is a complete discourse unit because as it poses a problem of “coming together” in the beginning of the passage, it provides a solution at the end.

Given this inverted parallelism, we argue that if this passage is about “how to interact with each other in the church” – the word “coming together” (συνέρχομαι), which only appears in 1 Corinthians is found five times in 11:17-34, out of seven times altogether in the Pauline corpus (the other two times are in 14:23, 26) – then the church of God, for Paul, is characterized by a notion of receiving from one another, which implies an acknowledgement and appreciation of differences. Hence, it should not surprise us (by contrast with many Patristic Fathers and modern biblical scholars), that Paul writes that “it is necessary that *haireseis* exist among you, so that the approved ones may become manifested among you” (11:19). Indeed, if we do not assume that *haireseis* are necessarily bad and are simply a matter of “choices” (the basic meaning of *hairesis* before it becomes primarily pejorative in the second century CE), then the feature of the church of God in 11:17-34 will stand out.

This characteristic of the church is, however, sidelined in most interpretations of 11:17-34. Besides the typical negative rendition of *haireseis*, another term that we have discussed is ἐκδέχεσθε in 11:33, which Thiselton says is the “most problematic Greek word for translation” in this passage.⁸¹ We have also noted that, for many scholars, the meaning of ἐκδέχεσθε is tied to the meaning of προλαμβάνει in 11:21. As we have shown that the meanings of προλαμβάνει and ἐκδέχεσθε need not rely on each other; consequently, the meaning of ἐκδέχεσθε as “to receive from” can reflect the tension between *schismata* in 11:18 and *haireseis* in 11:19. Given the ambiguous meaning of *haireseis*, Paul as an enunciator, at first, seems to equate *schismata* and *haireseis* together. This move is important to appeal to the enunciatee so that they will not reject Paul’s exhortation outright. It can get their attention. Because while it is clear that Paul is against

⁸¹ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 898.

schismata in 1:10 and 11:18, when he says that *haireseis* must exist among believers in 11:19, he appears to contradict himself. We can take this saying of Paul in 11:19 as a sarcasm, but to do so is to portray Paul simply as wanting to rebuke and mock the enunciatee. Such an action is not helpful for communication and persuasion. However, if the basic meaning of *hairesis* is “choice,” and if Paul is not against differences but actually promote them in the Lord (12:4-7), then Paul tries to show that while *haireseis* must exist among believers, they need not result in *schismata*, in particular if they are Christ-oriented, as exemplified in Jesus giving his body for believers. We can further find this theme of how to “come together” in *haireseis* without causing *schismata* in the pairs of opposed actions.

(ii) Pairs of Opposition of Actions

As can be seen below (see also Appendix 2 in Chapter 3), we have six pairs of opposed actions in 11:17-34. For our purpose, we will arrange them into a story progression and shift the “polemical axis” so that we may have a series of semiotic squares to analyze to show how the themes are conceptualized. The first four pairs of the opposed actions are in the dialogic level and the last two pairs are in the warranting level. Here, we include 1:10e and 3:3b into our analysis to show that the argument in 11:17-34 is closely related with that of the entire 1 Corinthians. From these pairs of opposed actions, it is clear that Paul is concerned with how to respect and learn from each other in the Lord. Among these pairs of opposed actions, the first four pairs are from the dialogic level and the last two pairs are from the warranting level.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| (+) 1:10e – Paul urges no <i>schismata</i> | (no <i>schismata</i> → selves) |
| (-) 3:3b – jealousy and strife among Corinthians | (jealousy and strife → selves) |
| (-) 11:18 – <i>schismata</i> among Corinthians in gathering | (<i>schismata</i> → selves) |

- | | |
|--|--|
| (+) 11:26 – those proclaiming the Lord’s death, remember it, receive the Covenant ... corrected at the Lord’s meal | (union of Lord’s death and covenantal vocation → selves) |
| (-) 11:30 – those failing the test become weak, ill, and dead | (weakness, ill, death → selves) |

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| (+) 11:31 – not judged if discern at the Lord’s meal | (no judgment → selves) |
| (-) 11:29 – judged if did not discern the Lord’s meal | (judgment → selves) |
| | |
| (+) 11:33 – receiving from one another at the Lord’s meal | (the Lord’s meal → selves) |
| (-) 11:20-21 – individually eating one’s own meal | (individual meal → selves) |
| | |
| (+) 11:19 – <i>haireseis</i> reveals the approved ones | (existence → <i>haireseis</i>) |
| (-) 1:11 – strife among Corinthians | (existence → strife) |
| | |
| (+) 11:24a – Jesus gave thanks | (thanksgiving → God) |
| (-) 11:23 – people betrayed Jesus and God | (betrayal → God) |

(iii) The Story Progression: (Re)-Telling the Pairs of Opposed Actions

Here, we will re-arrange the above pairs of opposed actions according to how we understand the story progresses.

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| First: (+) 11:24a – Jesus gave thanks | (thanksgiving → God) |
| (-) 11:23 – people betrayed Jesus and God | (betrayal → God) |

To *be able* to give thanks is to have the vision, knowledge, and willingness to acknowledge that one has indeed received something “good” (from the other/Other). Without the vision to see and know (that also establishes the desire), one will not be able to give thanks. We put “good” in quotation marks to indicate that the “good” may not necessarily be good in the present. In the case of Jesus, the situation was dire and bleak for anyone to consider it good as he would soon be betrayed. We put “from the other/Other” in a bracket because as long as one is inspired, one can still give thanks even if one does not know “who” or “what” to give thanks to and be thankful for. We may assume that it was God whom Jesus gave thanks to, but Paul does not tell us (11:24). In fact, the verb “giving thanks” is an aorist active participle that describes the circumstance of Jesus’s breaking the bread and speaking to the disciples (καὶ εὐχαριστήσας

ἔκαλσεν καὶ εἶπεν) (11:24). This gesture of thanksgiving and breaking the bread (i.e., Jesus's own body) contrasts sharply with the betrayal that was under way at the same time. For Paul, these are the two paths presented before believers whenever they gather together to partake of the Lord's meal. They are manifested, *again and again*, each time in every gathering of believers.

Second: (+) 11:26 – those proclaiming the Lord's death, remember it, receive the Covenant ...
corrected at the Lord's meal

(union of Lord's death and covenantal vocation → selves)

(-) 11:30 – those failing the test become weak, ill, and dead

(weakness, ill, death → selves)

For those who remember and embody the sayings of Jesus at the Lord's meal and for those who are corrected from their errors, the Lord's meal (i.e., the eating of the bread and drinking of the cup) is an event through which they proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes (11:26). In proclaiming it, believers profess their solidarity with Christ and the oppressed. The proclamation is dangerous and risky, as it speaks against the Roman Empire that executes the crucifixion. The proclamation is an act of faith, courage, and defiance; it is both an illocutionary and a perlocutionary speech-act. The present active indicative in the *apodosis* in the general condition of 11:26 stresses that the proclamation of the death of the Lord is to be *repeatedly performed as often as* they gather together to eat the bread and drink the cup.⁸²

Third: (+) 11:31 – not judged if discern at the Lord's meal (no judgment → selves)

(-) 11:29 – judged if did not discern the Lord's meal (judgment → selves)

To partake of the Lord's meal is to embody it: to incorporate the body and the blood of Christ. If one becomes what one eats and drinks, one needs to be careful with what one eats (or does not eat) and drinks (or does not drink). In eating and drinking, the subject is an object and a

⁸² ὁσάκις γὰρ ἐὰν ἐσθίητε τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον καὶ τὸ ποτήριον πίνητε, τὸν θάνατον τοῦ κυρίου καταγγέλλετε ἄχρις οὗ ἔλθῃ (11:26).

receiver of eating and drinking. The food is certainly the object of one's consumption (for oneself), but as one is changed by the food, one then becomes the object and the receiver of such a transformation. The boundary between the self as the subject and the self as the object and the receiver is not rigid and clearly drawn; it is deconstructed in the eating and drinking. What is outside (i.e., the food) becomes that which constitutes the self, as parts of the self and the outside are excreted in the process of digestion.

Fourth: (+) 11:33 – receiving from one another at the Lord's meal (the Lord's meal → selves)

(-) 11:20-21 – individually eating one's own meal (individual meal → selves)

The partaking of the Lord's meal is an event of call and response; an event of discernment. It is an event of fidelity to which believers must be faithful in taking action about it. It is an event that exposes the system that crucifies the Lord of glory. It is an event that marks the new covenant between believers and their Lord (11:25); an event that is a relationship of remembering and embodying the words and deeds of Jesus. It is an event of re-telling and re-living the story of the Lord's meal, *again and again*. It is not a dead ritual; a mechanical routine. It is not something that happened in the past. It is still happening now. It challenges believers to make the event *their own* event in their everyday life; to make it relevant and pertinent to their relationship with the other/Other. Therefore, for believers to trivialize, mock, and shame the partaking of the Lord's meal (11:22) is to condemn themselves as believers. It is to discredit themselves because if they have already acknowledged the crucified Messiah as their Lord and accepted the *logos* of the cross as the power of God (1:18), then to shame the Lord's meal is to shame themselves. No wonder Paul says that many of those who did so are weak, ill, and even dead (11:30). However, for those who discern and examine themselves, they would not be judged (11:31). That is to say, in giving judgment to themselves, believers would not be judged.

On the other hand, it is those who do not give judgment to themselves who end up receiving the judgment (11:29). Here, we see that judgment and discernment should not be hurled at the other/Other but at oneself, instead. This self-discernment echoes the thanksgiving of Jesus. The issue is not what one has given to the other/Other, but what one has received.

Fifth: (+) 11:19 – *haireseis* reveals the approved ones (existence → *haireseis*)
(-) 1:11 – strife among Corinthians (existence → strife)

This other-orientation of the believer's life in the Lord, which contrasts sharply with a self-centered orientation, comes to the fore when Paul exhorts believers to receive food from one another at the Lord's meal (11:33). Regardless of how we interpret τὸ ἴδιον δεῖπνον ("one's own meal") in 11:21 – that is, how the meal becomes one's own meal – it is clear that those who eat their own meal are not considerate of other believers and their situations. They are not partaking of the Lord's meal (11:20) because they are not concerned with what the Lord cares about: the life of people. They only care about themselves, as opposed to the Lord who entrusts himself to God in his thanksgiving. Thus, Paul asks believers to share and eat each other's food. If we become what we eat (or do not eat), then eating each other's food in a style of a potluck can be challenging to both the well-to-do and the less well-to-do believers. While the latter may at first be intimidated, they will be empowered as they are invited to eat the kind of food that they normally will not eat. The former, on the other hand, will probably be turned off by the kind of food that is of less quality than theirs. But that is exactly the point of doing the potluck at the Lord's meal: to experience and embody what the Lord has done for them so that they too may live likewise. If the Lord does not show favoritism but can even give thanks in giving his life for believers (11:24), then believers need to observe the covenant that the Lord has made with them (11:25). This is how they can remember and proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes

(11:26). They need to experience and see the system that oppresses and even crucifies their Lord. It is through this ritual and its ritualization of receiving the food from each other that the *doxa* of the Empire can be exposed and the semantic *habitus* of believers can be challenged and transformed. This is why *haireseis* must exist among believers to make visible those who are tested (11:19).

Sixth: (+) 1:10e – Paul urges no <i>schismata</i>	(no <i>schismata</i> → selves)
(-) 3:3b – jealousy and strife among Corinthians	(jealousy and strife → selves)
(-) 11:18 – <i>schismata</i> among Corinthians in gathering	(<i>schismata</i> → selves)

Haireseis basically means “choices,” and hence, “differences.” Without respecting and appreciating differences, we cannot distinguish anything. We will only see from our perspectives and consider that which is different from our viewpoint as strange and even wrong. But, why would anyone, without any reason, want to broaden her/his perspective and semantic *habitus*? Unless one is confronted with such a need to re-examine and even change one’s semantic *habitus*, there is no reason to be concerned with such a change. In fact, how will such a confrontation and change take place in a way that is not too drastic, and hence, repulsive to her/him, which then will probably make her/him to just reject the possibility of change? However, if the challenge takes places in the ritual of the Lord’s meal, then the power of ritual can provide a liminal space for believers to try out different ways of interacting with each other, without feeling too awkward or uncomfortable. This is how *haireseis*, through the sharing and eating of each other’s food in each other’s company, can reveal the approved ones. It is through receiving from one another that believers come to see that other believers have indeed what they do not have, and as a result, may be inspired to actually learn from them. If this happens, then there will not be *schismata* among believers who refuse to associate and be linked with other believers whom they want to

keep at a distance. In other words, Paul does not just tell believers not to create *schismata* among themselves, he urges them not to form *schismata* in the church of God. Such an exhortation is a (surface) manifestation of a deep underlying concern of Paul.

In our reading of 11:17-34, we therefore can now re-arrange the pairs of opposed actions in the following order – presented from the bottom up for the convenience of making a series of semiotic squares for our semantic analysis below.

(iv) A Semantic Analysis of 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

As we did in Appendix 3 of chapter 3, we put the above pairs of opposed actions into the following way to form a series of semiotic squares.⁸³ As we will see, the semantic value “other-oriented” is repeatedly emphasized in all these semiotic squares.

- | | |
|--|---|
| (+) 1:10e – Paul urges no <i>schismata</i> | (-) 3:3b, 11:18 – strife among Corinthians |
| (+) 11:19 – <i>haireseis</i> reveals the approved ones | (-) 1:11 – strife among Corinthians |
| (+) 11:33 – receiving from one another at the Lord’s meal | (-) 11:20-21 – individually eating one’s own meal |
| (+) 11:31 – not judged if discern at the Lord’s meal | (-) 11:29 – judged if did not discern the Lord’s meal |
| (+) 11:26 – those proclaiming the Lord’s death, remember it, receive the Covenant ... corrected at the Lord’s meal | (-) 11:30 – those failing the test become weak, ill, and dead |
| (+) 11:24a – Jesus gave thanks | (-) 11:23 – people betrayed Jesus and God |

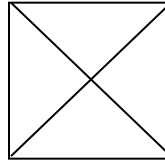
(a) Semiotic Square 1: Other-oriented (Christ-like)

In our first semiotic square, the issue of judgment comes to the fore. In 11:31, Paul writes, “But if we judged ourselves (ἐαυτοὺς διεκρίνομεν), we would not be judged (ἐκρινόμεθα).” But, how does one judge oneself? By what standard of evaluation? According to our semiotic square, the answer lies in remembering “the new covenant” (ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη) that the Lord Jesus has made with believers (11:24-25).

⁸³ Since the story progression relies on the positive mediation of the actions, we shift the negative actions (“the polemical axis”) upward. As a result, we will have four semiotic squares.

11:31 – not judged if discern at the Lord’s meal (S₁): Other-oriented (Christ-like)

11:30 – those failing the test become weak, sick, and dead (S₂): Non-Self-Discerning Judgment



11:26 – those proclaiming the Lord’s death, remember it, receive the new covenant ... corrected at the Lord’s meal (non-S₂): Self-Discerning Judgment

11:23 – people betrayed Jesus and God (non-S₁): Non-Other-oriented

As the word “covenant” indicates, it is a contract that binds those who sign it. When one is in the contract, one is bound by its terms. In light of the repetition of εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν (“for my remembrance”) in 11:24 and 11:25 and the clarification in 11:26 that “as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes,” this new contract is about remembering and proclaiming the words and deeds of Jesus. It is new because one becomes new like Christ when s/he proclaims the death of the Lord. That is to say, a new life is engendered when people hear the proclamation of the Lord’s death and respond to it positively.

The one who proclaims the Lord’s death should also receive it and be transformed by it; otherwise one cannot remember and proclaim it. Recall the middle voice: the proclamation should take place in the proclaiming itself. The one who gives the proclamation should also be the “object” and the “receiver” of the proclamation. Thus, if one wants to judge the other/Other, one should *first* be the “object” and the “receiver” of one’s judgment (cf. 4:4; Rom. 2:1-4; Matt. 7:1-5). The proclamation of the Lord’s death is a proclamation of one’s death as well (2 Cor. 4:10-11; Phil. 3:7-11). This is why Paul says that Christ sends him to gospelize (or manifest the gospel) (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) so that the cross of Christ may not be emptied of its power (1 Cor. 1:17).

In this ritual of the Lord's meal (from the eating of the meal to the drinking, conversation, and the singing of hymns, cf. 14:26), it is the remembrance of the Lord and the proclamation of his death that give rise to the meal gathering. Moreover, as the libation (after the meal) that is usually dedicated to the Roman emperor and the gods/goddesses is now poured out for the remembering of the new contract that is in the blood of Jesus, there is a strong sense of solidarity and defiance against the Empire that crucified the Lord.⁸⁴ The gathering, eating, and drinking of the Lord's meal are a ritualization that transforms believers by making them Christ-like: they are empowered to let go of themselves so that they can be empowered to let go. It is this trust in letting go of self that keeps one vigilant and Christ-oriented because in the letting-go of self, one can only rely on God for direction. This is why those who judge themselves in the remembrance of Jesus and the proclamation of his death are not judged because they are already transformed in the process of doing so.

This paradox of being empowered (in response to the gift of Jesus) to let go of self comes to the fore in Paul's re-telling of Jesus giving thanks on the night that he was betrayed (11:23). By giving and emptying himself for the sake of others, Jesus is not lost. He is not forgotten. Rather, he is remembered and incorporated into the life of believers. Paul writes, "Whenever you eat *this* bread and drink *this* cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes" (11:26). In other words, the body and blood of Jesus are to be digested and lived out. They should constitute believers and make them new. Not being transformed by the consumption of the body and blood of Jesus is not partaking of the Lord's meal. The gift of Jesus must be received and given at the same time. It is a gift that is constantly on the move, not owned by anyone.⁸⁵ It cannot be

⁸⁴ For details, see Hal Taussig, *In the Beginning was the Meal*, 118-39.

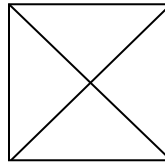
⁸⁵ This notion of gift is apparent in the beginning of 1 Corinthians. Paul gives thanks to God not only because of the gifts that have been given to believers in Christ Jesus, but also because believers embody the gifts in their testimony of Christ (objective and subjective genitive; cf. 3:11-13) as they wait for the gift of revelation of Lord Jesus Christ

objectified. The gift is characterized by the acts of simultaneous receiving and giving. The receiving and giving of the gift of the body and blood of Jesus empowers both the giver and the recipient at the same time. This is why believers should examine themselves when partaking of the bread and of the cup (11:28), not to mention “whoever partakes of the bread and cup unworthily will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord” (11:27). The gift of life can be a poison if it is not consumed and digested well. Instead of nourishing the body, it can cause indigestion, illness, and even death. Without embodying the life of Jesus, one puts her/his life at risk in partaking of the gift of life.

(b) Semiotic Square 2: Other-oriented (Concrete Interaction)

11:33 – receiving from one another at the Lord’s meal (S₁): Other-oriented

11:29 – judged if did not discern the Lord’s meal (S₂): Self-centered



11:31 – not judged if discern at the Lord’s meal (non-S₂): Non-Self-centered

11:30 – those failing the test become weak, sick, and dead (non-S₁): Non-Other-oriented

In this second semiotic square, a sense of other-oriented is again emphasized. But it is stressed through a concrete interaction between believers. This concrete interaction is crucial to one’s perception of the self and the other/Other. Without the face of the other/Other in front of one’s face, one can easily erase the otherness of the other/Other. But, the other/Other is not an object of one’s gaze and imagination. When one objectifies the other/Other, one will also be objectified by one’s objectification. It is a vicious cycle; a loop with no exit. But, if believers do interact with each other regularly, then perhaps one will be less judgmental and be more

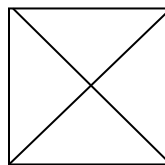
(1:4ff). The movement of gift is not a closed circle of economy. Gift is only a gift when it is given, received, embodied, and given again, affecting both the giver and the recipients at the same time, as well as the quality of the giving. For those who refuse the gift of God, they treat the cross as foolishness (1:18), misunderstand the wisdom of God (2:6-8) and reject the free gifts of God (2:14).

understanding and compassionate toward each other, as one realizes that others could have misjudged oneself too.

This is why Paul urges believers to receive food from one another (11:33), lest they cannot perceive the world otherwise. If believers do not interact with each other, then they are not gathering together, even if they may happen to share the same space (ἐπι τὸ αὐτὸ) (11:20). Paul thus says that they are not partaking of the Lord’s meal. To be at the same place is to gather together, share, and receive from one another, as the Lord gathered believers together and shared with them what he had received from God in his thanksgiving. This receiving from the other/Other can help one breakthrough her/his own horizon of vision. For Paul, it is through the other/Other that one can see one’s blind spot and limitation. Without the other/Other, one cannot be transformed. This self-centeredness will only make one see the fault of the other/Other without realizing that the problem can lie with the self. Consequently, one’s horizon of understanding will only get narrower and narrower, eventually causing one to become weak, sick, and even dead. By asking believers to, at least, share and eat each other’s food, Paul hopes that they may come to see the difference and realize their self-centeredness.

(c) Semiotic Square 3: Other-oriented (non-objectifying)

11:19 – *haireseis* reveal the approved ones (S₁): Other-oriented (non-objectifying)



11:20-21 – individually eating one’s own meal (S₂): Self-centered

11:33 – receiving from one another at the Lord’s meal (non-S₂): Non-Self-centered

11:29 – judged if did not discern the Lord’s meal (non-S₁): Non-Other-oriented

Here, a sense of other-oriented is again highlighted. While Paul does not say how the *haireseis* can make visible the tested ones among believers (11:19), it appears that it is how one

deals with *haireseis* that reveals whether one passes the test or not. As Paul in 11:18 rebukes believers for forming *schismata*, we can assume that if *haireseis* must exist, then it cannot manifest the qualities of *schismata* that divide the church of God into various groups that do not interact with each other. When believers claim themselves to belong exclusively to a certain group, they define groups in relation to each other, instead of in relation to Christ. The standard of judgment is not in terms of “Christ and him crucified,” but in terms of the honor of the Empire that crucified Christ. As such, the existence of *haireseis* must be Christ-oriented.

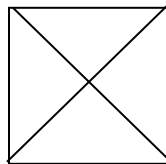
In the face of differences, *haireseis* can keep believers on their toes from objectifying and absolutizing any choice. They can also help believers to be cautious and vigilant of the choices that they make. Because when believers need to make a certain choice out of so many choices, they need to analyze the “pros” and “cons” of their decision and be able to explain the choice that they make. In other words, *haireseis* (or choices) can help believers to be keen to the contextual issues of their situation. In this articulation of their decision, believers must then take responsibility for their choices to show how it is a Christ-oriented decision.

On the other hand, if believers are self-centered, *haireseis* can easily become a threat to the unity of the church of God; after all, it is very difficult for a group to operate effectively if there are too many choices pulling the group in various directions. One can easily imagine how *haireseis* can even lead to *schismata*, in particular if believers refuse to see the limit and contextual character of their preferred choice. This danger of causing *schismata* is inherent in *haireseis*. But, precisely because of this danger, *haireseis* can reveal the tested ones as they challenge believers to rely not on the wisdom of the world, but on the power of God (i.e., the *logos* of the cross) to discern how God works in different situations. *Haireseis*, as such, cannot and must not be objectified because one does not know how God will work. The existence of

choices and differences deconstructs any objectification. This non-objectifying quality is manifested in Paul urging believers to interact with one another in such a concrete way that they should share and eat the food of each other at the Lord’s meal. Paul does not want them to just eat their own food. Paul wants them to be exposed to the real conditions of life of different believers so that their proclamation is in terms of death of the Lord for people.

(d) Semiotic Square 4: Other-oriented (non-absolutizing)

1:10 – Paul urges no *schismata* (S₁):
Other-oriented (Non-absolutizing)



1:11 – Strife among believers (S₂):
Self-centered

11:19 – *haireseis* reveal the approved ones (non-S₂): Non-Self-centered

11:20-21 – individually eating one’s own meal (non-S₁): Non-Other-oriented

It is “through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” that Paul urges believers not to have *schismata* among themselves (1:10). It is the name of Jesus that believers in every place calls upon (1:2), a name that they can only, in the Holy Spirit, confess to be that of their Lord (12:3). However, when we examine the strife among believers (1:11), we see how they use the names of the apostle and even of Christ to form their own group. As the name of Paul is even used by believers, it is clear that believers do not have the approval of the apostles and of Christ to use their names.

Here, the objectification by believers is rather obvious. In a group-oriented culture, such a self-centeredness not only categorizes and alienates believers, it also sets the apostles against each other. But, Paul makes it clear that each apostle has her/his role and responsibility (3:5-8), just as each person receives her/his own gift from the spirit (12:7-11), not to mention each body part has its own indispensable role that cannot be substituted by the others (12:14-27). So when

each group thinks that it is alone to understand and represent God, it absolutizes itself at the expense of other believers. It objectifies God.

For Paul, this overemphasis of any individuality is problematic because it can become a form of universalization that ends up rejecting individuality. This is the unfortunate result that we see with the *schismata* that believers form among themselves. In asserting its own particularity, each group denies other particularities. This is why *haireseis* must exist among believers. The problem is not with the variety of choices; it is with the discernment of choices. Perhaps this is why in all the four semiotic squares that we see in 11:17-34, a notion of other-oriented is repeatedly emphasized in different ways. For Paul, a coming together that does not incur judgment is a coming together that share and learn from the otherness of each other.

V. Conclusion

When we recognize that a sense of other-orientation undergirds Paul's exhortation in 11:17-34, it becomes clear that Paul uses the word *haireseis* ambiguously to show that differences need not lead to the formation of *schismata* among believers. Given that there are already several groups in the church of God, each claiming "Christ," "Cephas," "Apollos," and "Paul" as its primary leader, believers may have positive and negative evaluation of the grouping. It is thus intriguing that while Paul criticizes *schismata*, he also says that *haireseis* must exist among believers. But, are *schismata* and *haireseis* not about groupings? For Paul, forming group is not necessarily divisive. The issue is how groups are formed. If birds of a feather flock together, it is expected that people tend to socialize more frequently with those whom they feel close to. What concerns Paul is that such a gathering ends up drawing boundaries and objectifying others whom one is not close to. Thus, we see that as the theme in 11:17-34 is about

“coming together,” Paul further conceptualizes it in terms of being Christ-like, concrete interaction, non-objectifying, and non-absolutizing. To concretize this theme, Paul then figurativizes it through the body of Christ, which is broken for everyone at the Lord’s meal, and which then signifies that just as everyone receives the body of Christ, one should also receive from one another as if one receives from Christ. It is through this receiving from one another that everyone comes together to partake of the Lord’s meal and proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Let us note the language of giving and receiving in Paul’s description of the Lord’s meal. First, in using the Lord’s meal tradition that is familiar to the enunciatee, Paul tells believers that what he has given to them is what he has received from the Lord (Ἐγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, ὃ καὶ παρέδωκα ὑμῖν) (11:23). Then he tells them how Jesus, on the night that he was given over (παρεδίδετο), after giving thanks, took (or received) (ἔλαβεν) the bread and gave it to believers. Just as Jesus makes a new covenant with believers in giving them the bread and the cup (11:25), believers need to proclaim his death until he comes whenever they come together to receive the bread and the cup (11:26). In order to give such a proclamation of the death of the Lord believers must have already received an evaluation of themselves in light of the new covenant. As such, it only makes sense that believers should discern and judge themselves when they partake of the Lord’s meal. Not to discern oneself in the partaking of the Lord’s meal means that one does not remember the new covenant and does not proclaim the death of the Lord. The receiving of the bread and the cup, which is already an acknowledgement of the judgment because it signifies the acceptance of the new covenant, therefore becomes a forceful judgment unto those who do not judge themselves.

For Paul, if the body of Christ is broken for everyone, then discriminating against anyone is to be against Christ himself. If believers have received from Christ, then in welcoming each other and receiving from each other, believers also welcome and receive from Christ who gives himself to everyone. On the other hand, if to receive the bread and the cup is to proclaim the Lord's death, then to shame those who have received the bread and the cup of the Lord is to shame the death of the Lord. If everyone has received from Christ, then differences need not be divisive. If everyone calls upon the name of the Lord in every place, then unity should be conceived of in a cross-like way. We thus need to remember that it in the name of the Lord Jesus that Paul urges believers to say the same thing and be restored in the same and in the same thought (1:10).

Just as a body has different body members, we can envision unity in terms of differences. For Paul, unity is Christ-oriented. Differences are differences not because they are in relation with each other. The coming together of differences must proclaim the Lord's death; that is, must embody the body of Christ that is broken for everyone. Differences are in relation with the body of Christ that is "parts beyond a part." Differences can become divisive when we absolutize our particularity at the expense of other particularities. Therefore for Paul, the notion of *haireseis* is ambiguous. It should be neither reified nor absolutized. The *haireseis* exist when people come together. It is the outcome of differences. Without differences, there are no *haireseis*. This is why Paul writes that *haireseis* must exist in the sense that people must come together, face to face. Differences can be liberating as they remind believers that there are many members of the body of Christ and everyone is a part of it.⁸⁶ Likewise, it is through different interpretations of 11:17-34 that we see the multiple layers and aspects of the text that we actually privilege and bracket

⁸⁶ Paul makes this point very clear in the beginning of 1 Corinthians when he addresses the Corinthian believers, "To the church of God in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, to those called saints, with everyone calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both their Lord and ours" (1:2).

out in our interpretations. These different interpretations that foreground and background certain textual dimensions (by using pertinent exegetical tool that correspond to relevant worldview) help us examine and see how we and others interact with 11:17-34. Paul does not speak of love in 11:17-34, but from the qualities of love that we fleshed out in chapter 4, we can say that Paul envisions and embodies a love that is not only other-oriented but also self-oriented (not self-centered) in the sense that just as one needs to receive and learn from the other, one also has something that one can teach the other. In chapter 6, we will see that this conflict at the meal gathering continues with the issue of the “idol food” in 8:1–11:1.

Appendix A – The Notion of “Heresy”

Overall, the New Testament Greek dictionary gives us two major meanings of *haireisis*: (1) “A group that holds tenets distinctive to it, *sect, party, school, faction*” and (2) “that which distinguishes a group’s thinking, *opinion, dogma*” (e.g., 2 Peter 2:1, which can “perhaps” refer to the “heretical sects”) (*BDAG*, 27-28). The examples under (1) are: the sect “of the Sadducees” (e.g., Acts 5:17), the sect “of the Pharisees” (e.g., Acts 15:5, 26:5), and the sect “of the Christians” (i.e., *haireisis tōn Nazōraiōn*) (e.g., Acts 24:5; cf. Acts 24:14 and 28:22). *BDAG* also notes that the *haireisis tōn Nazōraiōn* refers to a “*heretical sect*,”¹ with which most modern Western scholars agree.² Under (1), *BDAG* treats *haireisis* as having a “negative connotation, *dissension, a faction*” (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:19; Gal. 5:20). However, this pejorative use of *haireisis* marks a sharp difference with the neutral and positive uses of *haireisis* found in the classical Greek dictionary.³ Michel Desjardins’ review of scholarly works on the usage of *haireisis* in Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish literature also highlights the positive and neutral meaning of *haireisis*.⁴ In her essay, Joan Taylor even argues for the positive and neutral meaning of all the occurrences of *haireisis* in Acts 5:17, 15:5, 24:5-6 and 14, 26:5, and 28:22 (see below).

Derived from the verb *hairein* (“to take,” “to grasp,” or “to seize”), the noun *haireisis* generally means a “choice.” Being the result of choosing, *haireisis* or a “choice” can refer to one’s decision, disposition, and thought. For those who make similar choice or decision, they

¹ The examples that *BDAG* gives for this second meaning are Iren. *Against Heresies* 1.11.1, Orig. *Contra Celsum* 5.54.9, Justin. *Trypho* 35, etc.

² Joan E. Taylor, “The Nazoraeans as a ‘Sect’ in ‘Sectarian’ Judaism? A Reconsideration of the Current View Via the Narrative of Acts and the Meaning of *Hairesis*,” in *Sects and Sectarianism in Jewish History*. Edited by Sacha Stern (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 92-93.

³ According to *LSJ Supplement* (1996: 41), *haireisis* has two major meanings: (1) a “taking, esp. of a town” and (2) (i) a “choice” (such as a “choice, election of magistrates” or an “inclination”), (ii) a “purpose, course of action or thought” (such as a “system of philosophic principles, or those who profess such principles, sect, school, or “corps of epheboi,” or “condition” in astrology), and (iii) a “proposed condition, proposal” (such as a “commission,” “freewill offering,” and “bid at auction”).

⁴ See Michel Desjardins, “Bauer and Beyond: On Recent Scholarly Discussions of Αἵρεσις in the Early Christian Era,” 65-82.

form a group “marked by common ideas and aims.”⁵ Gradually, *haireisis* comes to denote a medical and a philosophical school of thought and life style.⁶ The meaning of *haireisis* as a heretical group outside the established tradition and authority is a much later development.⁷ So unless we can show that the early church in the first century CE was already an established institution beleaguered by the issues of legitimacy and authority,⁸ it is anachronistic to speak of *haireisis* as a heretical group that holds erroneous doctrines.⁹ In fact, as the question of “heresy” touches upon whether “heresy” is an offshoot of “orthodoxy” or “orthodoxy” is the result of “heresy,”¹⁰ it points to the issues of unity and diversity. For example, Robert Royalty, Jr. argues that the rhetoric of heresy is an “ideology of difference” that identifies, excludes, and demonizes non-mainstream beliefs and practices through the use of tradition and Scripture.¹¹

⁵ David T. Runia, “Philo of Alexandria and the Greek Hairesis-Model,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 53.2 (May 1999): 117-47 (118).

⁶ See Marcel Simon, “From Greek Hairesis to Christian Heresy,” in *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition: In Honorem Robert M. Grant*. Edited by William R. Schoedel and Robert L. Wilken (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1979), 101-16; Heinrich Von Staden, “Hairesis and Heresy: The Case of the *haireseis iatrikai*,” in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*. Vol. 3: *Self-Definition in the Greco-Roman World*. Edited by Ben F. Meyer and E. P. Sanders (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 76-100. In reviewing major works on “the term *haireisis* and various aspects of its usage,” Runia writes, “John Glucker demonstrated that when, from the 2nd century BCE onwards, the term began to be used for philosophical schools, it indicated not schools in the institutional sense, based on a continuous succession in Athens, but rather ‘schools of thought.’ Heinrich von Staden reminded us of the fact that medical *haireseis* were no less prominent than philosophical ones, and that they corresponded to various degrees of organization and continuity. In a magisterial study Alain Le Boulluec has argued that Justine Martyr played a crucial role in adapting and transforming the model of Greek heresiography to the situation of the emerging Church.” See David T. Runia, “Philo of Alexandria and the Greek Hairesis-Model,” 119.

⁷ In fact, Simon argues that not only pre-Christian texts do not use the term *haireisis* pejoratively, philosophers also do not use the term to denote “teachings of an adversary which he considered erroneous.” See Marcel Simon, “From Greek Hairesis to Christian Heresy,” 110.

⁸ For the difference between authority and legitimacy, see John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*. New Introduction by Wayne A. Meeks (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 1-34.

⁹ Simon writes, “We know that the term in its original sense carried no value judgment. It simply meant, according to its etymology, “choice,” and specifically the choice of embracing a particular school of thought. There could be in the Greek, as well as in the Jewish view, depending on the point of view of the speaker, good and bad heresies. But, in principle, they are neither good nor bad, since there existed no universally recognized criterion of authority by which to classify them in two opposing categories and to distinguish truth from error.” See Marcel Simon, “From Greek Hairesis to Christian Heresy,” 104.

¹⁰ See Michel Desjardins, “Bauer and Beyond: On Recent Scholarly Discussions of Αἵρεσις in the Early Christian Era,” 66-69. For details, see Robert Royalty, Jr., *The Origin of Heresy: A History of Discourse in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity*. Routledge Studies in Religion (New York and London: Routledge, 2012), 9-27. For Royalty, diversity marks the inception of the Jesus and Christian movements.

¹¹ He argues that “by the end of the first century, some Christians highlighted *difference as a discursive move for group identity* (‘we are the true Christians as opposed to those false Christians’) and for political posturing of the

Now, even when the negative notion of *haireisis* as a “heretical group” became dominant in the early Patristic Period,¹² we still see the neutral and positive trace of *haireisis*. For instance, in *Contra Celsum* 3.12 and 3.13, when Celsus criticizes Christianity for its diverse sects,¹³ Origen retorts that *haireseis* actually results from people seeing the value of Christianity and wanting to study it. If Christianity were not attractive to people, people would not have studied it. Without such a studying, there would not be various opinions or *haireseis*. *Haireseis* arise because Christianity is beneficial to people.¹⁴ Hence, for Origen, Paul speaks of *haireseis* in 1 Cor. 11:19 because it is by studying various *haireseis* that one can recognize what is the best choice among them.¹⁵ A similar explanation is also found in *Stromata* when Clement of

ekkēsia (church) in the *oikoumenē* (Empire; ‘we the true Christians are Romans’). I understand difference here as neither a theological position nor merely a social conflict; although to be sure there were different ideological positions and extensive conflicts between these groups. Rather, difference is a discursive move, an ideological strategy (in Foucault’s parlance, a theory or theme).” See Robert Royalty, Jr., *The Origin of Heresy*, 18.

¹² For example, Desjardins writes, “In second-century non-canonical Christian literature, αἵρεσις, with few exceptions, is consistently used to depict false and dangerous choices made in the light of the preaching of the Christian message.” See Michel Desjardins, “Bauer and Beyond: On Recent Scholarly Discussions of Αἵρεσις in the Early Christian Era,” 74-75.

¹³ “In the next place, since he [Celsus] reproaches us with the existence of heresies [αἱρέσεων, *sectas*] in Christianity as being a ground of accusation against it, saying that ‘when Christians had greatly increased in numbers, they were divided and split up into factions [σχίζονται, *factionem*], each individual desiring to have his own party;’ and further, that ‘being thus separated through their numbers, they confute one another, still having, so to speak, one *name* in common, if indeed they still retain it...’” See *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol 4: *Tertullian, Part Fourth; Minucius Felix; Commodian; Origen, Parts First and Second*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 469.

¹⁴ He writes, “heresies [αἱρέσεις] of different kinds have never originated from any matter in which the principle involved was not important and beneficial to human life ... So, then, seeing Christianity appeared an object of veneration to men, not to the more servile class alone, as Celsus supposes, but to many among the Greek who were devoted to literary pursuits, there necessarily [ἀναγκάως] originated heresies, – not at all, however, as the result of faction and strife, but through the earnest desire of many literary men to become acquainted with the doctrines of Christianity. The consequence of which was, that, taking in different acceptations those discourses which were believed by all to be divine, there arose heresies, which received their names from those individuals who admired, indeed, the origin of Christianity, but who were led, in some way or other, by certain plausible reasons, to discordant views. And yet no one would act rationally in avoiding medicine because of its heresies; nor would he who aimed at that which is seemly entertain a hatred of philosophy, and adduce its many heresies as a pretext for his antipathy. And so neither are the sacred books of Moses and the prophets to be condemned on account of the heresies in Judaism.” *Idem*.

¹⁵ “Now, if these arguments hold good, why should we not defend, in the same way, the existence of heresies [αἱρέσεων] in Christianity? And respecting these, Paul appears to me to speak in a very striking manner when he says, ‘For there must be heresies among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest among you.’ For as that man is ‘approved’ in medicine who, on account of his experience in various (medical) heresies, and his honest examination of the majority of them, has selected the preferable system, – and as the great proficient in philosophy is he who, after acquainting himself experimentally with the various views, has given in his adhesion to the best, –

Alexandria speaks of the good and bad *haireseis*.¹⁶ Likewise, in the “Edict of Milan,” Eusebius reports that Constantine Augustus and Licinius Augustus granted Christians and others free choice (*hairestin*) to keep their own worship and *hairesis* (*The Ecclesiastical History* 10.5.2).¹⁷ Clearly, the notion of *hairesis* is not pejorative in this fourth-century-CE writing.

In a recent essay, Taylor further contends that the notion of *hairesis* is not only neutral but also positive in the *Acts of the Apostles*. Arguing against the majority view, Taylor finds that “[t]he language of Acts is very much the same as Josephus, who defines groups holding jurisprudential authority as *haireseis*.”¹⁸ In Acts, we note that the Pharisees (15:5 and 26:5) and the Sadducees are called *hairesis* (5:17). This notion of *hairesis* as a Greek philosophical school of thought is common in the Hellenistic period. A *TLG* (*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*) search will yield numerous examples. David Runia and Steve Mason point this out in the writings of Philo and Josephus, respectively.¹⁹ The fact that Philo and Josephus, for different reasons, use the

so I would say that the wisest Christian was he who had carefully studied the heresies both of Judaism and Christianity.” Idem.

¹⁶ See 7.15-16 of the *Stromata* in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. 2: *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria (Entire)*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 549.

¹⁷ For example, 10.5.4 mentions that the emperors “grant both to the Christians and to all the free choice [ἐλευθεράν αἵρεσιν] of following whatever form of worship they pleased, to the intent that all the divine and heavenly powers that be might be favorable to us and all those living under our authority.” 10.5.5: “Therefore with sound and most upright reasoning we resolved on this counsel: that authority be refused to no one whomsoever to follow and choose [τοῦ ἀκολουθεῖν καὶ αἰρεῖσθαι] the observance or form of worship that Christians use, and that authority be granted to each one to give his mind to that form of worship which he deems suitable to himself, to the intent that the Divinity ... may in all things afford us his wonted care and generosity.” 10.5.8: “And when thou perceivest that this has been granted unrestrictedly to them by us, thy Devotedness will understand that authority has been given to others also, who wish to follow their own observance and form of worship – a thing clearly suited to the peacefulness of our times – so that each one may have authority to choose and observe [τοῦ αἰρεῖσθαι καὶ τημελεῖν] whatever form he pleases.” See Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History*. Translated by J. E. L. Oulton and H. J. Lawlor. 2 vols (Loeb, 1953), 447.

¹⁸ Joan E. Taylor, “The Nazoraeans as a ‘Sect’ in ‘Sectarian’ Judaism?,” 113.

¹⁹ See Steve Mason, “Josephus’s Pharisees: The Philosophy,” in *In Quest of the Historical Pharisees*. Edited by Jacob Neusner and Bruce D. Chilton (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2007), 41-66. Also, see David T. Runia, “Philo of Alexandria and the Greek Hairesis-Model,” 117-47; Joan E. Taylor, “The Nazoraeans as a ‘Sect’ in ‘Sectarian’ Judaism?,” 99ff.; Heinrich Schlier, “αἵρεσις,” 181. Unlike the frequent uses of *hairesis* in the writings of Josephus (e.g., *War* 2.119-62; *Ant.* 13.171-73; *Ant.* 18.12-22; *Life* 10-11; etc.), Runia notes that there are only four places where the word *hairesis* refers to the “school of thought” in Philo’s writing (e.g., *De Plantatione* 151, *De Vita Mosis* 1.21-9, *De Vita Contemplativa* 3.29, and *Quaestiones in Exodum*).

word *haireisis* for certain Hellenistic Jewish group indicates the positive notion of *haireisis*.²⁰ Taylor notes that “for Josephus the three schools proper [i.e., the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes] not only interpret the law but play a role in public life within the city.”²¹ While Philo is more reserved than Josephus to use *haireisis* to present the Jewish groups as Greek schools of philosophy, he associates it with virtue in *Who is the Heir of Divine Things* 241. Philo writes, “virtue (ἀρετή) has derived its name not only from the word choice (παρὰ τὴν αἵρεσιν ὀνομάσθη), but also from the fact of its being lifted up (παρὰ τὴν ἄρσιν)...”²² Here, the wordplay of “virtue,” “choice” (or “heresy”), and “lifted up” is rather obvious: that which is raised up is virtuous and of good choice. Given this usage of *haireisis* in the writings of Philo and Josephus, it is not a surprise that Acts uses the term positively in 5:17, 15:5, and 26:5. Now, let us examine the remaining three occurrences of *haireisis* in Acts 24:5-6 and 14, and 28:22.

Regarding 28:22, Taylor argues that “the Jewish leaders in Rome use the term *haireisis* neutrally but respectfully.”²³ If they had a pejorative view of Paul and the Way, they would not have gone to listen to him, let alone some were even persuaded (28:24). When it comes to the usage of *haireisis* in 24:5-6 and 24:14, Taylor foregrounds its neutral and positive notion in the verses we just read and stresses the legal feature of *apologia* in 24:14 when Paul speaks before Felix in defending the Way, which the lawyer Tertullus labels as *haireisis* (cf. 24:5). For Taylor,

²⁰ Taylor points out that Josephus only uses the term *haireisis* for Jewish groups that are well recognized in the public. While Philo also wants to present Judaism in terms of Greek school of philosophy, he is more reserved than Josephus in using the word *haireisis* because he also wants to stress the unity of Judaism. See Joan E. Taylor, “The Nazoraeans as a ‘Sect’ in ‘Sectarian’ Judaism?,” 101, and David T. Runia, “Philo of Alexandria and the Greek Hairesis-Model,” 138-43.

²¹ Joan E. Taylor, “The Nazoraeans as a ‘Sect’ in ‘Sectarian’ Judaism?,” 101. For Taylor, Josephus also calls the ‘fourth’ philosophy a *haireisis* because the group enjoys “legal authority in Jerusalem ...” Ibid., 104.

²² “For virtue (*aretē*) has derived its name not only from the word choice, but also from the fact of its being lifted up (*para to airesthai*), for it is lifted up (*airetai*) and borne on high because it always loves heavenly things; but wickedness (*kakia*) is so called from its tendency to go downwards (*apo tou katōkechōrēkenai*), and also because it compels those who practice it to fall down to the bottom (*katapiptein*).” See “Who is the Heir of Divine Things,” in *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*. New updated edition. Translated by C. D. Yonge (USA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2008), 296.

²³ Joan E. Taylor, “The Nazoraeans as a ‘Sect’ in ‘Sectarian’ Judaism?,” 98.

if Luke-Acts tries to present the Way (like the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes) as a school of philosophy with public authority, then Luke-Acts may want to highlight this aspect through the mouth of Tertullus who accuses Paul as a ringleader of the Nazarene *haireisis* (24:5). So, as Tertullus “inadvertently grant[ed] the Nazoraeans the same status as another ‘school of Judean religion’ with legitimacy,²⁴ Paul confesses, “according to the Way that they call a *haireisis*, I thus worship the ancestral God, as I observe everything according to the law and those written in the prophets” (24:14). Note that Paul says “according to the Way that *they call* is a *haireisis*.” Taylor points out that as this is Paul’s legal *apologia* before Felix, it makes no sense for him to defend himself using *haireisis* as a pejorative term. Rather, Luke-Acts is consistent in using the term *haireisis*. Taylor summarizes,

To highlight to Felix that ‘they call’ his beliefs a ‘wrong opinion’ or ‘heresy’ – as if *offended* – would not be a very effective method of defence ... Tertullus ‘himself says’ that Paul belongs to a ‘school [of Judaeian religion],’ with its implications of legitimacy and authority, and Tertullus’ own credibility is agreed in this circumstances; therefore, Paul can use the language of Tertullus in his *apologia*, turned against his accusers.²⁵

Now, even if Tertullus’ notion of *haireisis* is negative (given the context of his accusation), Paul’s confession that he follows the Way that certain Jewish leaders allege to be a *haireisis* is noteworthy. If Paul uses *haireisis* negatively, then his explanation is subversive. How can the *haireisis* that Paul is involved in be condemned, if he observes everything according to the law and those written in the prophets? So, even if the notion of *haireisis* in Acts 24:5 and 24:14 is different from other usages of *haireisis* in Acts, Paul challenges the negative notion of *haireisis*.

When it comes to the word *haireseis* in 1 Cor. 11:19, Taylor suggest that it “embraces both right and wrong ‘choices’ in theory, but there is an underlying presupposition that there is

²⁴ Ibid., 97.

²⁵ Ibid., 98.

only one true way.”²⁶ Here, we want to argue that this “one true way” is rather complicated. In 11:19, Paul does not just use the word *haireseis* ambiguously, which Desjardins also finds,²⁷ he also deconstructs the notion of *hairesis*. *Hairesis* can be good and/or bad. For Paul, *hairesis* can expose and destabilize the construction and maintenance of status quo. From what we have discussed so far, this meaning of *haireseis* is not impossible. In fact, it works quite well if we translate ἐκδέχεσθε as “to receive (food) from” one another. Now, let us turn to our structural semiotic analysis of 11:17-34 to further support our argument.

²⁶ Ibid., 94.

²⁷ Michel Desjardins, “Bauer and Beyond: On Recent Scholarly Discussions of Αἵρεσις in the Early Christian Era,” 74.

**Chapter 6 – Eat, Drink, and Love:
Idol and Icon in the Issue of *Eidōlothuta* in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1**

You know that when you were gentiles (ἔθνη), in being led astray (ἀπαγόμενοι), you used to be led (ἠγεσθε) to mute idols (τὰ εἰδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα). For this reason, I am making it known to you that nobody, when speaking in the spirit of God, says that “Jesus be cursed” (Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς) and nobody is able to say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:2-3). – Paul

My idol defines what I can bear of phenomenality ... my idol exposes the span of all my aims – what I set my heart on seeing, and thus also want to see and do. In short, it denudes my desire and my hope. What I look at that is visible decides who I am. I am what I can look at. What I admire judges me.¹ – Jean-Luc Marion

I. Introduction

From our discussion in the previous chapter, we can see how Paul’s notion of “coming together” can help implement his notion of the body of Christ as “parts beyond a part” (12:27). To prevent the body of Christ from being objectified, rigidified, and fixed, Paul urges the Corinthian believers *to receive (food) from one another* when they come together to observe the *ritual* of the Lord’s Supper (11:33). Paul tells them that *haireseis* (i.e., choices) *must* exist among them in order to highlight their limits and limitations. Without being confronted by differences, they might become lax and fail to discern the works of God among them. The *haireseis* in this sense can help believers transform their semantic *habitus* in their interaction with each other. They can provoke them to question their existing understanding. Thus at the core of “coming together” at the “Lord’s Supper,” Paul speaks of what he has received from the Lord, namely, how the Lord, despite the fact that he was betrayed, still gave thanks and made a new covenant with them through his body and blood (11:23-25). For Paul, this act of love for the other/Other (cf. Rom. 5:8) should *always* inform and undergird the believers’ semantic *habitus*.

¹ Jean-Luc Marion, “The Idol or the Radiance of the Painting,” in *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*. Translated by Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 61.

In this chapter, as we address the “idol food” conflicts in 1 Cor. 8:1–11:1, we continue to see Paul’s concern for the believers’ semantic *habitus*. This time Paul is concerned about *how believers come to know what they think they know*. Note that, as we have seen (chapter 4) and as we shall further see below, Paul is *not* against *gnosis* per se. Neither is he pitching love against *gnosis* when he writes that “*gnosis* puffs up, but love builds up” (8:1). On the basis of our discussion of the modes of existence (e.g., autonomy, relationality, and heteronomy) in chapter 1, we find that Paul is concerned about the mode of existence in which we frame our process of knowing. Indeed, from our semantic analysis of Paul’s vision of love in chapter 4, we find that in associating *gnosis* with love, Paul wants believers to develop a heteronomous mode of knowing in their interaction with each other; a kind of knowledge that does not objectify the self and the other/Other but is always open to a new horizon of understanding. Once *how we come to know* is objectified, the “mercantilization of knowledge”² is bound to happen, as Paul solemnly reminds believers not to let the *exousia* derived from their *gnosis* cause the weak to stumble (8:9). Thus Paul writes, “But *for us* there is one God the father, *from whom* are all things and *for whom* we are, and one Lord Jesus Christ *through whom* all things are and *through whom* we are” (8:6). The dative voice “for us” is not merely relational. It also signifies a sense of responsibility and response-ability. That is to say, *for whom* is God the Father and Jesus Christ the Lord? If it is *for all believers*, then how can believers form factions and discriminate against anyone? The prepositional phrases “*from whom*,” “*for whom*,” and “*through whom*” highlight a heteronomous mode of perception that Paul wants the Corinthian believers to embrace and embody.

² See Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Foreword by Fredric Jameson. *Theory and History of Literature* 10 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 5.

II. Chinese Ancestor Veneration and the “Idol Food” Issue

Chinese Christianity tends to condemn Chinese ancestor veneration as idol worship. The attack is considerable when the ritual, with more than 10,000 years of history, is inextricably related to the Chinese worldview, spirituality, and social identity.³ The denouncement can be tantamount to demonizing the Chinese heritage, causing unnecessary family dispute and hurt,⁴ as if a Chinese Christian must reject the ritual of ancestor veneration. The situation becomes more complicated when Chinese Christians are taught to accept Western traditional theology as the orthodox belief that holds the key to their “salvation.”⁵ When Chinese internalize the Western worldviews embedded in these doctrines, we distrust our own contextual interpretation of the Bible; after all, “What Has Jerusalem To Do With Beijing?”⁶ Indeed, for many Chinese Christians, it is wrong to read the Bible through our socio-cultural values. But, if no Chinese would call their ancestors idols, then how is the ritual idolatrous? Did not the ancient Israelites observe ancestor veneration?⁷ Why are Chinese artifacts and images deprecated as idols, while

³ See William Lakos, *Chinese Ancestor Worship: A Practice and Ritual Oriented Approach to Understanding Chinese Culture* (UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 12-13.

⁴ See Yak-hwee Tan, “Judging and Community in Romans: An Actions within the Boundaries,” in *Gender, Tradition and Romans: Shared Ground, Uncertain Borders*. Edited by Cristina Grenholm and Daniel Patte (London and New York: T&T Clark International, 2005), 39-60.

⁵ For many Chinese Christians, “salvation” is often reduced to mean that one goes to heaven after s/he dies. But, to speak of “salvation,” we need to at least clarify *from* what and *to/for* what one is saved. For details, see Daniel Patte, “Salvation,” in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity*. Edited by Daniel Patte (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1125-126. In the beginning of 1 Corinthians, we see that “salvation” is related to receiving the *logos* of the cross, which is the power of God (1:18).

⁶ In fact, even though the values of community and relationship are important to the Chinese cultures, which are also characteristic of the biblical worldview, many Chinese Christians are individualistic in their interpretation of the Bible. It is not difficult to find that most of the time, the real conditions of people’s lives are not mentioned in the sermon and adult Sunday school. What is highlighted are often abstract theological propositions and expositions. So for many Chinese churches, the answer to Yeo’s book, “What Has Jerusalem To Do With Beijing?”, is “nothing.” There is nothing that “Beijing” can contribute to our (critical) study and understanding of the Bible. It is, moreover, a taboo to connect both; this taboo is reinforced by the so-called “eisegesis” in the Western academy of critical biblical interpretation. However, see Khiok-khng (K.K.) Yeo, *What Has Jerusalem To Do With Beijing? Biblical Interpretation From a Chinese Perspective* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998). Also, see Daniel Patte, “Contextual Reading of Mark and North Atlantic Scholarship,” in *Mark. Texts@Contexts*. Edited by Nicole Wilkinson Duran, Teresa Okure, and Daniel Patte (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011), 197-213.

⁷ For example, see Brian B. Schmidt, *Israel’s Beneficent Dead: Ancestor Cult and Necromancy in Ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1996).

their Christian counterparts are admired as icons? For Paul, what are the features of an idol that mark it as idolatrous? While it is clear that Paul urges believers to flee from idolatry or “the worship of the idol” (εἰδωλολατρία) (10:14), it is not clear what makes an “idol” an “idol.”⁸

Since Paul addresses the idol food conflict by first referring to the notions of *gnosis* and love, we need to understand how *gnosis* and love configure our notion of idolatry. With the word “idol” (εἶδωλον) coming from “to see” (εἶδ-),⁹ which is related to the word οἶδα (“to know”),¹⁰ it appears that the notion of idol concerns *how we perceive* and *know* the world. And, if our making sense of the world is inevitably bodily-oriented, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Pierre Bourdieu have shown (see chapter 2), our process of meaning production cannot overlook our flesh-and-blood body. Indeed, if the difference between an idol and an icon hinges on *how we see* – which Jean-Luc Marion argues that an idol is an invisible mirror that reflects our gaze and in return captures it, whereas an icon challenges our gaze as it makes us shift our viewpoint until what we see can appear to us¹¹ – the problem of objectifying the other/Other in our gaze comes to the fore. An inter(con)textual reading of 8:1–11:1 and the ritual of Chinese ancestor veneration can here help us deconstruct our gaze. This juxtaposition will reveal how each context envisions the notion of idol differently,¹² as both contexts speak of loving and honoring the other/Other.

⁸ Newton writes, “The term *eidolon* is used negatively and polemically by New Testament writers to oppose ‘paganism,’ but although all of these texts condemn believers’ association or involvement with *eidola*, nevertheless they do not pinpoint the specific form, nature and significance of the actual *eidolon* intended by the writer, nor do they attempt to define the meaning of actual *worship* of *eidola*, and neither, finally, do they *explain* the relationship, if any, between the *eidola* and the concepts of divinity which they represent or involve.” See Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet: The Dilemma of Sacrificial Food at Corinth*. JSNT Supplement Series 169 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 134.

⁹ Friedrich Büchsel, “εἶδωλον,” *TDNT* 2: 375. Also, see Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 128-34.

¹⁰ For example, Seesemann finds that “οἶδα is an Indo-Eur. Perf. of the root εἶδ-, ἰδ- (→ εἶδος, εἰδέναι, ἰδεῖν), though always used in the pres.: ‘to have realized, perceived’ = ‘to know.’” See Heinrich Seesemann, *TDNT* 5: 116.

¹¹ See Jean-Luc Marion, *God without Being*. Translated by Thomas A. Carlon (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 1-52; idem., “What We See and What Appears,” in *Idol Anxiety*. Edited by Josh Ellenbogen and Aaron Tugendhaft (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 152-68.

¹² Such a juxtaposition considers the ubiquity of religious artifacts and rituals in both Roman Corinth and Chinese Malaysian community. See Donald Engles, *Roman Corinth: An Alternative Model for the Classical City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 92-120; Nancy Bookidis, “Religion in Corinth: 146 B.C.E. to 100 C.E.,” in

From our analysis of the semiotic squares in the complete discourse unit of 8:1–11:1 that focuses on Paul’s notion of love in handling the idol food conflict, we argue that, for Paul, just as one’s *gnosis* needs to be God-and-Christ-oriented, as love should also be, an idol or icon becomes idolatrous when it is not God-and-Christ-oriented. Paul is not against *gnosis* per se. He writes, “If anyone thinks that s/he has known something (ἐγνώκειναι τι), s/he has yet to know as s/he should know (οὐπω ἔγνω καθὼς δεῖ γινῶναι)” (8:2). Notice the tense of “knowing” changes from the perfect ἐγνώκειναι to the aorist ἔγνω and γινῶναι.¹³ Also, in saying that “s/he has yet to know as s/he should know,” Paul points out that one’s knowing is always dynamic and on-going, and hence, partial. In fact, if knowing is a gift (1:5; 12:8), then it must not be objectified.¹⁴ Note that Paul does not clarify “we all *have gnosis*” (8:1) with “not everyone *has this gnosis*.” Rather, he writes that “not *in* everyone is this *gnosis*” (οὐκ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡ γινῶσις) (8:7). The *gnosis* in 8:1 is changed from being an “object” to be possessed (and hence, that can be manipulated; cf. 8:10-11) to a “subject” in 8:7 that does its work. One may find the nuance trivial, but this phrase “in everyone” can signify that “this *gnosis*” has yet to take root in the believer’s semantic *habitus*

Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approaches. Edited by Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 141-64.

¹³ As Anthony Thiselton points out, “The use of the *perfect* infinitive (ἐγνώκειναι) signifies that the Corinthians, or some of them, perceive themselves to have achieved a present state of “having come to know,” i.e., having **achieved knowledge**. By contrast *the ingressive use of the aorist* (ἔγνω) represents Paul’s correction: *he or she has not yet come to know*. The aorist infinitive γινῶναι, which follows καθὼς δεῖ (*as it is necessary, or as they ought*), expands the contrast: *just as it is necessary to come to know the difference* between the Christian process of **coming to know** and quasi-gnostic, triumphalist claim **to possess** (v. 1), *the completed process of having come to know, i.e., knowledge*, probably as a ‘spiritual gift’ of revelation which is definitive.” See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 200), 624.

¹⁴ Conzelmann writes, “It is a striking thing that, although γινῶσις, ‘knowledge,’ is a χάρισμα, ‘gift,’ both for Paul and for the Corinthians, 8:1-6 is concerned with objective knowledge which, while it does have consequences for the knower, nevertheless does not for that reason alone bring about a change.” See Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Translated by James W. Leitch. Edited by George W. MacRae (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1975), 140. For Newton, “In ch. 8 Paul agrees that ‘idols’ – by which he means ‘other gods’ – do not exist, but in 10.14-22 he affirms that demons nevertheless are very real. It is thus insufficient for the Corinthians merely to have ‘knowledge’ about the one God; they must rather be known by, and be in relationship with, that God.” See Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 23.

(note the phrase “by habit, τῆ συνηθείᾳ” in 8:7). Whether “this *gnosis*” refers to 8:4-5 or 8:6,¹⁵ for Paul, it must be God-centered and Christ-oriented, which he reiterates at the end of the complete discourse unit of 8:1–11:1,¹⁶ which also echoes the end of chapter 8 and chapter 9.¹⁷

As we have already noted about the signifying system of food in the previous chapter, the issue of eating is very personal, in particular if we are what we eat (and do not eat). Paul thus shows that our knowing is not only a matter of a cognitive knowing. He writes, “But not in everyone is this *gnosis*; as some by habit (τῆ συνηθείᾳ) until now to the idol eat *as if* an “idol food” (ὡς εἰδωλόθυτον)...” (8:7). For Paul, if our knowing is informed by our semantic *habitus* (see our discussion of *habitus* in section 3.1 in chapter 2), then our knowing has to be God-and-Christ-oriented. This bodily aspect of knowing, especially in dietary and eating, that marks a person so intimately, should not be overlooked. Thus from my Chinese context in Malaysia, Paul’s framing of the “idol food” issue in terms of a non-objectifying knowing is practical to address the conflict.

III. A History of Interpretations of 1 Cor. 8:1–11:1

In a recent article where Wendell Willis identifies seven areas of consensus in the critical study of 8:1–11:1,¹⁸ we find that most scholars do not articulate their concepts of idol and

¹⁵ Whether 8:4b is a Corinthian slogan (hence, the warranting level) – it is hard to decide whether οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἴς, the slogan is οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ or just οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ – really affect our analysis when we treat it as a part of the dialogic level. Likewise, even if the confession in 8:6 is certainly in the warranting level, we can also treat it as a part of Paul’s argument, and hence, in the dialogic level.

¹⁶ Paul stresses that “whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God, become people who give no offense to the Jews and the Greeks and the church of God” (10:31-32). Indeed, Paul continues, “Just as I am pleasing everyone in everything not seeking my own benefit but of others so that they may be saved” (10:33). How? “Become imitators of me, *just as I am of Christ*” (11:1).

¹⁷ Paul writes, “Therefore if food scandalizes my *adelphos* I do not eat meat forever so that I do not scandalize my *adelphos*” (8:13). Likewise, “I therefore in this way run as not uncertainly, I box in this way as not a person beating the air but I treat my body harshly and I bring it to subjection, lest somehow after preaching to others I myself may become disqualified” (9:26-27).

idolatry and do not examine the effect or power of idol in *habitus*. In his list of consensus – (1) “The Unity of 1 Corinthians 8–10;”¹⁹ (2) “The Function of 1 Corinthians 9;”²⁰ (3) “Quotations from Corinthians;”²¹ (4) “The Reality and Possible Identity of Suggested ‘Parties’ in Corinth Related to the Topic of Eating Sacrificial Food;”²² (5) “The Possible Occasions of Eating Under Discussion;”²³ (6) “The Nature of Pagan Religious Meals in the Greco-Roman World;”²⁴ and (7)

¹⁸ See Wendell Willis, “1 Corinthians 8-10: A Retrospective after Twenty-Five Years,” *Restoration Quarterly* 49 (2007): 103-12.

¹⁹ For scholars who posit the integrity of 1 Cor. 8:1–11:1 through historical and socio-rhetorical analyses, see John C. Brunt, “Love, Freedom, and Moral Responsibility: The Contribution of 1 Cor. 8-10 to An Understanding of Paul’s Ethical Thinking” in *Society of Biblical Literature 1981 Seminar Papers*. Edited by Kent H. Richards (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1981), 20; Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1992); 126-49; Ben Witherington, III., *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 186-91; Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth: Jewish Background and Pauline Legacy*. JSNT 176 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 82-85; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 607-12; David J. Rudolph, *A Jew to the Jews: Jewish Contours of Pauline Flexibility in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 90; etc. For scholars who contend that 10:1-22 does not fit the style, theme, and the setting of idol food mentioned found in 8:1–13 and 10:23–11:1, see Walter Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth: An Investigation of the Letters to the Corinthians* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 92; Lamar Cope, “First Corinthians 8-10: Continuity or Contradiction?” *ATR Supplementary Series* 11 (1990): 114-123; Khiok-Khng Yeo, *Rhetorical Interaction in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10: A Formal Analysis with Preliminary Suggestions for a Chinese, Cross-Cultural Hermeneutic* (Leiden: Brill, 1995): 75-83.

²⁰ Most scholars treat it as an *exemplum*, see Wendell Willis, *Idol Meat in Corinth: The Pauline Argument in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10* (Chico: Scholar’s Press, 1985), 108; Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 130; David Horrell, “Theological Principle or Christological Praxis? Pauline Ethics in 1 Corinthians 8.1-11.1,” *JSNT* 67 (1997): 83-114 (92); Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 610-12; John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Reconsideration of 1 Corinthians 8:1 – 11:1* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 2003), 223-27; etc. For those who argue that that it is an *apologia* of apostolic authority, see Gordon D. Fee, “Εἰδωλόθυστα Once Again: An Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 8-10,” *Biblica* 61 (1980): 172-97 (191-92); Khiok-Khng Yeo, *Rhetorical Interaction in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10*, 76; etc. Cf. Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority: A Study of 1 Corinthians 8.1-11.1 in the Light of the Jewish Diaspora* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 172-200; Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth*, 137-39; David J. Rudolph, *A Jew to the Jews*, 107.

²¹ Although differ in details, most scholars see 8:1 and 8:4 as Corinthian slogans. For details on the slogan in 8:1 and 8:4, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 620-21, 629-30.

²² Most scholars assign different social identity to the “weak” group and the postulated “strong” group. For an overview, see Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority*, 1-28; John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth*, 4-48. Those who find the divisions hypothetical or rhetorical, see Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 147; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 176; John C. Hurd, *The Origin of 1 Corinthians* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1983), 124-25, 147-48; Peter D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food: 1 Corinthians 8-10 in Its Context* (Ontario, Canada: Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion/Corporation Canadienne des Sciences Religieuses by Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1993), 62-68; and Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth*, 87-89.

²³ For a recent discussion on this issue using archaeological evidence, see Peter D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 1-26; Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 79-114; John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth*, 49-178, 252-63. For the change of socio-historical circumstance in Roman Corinth, see Bruce W. Winter, “Kosher Food and Idol Meat (1 Corinthians 10:25-28),” in *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 287-301. For a summary of different views on how believers interact with each

“The Norms and Warrants Expressed by Paul in Response to the Situation in Corinth”²⁵ – only (6) touches the notion of idol in terms of its socio-religious aspect in the “pagan religious meals.” However, if the term *eidōlothuton* (“idol food”) (8:1, 4, 7, 10, and 10:19) “is a Jewish Christian term, possibly coined by Paul himself,”²⁶ then we have to ask: *for Paul* what makes the “idol food” idolatrous?²⁷ While some may argue that the consumption of the idol food is a matter of

other, see Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 387-90. For the role of Apostolic Decree in Acts 15 in Paul’s prohibition, see Charles K. Barrett, “Thing Sacrificed to Idols.” *New Testament Studies* 11 (1965): 138-53 (150); John C. Hurd, *The Origin of 1 Corinthians*, 253-70; Ben Witherington, III., *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 190-91.

²⁴ On the little accessibility of meat by non-elites, see Gerd Theissen, “The Strong and the Weak in Corinth: A Sociological Analysis of a Theological Quarrel,” in *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 121-43. Contra Theissen, see Justin J. Meggitt, “Meat Consumption and Social Conflict in Corinth,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1994): 137-41. For the political implication of such food in Roman imperial cult, see Bruce W. Winter, “The Imperial Cult, the Games, and Dining in a Temple (1 Corinthians 8-10:21,” in *After Paul Left Corinth*, 269-86.

²⁵ When formulating an ethical or theological teaching on the issue of idol food, many biblical scholars stress the difference between the law and the gospel and argue that Paul was not forming a legalistic exhortation. See Gordon D. Fee, “Εἰδωλόθυτα Once Again,” 195-97; John C. Brunt, “Love, Freedom, and Moral Responsibility,” 27-28; Bruce N. Fisk “Eating Meat Offered to Idols: Corinthian Behavior and Pauline Response in 1 Corinthians 8-10 (A Response to Gordon Fee),” *Trinity Journal* 10 (1989): 49-70 (70); David Horrell, “Theological Principle or Christological Praxis?” 105-09; Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority*, 205-08; etc.

²⁶ Ben Witherington, III., *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 189. Conzelmann finds that the word “is a Jewish term, constructed with a polemical edge against the Greek ἱερόθυτον (10:28).” See Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 139. Similarly, Newton writes, “*Eidolothuton* does not occur at all in pre-Pauline Greek literature, except in the Septuagint at 4 Maccabees, which may or may not be pre-Pauline, depending on date. Its usage consistently carries the flavour of anti-pagan polemic and is emotive, negative, critical and decidedly non-neutral.” See Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 183. Witherington, moreover, makes a distinction between *eidōlothuton* and *hierothuton*; the former is consumed in a pagan temple and the latter is not. See Ben Witherington, III, “Not So Idle Thoughts about *Eidolothuton*,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 44.2 (1993): 237-54 (240). Cheung, however, disagrees: “The idea that ἱερόθυτον, in contradistinction to εἰδωλόθυτον, denotes specifically sacrificed food removed from the sacrificial context, cannot be found in any early Christian writing which discusses 1 Corinthians 8-10.” See Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth*, 320. And contra Thiselton, Gooch argues that the term refers to idol food instead of just idol meat. See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 617-20. Gooch writes, “Idol-food in 1 Corinthians may include many foods: meat or grain, oil and honey.” See Peter D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 55. Also, Fotopoulos writes, “However, meat was not the only kind of food offered in sacrifice to the gods in Greco-Roman religions. Items such as fruits, grains, cakes, fish, milk, oil, and wine were all offered to the gods in sacrificial rites.” See John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth*, 14.

²⁷ Phua writes, “But the issue of idolatry is a subjective one – different people will define idolatry differently and thus practise according to what they think is or is not idolatry. For example, does eating idol-meat constitute idolatry? Or does idolatry take place only when such eating involves actual idols? Thus, is a monotheist, who only views eating idol-meat but not visits to pagan temples as idolatry, committing idolatry when he or she conducts business transactions at a pagan temple? Similarly, a person may not think that eating idol-meat constitutes idolatry, only if one worships an idol. But to others who do not think so, that person is idolatrous. Even within the Jewish tradition, idolatry does not seem to be a clearly defined category. This shows that there is no single definition of idolatry.” See Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority*, 29.

indifference for Paul, if it does not cause other believers to stumble,²⁸ we cannot ignore that “the extant voices of other Christians in the first three centuries are virtually unanimous in their condemnation of the eating of idol-food”²⁹ (cf. Acts 15:20, 29, and 21:25; Revelation 2:14 and 20). But, does it mean that Paul must have also prohibited the eating of the “idol food”? Or, as John Brunt argues, Paul’s exhortation was “rejected, ignored, or misunderstood” by the early Christian writers?³⁰

(i) The Notion of “Idolatry”

To argue that the idol food is idolatrous because it is tied to “pagan gods” or “demons” is tautological. It is a name calling that aims to slander and demonize the others. It does not help us understand what constitute an “idol” as such so that any association with it can risk becoming idolatry. From the Mesopotamian idol anxiety, exemplified in the “mouth-washing” ritual,³¹ to the polyvalence of the notion of the “idol” (or “image,” “representation”) in Greco-Roman literature,³² we find that people actually *deliberately* oppose idol worship. For them, if an idol is

²⁸ For example, see Charles K. Barrett, “Thing Sacrificed to Idols,” *New Testament Studies* 11 (1965): 138-53; Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Freedom or the Ghetto (1 Cor 8:1-13; 10:23-11:1),” *Revue Biblique* 85 (1978): 543-74; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 381-84; Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 137; Gerd Theissen, “The Strong and the Weak in Corinth,” 122; etc.

²⁹ See Peter D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 121. For a critique of the traditional interpretation that claims that Paul permits the consumption of the idol food, see Alex T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth*, 16-23. In noting “that while Jews in general abhorred idolatry, there were Jews in the Diaspora who were not altogether free from idolatrous behaviour and/or intention,” Phua finds that Cheung’s “thesis is based on a mistaken view that Jews *always* abhorred idols and abstained from idolatrous practices.” See Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority*, 201.

³⁰ John C. Brunt, “Rejected, Ignored, or Misunderstood? The Fate of Paul’s Approach to the Problem of Food Offered to Idols in Early Christianity,” *New Testament Studies* 31 (1985): 113-24.

³¹ For example, people were so concerned with idol that they made that they would even ritually and symbolically have their hands cut off and the tools used to craft the statue thrown into the river to signify that the “enlivened statue” was not human made. See Christopher Walker, and Michael B. Dick, “The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamia *mīs pī* Ritual,” in *Born in Heaven, Made on Earth: The Making of the Cult Image in the Ancient Near East*. Edited by Michael B. Dick (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 55-121; *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*. Edited by Neal H. Walls (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005); and *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. Edited by Karel Van der Toorn (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1997).

³² Newton argues that “the term *eidolon* was used in Greek literature fundamentally and consistently in a positive, neutral or merely factual manner ... The term also overwhelmingly reflects the human, earthly dimension rather than the divine world. Only very rarely was *eidolon* used in pre-Christian Greek literature to indicate a representation of the divine. Above all, the term conveyed unreality. It indicated something which was an image or representation of a

not idolatrous but a representation of the divine, we should not assume that an idol is necessarily idolatrous. There must be something that makes one feel and think that an idol is idolatrous. We need to examine Paul's notion of idolatry, and what makes idol food idolatrous. Was it related to the religious features of the eating space?³³ The food itself? Or the cultic practices associated with it?³⁴ It is also problematic to posit that Paul permits the eating of idol food because an idol is non-existent *and* as long as such behavior does not cause other believers to stumble. Not only does it ignore the power of the idol in forming one's semantic *habitus*, it also assumes a metaphysical and dualistic view of existence.³⁵ It may even suggest that Paul disregards his Jewishness, which is unlikely, not to mention that Paul's notion of law was not monolithic. Indeed, if Paul has become *all* things to *all* people (10:22) and pleases *all* people in *all* ways (10:33), then how does he honor everyone's singularity while pleasing "all people in all ways" in becoming "all things to all people"?

The two scholars who pay most attention to Paul's notion of idolatry are Derek Newton and Richard Phua.³⁶ In light of his nine-year experiences of working among the Torajanese people in Indonesia,³⁷ Newton finds that the newly-converted Torajanese Christians have a wide range of perspectives on the issues of idol food and idolatry. This variety of perspectives comes from the interactions of different worldviews of the Torajanese and Christian missionaries. From his socio-historical and archaeological studies, Newton claims that the Corinthian believers, like

real thing but not the real thing itself. It was employed in a wide variety of contexts, though very rarely of divine images and even then, the Greek mind would not automatically link the term *eidolon* with the actual receipt of cultus." See Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 131.

³³ See John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth*, 49-178; cf. Peter D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 15-26; contra Wendell Willis, *Idol Meat in Corinth*, 259-61.

³⁴ For example, Gooch thinks that "Paul believed idol-food to carry the contagion of demons in the same way that the meal of the Lord infects with the Lord's blessing." See Peter D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food*, 56. Also, see John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth*, 176-77, 258-59; David J. Rudolph, *A Jew to the Jews*, 93ff.

³⁵ See David W. Odell-Scott, *A Post-Patriarchal Christology*. American Academy of Religion Series 78 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 147.

³⁶ For example, in his survey of scholarship on the issue of idolatry in 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1, Phua notes that only Newton addresses the definition of idolatry extensively. See Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority*, 29.

³⁷ See Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 40-78.

the Torajanese believers, might also hold various beliefs and practices that are marked by “a wide range of ambiguities, boundary definition difficulties and conceptual differences.”³⁸ As a result of such dynamic concepts of idols and idolatry, Newton argues that Paul (the outsider) perhaps misunderstands and miscommunicates with the Corinthian believers. Since there are so many opinions without a clear definition of idolatry, Paul thus has to prioritize the communal coherence over individual viewpoints.³⁹

While I appreciate Newton’s emphasis on the diverse notions of idol and idolatry, I find it hard to posit that Paul can miscommunicate with the Corinthian believers so badly, especially given his cross-cultural experiences of evangelism.⁴⁰ Moreover, if our knowing is embodied, I doubt that we can so neatly distinguish Paul’s notion of an idol, which is a “false god” of physical representation with divine power, from the Corinthian conception of an idol as an unreality.⁴¹ It is Newton, after all, who consistently reminds us of the “wide range of ambiguities, boundary definition difficulties and conceptual differences” in our usage of such key terms as the

³⁸ He continues, “The result was a wide spectrum of viewpoints such that differences of opinion existed not only, as some scholars argue, between factions within the church, nor only, as others contend, between the Corinthians and Paul, but in fact in all directions. The root problem was not that one ‘party’ was right or wrong, but that a great range of possible and viable individual interpretations existed on the issue of Christian involvement in cultic meals. The elements of cultic festivals, namely images, sacrifices and communal meals, were each capable of multiple interpretation.” Ibid., 21.

³⁹ Ibid., 387.

⁴⁰ See John Fotopoulos, *Food Offered to Idols in Roman Corinth*, 31. However, from the perspective of hermeneutics, I disagree with the critique of Fotopoulos that “Newton’s work on 1 Corinthians 8:1-11:1 is also unduly influenced by his contemporary case study from the Torajanese area of modern Indonesia.” Ibid., 32. On the contrary, I find Newton’s intertextual references insightful.

⁴¹ “Paul is trying to portray *eidolon* in the sense of a ‘false god’ but did his use of *eidolon* actually communicate his intent? ... The general ‘pagan’ use of *eidolon* in connection with humanity rather than divinity, together with the pagan preference for *agalma* to translate divine image raises the possibility that Paul’s use of *eidolon* in his previous dealings with the Corinthians, as well as in 1 Corinthians 8, may have caused confusion to the believers at Corinth. Paul clearly intended *eidolon* to have divine reference in 1 Corinthians 8. If, for the Corinthians, *eidolon* did not have divine significance, then they would see no harm in eating food offered to Paul’s *eidola*, because *eidola* for them had neither real existence nor divine significance ... a Corinthian reading of v. 4 (οὐδὲν εἰδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ) may in Corinthian terms, sound something like ‘a non-existent thing is nothing in the world’ or ‘no non-existent thing exists in the world.’ A ‘non-existent thing’ is an ‘image’ in the sense in which ‘image’ is contrasted with ‘reality,’ and as such constitutes a familiar Greek usage.” See Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 281.

“idol,” “god,” “conscience,” and “demons.”⁴² This reminder from Newton is also applicable to our notion of Chinese ancestor veneration because terms like ritual, ancestor veneration, and sacrificial food can be understood in various ways as well (see below).

With this attention to the discursiveness and contextuality of the semantic range of the words used in understanding the idol and idolatry, we turn to Phua’s thesis. Using the work of Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit, Phua argues that Paul views idolatry as

an act that is contrary to the biblical ancestral tradition, a rebellious act that involves partnership with δαιμόνια [demons⁴³] and breaks partnership with the Lord, an unloving act that can possibly cause a ‘weaker’ fellow believer to fall, an act that reflects spiritual indiscipline that invites God’s wrath and the possible loss of eschatological salvation.⁴⁴

This definition resembles the notion of idolatry that Halbertal and Margalit find in the Jewish sources, in which an idolatry is not just a worship of other gods (or alien cults), it is also a misrepresentation of God (*Yahweh*).⁴⁵ At the center of this definition are the dynamic, changing conceptions of God (including the relation between such a God and other spiritual beings) and the relationship between the people of God and God. Equally significant to this definition is how these conceptions and relationships are expressed and represented, whether linguistically, pictorially, or materially (or artistically).

In terms of worship, Halbertal and Margalit underscore the visual and cognitive errors in the *method* and *intention* of worship.⁴⁶ Idolatry can take place in various ways when people fail

⁴² For example, see Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 278-90, 292 n. 76, 295-96, 349-57. Cf. Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 640-44.

⁴³ “The word demons could refer to good spirits in secular Greek, but almost never in the New Testament (Acts 17:18 is an exception.” See Paul Ellingworth, and Howard A. Hatton, *A Handbook on Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians* (Germany; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 230. Cf. Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 349-57.

⁴⁴ See Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority*, 205.

⁴⁵ See Moshe Halbertal, and Avishai Margalit, *Idolatry*. Translated by Naomi Goldblum (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 3. Cf. Stuart Weeks, “Man-made Gods? Idolatry in the Old Testament,” in *Idolatry: False Worship in the Bible, Early Judaism and Christianity*. Edited by Stephen C. Barton (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 10-

to worship God with the correct method *and* intention. So one may still commit idolatry even if s/he worships the true God with a wrong method. Similarly, even if one may worship God in a correct manner, if s/he does not have a proper understanding of God, s/he can still commit idolatry. In terms of representation – whether similarity-based, causal-metonymic, or convention-based⁴⁷ – the use of metaphor is crucial to keep one’s notion of God and one’s relationship with God dynamic and pertinent because a metaphor, unlike a metonym, addresses two different semantic universes of the two terms (see section 3 in chapter 2). Two prominent metaphors used to describe this definition are the marital metaphor (God as the husband) and the political metaphor (God as the sovereign) that depict idolatry as unfaithfulness, betrayal, and rebellion against the God of Israel and the Israelite ancestral tradition.

One thing that Halbertal and Margalit emphasize in their notion of idolatry is the discursiveness, dialectics, and fluidity of the definition. In reminding readers that “it is a mistake to articulate an account of what is the essential content of idolatry,”⁴⁸ Halbertal and Margalit in the beginning of their book write:

Idolatry, like many other religious and cultural concepts, belongs to the area called “sensibility.” This term describes a type of connection between intellectual conceptions on the one hand and perceptual and emotional experiences on the other. “Sensibility” refers to the esthetics of ideas and concepts, where “esthetics” is understood in its original meaning of “feeling.”⁴⁹

21; Nathan MacDonald, “Recasting the Golden Calf: The Imaginative Potential of the Old Testament’s Portrayal of Idolatry,” in *Idolatry: False Worship in the Bible, Early Judaism and Christianity*, 22-39.

⁴⁷ See Moshe Halbertal, and Avishai Margalit, *Idolatry*, 39-66. Phua summarizes these representations as: “(1) similarity-based representation, which refers to the representation of one thing by another because it is similar to it; (2) causal-metonymic representation, which refers not to a relation of similarity but a relationship of possession; for example a handkerchief of someone represents him/her not because it resembles him/her but because it belongs to him/her; and (3) convention-based representation, which refers to the convention that permits something to be so called. For example, a cup is called a cup without (1) and (2) but because there is a convention that allows the word ‘cup’ to represent the physical object.” See Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority*, 30-31.

⁴⁸ They continue, “Our approach is therefore not to try to formulate one definition of idolatry that will capture its essence, but to show how diverse and problematic the concept itself is. The boundary drawn by the prohibition against idolatry marks different territories, which depend simultaneously different ideas of God and on different ideas of idolatry.” See Moshe Halbertal, and Avishai Margalit, *Idolatry*, 241.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

Note that for Halbertal and Margalit, idolatry “belongs to the area called ‘sensitivity’” (i.e., the “semantics;” proprioceptivity) that tries to connect “between intellectual conceptions ... and perceptual and emotional experiences.” In this area of connection, an *aporia* necessarily takes place, unless one can demonstrate that one’s “intellectual conceptions” can fully articulate to one’s “perceptual and emotional experiences.” In chapter 1, we have already seen this *aporia* in our notion of honor in terms of “honor felt,” “honor claimed,” and “honor paid,” where the latter two kinds of honor cannot fully represent the felt aspect of honor. Thus, when Halbertal and Margalit write that idolatry “belongs to the area called ‘sensitivity,’” where sensitivity “refers to the esthetics [i.e., the “semantics;” proprioceptivity] of ideas and concepts,” they rightly clarify that “‘esthetics’ is understood in its original meaning of ‘feeling’ [i.e., the “semantics;” proprioceptivity].” As this clarification highlights the limitation of “ideas and concepts” to define idolatry, Halbertal and Margalit write, “Those cultural concepts that are in the area of sensitivity are the most difficult to analyze because of the complex connection between concepts and feelings, representations and impressions”⁵⁰ (see our discussion of typology in section 4 in chapter 2). Moreover, in writing that the rejection of idolatry is similar to the rejection of “an idea or feeling that arouses disgust,”⁵¹ Halbertal and Margalit seem to be describing a notion of abject that we see in the works of Julia Kristeva (see section 2.2 in chapter 2), in particular as they also speak of a dialectical relationship between correct belief and practice and idolatry, in which the former comes to define itself by demonizing and rejecting the latter.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 5

⁵¹ They write, “Religious sensitivity says that the rejection of idolatry is the rejection of a type of contact between faith and other forms of worship, similar to the esthetic rejection of a work embodying an idea or feeling that arouses disgust. The concepts of religious modesty – what sort of clothing it is permitted to wear and what form of hairstyle is permissible – are drawn to a considerable extent not from the realm of religious morality but from the realm of religious sensitivity. Shared values, derived from the association of fixed visual perceptions, create a certain shared sensitivity in people.” Ibid., 4-5.

This fluidity in the notion of idolatry is not always present in Phua’s work, however. For example, while Phua helpfully points out that *not* all Jews categorically oppose idolatry,⁵² he assumes a monolithic view of Paul’s notion of law when he posits that “the ‘Law’ is no longer to be the basis for ethical behavior, but rather the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”⁵³ Moreover, when he juxtaposes Christ’s ‘law’ against the Torah,⁵⁴ he contradicts his own definition of idolatry. If the Torah is so integral to “biblical ancestral tradition,” Paul would be guilty of idolatry. But, are the Torah and Christ’s ‘law’ necessarily incompatible? A hermeneutic of typology with a dynamic character of “sensibility” would say “no.”

(ii) The Notion of “Typology”

Here, we refer to typology for three reasons. First, Paul himself uses the word *typos* (“type”) in our complete discourse unit of 8:1–11:1 in 10:6 and 10:11 when he juxtaposes the narrative of Israelite wilderness with that of the Corinthian believers. While most translators render *typoi* as examples and *tytikōs* as a “warning” or an “instruction” (e.g., *NKJV*, *NAB*, *NAS*, *NIV*, *NRSV*), we must be careful not to objectify the typological terms that are being juxtaposed in a typology.⁵⁵ For Richard Hays, as this intertextual allusion is significant for Paul to see how God *is working* among the people of God,⁵⁶ he finds that typology “is a central feature of his [i.e., Paul’s] interpretive strategy.”⁵⁷

Secondly, as Halbertal and Margalit point out that the notion of idolatry is in the “area of sensibility” that describes a “complex connection between concepts and feelings, representations

⁵² See Richard Liong-Seng Phua, *Idolatry and Authority*, 91–125.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 205.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 206.

⁵⁵ For details, see our discussion on typology in section 3.4 in chapter 2.

⁵⁶ Hays writes, “For the rabbis, God’s word is a deposit stored up in time past and entrusted to the community’s ongoing interpretation; for Paul, God’s word is alive and active in the present time, embodied in the community’s Spirit-empowered life and proclamation.” See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 171.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 161.

and impressions,” we find this “complex connection” is characterized by a sense of ambiguity and ambivalence in the word *typos*, as Richard Davidson argues when he reviews Leonhard Goppelt’s definition of *typos*.⁵⁸ For Davidson, this ambiguity and ambivalence comes from the fact that the *typos* (“impression”) is itself the product of an impression. We want to push further and contend that we cannot speak of typology in terms of a linear folding and unfolding, as if an *antitype* (i.e., the unfolding of a *type*) is superior to the *type* because it fulfills the *type*, which we find also embedded in the work of Hays.⁵⁹

Rather, we need to note that a typology is itself a transformative relation that interconnects a *type* and an *antitype* together, as Giorgio Agamben emphasizes.⁶⁰ This is why in his *reading with* the Orthodox interpretations of Paul’s letter to the Romans, Daniel Patte speaks of typology as a “circular typology” where the *type* and *antitype* deconstruct one another in a metaphorical relation that they discursively extend, retract, and create meaning in their typological relation.⁶¹ In referring to John Hollander’s *The Figure of Echo*, Hays makes a similar point when he writes, “The twofold task of a criticism attuned to such echoes [i.e., intertextual allusions], then, is (a) to call attention to them so that others might be enabled to hear; and (b) to

⁵⁸ See Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures*. Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), 129; Leonhard Goppelt, “τύπος, ἀντίτυπος, τυπικός, ὑποτύπωσης,” in *TDNT* 8:246.

⁵⁹ See our evaluation of Hays’ anti-supersessionist hermeneutics in note 137 in chapter 2.

⁶⁰ “What matters to us here is not the fact that each event of the past – once it becomes a figure – announces a future event and is fulfilled in it, but is the transformation of time implied by this typological relation. The problem here does not simply concern the biunivocal correspondence that binds *typos* and *antitypos* together in an exclusively hermeneutic relationship ... rather, it concerns a tension that claps together and transforms past and future, *typos* and *antitypos*, in an inseparable constellation. The messianic is not just one of two terms in this typological relation, *it is the relation itself*.” See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains: A Commentary of the Letter to the Romans*. Translated by Patricia Dailey. Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 74.

⁶¹ Daniel Patte, “A Western Biblical Scholar *Reading* Romans with Greek Fathers and Eastern Orthodox Biblical Scholars,” in *Greek Patristic and Eastern Orthodox Interpretations of Romans*. Romans Through History and Cultures Series 9. Edited by Daniel Patte and Vasile Mihoc (London and New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 218.

give an account of the distortions and new figuration that they generate.”⁶² Note that an intertextual echo, which suggests a *distance* as it travels and reverberates through a *medium*, not only does not dismiss any intertextual references in the signifying process, but also highlights the *relation* that links them together. It foregrounds and brackets out meaning-producing dimensions that usually do not catch our attention.⁶³ It is thus noteworthy that it is the “rhetorical and semantic effects”⁶⁴ that the echo (or intertextuality or typology) aims to engender. Note the word “effects.” Thirdly, we have noted in the Methodological Appendix that a hermeneutics of

⁶² See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 19. This summary of Hays is apparent in the “Preface” of John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California, 1981), ix. Let us note two things. First, Hays does not distinguish an echo from an allusion, but he notes that an “allusion is used of obvious intertextual references, [whereas an] echo of subtler ones.” See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 29. Secondly, while Hays does not elaborate what he means by “new figuration,” it is important to note that “to give an account” should not end up flattening the “new figuration.” In his textual analysis, Hays *seems to* mainly focus on the cross-referencing of the “figure” and its context. He does not examine how the theme embodied by the “figure” in one context is transformed or re-thematized (or re-conceptualized) in another context that uses the same “figure.” Consider the last sentence in the following quote from Hays: “We must give due weight to the apocalyptic perspective of Paul’s hermeneutical dictum. He does believe himself to be living in the final age toward which the eternal purpose of God has been aiming from the beginning of time ... His perspective from within this final chapter allows him to *read the story whole from the standpoint of its ending*, thus perceiving correspondences and *narrative unities* that would have been hidden from characters in the earlier chapters of the story, as well as from even the most perceptive readers before the climactic peripeteia of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Messiah. This astonishing event, completely unpredictable on the basis of the story’s plot development, is nonetheless now seen as the supremely fitting narrative culmination, providing unforeseen closure to dangling narrative themes and demanding a reconfiguration of the *dianoia*, the reader’s grasp of ‘what the story is all about.’” *Ibid.*, 100. Note that Hays *does write* that the theme is reconfigured in the reader’s grasp, in particular when he goes on to describe the metaphorical features in a typology. But when we speak of a “figure,” we also need to address how the “figure” embodies the “theme,” lest we objectify and fix the “figure” as if it signifies the same conceptualization in different contexts.

⁶³ Hays writes, “Paul’s intertextual *poiesis* poses a formidable challenge for those who follow him. The Pauline letters, read as hermeneutical events, are evocative allusive reflections on a text (Scripture) that is in turn deemed allusive rather than overt in its communication strategies. Inevitably, such a complex intertextual matrix proves hospitable to the proliferation of metalepsis. Echoes linger in the air and lure the reader of Paul’s letters back into the symbolic world of Scripture ... If meaning is the product of such intertextual relations, then it is – to alter the figure – not so much like a relic excavated from an ancient text as it is like a spark struck by the shovel hitting rock. Consequently, for Paul, original intention is not a primary hermeneutical concern. If Paul’s intertextual readings are metaphorical in character, the reader of Paul’s letters is assigned the same active responsibility that falls on readers of all figurative discourse: to articulate semantic potentialities generated by the figures in the text. Such potentialities can far exceed the conscious design of the author.” *Ibid.*, 155-56. Also, see 173-78, in particular on the “dialectical imitation.” For the notion of “metalepsis,” see John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo*, 133-49.

⁶⁴ See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 19. “The volume of intertextual echo varies in accordance with the semantic distance between the source and the reflecting surface. Quotation, allusion, and echo may be seen as points along a spectrum of intertextual reference, moving from the explicit to the subliminal. As we move farther away from overt citation, the source recedes into the discursive distance, the intertextual relations become less determinate, and the demand placed on the readers listening powers grows greater. As we near the vanishing point of the echo, it inevitably becomes difficult to decide whether we are really hearing an echo at all, or whether we are only conjuring things out of the murmurings of our own imaginations.” *Ibid.*, 23.

typology in terms A. J. Greimas's "Narrative Semantics" not only underscores the dynamic relation that links and transforms the intertextual references. It also teases out the religious dimension of the text, which echoes the "area of sensibility" that Halbertal and Margalit foreground in their notion of idolatry.

IV. A Semantic Analysis of Love in 1 Cor. 8:1–11:1

To help us understand the typological relation in Paul's hermeneutics, we will in this section analyze the semiotic squares in the complete discourse unit of 8:1–11:1, as 8:1-3 forms an inverted parallelism with 10:31–11:1. The theme highlighted here is about how to build a God-oriented community in the issues of knowing and loving in one's eating and drinking. Paul writes, "Now concerning the idol food, we know that we all have *gnosis*. *Gnosis* puffs up, but love builds up" (8:1). As a verb, the word "to build up" appears in 1 Corinthians in 8:1, 10; 10:23; 14:4, and 17. As a noun, it appears in 3:9; 14:3, 5, 12, and 26. Now, if believers are the field of God and the building of God (3:9), then how the building of God is built and maintained can manifest the characteristics of God. This is why Paul urges believers to do everything for the glory of God and not to become a stumbling block to the Jews, Greeks, and the church of God (10:31-32). How? By imitating him *as* he imitates Christ (11:1).

To see how this theme is conceptualized in the discourse, we will arrange the pairs of opposed actions in the dialogic level of 8:1–11:1 to show how one action leads to another through the giving and receiving of objects. After we form a series of semiotic squares, we will then analyze the values highlighted in each semiotic square.

(i) Pairs of Opposition of Actions in the Story Progression

The pairs of opposed actions are arranged, from bottom up, in the order of the story progression. There are ten semiotic squares in 8:1–11:1, but we will focus on those that can help us flesh out Paul’s notion of love. In discussing these pairs of opposed actions, we **bold** the verse numbers (e.g., **8:6**) to indicate that we are commenting on a particular pair of opposed actions.

- | | |
|---|--|
| (+) 10:21 – not to drink the Lord’s cup and table and the <i>daimonia</i> ’s cup and table | (-) 10:21 – [implied] drinking the Lord’s cup and table and the <i>daimonia</i> ’s cup and table |
| (+) 8:13; 10:32 – not to scandalize in eating | (-) 8:9-11a – eating scandalizes people |
| (+) 8:8; 6:13 – food will not offer us to God | (-) 8:8 – [implied] food will offer us to God |
| (+) 8:9b, 10a – those with <i>gnosis</i> use the <i>exousia</i> to eat at the idol’s temple | (-) 8:9c, 11a – <i>gnosis</i> and <i>exousia</i> cause stumbling and destruction |
| (+) 9:2b – Paul is an apostle to the Corinthians | (-) 9:2a – Paul may not be an apostle to others |
| (+) 10:28-29 – not to eat because of conscience | (-) 10:25, 27 – conscience judged in eating |
| (+) 6:12; 10:23a-b – not everything is beneficial | (-) 6:12a; 10:23 – everything is permitted |
| (+) 10:24b – should seek the thing of other | (-) 10:24a – people seek their own thing |
| (+) 8:1e – love builds up | (-) 8:1d – <i>gnosis</i> puffs up |
| (+) 8:3 – those loving God are known by God | (-) 8:2 – those thinking they know do not know |
| (+) 8:6 – for “us” there is one God ... and one Lord Jesus Christ | (-) 8:5 – there are many gods and many lords many lords |
| (+) 8:4-6 – we know that the “idol is nothing,” that “there is no God but one,” and that there is one God, the Father ... and one Lord, Jesus Christ... | (-) 8:7 – not everyone has this <i>gnosis</i> |

Now, beginning with **8:6**, whether Paul is or is not citing the Corinthian slogans does not really affect our analysis as we treat them as a part of Paul’s argument in the dialogic level. It may be fundamental that believers know that an “idol is nothing in the cosmos,” that “no one is God but the one God,” and that “there is one God the Father ... and one Lord Jesus Christ...” but what undergirds this knowing and is most significant is that it is framed *with respect to us* or *for our benefit* (ἡμῶν). That is to say, this knowing is relational and personal; it has to form the believers’ semantic *habitus*. The issue is not whether there are many gods and many lords. Even if there are, indeed, many gods and many lords, *for believers* there is only one God and one Lord. Thus, even if one may have the *gnosis* and even the *exousia* (“choice,” “freedom,” or “ability”), her/his *gnosis* and *exousia* should be God-oriented. They should not be misused as if one were

gnosis-oriented, instead of God-and-Christ-oriented. To prevent the *gnosis* from being objectified and manipulated, Paul reminds believers that if they think that they have known something, then they are mistaken (**8:2**). It is those who love God who will be known by God; otherwise how will God give them the gifts and how will they, in return, receive them (2:9-15)?

As we noted, Paul does not say that believers will know God if they love God. He says that those who love God are *known by God* (**8:3**). To think of what one will get if one loves God is to treat God as an object that one can manipulate for one's own benefits. God, however, is not an object under anyone's subjection. When one is in love (i.e., when one falls in love), one is not in control of love. One is not even in control of oneself as one is drawn out of oneself towards the beloved. It is because of this vulnerability that love is characterized by risk and promise. One does not know what will happen in love. One can only be faithful and hopeful existentially that her/his love may bear fruits. Thus even if one is known by God when one loves God, one is not objectified by God. On the contrary, as God has prepared for those who love God (2:9) and as Christ died for people (cf. 8:11), believers are even empowered by the gifts of God to have *exousia* (**8:9**) as they are acknowledged by God (1:26-29). This is why Paul says that love builds up (**8:1**), as Jesus exemplifies in setting up the foundation.

It takes planning, dedication, collaboration, labor, time, and skill sets to build a building. Paul thus urges believers to work with one another in seeking the thing of the other (**10:24**). A building cannot be built without one being aware of how different parts of the building fit together. Without being in touch with other perspectives, one cannot see the limitation of one's horizon of vision. One will not be able to see that not everything is beneficial (**6:12; 10:23**). Paul reminds believers that they need to be mindful of the other person's conscience in their eating and drinking (**10:28-29**). He uses his examples as an apostle to the Corinthian believers (**9:2**),

since they are familiar with how he works with God among them. Some may view the examples as a deliberative rhetoric or a way to defend Paul's authority. But, one can read these verses expressing that Paul is concerned to show that to care for others does not mean that one will be shortchanged. Rather, as the Scripture promises, God will provide.

With this focus on God and Christ, believers with *gnosis* should not use their *exousia* to eat in the idol's temple (**8:10**). They should realize that it is not *gnosis* that gives them right and freedom. Rather, it is God who enriches them in Christ Jesus in *every logos* and *every gnosis* (1:4-5). Being endowed with the gifts of God, believers should not be puffed up and forget their calling and situation (1:26-29). Do they think that, by themselves and with their *gnosis*, they can now defeat the power of the idol (cf. 10:21-22)? No. For Paul, "Food will not offer us to God. We are neither lacking nor abundant if we eat" (**8:8**). This may be a Corinthian slogan, but incorporated into Paul's argument, this saying shows that food should not become a means to mediate one's relationship with God, as if God is implicated in the signification system of food. Rather, all things are from God and we are oriented toward God (8:6; 10:26). As such, believers should not, because of food, cause anyone to stumble (**8:13**). They should not in giving food to themselves and to God, give scandal to themselves and other believers.

This is why Paul tells believers that they are not able (οὐ δύνασθε) to drink the Lord's cup and the *daimonia*'s cup or partake of the Lord's table and the *daimonia*'s table (**10:21**). Their semantic *habitus* has to be fully God-and-Christ-oriented; it cannot be self-centered. In a group-oriented culture where an individual's identity is tied to the reputation of the group with which s/he is associated, one cannot belong to two opposing groups at the same time. To do so is to betray both groups and give a bad name to them. It is to jeopardize the honor of those whom one is close to. But, as Paul expressed earlier in the letter, if believers are called and sanctified in

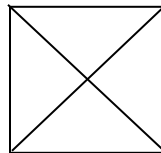
Christ Jesus (1:2), as Jesus, for their benefit, becomes the wisdom from God, justice and sanctification and redemption (1:30), then they should “cleanse out the old yeast” to become a new batch and remain unleavened by relying on God (5:7-8). Indeed, as believers are bought with a price (τιμῆς) (6:20; 7:23) with the honor of Jesus crucified, they should be “washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God” (6:11). They should not mix the unleavened bread with the “yeast of badness and wickedness” (5:8). It is poignantly ironic that while the Lord gives his life to believers, they give themselves the *daimonia*’s cup and table (10:21).

(ii) Semiotic Square 1: Assurance and Commitment

In this first semiotic square, Paul stresses that God’s assurance and acknowledgement of believers is what matters to them. To say that those who love God are known by God suggests that love is not without response and assurance. Such an assurance, however, should not be mistaken for a certainty, as if it was certain that I will be known if I love. To do so is to turn love into a means of calculation and exchange. It is like turning *gnosis* into an object, as if as long as one possesses *gnosis*, one will be empowered to do whatever one desires. Rather, both love and *gnosis* are relational.

8:3 – those who love God are known by God (S₁): Assured (trusting Gods’ provision)

8:5 – there are many gods and many lords (S₂): Not Committed



8:6 – for us, there is one God ... and one Lord Jesus Christ (Non-S₂): Committed

8:7 – not in everyone is this *gnosis* (Non-S₁): Not assured

For Paul, even if “we all” *have gnosis* (πάντες γινώσκοντες ἔχομεν), this *gnosis* (which can refer to 8:4 or 8:6 or both), is not *in everyone* (ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡ γινώσκουσιν) (8:7). For Paul, *having gnosis* (as an object) is not enough. One must also embody and live it. Just as it is in

loving that knowing (by God) takes place, it is in living inside *gnosis* that *gnosis* is appropriated. This is why Paul says that even if one may have an incredible ability and *gnosis*, if one does not *have* love, one is nothing (13:2). Hence Paul speaks of commitment in 8:5-6 (note the emphatic transition ἀλλ' ἡμῖν in the beginning of 8:6). It does not matter whether there are many gods and many lords; believers must commit themselves to God and Christ. The contrast between “one” and “many” shows that believers cannot pick and choose whatever they like and do not like. To do so is not to love. Love demands commitment and loyalty. If there is only one God and one Lord, then believers must be God-and-Christ-oriented, even though there may be many gods and many lords. To be thus oriented is to let go of one’s egocentricity.

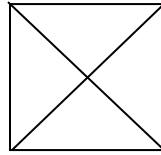
(iii) Semiotic Square 2: Constant Discernment

In this semiotic square, Paul stresses the need of hard work, patience, and persistency in a love relationship. In saying that love builds up (8:1), Paul shows that love not only requires effort and responsibility, it also needs *constant* investment and maintenance.

For Paul, there can be many gods and many lords (8:5) and believers can pick and choose the one(s) that they like and from whom they can benefit, but with the one God and one Lord whom they worship (8:6), believers do not get to choose. In fact, they were called by God to participate in the fellowship of Jesus (1:9). And, the incredible thing is that they responded affirmatively, in spite of the tremendous scandal of the cross. As the building of God (3:9), believers thus should hang on to the foundation, which is Jesus Christ (3:11). Just as Jesus did not compromise but held on to God, “from whom are all things and for whom we are” (8:6), believers should also follow suit.⁶⁵ Love is not a fleeting feeling that comes and goes according to the circumstance. It is about discernment, commitment, and perseverance.

⁶⁵ Hence, believers need to be careful with what they build upon it. They may build upon it with gold, silver, worthy stones, wood, hay, or straw (3:12), but their work will become visible (φανερὸν γενήσεται), for the day will show

8:1e – love builds up (S₁): Constantly
Discerning (hard work)



8:2 – those who think that they have
known something do not yet know (S₂):
Totalizing

8:3 – those who love God are known by
God (Non-S₂): Non-Totalizing

8:5 – there are many gods and many
lords (Non-S₁): Non-Constantly
Discerning (opportunistic)

To say that “love builds up” also means that love is able to connect and enable various materials to work together in the building project. This ability of love does not mean that love compromises. Rather, love allows individual materials to optimize their strength while reducing their weakness; otherwise the building materials will not be able to work together. For love to be able to discern the good and the bad of the building materials, it has to be able to see both the big picture and the small picture. Similarly, believers must not think they have already known what they need to know (cf. 8:2). For Paul, if it is according to the grace of God given to him that he lays the foundation (3:10), then one must rely on God to build the building. Even if one is good at the building project, one must still rely on God’s direction. The building is the building of and by God; it is not anyone’s building. Believers are God’s co-workers (cf. 3:9). They should not work by themselves as if God does not work with them.

In telling believers that “those who think that they have known something do not yet know” (8:2), Paul reminds them not to totalize their knowing, making what is a partial knowing into a complete knowing. It is a mistake to think that one has already known something, as if one does not need to consult God anymore. On the contrary, they must constantly check whether they still love God and whether God acknowledges them (8:3). The issue is not so much about asking

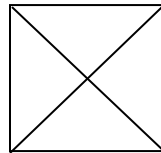
(δηλώσει) it, as it is disclosed in fire (ἐν πυρὶ ἀποκαλύπτεται) when the fire tests (δοκιμάσει) it (3:13). There is no way to hide what one builds. If one needs to build it anyway, one may as well make use of the foundation and build something that can last.

God as conversing with God, as it is through conversations that relationship is built and maintained. If one is in love, one will not think that one has already known the beloved and therefore does not need to know more about the beloved. In fact, the more one is in love, the more s/he will want to know about the beloved and be closer to the beloved.

(iv) Semiotic Square 3: Non-Self-Centered

10:24b – believers should seek the things of others (S₁): Non-Self-Centered

8:1d – *gnosis* puffs up (S₂): Not Substantial



8:1e – love builds up (Non-S₂): Substantial

8:2 – those who think that they have known something do not yet know (Non-S₁): Self-Centered

In love, the lover naturally pays attention to the need and situation of the beloved so that the beloved may feel and receive the love of the lover. In trying to please the beloved, the lover cannot do whatever s/he desires and thinks is good for the beloved. If s/he does, s/he may actually displease the beloved. Rather, the lover needs to please the beloved in the way that the beloved wants to be pleased. Here, Paul’s saying in 9:19-23 readily comes to mind (cf. 10:33). For example, Paul writes, “And I became to the Jews *as* (ὡς) a Jew so that I might gain Jews; to those under law *as* (ὡς) one under law, not that I myself under law, so that I might gain those under law” (9:20).

Indeed, if believers love God, they need to love what/whom God loves. This is especially so in a group-oriented culture, where everyone is interrelated. Thus, if God calls believers into the fellowship of Jesus (1:9), then believers should love one another, as they are *all* loved and called by God. It is contradictory for believers to love God but not those whom God loves. The more they love God, the more they should love those whom God loves and those who love God.

It is in light of this love that Paul exhorts believers to seek the things of others (10:24) so that they may continuously be transformed. It is when believers are confronted with the different ways other believers love and work with God that they can learn and grow. This is how believers keep their love towards God vibrant.

However, believers should not seek the things of others from their own perspectives. To do so is to objectify others, thinking that they have known a truth about others while actually they do not yet know (cf. 8:2). Rather, they need to interact with and understand others from their situations. They need to see what God is doing in the lives of others and how others love God. It is in this sense that love can build up (8:1e); that is, build each other up in their love towards God. To seek the things of others only from one's perspective will not build each other up. Such a seeking is egocentric. This is why in telling the Corinthian believers to seek the things of others, Paul warns them that they cannot partake of the table and cup of the Lord and of demons at the same time (10:21).

We could continue analyze the rest of the seven semiotic squares in 8:1–11:1, but the values of “assurance and commitment,” “constant discernment,” and “non-self-centeredness” that we have highlighted thus far would echo the characteristics of Paul's notion of love in chapter 4.⁶⁶ To concretize these values, Paul refers to the confession that believers will readily subscribe to: “there is one God the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we are, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things are and through whom we are” (8:6). For Paul, if God and Christ mark the semantic *habitus* of believers, then believers cannot objectify God and

⁶⁶ These characteristics of Paul's notion of love are: “(1) performative (i.e., other-oriented, messianic, and charismatic) and communicative, (2) letting go and collaborative, (3) risky (but promising) and non-calculative, (4) Christ-oriented and a non-self-centered reasoning, (5) contextual (risky but promising) and not universalizing a particular context, (6) perseverance (in hard work and response-ability) and a relational knowing, (7) something that cannot be represented and delimited, (8) Christ-like and non-self-centered, and (9) a Christ-oriented honor and a non-self-centered authority.”

Christ in knowing and loving them. Stressing that those who love God are known by God, Paul further contrasts God's knowing with the believer's knowing. In knowing believers, God not only provides for them, Christ even died for them. But in knowing God, not only do believers fail to care for God and other believers, they even become puffed up.

We may wonder why Paul does not just tell us whether believers can eat the idol food. If the gods and lords are subjected to the one God and one Lord, and if the idol is nothing, then the eating of the idol food should not be problematic. Paul does not give us this conclusion, however. With the *gnosis* concerning the idol causing so much trouble in the church of God, Paul does not want his writing to become another *gnosis* to be objectified for anyone's purpose. As Halbertal and Margalit point out, the term idolatry is discursively dynamic as it tries to "describe a type of connection between intellectual conceptions on the one hand and perceptual and emotional experiences on the other."⁶⁷ Because of this discursiveness, in particular if the notion of idolatry is related to the method and intention of worship as well as the representation of God, Paul has to avoid objectifying God in dealing with the idol food conflict. By associating *gnosis* with love, Paul urges believers to be God-and-Christ-oriented. For Paul, the issue is not whether one has *gnosis* or not. What is the use to have *gnosis* if one is not God-and-Christ-oriented? So, while Paul does not explicitly tell us what makes an idol an idol (i.e., what makes an idol idolatrous), he contrasts the one God and one Lord with the many gods and many lords, and the Lord's cup and table with the *daimonia*'s cup and table. In this contrast, where the words "idol," "gods," and "*daimonia*," are used interchangeably,⁶⁸ it is the fellowship in the blood and body of Christ (10:16) as Christ died for people (cf. 8:11) that distinguishes the one God and the one Lord from

⁶⁷ See Moshe Halbertal, and Avishai Margalit, *Idolatry*, 4.

⁶⁸ For example, Newton argues that "the Septuagint, Pseudepigrapha and New Testament fail to offer clear or detailed criteria for distinguishing between gods, demons, spirits and 'idols, but rather portray δαιμόνια polemically as negative, evil phenomena which are set in opposition to the worship of the one Creator God." See Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 352.

the other gods and lords. The God and the Lord of Paul are the God and the Lord who not only take responsibility and provide for believers, but also help them to overcome their trials and temptations (10:13). Paul even uses the Israelite wilderness story to illustrate how the Corinthian believers are objectifying God and the gifts of God as their “fathers” did when all of them were under the cloud and went through the sea... (10:1-4). To prevent this story from being objectified, Paul writes the narrative typologically.

V. Typology in Ritualization: The Ritual of Chinese Ancestor Veneration

In framing his discussion of the “idol food” issue in terms of a heteronomous notion of love and *gnosis* that is God-and-Christ-centered, Paul urges the Corinthian believers to seek the things of other/Other in their handling of the idol food. Whatever believers say and do, it must be God-and-Christ-centered. This concern for others in their concrete context is also prominent in our understanding of the ritual of Chinese ancestor veneration, as the ritual is thematized differently in different figures by different groups of people. Here, our notion of typology in terms of Narrative Semantics is also at work in our view of Chinese ancestor veneration.

In chapter 2, we have noted that there is no sharp dichotomy in Chinese worldview. Not only is everything (material and immaterial) made of *Qi* (breath or energy), the visible and invisible worlds are also a continuum where (1) *yin-yang* (a dynamic complementary system), (2) heaven-earth-humanity (a triadic verticality), (3) five phases (wood, fire, earth, metal, and water), and (4) nine fields or palaces (a horizontal division system) form the essential components of correlative thoughts. As such, gods, ancestors, ghosts, and human beings are not ontologically different.⁶⁹ The departed “are not worshipped as transcendent powers;”⁷⁰ they are interconnected.

⁶⁹ See Stephen F. Teiser, “Introduction: The Spirits of Chinese Religion,” in *Religions of China in Practice*. Edited by Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 32–36.

Certain performance of ancestor veneration can be seen as superstitious – such as burning paper goods to aid the underworld journey of the departed, the setting up of the “spirit tablet” at the family shrine for one of the seven souls of the deceased, the ritual bowing and the offering of food and incense before the “tablet,” etc.⁷¹ – but the ritual functions more “as a demand to fulfill the social and family responsibilities *extended* to the deceased person.”⁷² The past, present, and the future are existentially interdependent.

Moreover, since the worship of Yahweh is tied to “ancestral tradition”⁷³ and not viewed as an “ancestor worship,” then ancestor veneration should not necessarily be viewed as worshipping the dead. Choan-Seng Song argues that “we must distinguish between ancestor worship as the cult of the dead and ancestor worship as the consciousness of the living presence of the dead in our lives through some ritual.”⁷⁴ The ritual is about honoring one’s heritage, “preserving family ties,” and giving meaning to life after death.⁷⁵ It should not be about fearing or placating the departed.⁷⁶

However, the “supernatural” and “superstitious” elements in ancestor veneration cannot be simply bracketed out. Even if Xunzi, a fourth-century BCE Confucian philosopher, focused on the sociopolitical aspect of ritual (*li*) and called those who treated the ritual as supernatural

⁷⁰ See Choan-Seng Song, *Third-Eye Theology: Theology in Formation in Asian Settings*. Revised edition (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 172.

⁷¹ For details, see Leon Comber, *Chinese Ancestor Worship in Malaya* (Singapore: Donald Moore Singapore, 1956); C. K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society: A Study of Contemporary Social Functions of Religion and Some of Their Historical Factors* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961), 28-57.

⁷² See Choan-Seng Song, *Third-Eye Theology*, 172. Emphasis added.

⁷³ Whether the “ancestral graves” in ancient Israel indicate ancestor cult, “the care, feeding, and commemoration of the dead ... verifies the centrality of kinship and family in religious and social life. These rites, however, neither presupposed nor necessitated the belief in the supernatural beneficent power of the dead as expressed in ancestor veneration or worship or in the deification of the dead.” See Brian B. Schmidt, *Israel’s Beneficent Dead: Ancestor Cult and Necromancy in Ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 275.

⁷⁴ Choan-Seng Song, *Third-Eye Theology*, 171.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 172.

sad (*xiong*),⁷⁷ we cannot deny that the ritual has religious aspects. Likewise, even if the sacrificial food in the ritual of ancestor veneration has socio-psychological functions, its tie to honoring and feeding the spirits is irrefutable.⁷⁸ But, as Noah Fehl points out about the change of the notion of ritual among Chinese, the concepts of ritual, ancestor veneration, and sacrificial food are dynamic.⁷⁹ Different Chinese traditions have different understandings. For Xunzi the ritual comes from “ancient kings” who wanted “to curb it [disorder], to train men’s desires [*yu*] and to provide their satisfaction.”⁸⁰ As such, ritual is “the means by which to rectify” a person’s character and emotions [*qing*]⁸¹ and “to apportion material goods.”⁸²

While ritual can be authoritative in the sense that it needs to be observed properly, the point is that as a group-oriented community, Chinese see family harmony as instrumental to the state stability. At the core of this family order is the value of filial piety in ancestor veneration.⁸³ The *Doctrine of the Mean* 19.2ff even asserts that perfect filial piety is serving the departed *as if* they were still among us.⁸⁴ The *Classic of Filial Piety* further teaches that filial piety is *the* root of all virtue [*de*]: “it commences with the service of parents; it proceeds to the service of the ruler;

⁷⁷ See Xunzi, “A Discussion of Heaven,” in *Xunzi: Basic Writings*. Translated by Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 89-90.

⁷⁸ See Frederick J. Simoons, *Food in China: A Cultural and Historical Inquiry* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 1991), 28-31; Roel Sterckx, *Food, Sacrifice, and Sagehood in Early China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁷⁹ See Noah Edward Fehl, *Li: Rites and Propriety in Literature and Life: A Perspective for a Cultural History of Ancient China* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1971), 221. Given the space limit of this paper, I will focus on the work of Xunzi, who creatively synthesized the notions of ritual or *li* of different schools of thoughts before him. Also, see Masayuki Sato, *The Confucian Quest for Order: The Origin and Formation of the Political Thought of Xun Zi* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

⁸⁰ See Xunzi, “A Discussion of Rites,” in *Xunzi: Basic Writings*, 93.

⁸¹ See Xunzi, “Improving Yourself,” in *Xunzi: Basic Writings*, 31.

⁸² See John Knoblock, *Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*. Vol. 3: *Books 17-32* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 50. The self-cultivation through ritual assumes three bases [*ben*] of rites: (1) heaven and earth as the “basis of life,” (2) ancestors as the “basis of family [*lei*],” and (3) rulers and teachers as the “basis of order.” See Xunzi, “A Discussion of Rites,” in *Xunzi: Basic Writings*, 95.

⁸³ See Xunzi, “A Discussion of Rites,” in *Xunzi: Basic Writings*, 100-01.

⁸⁴ See James Legge, *Confucius: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning and the Doctrine of the Mean* (New York: Dover, 1971), 402-03.

it is completed by the establishment of character.”⁸⁵ Concerning the supernatural elements in ancestor veneration, Xunzi writes:

[T]he sacrificial rites originate in the emotions of remembrance and longing, express the highest degree of loyalty, love, and reverence, and embody what is finest in ritual conduct and formal bearing ... The sage understands them, the gentlemen [*shijunzi*] finds comfort in carrying them out, the officials are careful to maintain them, and the common people [*baixing*] accept them as custom. To the gentleman they are a part of the way [*dao*] of man; to the common people they are something pertaining to the spirits [*guishi*].⁸⁶

In the same text Xunzi further maintains that one should perform ritual in “the middle state” between “form and meaning” and “emotional content and practical use.”⁸⁷ While Xunzi’s notion of ritual is hierarchical and gendered, from the details that he gives regarding funeral rite, the mourning period, and ancestor veneration, Xunzi wants people to understand the logic of ritual when performing it.⁸⁸ The ritual is not an end to itself. The ritual of ancestor veneration is a *medium* to cultivate social harmony and filial piety. This allusion to fundamental values in ancestor veneration is well noted in Daoism and Buddhism.

When Ge Hong (ca. 283–363CE), a leading Daoist in the “Quest for Transcendence,” was accused of turning “back to traditions and abandon[ing] the world,” he replied,

I have heard that keeping one’s body without harm is what is meant by fulfilling filial piety. Does not the attainment of the way of the immortals [or transcendent], which enables one to enjoy everlasting life ... far surpass this?’ Furthermore, if one succeeded in attaining the Dao, his ancestors would be immensely proud of his achievement. In the realm of the immortals, nothing would be lacking.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ <http://www.anselm.edu/homepage/athornto/xiaojing.htm> (accessed March 2, 2012).

⁸⁶ See Xunzi, “A Discussion of Rites,” in *Xunzi: Basic Writings*, 113.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁸⁹ Mugitani Kunio, “Filial Piety and ‘Authentic Parents’ in Religious Daoism,” in *Filial Piety in Chinese Thought and History*. Edited by Alan K. L. Chan, and Sor-hoon Tan (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 117.

This response is a reconfiguration of the theme of filial piety, as Ge Hong addresses the *Classic of Filial Piety* that presents “the beginning of filial piety” is to not harm one’s bodies, since we receive them from our parents.⁹⁰

Buddhism also makes a similar defense when stipulating that monks and nuns renounce their social identity, to get new names, to shave their head, to adhere to celibacy, and to leave the family to join the *sangha* at monastery. While these acts betray ancestor veneration and disrupt social order, *Mouzi on the Settling of Doubt* contends that such self-renunciation was actually filial piety!⁹¹ Ritual is important to observe, but we need to do things according to the situation, even if it means doing things contrary to ritual, an argument which Mencius, an older contemporary of Xunzi, also highlights.⁹² Another example is the defense of Ling Shou when her father told her to get married. She explained that she was actually being filial pious, since her nunnery life would free her parents from suffering.⁹³

The values in the ritual and ancestor veneration are not only reconfigured in different ways to express filial piety, they are also modified accordingly. Likewise, the sacrificial food in ancestor veneration signifies different things to different people, as Newton suggests about the notion of idolatry among the Corinthian believers. Indeed, if “[r]itualization is fundamentally a way of doing things to trigger the perception that these practices are distinct and the associations that they engender are special,”⁹⁴ we should not be surprised that rituals “have many [messages and purposes], and frequently some of these messages and purposes can modify or even

⁹⁰ <http://www.anselm.edu/homepage/athornto/xiaoqing.htm> (accessed March 2, 2012).

⁹¹ For the rationale given in this text on discerning situation in observing ritual or propriety, see Kunio (2004: 115).

⁹² *Mencius, Li Lou I*, 7.17. For the full text, see <http://ctext.org/mengzi/li-lou-i> (accessed March 15, 2012).

⁹³ See *Lives of the Nuns: Biographies of Chinese Buddhist Nuns from the Fourth to Sixth Centuries*. A Translation of the *Pi-chu'iu-ni chuan*, comp. Shih Pao-ch'ang. Translated by Kathryn Ann Tsai (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), 20–21.

⁹⁴ See Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 220.

contradict each other.”⁹⁵ For example, Hal Taussig argues that the meal gathering in the early church was a “laboratory” for early believers to test out the boundary of the social norms.⁹⁶ The contradictions are the results of trials and errors in ritualization, which not only preserve heritage, but also provide conditions for assurance and change.⁹⁷ This notion of imaginative construction and maintenance in ritualization is like the semantic *habitus* that forms and sustains the way we envision, perceive the world, and comport ourselves in it.

VI. An Embodied Ritualization in A Non-Dualistic Worldview

Although Bourdieu argues for a syntactic notion of *habitus* as “systems of durable transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures,”⁹⁸ we find that in a proprioceptive and communal culture like the Chinese culture the semantic dimension that fundamentally characterizes *habitus* cannot be neglected and reduced (see section 3.1 in chapter 2). So, while we agree that *habitus*, produced by the material conditions societies, continually (re)inscribes its marks on our habitual bodies to the extent that we “wittingly or unwittingly ... [become] a producer and reproducer of objective meaning,”⁹⁹ as if “there is a quasi-perfect correspondence between the objective order and the subjective principles of organization ... [where] the natural and social world appears as self-evident,”¹⁰⁰ we

⁹⁵ See Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 22.

⁹⁶ See Hal Taussig, *In the Beginning was the Meal: Social Experimentation and Early Christian Identity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 20.

⁹⁷ See Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 222.

⁹⁸ See Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 72. This idea of *habitus* can be traced to Merleau-Ponty and Husserl. See Nick Crossley, “Sociology,” in *Merleau-Ponty: Key Concepts*. Edited by Rosalyn Diprose and Jack Reynold (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2008), 228-39; Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Colin Smith (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2005), 77-102, 112-70; idem., *The Visible and the Invisible*, ed Claude Lefort. Translated by Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), 130-55; Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to A Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*. Second Book: *Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 151-80.

⁹⁹ See Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 78.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 164.

want to add that *habitus* is also marked for us by a semantic universe that cannot be represented (in Greimas's actantial model). For us, this semantic *habitus* is a typological pattern that cannot be easily objectified. So while Bourdieu calls this self-evident correspondence *doxa*, "the universe of the undiscussed" where things are taken for granted for what they are,¹⁰¹ we want to add that the *doxa* is established as a vision through rituals and ritualization.

Given our semantic-oriented notion of *habitus* as transformed (beyond Bourdieu) through ritual into one's *doxa*, it is not surprising that those accustomed (τῆ συνηθείᾳ) to the idol would still treat the food as having the power of the idol (8:7). They were too *used to* it without realizing its *doxa*. This power of the idol becomes more forceful when "an ontological dualism in the Cartesian sense is not found in the ancient world,"¹⁰² where the visible and the invisible worlds are a "single continuum."¹⁰³ It is no wonder that one's conscience (ἡ συνείδησις) or the "convicting consciousness"¹⁰⁴ would be destroyed in such *doxa*.¹⁰⁵ As Halbertal and Margalit rightly point out the bodily "feeling" (proprioceptive) aspect in the notion of idolatry, to address the issues of the idol and idolatry *effectively*, we must take the religious sensibility or conviction into account. But, when we render οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ in 8:4 as "an idol has no real existence" (RSV; cf. NJB),¹⁰⁶ we overlook the tangible *effect* of the idol. While the UBS Handbook also translates it as an idol "has no real existence," the authors warn that "care should be taken not to translate this part of verse 4 in such a way as to conflict with verse 5, where Paul

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 168.

¹⁰² See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 15.

¹⁰³ See Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament*. Vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 15. Cf. Kabiro wa Gatumu, *The Pauline Concept of Supernatural Powers: A Reading from the African Worldview* (Milton Keynes; Colorado Springs; India: Paternoster, 2008).

¹⁰⁴ See Richard Horsley, "Consciousness and Freedom among the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 8-10," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 40 (1978): 574-89 (582).

¹⁰⁵ See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 643.

¹⁰⁶ Whether we take οὐδὲν εἶδωλον "as attributive ('no idol [exists]') or as predicative ('an idol is a nothing ...'), as Thiselton suggests, these translations presuppose an ontological framework. Ibid., 630.

admits that other spiritual powers exist.”¹⁰⁷ *BDAG* (591–92), however, tells us that οὐδέν has both substantive and non-literal meanings. It can also mean “worthless, meaningless, and invalid,” as the Chinese Bible takes it. This notion of οὐδέν is sidelined in English Bibles.¹⁰⁸ They seem to assume a metaphysical and Cartesian worldview, as opposed to a non-dualistic Chinese worldview where everything is made of *qi*. To make sense of οὐδέν εἰδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ in 8:4 with 8:5 as well as 10:19–21, Gordon Fee, for instance, argues that

Paul does not allow reality to the “gods” of idolatry. What he does rather is to anticipate the argument of v. 7 [8:7], that such “gods” have subjective reality for their worshippers; that is, they do not objectively exist, but they do “exist” for those who have given them reality by believing in them.¹⁰⁹

This constructed division of “objective reality” and “subjective reality” is common among biblical scholars.¹¹⁰ While David Garland follows this line of interpretation, he highlights “the intention of the worshippers.”¹¹¹ Hans Conzelmann, on the other hand, as he argues that Paul sees idols as real beings, maintains that an idol is real *insofar as we make* it into “something.”¹¹² But, the main issue is not whether something is ontologically “real” or not. It is about the effect of what *feels* or *seems* good to be real, which is another possible mode of existence.¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ See Paul Ellingworth, and Howard A. Hatton, *A Handbook on Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians*, 185.

¹⁰⁸ *NRSV*: “no idol in the world really exists;” *NKJV*: “an idol is nothing in the world;” *NAS*: “there is no such thing as an idol in the world;” *NIV*: “an idol is nothing at all in the world;” *NJB*: “none of the false gods exists in reality;” *NAB*: “there is no idol in the world;” etc. The Chinese Union renders it as idol in the world does not mean much.

¹⁰⁹ See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 370.

¹¹⁰ See William F. Orr, and James Arthur Walther, *1 Corinthians: A New Translation*. The Anchor Bible 32 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1976); 233; Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians*. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1989), 139; Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*. Sacra Pagina Series 7 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 319; Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 379-80.

¹¹¹ See David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 480.

¹¹² See Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 173.

¹¹³ See Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts: Greimas's Structural Semiotics and Biblical Exegesis* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 111–264; Timothy B. Cargal, “The Generative Trajectory in Certain Non-Western Cultures,” in *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 265-75.

Indeed, if the notion of εἶδωλον (*eidōlon*) is related to seeing, and if an “idol never deserves to be denounced as illusory, since by definition, it is seen— *eidolon*,”¹¹⁴ our notion of an idol hinges upon *how* we see things and *how* they appear to us. While knowledge (*oida*) is primarily tied to seeing,¹¹⁵ most objects only become objects for us when we turn our attention to them. But, in our everyday life, what we aim at is often not present before our eyes; we see them in the sense of foreseeing them because of our semantic *habitus*. That is, objects “are simply the result ... of expectation that gives access to an object without itself.”¹¹⁶ We can associate this notion of seeing the foreseen with the power of semantic *habitus* in idolatry. As semantic *habitus* shapes our comportment and perception, we forget that “what we see most often does not appear”¹¹⁷: our aim precedes our seeing of the object. The object no longer appears before us. At first, the idol lets us see the invisible, but as time goes on, it disguises the invisible by fixing our gaze upon the visible.¹¹⁸ Consequently, idol “allows no invisible.”¹¹⁹ Given Paul’s emphasis on being God-and-Christ-oriented, it appears that, for Paul, an idol is idolatrous because it is not other-oriented, as it becomes an invisible mirror that reflects and captures the objectifying gaze of believers, turning their partial knowing into a fixed, complete knowing. To deconstruct such a system of knowing that orders *how* believers perceive the world, Paul needs to speak of love to problematize an egocentric gaze that objectifies the other/Other, a heteronomous notion of love which we highlighted above in our semantic analysis.

¹¹⁴ See Jean-Luc Marion, *God without Being*, 9.

¹¹⁵ *Idem*.

¹¹⁶ See Jean-Luc Marion, “What We See and What Appears,” 156.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 153.

¹¹⁸ See Jean-Luc Marion, *God without Being*, 12.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

Icon, on the other hand, as the Orthodox iconography teaches us,¹²⁰ challenges our vision, as it does not conform to our aim or gaze. It keeps rendering the invisible visible without fixing the invisible. As such, “the invisible always remains invisible,”¹²¹ exceeding and transforming our gaze. In a similar way this is what typology does. It reveals the pattern without letting our gaze rest upon it. Marion further posits that icon and idol “indicate a manner for beings ... [to] pass from one rank to the other.”¹²² As opposed to our fixated gaze upon the idol, the icon appears before us, captivates our gaze, unsettles and saturates our aim. In short, the icon is of the after-seeing; the idol is of the foreseen.¹²³ In terms of Chinese ancestor veneration, the ritual is iconic when it works as a *medium* connecting Chinese to their heritage and value of filial piety. This feature of the icon works in Paul’s typology when it empowers believers to *continually* open up their horizons to see the works of God in different situations.

VII. A Typological and Inter(con)textual Interpretation of 1 Cor. 8:1–11:1

To assert that an idol is metaphysically non-existing not only discounts the power of the idol, it also presupposes a Cartesian worldview that further consolidates the bedazzling gaze of the idol. Given a more holistic worldview in the ancient world, it is unlikely that Paul held such a view. Even if Paul did, to effectively address the semantic *habitus* knowing in the idol food conflict would take more than a mere conveying of knowledge. So when Paul reminds believers of their previous way of being misled *toward* the mute idols (τὰ εἶδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα) (12:2), we see him highlight the *doxa* of the idol. The issue is not whether idols exist or not ontologically; the

¹²⁰ For example, see Leonid Ouspensky, and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons*. Translated by G. E. H. Palmer and E. Kadloubovsky (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1982).

¹²¹ See Jean-Luc Marion, *God without Being*, 17.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 8.

¹²³ See Jean-Luc Marion, “What We See and What Appears,” 162.

issue concerns the manner we see and perceive the world, and more specifically the ways believers objectify and totalize their partial knowing into a system of knowing.

Now, if the idols are mute, then how could communication happen? Yet communication did happen; people did worship idols. But, how did idols convey meaning if they are ἄφωνα? By *doxa*, because once we are bedazzled by the reflecting gaze of the idol, we foresee the objects without seeing them. It is only when things break down that we start to see them. Hence, when Paul in 12:3 stresses the contradiction in cursing and confessing Jesus as the Lord, he wants believers to see the “break down” of logic. While most scholars interpret 12:3 in terms of cultic ecstasy,¹²⁴ Patte proposes that Jesus was indeed the Lord *and* the cursed. That is, if Jesus as the *Lord* is cursed, then Jesus exposes the idolatry of the system that curses and crucifies him.¹²⁵ The tricky thing about the idol is that it will never appear as an idol – because it is validated in the way that we perceive and interact with the world – at least not until its contradiction is pointed out. It is only when one is in the spirit of God or in the *holy* spirit (12:2) that one can start to see the crack in the façade of the idol. Paul makes it clear that it is when one receives the spirit from God that one can see and receive the gifts of God (2:12). Thus Paul asks believers to “keep testing *all* things, and hold on to the good thing” (1 Thess. 5:21; cf. 1 Cor. 14:29-32). Without an otherness-orientation that challenges the mirror image of our gaze, our gaze can be fossilized.

In light of this power of the idol, Paul therefore uses typology to address the issues of idol food and idolatry. In the complete discourse unit of 8:1–11:1, we note that the overarching theme comes to the fore when a self-oriented, active and confident stance in 8:1–2 is inverted into a God-centered, Christ-mediated, and other-oriented in 10:31–11:1 (cf. 8:6). This inversion shows Paul’s attempt to transform the believers’ faith by gradually exposing the contradiction in their

¹²⁴ For example, see Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 206; Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 447-48; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 581.

¹²⁵ See Daniel Patte, *Paul’s Faith and the Power of the Gospel*, 306-10.

conviction. Thus, even if *all* possess knowledge (8:1), Paul tries to show that knowledge is God-oriented as everything comes from God (1:6, 30; 3:11; 4:7). Not only does Paul stress the limit of one's knowledge (8:2; cf. 13:8–9), he also ties knowledge to love: “But if anyone loves God, this person is known by him” (8:3). This change of active voice to middle/passive is significant. The Corinthians might think that they could fully grasp knowledge, as implied in the perfect tense of ἐγνώκεναι in 8:2a (cf. Gal. 4:9). But, as Anthony Thiselton argues, the aorist tense of ἔγνω and γινῶναι in 1 Cor. 8:2b can stress the “process of coming to know.”¹²⁶ Indeed, 8:3 does not say that one knows God if one loves God. Paul suspends the result of loving. It is not within one's determination.¹²⁷ In being drawn out of oneself towards the beloved, one is simultaneously the subject, receiver, and object of love as s/he loves the beloved.

This theme of being God-and-Christ-oriented in 8:1–11:1 is pronounced in the confession (8:6), especially if Paul “intentionally utilizes his understanding of the one God in order to underscore his overall argument.”¹²⁸ When Paul writes that “for us (ἡμῖν) there is one God the father, out of (ἐξ) whom are all things and we are oriented toward (εἰς)¹²⁹ him, and there is one Lord Jesus Christ, through (διὰ) whom are all things and we are from (διὰ) him” (8:6), he highlights the “father” and the “lord” figures in believers' relationship with God and Jesus. This relationship is contrasted with the many “gods” and many “lords” (8:5). Whether the “gods” were the “traditional deities” in Greco-Roman religions and the “lords” the “deities of the mystery cults,”¹³⁰ the concept of deity in Greco-Roman society, as Ron Fay points out, “is a loose term, allowing much flexibility while stressing power and accomplishment. Being a god

¹²⁶ See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 624.

¹²⁷ “[T]he knowledge that the faction claims to possess and assumes is ‘substantive’ and ‘certain,’ is reversed and relativized by Paul in his reply.” See David W. Odell-Scott, *A Post-Patriarchal Christology* 144.

¹²⁸ See Suzanne Nicholson, *Dynamic Oneness: The Significance and Flexibility of Paul's One-God Language* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2010), 4.

¹²⁹ “The preposition can be used in numerous ways; Paul most frequently uses εἰς to indicate purpose, although when speaking of God he usually specifies the purpose of God's glorification.” *Ibid.*, 54.

¹³⁰ See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 373.

did not denote responsibility, instead it conferred on the person a special status and the responsibility was imported to the worshippers.¹³¹ This notion that “a god did not denote responsibility” contrasts sharply with the Lord who died for the sake of the weak (8:11). If the cross is the core of the gospel (1:17) and the power of God to those who are saved (1:8) and if the kingdom of God is in this power (4:20), then believers should also have this characteristic of the cross. Furthermore, if Suzanne Nicholson is correct about the “subordination” of Jesus to God in 1 Corinthians to stress that God and Jesus must be understood in light of each other,¹³² then believers should also imitate such relationship, instead of being self-centered. They should see through the lens of Christ in their handling of the idol food.

Indeed, if individuals in the ancient Mediterranean world “owe [to their groups] loyalty, respect, and obedience of a kind which commits their individual honor without limit and without compromise,”¹³³ then believers should imitate Paul *just as* he imitates Christ (11:1; cf. 4:16) in terms of letting Christ work through them. The metaphor of the one bread in 10:17 is a case in point (cf. the same spiritual food and the same spiritual drink in 10:3–4). Paul’s description of fulfilling the calling of God in fear and trembling in 1 Cor. 9 is a good example. Like an ox, Paul feels that he has nothing to boast about; he was just doing his duty (9:16) so that he may be a partner of the gospel (10:23). Just like those preparing for the Roman running contest, Paul enslaves his body so that *he* may not be disqualified (9:27). Thus even if the ox has worked hard in the past, it still needs to work hard. Instead of letting his past accomplishments become an invisible mirror to satisfy his gaze, Paul lets the cross-event provoke and transform him, lest the *pistis* of believers be not in the power of God (2:5). Paul realizes that the cross-like event is a

¹³¹ See Ron C. Fay, “Greco-Roman Concepts of Deity,” in *Paul’s World*, 79.

¹³² See Suzanne Nicholson, *Dynamic Oneness*, 47-104.

¹³³ See Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 45.

pattern that he needs to *watch* out for. So when he uses the word *typos* in 10:6 and 10:11, he *sees* the Israelite wilderness story as a typology that can help believers see the pattern (note βλέπετε in 8:9; 10:12, 18). In using δοκεῖ ἐγνωκεναι in 8:2, Paul in 10:12 warns those who *think* that they have stood firm to be alert, lest they fall (ὁ δοκῶν ἕσταναι βλεπέτω μὴ πέσῃ).

When Paul writes that God is faithful (*pistos*) and will help them out in their trials (10:13), he also addresses the weak, just as he does in the confession (8:6), stressing that believers should live their lives through Christ (the mediating figure) toward God (the father or the source figure). The διά language in 8:6 shows that since believers exist *through* Christ, Christ should be their mediator. It is when believers, *through* Christ, see God as their source and orientation that an idol becomes οὐδέν. It is in this sense that Paul urges those who are still accustomed to the idol to have “this” kind of knowledge (ἡ γνῶσις). If this definite article ἡ in 8:7 refers to the knowledge in 8:1, as many have argued,¹³⁴ Paul would be naïve to think that knowledge alone can effectively address the issue of “convicting consciousness.” The issue is not so much about the knowledge as about the orientation of knowledge. As the knowledge becomes a power (8:9), one needs to see *through* Christ to recognize the contradiction in such power. By removing food from the signification of power (8:8),¹³⁵ Paul forces believers see beyond the idol food so that the gaze and the discussion do not rest upon the visible. His telling of his cross-like experiences, despite his *seal* of apostleship (9:2), further shows that to become *all* things to *all* people (9:22; cf. 1:18) is about recognizing cross-like events in others, learn from them, magnify them so that others will see them, and be cross-like to them as well. Without this other-oriented imitation through cross-like experiences, even an icon can become an idol.

¹³⁴ For example, see Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 146; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 379; and Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 324). Contra Derek Newton, *Deity and Diet*, 290.

¹³⁵ For a discussion on whether 8:8 is partially or wholly a Corinthian slogan, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 647-49.

VIII. Conclusion

Love trumps knowledge and knowledge is at its best when it concedes what it does not know, whereas loving can never brag about not loving. Any given faith is certainly a way to see and to know, one more among many, since indeed all genuine knowing is knowing ‘as,’ and all knowledge depends upon faith, and all faith is a way of seeing, construing, knowing. But faith lacks the wherewithal to absolutize its perspective, to lift itself up above the others in Capitalized form and cow the rest of us into submission.¹³⁶ – John D. Caputo

Instead of asking whether Paul allows the eating of idol food, we examined Paul’s notion of idolatry. But, as Newton and Phua argue for different notions of idolatry concerning idol food among Hellenistic Jews, we find that Paul is more concerned about whether believers orient themselves toward God through Christ in their dealing with idolatry. In light of the power of the idol in semantic *habitus* and ritualization in a non-dualistic worldview, Paul cannot give a universal answer to the issues of idol food and idolatry. To do so is problematic. It can turn such an instruction into an idol, in particular when we lose sight of the fundamental values that undergird the teaching and absolutize it into certain forms. To address the issue of idolatry that is in the area of “sensibility,” as Halbertal and Margalit argue, Paul emphasizes the work of God through Christ in typology. To consider others and to please *all* people in *all* manners challenges believers not to objectify and totalize their partial knowledge into a system but to continually look for cross-like events in the work of God.

For Chinese Christians, we also need to see such cross-like events in ancestor veneration so that we do not just accept or reject our heritage. From what we have noted about the semantic *habitus*, there are no easy and quick answers to whether we can eat the offering food, in particular if the idol and the icon “indicate a manner for being” and if idol food is not necessarily

¹³⁶ See John D. Caputo, *On Religion* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 111-12.

idolatrous. The idol food can be a sign of heritage, a means of ritual, or/both a signification of interaction with the invisible world. But, what we have learnt in this inter(con)textual interpretation is that the validity of context in one's interpretation does not exclude textual and hermeneutical analysis. It is when we are aware of the discursive process of interpretation that we realize that we *all* make choices in our interpretation! So even though everyone reads the same text, the text *becomes* different for different people. This awareness not only calls us to be *accountable* and *responsible* for our interpretation, it also reminds us to be open to other interpretations so that we may see their rationale, and not co-opt or criticize them outright. As contextual interpretation helps us see new aspects of the text and context, and thus, read it *anew*, it can then promote dialogue.

Chapter 7 – The Stake of Love and Gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:1–14:40

To love is to respect the invisibility of the other, to keep the other *safe*, to surrender one's arms to the other but without defeat ... To love is to give oneself to the other in such a way that this would really be giving and not taking, a gift, a way of letting the other remain other, that is, be loved, rather than a stratagem, a ruse of jealousy, a way of winning, *eine vergiftete Gift*. Then it would turn out that the passion for the impossible would be love.¹ – John D. Caputo

When, then, does the lover appear? Precisely when, during the encounter, I suspend reciprocity, and no longer economize, engaging myself without any guarantee of assurance. The lover appears when one of the actors in the exchange no longer poses prior conditions, and loves without requiring to be loved, and thus, in the figure of the gift, abolishes economy.² – Jean-Luc Marion

I. Introduction

In this concluding chapter, we will focus on Paul's notion of love in 1 Cor. 13:1-13, framed in the complete discourse unit of 12:1–14:40 that addresses the issues of singularity and plurality of the body of Christ and of various “*charismata*,” “services,” “workings,” and manifestations of the spirit. In this complete discourse unit, we continue to see that Paul is concerned with *how* the Corinthian believers come to know what they know. The inverted parallelism between 12:1-3 and 14:37-40 shows that the believers' knowing must not be egocentric, but must be oriented toward God, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus (see below); after all, it was *in* God that believers were enriched in *everything*, in *every logos* and *every gnosis* (1:5). If the *logos* of *gnosis* is given (δίδοται) to believers *through* the spirit (12:8), then they should know that the *logos* of God neither comes from them nor goes to them only (14:36).

For Paul, since everything comes from God (4:7), believers must not objectify *gnosis* into their own system of knowledge that they can manipulate for their own benefits (cf. 8:9). Thus in

¹ John D. Caputo, *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida: Religion without Religion* (Bloomington and Indianapolis Indiana University Press, 1997), 49.

² Jean-Luc Marion, *The Erotic Phenomenon*. Translated by Stephen E. Lewis (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 78.

12:1–14:40, Paul stresses that “the manifestation of the spirit” (ἡ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος) is “given (δίδοται) to *each* person *for* the common good” (πρὸς τὸ συμ-φέρον) (12:7). Three things we need to note here. First, the manifestation must not be mistaken for the spirit itself. In pointing to the spirit *and* the common good, the manifestation appears by withdrawing itself (from not pointing to itself). Secondly, the manifestation is given to *everyone*. It is thus ironic for believers to flaunt and compare their gifts. Thirdly, as the manifestation is oriented towards the common good, it becomes contradictory when it is used for personal gains. Believers need to note that just as it is *in* the Holy Spirit that they *can* confess “Jesus is Lord” (12:3), they must be spirit-oriented, not manifestation-oriented. Just as both the spiritual gifts and believers become insignificant when the gifts are performed without love (13:1-3), the manifestation of the spirit ceases its purpose when it is not used for the common good.

The genitive in 12:7 further shows that the manifestation can be rendered as the spirit that manifests itself (subjective genitive), highlighting not just the manifestation *about* the spirit (objective genitive) but also the spirit that gives. Similarly, the possibility of δίδοται in the middle voice with an “intransitive nonreflexivity”³ and the preposition συμ (“with”) in τὸ συμ-φέρον that indicates an advantageous result of coming together stress “the manifestation of the spirit” taking place in the giving and receiving in the middle voice when believers come together for the benefits of each other. The common good is not an existing property but a figure of “togetherness” (see section 3.2 in chapter 2) that appears when believers come together seeking the things of others. This is why Paul urges believers to *receive from one another* when they come together for the Lord’s Supper (see chapter 5). It is in the face of choices that believers are challenged to discern and decide which choice manifests the works of God among them.

³ See n. 11 in the Introduction chapter.

Now, just as it is *in* (ἐν) the Holy Spirit that believers are *able* (or have the potential) (δύνανται) to say that “Jesus is Lord” (12:3), believers should not judge by themselves (cf. 4:3-5). They should judge spiritual matters *together with* spiritual (people or matters) (πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες) (2:13).⁴ Indeed, if believers cannot know the gifts given by God (τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα) without receiving the spirit from God (2:12), then they must speak of them *in* (ἐν) the teaching of the spirit (2:13). Moreover, if God has prepared for those who love God (2:9), then loving God and the giving and receiving of gifts are intertwined. This intimate relation between love and gift is also prominent in 12:1–14:40. Just as the knowing of God’s gifts must be done through the spirit from God and the receiving of God’s gifts takes place in love, the gifts must also be performed with performative love (13:1-3).

In this chapter we argue that as Paul’s vision of love is heteronomy-oriented (see chapter 4), Paul’s notion of “spiritual gifts,” which frames the so-called love poem of Paul in 1 Cor. 13, is also heteronomy-oriented. Here, our usage of “spiritual gifts” is broadly conceived as “gift effects,” which not only stresses the dynamic relations of the giver, receiver, and gift, but also the common good that should mark the giving and receiving of gifts (12:7). The “spiritual gifts” in 12:1–14:40 may refer to various “*charismata*” (χαρίσματα) (12:4), “services” (διακονίαι) (12:5), “workings” (ἐν-εργήματα) (12:6), “manifestation of the spirit” (12:7), etc.⁵ But, what

⁴ One can translate πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες in several ways, depending on how one renders the gender and dative of πνευματικοῖς. Fitzmyer suggests four possibilities: (1) “comparing spiritual realities with spiritual realities,” (2) “interpreting spiritual realities in spiritual terms,” (3) “interpreting spiritual realities for spiritual people,” and (4) “fitting spiritual things to spiritual expression.” See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. The Anchor Yale Bible 32 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 181-82.

⁵ Concerning the meanings of “services” and “workings” and their relations to *charismata*, Schatzmann argues that the former “denotes the fundamental purpose for God’s gracious bestowal of gifts. Only in different kinds of service exists the legitimization of charismata.” The latter “describes the concrete effects which occur when χαρίσματα are used in service” in the sense that “God energizes all enabling graces; thus charismata become demonstration of the power of God, effected in service.” See Siegfried S. Schatzmann, *A Pauline Theology of Charismata* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987), 34. Concerning the word “charismata,” Schatzmann lists three ways the word is used by Paul. First, he finds that “Paul employed the term in a ‘nontechnical,’ general sense. Typically, χάρισμα here overlaps considerably with χάρις, as in Rom. 5: 15, 16, as well as in 6:23” (ibid., 4). Secondly, he finds that

matters to Paul is not so much spiritual gifts as believers to whom they are given. As the gift cannot be objectified – after all, it is given by the spirit, which cannot be objectified – neither the giver nor the receiver can be objectified. Their relationship with the spirit, God, and Jesus should be vibrant. So instead of speaking of the identity/character of the giver, receiver, and gift, we find it more fitting to describe the interactions of giver, receiver, and gift as actants in A. J. Greimas’s actantial model (see section 3.3.c in the Methodological Appendix), where a character can play different actantial roles at the same time. Our semantic analysis will not focus on the notion of “gift” in 12:1–14:40, but because Paul’s vision of love is framed in his discussion of spiritual gifts, we will in the next section review how the gift can be conceptualized and configured in different modes of existence. We will first review critical interpretations of *charis* (“gift” or “grace”) and *charismata* in 1 Corinthians,⁶ which biblical scholars have recently placed within Greco-Roman systems of reciprocity (i.e., benefaction and patronage relationships).⁷ We agree with Bruce Lowe that both diachronic and synchronic analyses are

word is used twice “for specific gifts given to the believers” (e.g., 1 Cor. 7:7 and 2 Cor. 1:11) (*ibid.*, 5). Thirdly, the word is used most frequently for “a manifestation of grace within the community of believers” (e.g., Rom. 1:11, 11:29, 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 1:7 and 1 Cor. 12-14) (*idem*).

⁶ *BDAG* defines *χάρις* as (1) “a winning quality or attractiveness that invites a favorable reaction,” (2) “a beneficent disposition toward someone,” (3) “practical application of goodness,” (4) “exceptional effect produced by generosity,” and (5) “response to generosity or beneficent” (1079-1081). It further notes that “*χάρις* is not always clearly differentiated in meaning from *χαρά*” (1079). This relationship between *χάρις* and *χαρά* is also noted by many scholars. For example, Conzelmann writes, “The basic of the usage [of *χάρις*] is the relation to *χαίρω*.” See Hans Conzelmann, “*χάρις* κτλ.,” in *TDNT* 9: 373. As of *χάρισμα*, *BDAG* defines it as “that which is freely and graciously given”: (a) “generally, the earthly goods bestowed by God,” (b) “of special gifts of a non-material sort, bestowed through God’s generosity on individual Christians” (1081).

⁷ Emphasizing that Greek benefaction (“*euergetism*”) and Roman patronage are “two different but related forms of social interchange,” Joubert argues that while “both these relationships we have an exchange of goods and services that leads to mutual obligations, together with differentiations of status and power between the interlocutors ... the contents of the goods exchanged and the nature of the ensuing social relationships (in terms of the status and reciprocal responsibilities of the individuals/groups) are different.” See Stephan J. Joubert, “One Form of Social Exchange or Two? ‘*Euergetism*,’ Patronage, and Testament Studies,” in *Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 31 (2001): 23. For Joubert, the benefactor-beneficiaries relationship in “*euergetism*” is less oppressive than the patron-client relationship. For him, the “status differentials between public benefactors and beneficiaries were not ‘entrenched’ by benefit-exchanges. The (collective) recipients of public benefits, for example, seldom took on a submissive role (which was often the case with clients of powerful Roman patrons). On the contrary, in honorary decrees they frequently state how they proudly fulfilled their obligations toward their benefactors, thus placing the latter in their debt once more. In order to maintain their public honor and status,

significant to our understanding of Paul's notion of *charis*,⁸ in particular when "the material outside the NT tells us almost nothing" about *charisma*.⁹ Therefore we will review the constitution of gift through the works of Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion. For concrete examples, we will briefly highlight different types of gifts in Western antiquity. These analytical steps to flesh out the conceptualization and configuration of gift are important to note because quite often it is not a textual but a hermeneutical distinction that frames our interpretation (cf. section 5 in chapter 1). Once we show that the gift can be envisioned in various modes of existence, we will proceed with our semantic analysis of love in 12:1–14:40 to argue that for Paul, both love and gift are heteronomy-oriented. Lastly, we will end with an evaluation of Paul's heteronomous view of love in our context of a pluralistic environment in Malaysia.

II. The Notion of "Gift"

The law of benefits is a difficult channel, which requires careful sailing, or rude boats. It is not the office of a man to receive gifts. How dare you give them? We wish to be self-sustained. We do not quite forgive a giver. The hand that feeds us is in some danger of being bitten. We can receive anything from love, for that is a

benefactors therefore had to confer further benefits on their communities." Idem. By contrast, in a Roman patron-client relationship, the patrons "remained in the superior social position, even if they failed to reciprocate their clients' public bestowals of loyalty and honor. 'Cliental gratitude' did not place patrons in a submissive position." Idem. Joubert therefore contends that Paul's collection from the Gentile churches to the Jerusalem church should be understood within the dynamic benefactor-beneficiary relationship. For details, see idem., *Paul as Benefactor: Reciprocity, Strategy and Theological Reflection in Paul's Collection* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000). To address the social positions in the benefaction system, Joubert refers to J. Christiaan Beker's idea of "coherency" and "contingency," but he does not clearly explain how "Paul's convictional framework" is distinguished from Paul's rhetoric. As a result, Joubert thinks that "Paul at times fell prey to 'ideological manipulation' in order to promote his own interests. Therefore, one should be careful not to merely accept his 'theologizing' at face value." Ibid., 11. For a critique of Joubert's differentiation between benefaction and patronage, see Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualization Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter), 60-66. Crook writes, "Joubert is perfectly correct that patronage and benefaction are not exactly the same phenomena. The differences between them, however, are both more general and more subtle than Joubert attempts to present." Ibid., 64.

⁸ See Bruce A. Lowe, "Paul, Patronage and Benefaction: A 'Semiotic' Reconsideration," in *Paul and His Social Relations*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Christopher D. Land. *Pauline Studies* 7 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 57-84. Lowe focuses on the relation between the signified and signifier in the signification of the word.

⁹ See Hans Conzelmann, "ἡγάρις κτλ.," in *TDNT* 9: 403.

way of receiving it from ourselves; but not from any one who assumes to bestow.¹⁰ – Ralph Waldo Emerson

We are either glad or sorry at a gift, and both emotions are unbecoming. Some violence, I think, is done, some degradation borne, when I rejoice or grieve at a gift. I am sorry when my independence is invaded, or when a gift comes from such as do not know my spirit, and so the act is not supported; and if the gift pleases me overmuch, then I should be ashamed that the donor should read my heart, and see that I love his commodity, and not him.¹¹ – Ralph Waldo Emerson

What is gift? This seemingly simple question has sparked numerous works and debates across various disciplines such as philosophy (in particular phenomenology), anthropology, sociology, theology, classical studies, biblical studies, etc.¹² Linguistically, the ambiguity and ambivalence of the word “gift” are noted by Marcel Mauss and Emile Benveniste. For example, tracing the etymology of the word, Mauss shows that it can mean “present” and “poison” in the Germanic languages. For Mauss, these two senses of “gift,” within the *systeme des prestations totales* in the Germanic world,¹³ are related to “the gift of drink” – a “typical prestation for the

¹⁰ See Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Gifts,” in *Essays*. First and Second Series. Second Series (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1883), 155-56.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 156. Likewise, Derrida writes, “For there to be a gift, there must be no reciprocity, return, exchange, countergift, or debt ... Here we are anticipating another dimension of the problem, namely, that if giving is spontaneously evaluated as *good* ... it remains the case that this ‘good’ can easily be reversed. We know that as good, it can also be bad, poisonous (*Gift, gift*), and this from the moment the gift puts the other in debt, with the result that giving amounts to hurting, to doing harm...” See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*. Translated by Peggy Kamuf (London and Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 12.

¹² For example, see the essays in the following edited volumes: *God, The Gift, and Postmodernism*. Edited by John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999); *The Gift: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*. Edited by Aafke E. Komter (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996); *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*. Edited by Alan D. Schrift (London and New York: Routledge, 1997); *The Gift in Antiquity*. Edited by Michael L. Satlow (UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013); *The Question of the Gift: Essays Across Disciplines*. Edited by Mark Osteen (London and New York: Routledge, 2002); *The Enigma of Gift and Sacrifice*. Edited by Edith Wyschogrod, Jean-Joseph Goux, and Eric Boynton (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002). For recent works in theology, see Kathryn Tanner, *Economy of Grace* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005); J. Todd Billings, *Calvin, Participation, and the Gift: The Activity of Believers in Union with Christ* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007); Stephen H. Webb, *The Gifting God: A Trinitarian Ethics of Excess* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Risto Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005); Jan-Olav Henriksen, *Desire, Gift, and Recognition: Christology and Postmodern Philosophy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2009).

¹³ Concerning the role of the “system of total services” in his notion of gift, Mauss writes, “First, it is not individuals but collectivities that impose obligations of exchange and contract upon each other ... Moreover, what they exchange

ancient Germans and Scandinavians” – which can be either a gift-present or a gift-poison.¹⁴ Going further than Mauss, Benveniste argues that the root **do-* that can mean “to give” in most Indo-European languages can also mean “to take,” depending on the syntactic construction of the verb. He writes, “**do-* [as in French *don* or *donner*] indicated only the fact of taking hold of something; only the syntax of the utterance differentiated it as ‘to take hold of in order to keep’ (= take) and ‘to take hold of in order to offer’ (= give).”¹⁵ A similar linguistic phenomenon is also found in the Chinese character 受 (*shou*). Originally the word can mean “to give” or “to receive,” as indicated by the two radicals 𠂇 (read as 爪, *zhao*) and 又 (*you*) in the word – both signify “hand” – which signify the receiving and passing from one hand to another. While the context can determine the meaning, at times it can have both meanings.¹⁶ To avoid the semantic ambiguity, another word 授 (*shou*) (“to give”) – a radical 扌 (*shou*) (meaning, “hand”) + 受 (*shou*) – is then created to distinguish it from 受 (*shou*) (“to receive”). Both words, however, are pronounced the same.

is not solely property and wealth, movable and immovable goods, and things economically useful. In particular, such exchanges are acts of politeness: banquets, rituals, military services, women, children, dances, festivals, and fairs, in which economic transaction is only one element, and in which the passing on of wealth is only one feature of a much more general and enduring contract. Finally, these total services and counter-services are committed to in a somewhat voluntary form by presents and gifts, although in the final analysis they are strictly compulsory, on pain of private or public warfare.” See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Foreword by Mary Douglas (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), 6-7.

¹⁴ See Marcel Mauss, “Gift, Gift,” in *The Logic of the Gift*, 30. Mauss further finds it “unnecessary to refer here to a very substantial number of topics of Germanic law and mythology. But one can see that the uncertainty about the good or bad nature of the presents could have been nowhere greater than in the case of the customs of the kind where the gifts consisted *essentially* in drinks taken in common) in libations offered or to be rendered.” Idem. The ambiguity of gift is configured as the *hau* (“the spirit of things”) in Mauss’ notion of gift that drives and sustains the circulation of gifts. See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, 14-16, 115-16 n. 29-31. For a critique of Mauss’s translation and interpretation of *hau*, see Sahlins, who notes that Mauss should have addressed different types of *hau* instead of introducing an unnecessary element of uncertainty into the economy of gift exchange. Consult Marshall Sahlins, “The Spirit of the Gift,” in *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1972), 149-68.

¹⁵ See Emile Benveniste, “Gift and Exchange in the Indo-European Vocabulary,” in *Problems in General Linguistics*. Translated by Mary Elizabeth Meek. Miami Linguistics Series 8 (Coral Gables, FA: University of Miami, 1971), 272. Also, see various chapters on the topic of gift in idem., *Indo-European Language and Society*. Translated by Elizabeth Palmer. Miami Linguistics Series 12 (Coral Gables, FA: University of Miami Press, 1973).

¹⁶ Consider the saying *qi yue liu huo, jiu yue shou yi* (七月流火, 九月受衣: in July the heat starts to abate, in September start to give out or receive clothing) in *Shi Jing·Bin Feng·Qi Yue* (“诗经·邶风·七月”).

This semantic ambiguity of the word “gift” is also manifested in our everyday experience, as Emerson points out (see the epigraph). While Mauss finds the “charity-gift” in Emerson’s essay “curious,”¹⁷ we find the following comment by Emerson curious: “We can receive anything from love, for that is a way of receiving it from ourselves; but not from any one who assumes to bestow.” Why are the giving and receiving in love exempted from potential problems implicated in the gift? Indeed, what does it mean that “[t]he gift, to be true, must be the flowing of the giver unto me, correspondent to my flowing unto him. When the waters are at level, then my goods pass to him, and his to me. All his are mine, all mine his”?¹⁸ It appears that when gifts are given and received in love, there is a sense of “[a]ll his are mine, all mine his,” and as a result of this flowing to and fro between the giver and receiver, gifts can be given and received without causing any hurt.¹⁹ If this is the case with Emerson, does Paul’s notion of gift also embody a similar character? If one cannot distinguish the beloved from the lover in a love relationship, then can one clearly tell the giver from the receiver in a love relationship?

(i) The Notion of *Charis*

In critical biblical studies, an increasing number of scholars has recently argued for the sociopolitical context of *charis* in Greco-Roman benefaction and patronage systems. For

¹⁷ Mauss writes, “The unreciprocated gift still makes the person who has accepted it inferior, particularly when it has been accepted with no thought of returning it. We are still in the field of Germanic morality when we recall the curious essay by Emerson entitled ‘Gifts.’ Charity is still wounding for him who has accepted it, and the whole tendency of our morality is to strive to do away with the unconscious and injurious patronage of the rich almsgiver.” See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, 83.

¹⁸ See Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Gifts,” 156-57.

¹⁹ In his reading of Emerson, Schrift notes that for Emerson, “the only true gift is a gift of oneself, for a ‘real gift’ must be something painful to give. That gift must also be unnecessary to the receiver; it must be excessive, for if it is needed, it loses its status as gift. While gifts challenge the autonomy of the receiver, the true gift nevertheless unites the giver and receiver) and Emerson concludes that the gift finds perhaps its most perfect expression in the gifts of love.” See Alan D. Schrift, “Introduction: Why Gift?” in *The Logic of the Gift*, 7. Emerson presents a heteronomous notion of love in “Love,” in *Essays*, 161-79.

example, David deSilva speaks of three meanings of *charis* that “mark the patron-client relationship, friendship, or public benefaction” in Greco-Roman cultures.²⁰

First, “grace” was used to refer to the willingness of a patron to grant some benefit to another person or to a group. In this sense, it means “favor,” in the sense of “favorable disposition.” In Aristotle’s words (*Rhetoric* 2.7.1 [1385a16-20]), “Grace (*charis*) may be defined as helpfulness toward someone in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper himself [or herself], but for that of the person helped.” In this sense, the word highlights the generosity and disposition of the patron, benefactor, or giver. The same word carries a second sense, often being used to denote the “gift” itself, that is, the result of the giver’s beneficent feelings. Many honorary inscriptions mention the “graces” (*charitas*) of the benefactor as the cause for conferring public praise, emphasizing the real and received products of the benefactor’s good will toward a city or group. Finally, “grace” can be used to speak of the response to a benefactor and his or her gifts, namely “gratitude” [*charin echein*].²¹

From the perspective of a group-oriented culture, we are not surprised by the first meaning of *charis*. As we have noted about “the felt” (cf. heteronomy), “the claimed” (cf. autonomy), and “the paid” (cf. relationality) aspects of honor (see section 3 in chapter 1), we emphasize that in a culture where everyone is interrelated, the proprioceptive (i.e., bodily-oriented) and communal features are interwoven. For example, in the Chinese worldview, because our perception of the world is proprioceptive (see section 2 in chapter 2), our perception is correlative, and as such, communal. Consequently, the fact that *charis* “was used to refer to the willingness of a patron to grant some benefit to another person or to a group” because of personal relationships or network, instead of individual merit or credit, is expected, although it may be “distasteful” to many in the West that values individualism.²² Here, deSilva’s advice is helpful.

²⁰ See David A. deSilva, “Patronage and Reciprocity: The Context of Grace in the New Testament,” in *Ashland Theological Journal* 31 (1999): 32-84 (38).

²¹ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

²² DeSilva writes, “The term ‘patronage’ refers to a system in which access to goods, positions, or services is enjoyed by means of personal relationships and the exchanging of ‘favors’ rather than by impersonal and impartial systems of distribution. People in the United States and Northern Europe may be culturally conditioned to find the concept of patronage distasteful at first, and not at all a suitable metaphor for talking about God’s relationship to us. When we say ‘it’s not what you know but whom you know,’ it is usually because we sense someone has had an

The world of the authors and readers of the New Testament, however, was a world in which personal patronage was an essential means of acquiring access to goods, protection, or opportunities for employment and advancement. Not only was it essential – it was expected and publicized! The giving and receiving of favors was, according to a first-century participant, the “practice that constitutes the chief bond of human society” (Seneca, *De beneficiis* 1.4.2).²³

While deSilva briefly mentions “the felt” aspect of *charis*, we want to highlight it. We have already seen this felt aspect of *charis* in our discussion of *philia* (see section 5 in chapter 1), but let us refer to David Konstan again.

Most societies, and certainly classical Greece and Rome, distinguish between gifts, which are freely granted without expectation of return or at least of return in kind, and commercial or economic exchanges, in which things are traded for other things of a comparable value.²⁴

Here, Konstan makes a distinction between “gifts” and “commercial or economic exchanges,” but the difference is not always clear in everyday experience because as “gratitude” – the third meaning of *charis* according to deSilva – is a response to *charis*, it can be treated as some kind of return to the gifts received. Konstan explains:

This linking of gratitude to the bestowal of a favor is significant: it suggests that the altruism affirmed in the definition of a *charis* is not entirely unconditional. But it is important to observe that the response to a favor is not a return in kind, but rather an emotion or *pathos* that is elicited by the simple gesture of receiving such a present. Of course, this reaction is not automatic or inevitable; there are ungrateful people who do not respond in this way to help or services rendered, and this is clearly a vice. But the emotional response to receiving a gift is not understood by Aristotle or any other ancient thinker as a return of the favor, or as constituting an economic exchange. And this is the crucial element in the notion of *charis*.²⁵

unfair advantage over us or over the friend whom we console with these words. It violates our conviction that everyone should have equal access to employment opportunities (being evaluated on the basis of pertinent skills rather than personal connection) or to services offered by private businesses or civic agencies. Where patronage occurs (often deridingly called nepotism: channeling opportunities to relations or personal friends), it is often done ‘under the table’ and kept as quiet as possible.” Ibid., 32.

²³ Ibid., 32-33.

²⁴ See David Konstan, “‘Can’t Buy Me Love’: The Economy of Gifts in Amorous Relations,” in *The Gift in Antiquity*, 96.

²⁵ Ibid., 97.

For Konstan, because “gratitude” is an *emotional* response, it “is not understood by Aristotle or any other ancient thinker as a return of the favor, or as constituting an economic exchange.” Konstan further stresses elsewhere that “[t]he emotion of gratitude is distinct from the act of reciprocation: it is felt, not due as compensation.”²⁶ In his study of Roman reciprocity, Neil Coffee agrees with Konstan that “Roman gift-exchange cannot be viewed simply as a matter of self-interested jockeying for advantage because there was a real emotional dimension to giving and receiving.”²⁷ This “felt” aspect of *charis* in “gratitude” is expected, in particular because *charis* is tied to honor, as Zeba Crook points out (even though he argues that Paul’s notion of *charis* should be understood within the Greco-Roman systems of reciprocity).²⁸ But, if “honor is too intimate a sentiment to submit to definition: it must be felt,”²⁹ then “the felt” aspect

²⁶ Konstan continues, “Thus Socrates, in Plato’s *Apology* (20A), asserts that the disciples of the sophists ‘give them money and are grateful besides [*khremata didontas kai kharin proseidenai*],’ that is, over and above the payment that is required. The sentiment of course sustains the social system of reciprocity, but has its own grammar and role. Gratitude is never owed.” David Konstan, “Gratitude,” in *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 167.

²⁷ See Neil Coffee, “Ovid Negotiates with His Mistress: Roman Reciprocity from Public to Private,” in *The Gift in Antiquity*, 78.

²⁸ Zeba A. Crook, *Reconceptualization Conversion*, 68, writes: “Patronage and benefaction worked in harmony with the values of honour and shame, for without the importance attached to accruing honour and without the hope of doing so within one’s own lifetime, patronage and benefaction would not have existed in the form or to the extent it did.” We have highlighted “the felt” aspect of honor and noted that Crook follows Bruce Malina’s functionalist definition of honor (see note 216 in chapter 1). This tendency to sideline heteronomy is also apparent in Crook’s functionalist notion of “loyalty” (*pistis* or *fides*), which according to him, undergirds the “ancient conversion” in the social context of patronage and benefaction. He writes, “Loyalty is an important feature of the model of ancient conversion, for without it, it appears that conversion in this cultural context was nothing more than a form of rational choice theory – that human actors behave as if the world is a market in which decisions are made rationally based only on perceived outcomes and benefits.” *Ibid.*, 9. For Crook, “Loyalty allows for the possibility of an emotional component to enter into the model of ancient conversion, but it is most helpful because it does not rely on emotion for its central or defining characteristic... [In fact] loyalty was a set of behaviours, it was not a feeling. The important distinction here is that loyalty was not an internal state of mind as much as it is an external set of actions.” *Ibid.*, 200. It is obvious that Crook only focuses on a certain syntactic aspect of *pistis* or *fides* while neglecting (or perhaps rejecting?) its semantic aspects. By contrast, David Konstan (in “‘Can’t Buy Me Love,’” 98) points out that “all interpersonal exchange, according to Aristotle, is premised on trust and hence on a degree of affection. But the sign of true affection is a generosity that does not insist on return, but seeks the benefit of the other in a spirit of selflessness.” The relation between trust (*pistis* or *fides*) and economy is insightfully fleshed out by de Certeau, which for us highlights the modes of existence in the notion of “trust.” For details, see Michel de Certeau, “What We Do When We Believe,” in *On Signs*. Edited by Marshall Blonsky (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 192-202. Also, see Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts: Greimas’s Structural Semiotics and Biblical Exegesis* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 111-215.

²⁹ John G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Introduction,” in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*. Edited by J. G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers (Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge Press, 1992), 4. Concerning the social

of *charis* cannot be reduced, as John Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers realize when saying that “honor has a kind of congenital relationship with grace which challenges our previous view of it as primordially a matter of social structure.”³⁰ Given this intimate relation between honor and grace,³¹ Pitt-Rivers writes:

The unverifiability of intentions and the state of the heart which are necessary to both honor and grace, the paradoxes which assail both and the uncertainty of divine judgment which refuses to submit to mundane reasoning have encouraged societies with writing to replace the reciprocity of the heart by the law of contract and provide sanctions for its enforcement. Taking reciprocity out of the field of grace detaches it from the sentiments and objectifies it, making it abstract and depersonalized.³²

Note that Pitt-Rivers does not say that there is no reciprocity in grace. Rather, in our language of modes of existence, reciprocity can also be conceived of in terms of heteronomy (see section 2.3 in chapter 1).³³ This is why even though we emphasize the heteronomous mode of love in 1

aspect of honor, the authors write, “The paradox that honor is at the same time a matter of moral conscience and a sentiment on the one hand, and on the other, a fact of repute and precedence, whether attained by virtue of birth, power, wealth, sanctity, prestige, guile, force, or simony (or, to take another paradox, that those whose honor is greatest feel least obliged to defend it), implied that honor could not merely be reduced and treated as an epiphenomenon of some other factor, but obeyed a logic of its own which could dispel the paradoxes.” Ibid., 5.

³⁰ Ibid., 3.

³¹ Pitt-Rivers finds that grace “shares with honor the same tendency to be evanescent and self-contradictory. Sometimes the two words are almost interchangeable: you pay honor in offering grace, for it is an expression of sentiment freely willed. You expose your honor in doing so, precisely because there is no obligation to return grace unless it comes from the heart – and you are dishonored if you get a ‘brush-off,’ in which case you are justified in being offended. Hence it can be seen that exchanges of honor are very similar to exchanges of grace.” See Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Postscript: The Place of Grace in Anthropology,” in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology*, 240.

³² Ibid., 241. Pitt-Rivers asks, “Can one explain systems of reciprocity adequately without considering the possibility of non-reciprocity, i.e. gratuity? ... And are not thanks the common coinage of encounters between persons? Yet what do they imply? What is their logic? ... This oversight might be accounted for simply by a regrettable tendency among those of a functionalist turn to mind to jump to conclusions regarding the significance of human actions on the basis of expressed intentions, without examining their mode of expression: to reduce each institution to ‘what it amounts to’ or ‘what it does’ in terms of practical results, ignoring its cultural roots, thinking that there is nothing more to be known about the culture of a people than what they themselves consciously recognize.” Ibid., 216.

³³ It is clear in the following remarks by Pitt-Rivers that we do have reciprocity in grace, but the reciprocity is not to be understood in the mode of relationality but of heteronomy. He writes, “To summarize: in the sense of benefaction, gift, demonstration of benevolence, concession, graciousness, pardon, or indulgence, grace is inspired by the notion of something over and above what is due, economically, legally, or morally: it is neither foreseeable, predictable by reasoning, nor subject to guarantee. It stands outside the system of reciprocal services. It cannot be owed or won, specified in advance or merited. Hence it can mean remission of a sin or a debt, mercy, pardon, or forgiveness and thus it is opposed to justice and the law. As gratitude it is the only return-gift that conserves the nature of the initial

Corinthians, we do not deny that Paul’s vision of love can be interpreted in other modes of existence. A “felt” honor cannot be separated from the claimed and paid honor. Given these different aspects of honor, we can perhaps also speak of the “felt,” “claimed,” and “paid” aspects of gift and love, to which Konstan alludes in the following:

The idea of *philia* – “love” or “friendship” – extended over or underpinned a range of transactions *running from* a purely altruistic benefaction – our idea of a freely bestowed gift – *to* commercial or (as we might see it) quasi-commercial exchanges that looked to realizing some remuneration or even gain...³⁴

We italicize “*running from ... to ...*” to stress the different modes of existence of gift and love. As Yochanan Muffs has highlighted the felt and paid aspects of love in the legal texts of Ancient Near Eastern documents, he also stresses the felt aspect in the giving and receiving of gifts (see section 5 in chapter 1). Muffs even refers to 2 Cor. 9:5-7 as an illustration of his argument to underscore the indispensable element of *chara* (“joy”), which is closely related to *charis*, in the acts of giving and receiving to signify an inner attitude of volition and willingness.³⁵ Likewise, in his analysis of the relation of *charis* with the verb חָנַן (“grace”) and רַחֵם (“loving kindness”) in the Hebrew Bible, Walther Zimmerli mentions the “heart-felt” quality of these Hebrew words. Zimmerli further argues that the noun חֵן (which is different from the verb חָנַן that “indicates the gracious act from the standpoint of the giver”) “manifests a wholly astonishing detachment from the giver and his gracious act and relates the value established

prestation. You cannot pay for a favor in any way or it ceases to be one, you can only thank, though on a later occasion you can demonstrate gratitude by making an equally ‘free’ gift in return.” Ibid., 231.

³⁴ See David Konstan, “Can’t Buy Me Love,” 102. Emphasis added.

³⁵ In his summary, Muffs writes, “the volitional metaphors of love and joy found in a wide range of legal situations, but their distribution in seemingly non-legal contexts is much wider than the traditional legalist would ever expect: not only Deuteronomy and Chronicles, but Ben Sirah and Philo, the sermons of Paul, early and late rabbinic midrash and *piyyut*, Jewish and Christian liturgy, Samaritan marriage documents and early Arabic deeds of sale.” See Yochanan Muffs, *Love and Joy: Law, Language and Religion in Ancient Israel* (New York and Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 122.

thereby to the recipient.”³⁶ When it comes to חַסְדִּים , Zimmerli notes that it “always contains an element of spontaneous freedom in the demonstration of goodness or in kindly conduct, and it cannot be reduced to what is owed or to a duty.”³⁷ The heart-felt quality of חַסְדִּים is further stressed by Uriah Kim as an “act of ‘affection and kindness’ that a person can perform for another for the sake of God or for the sake of human solidarity, irrespective of whether or not there is a close relationship between them.”³⁸

It is perhaps because of these aspects of *charis* that James Harrison, in his analysis of the usage of *charis* in Jewish and Greco-Roman sociopolitical and religious contexts, finds that “[a]lmost universally, Paul uses $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ and its cognates in a benefaction context, but at times with reserve as far as reciprocity is concerned.”³⁹ Note the “but,” which for us manifests the felt aspect of *charis* that cannot be systematized. It appears that while Harrison argues that “Paul

³⁶ See Walther Zimmerli, “ $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ κτλ.,” in *TDNT* 9: 379. “In the חַסְדִּים given by Yahweh there is no longer reflected the relation between giver and recipient but that between the bearer of חַסְדִּים and a third person in whose eyes the חַסְדִּים of him who bears it has its effect.” *Ibid.*, 380.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 382. Different from חַסְדִּים , “in which we have movement from the one to the other but not maintaining of a relation of fellowship,” חַסְדִּים “presupposes an ongoing fellowship.” *Idem.*

³⁸ See Uriah Y. Kim, *Identity and Loyalty in the David Story: A Postcolonial Reading* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), 27. For a very helpful review of scholarship on *hesed*, see pages 30-60.

³⁹ See James R. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace in Its Greco-Roman Context* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 2. At the very beginning of his monograph, Harrison clearly states: “This thesis will argue that the Graeco-Roman benefaction context of $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ is the backdrop for Paul’s understanding of divine and human grace. Paul’s language of grace would have been assessed by his auditors against the hellenistic reciprocity system that shaped the rituals of giving and receiving throughout the eastern Mediterranean basin. This was, after all, the area in which Paul founded and pastored his fledgling house churches. Paul’s Gentile converts were intimately familiar with the operations of Hellenistic beneficence. To be sure, the Roman patronal system was well known in the Greek East, initially through the benefactions of the republican luminaries and later through the munificence of the Caesars. But the traditional benefaction system of the Greek city-states continued to flourish well into the imperial period, along with its reciprocity conventions and terminology.” See James R. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace in Its Greco-Roman Context*, 1. He continues, “Paul’s Jewishness would not have insulated him against the impact of hellenistic reciprocity ideology. The very fact that Paul, in sharp contrast to the LXX, chose $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ (‘grace’) over against $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ (‘mercy’) as his central description of beneficence (divine and human) should alert us to this. Whereas *hesed* (‘mercy’) was the most frequently used Hebrew word for covenantal beneficence in the Old Testament, Paul rarely employs its LXX equivalents ($\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$, $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$). Instead, unexpectedly, he magnifies $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ and its cognates...” *Ibid.*, 2. Regarding Philo and Josephus, Harrison writes: “Both authors use an extensive range of inscriptional benefaction terminology and motifs (including $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$) in contexts of human and divine beneficence. Philo leans towards a Graeco-Roman conception of merit in describing covenantal $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$, whereas Josephus excises any LXX reference to covenantal $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ and dresses the Old Testament narrative in benefaction garb. Each author critiques the Graeco-Roman understanding of beneficence. Philo caricatures the $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ of the benefaction system and contrasts this in Stoic manner with the unconditioned generosity of God. Josephus compares the character of the true God with the $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ of the pagan gods and moralises about the self-interest of Graeco-Roman beneficence.” *Ibid.*, 165-66.

endorses conventions from the honorific inscriptions that stress the obligation of the beneficiary to respond worthily of the Benefactor,”⁴⁰ he considers (1) “Paul’s emphasis on the unilateral nature of divine grace,”⁴¹ (2) “Paul’s portrait of God as a dishonoured Benefactor (Rom. 1: 21-22),”⁴² (3) “Paul’s avoidance of the inscriptional language of commensurability (ἄξιος, κατάξιος) in conjunction with the language of grace,”⁴³ etc. as Paul’s critique of the patronage and benefaction systems in the Roman Empire. Elsewhere, Harrison further claims that “Paul’s presentation of electing grace in Romans is aimed as much at the Julio-Claudian rulers mediating divine favours as at contemporary Jewish understandings of election ... and the arrogance of Gentile Christians towards their Jewish brothers (Rom 11:17–21).”⁴⁴ In the face of the unilateral and superabundant grace of God, Paul, according to Harrison, “continues to affirm the obligation of believers to each other and to their Graeco-Roman neighbours. But he transforms the dynamic of reciprocity by means of the debt of love.”⁴⁵ In the language of deSilva, according to whom

⁴⁰ Ibid., 287.

⁴¹ Harrison finds that this emphasis “was directed against the idea that God was compelled by acts of human piety to reciprocate beneficently, as was the traditional belief in antiquity regarding the Graeco-Roman pantheon and the underworld deities of the magical papyri.” Ibid., 18. While this “unilateral nature of divine grace” is important, Paul also emphasizes believers’ response and collaboration with God in light of the Christ-event. See John M. Barclay, “By the Grace of God I Am What I Am’: Grace and Agency in Philo and Paul,” in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*. Edited by John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 140-57. Also, see idem., “Grace Within and Beyond Reason: Philo and Paul in Dialogue,” in *Paul, Grace, and Freedom: Essays in Honor of John K. Riches*. Edited by Paul Middleton, Angus Paddison, and Karen Wenell (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 9-21.

⁴² Given this imagery of the crucified Lord, “what consequence does this have for the social fabric (cf. Rom. 1:24-32)?” “To what extent did Paul embark on a radical re-definition of the Graeco-Roman honour system?” See James R. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace in Its Greco-Roman Context*, 18.

⁴³ Ibid., 20. “Why does Paul (almost universally) ignore the traditional range of terminology found with χάρις in the inscriptions? Why does he so often replace it with the language of abundance in his epistles? Or, more specifically, in the case of Romans, with regnal language?” Ibid., 22.

⁴⁴ See James R. Harrison, “Paul, Theologian of Electing Grace,” in *Paul and His Theology*. Pauline Studies 3. Edited by Stanley E. Porter (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2006), 81. Here, Harrison refers to J. Rufus Fears, *Princeps A Diis Electus: The Divine Election of the Emperor As A Political Concept at Rome*. Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome. Vol. 26 (American Academy in Rome, 1977). See James R. Harrison, “Paul, Theologian of Electing Grace,” 101-107.

⁴⁵ See James R. Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace in Its Greco-Roman Context*, 343.

charis must be met with *charis* in the “dance of grace,”⁴⁶ it is crucial to examine how *charis* can be met by *charis* in its own logic of *charis*. For this purpose, we will turn to how *charis* can be conceptualized and configured, in particular in the mode of heteronomy, as Pitt-Rivers points out that the logic of *charis* is “not answerable to coherent reasoning.”⁴⁷

(ii) A Gift With(out) Present

According to *The New Oxford American Dictionary*, a gift is “a thing given willingly to someone without payment” or “a natural ability or talent,”⁴⁸ and the word “grace” refers to “(in Christian belief) the free and unmerited favor of God, as manifested in the salvation of sinners and the bestowal of blessings.”⁴⁹ The tricky part of this definition is the word “free.” According to *New Comprehensive International Dictionary of the English Language*, it primarily means “not bound by restrictions, physical, governmental, or moral; exempt from arbitrary domination or distinction; independent.”⁵⁰ It appears that, contrary to this definition of the “gift” as “free,” even if a gift is given freely, it can still elicit repayment – such as the bestowal of reputation, self-esteem, indebtedness, etc. – when it appears as a gift. Note that the repayment need not only

⁴⁶ For deSilva, “Once favor has been shown and gifts conferred, however, the result must invariably be that the recipient will show gratitude, will answer ‘grace’ with ‘grace.’ The indicative and the imperative of the New Testament are held together by this circle of grace: we must respond generously and fully, for God has given generously and fully.” See David A. deSilva, “Patronage and Reciprocity,” 61.

⁴⁷ “Grace is a ‘free’ gift, a favor, an expression of esteem, of the desire to please, a product of the arbitrary will, human or divine, an unaccountable love. Hence it is gratuitous in yet another sense: that of being not answerable to coherent reasoning...” See Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Postscript: The Place of Grace in Anthropology,” 224.

⁴⁸ *The New Oxford American Dictionary*. 2nd ed. Edited by Erin McKean (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 711.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 730.

⁵⁰ See *Funk & Wagnalls: New Comprehensive International Dictionary of the English Language*. Encyclopedic Edition. Edited by Allen Walker Read et al. (Newark, NJ: Publishers International Press, 1982), 503. Other meanings include (1) “Not enslaved or in bondage,” (2) “Not believing in or permitting slavery,” (3) “Self-determining, whether as implying the absence of control through external causes in the form of physical forces, legal commands, or moral influences, or as asserting the mysterious and inexplicable spontaneity of the self as possessed of so-called *free will*,” (4) “Having, conferring, or characterized by political liberty,” (5) “Liberated, by reason of age, from the authority of parents or guardians,” (6) “Invested with certain franchises,” (7) “Exempt from or not subject to,” (8) “Characterized by disregard of conventionality, ceremony, or formality,” (9) “Characterized by disregard of duty or propriety,” (10) “Without impediment or restraint,” (11) “Without restriction; especially without charge or cost,” (12) “Employing or giving unrestrainedly or without parsimony,” (13) “Expending energy without stint; ready and prompt in action or movement without urging,” (14) “Not closely bound to an original or pattern,” (15) “Not attached, bound, or fixed,” etc. *Idem*.

come from the receiver, it can also come from the society and the giver her/himself. Derrida's critique of the phenomenality of gift has well illustrated the problem with this "free" notion of gift, which for him cannot appear as a present.⁵¹ He writes:

If there is gift, the *given* of the gift ... must not come back to the giving (let us not already say to the subject, to the donor). It must not circulate, it must not be exchanged, it must not in any case be exhausted, as a gift, by the process of exchange, by the movement of circulation of the circle in the form of return to the point of departure. If the figure of the circle is essential to economics, the gift must remain *uneconomic*. Not that it remains foreign to the circle, but it must *keep* a relation of foreignness to the circle, a relation without relation of familiar foreignness. It is perhaps in this sense that the gift is the impossible.⁵²

Lest there be any misunderstanding, Derrida does not say that there is no gift.⁵³ Rather it is in the circle of economy, where time is represented as a circle, "that the gift is the impossible."⁵⁴ That is to say, the gift, "if there is any," "must not circulate," "must not come back to the giving," because if it does, the gift disappears. In fact, the three elements that constitute the conditions of possibility of gift – namely, the giver, gift, and receiver – also constitute the conditions of impossibility of gift. When a gift is understood in terms of the giver, gift, and receiver – since one cannot speak of gift without them – an identification of these elements can "come back to the giving," which means that the gift is not freely given. It has strings attached to it.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Horner argues that the notion of "freedom" and "presence" are the two fundamental issues that undergird the discussion of gift. See Robyn Horner, *Rethinking God as Gift: Marion, Derrida, and the Limits of Phenomenology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2001), 3-6.

⁵² See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*, 7.

⁵³ For example, Derrida clarifies: "I never said that there is no gift. No. I said exactly the opposite. What are the conditions for us to say there is a gift, if we cannot determine it theoretically, phenomenologically? It is through the experience of the impossibility; that its possibility is possible as impossible." See "On the Gift: A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion" (Moderated by Richard Kearney), in *God, the Gift, and Postmodernism*, 60.

⁵⁴ This is why immediately before this citation, Derrida writes, "Now the gift, *if there is any*, would no doubt be related to economy. One cannot treat the gift, this goes without saying, without treating this relation to economy, even to the money economy. But is not the gift, if there is any, also that which interrupts economy? That which, in suspending economic calculation, no longer gives rise to exchange? That which opens the circle so as to defy reciprocity or symmetry, the common measure, and so as to turn aside the return in view of the – no-return?" See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*, 7.

⁵⁵ As the gift cannot be (a) present, Derrida argues that an absolute forgetting is constitutive of gift. *Ibid.*, 15-23.

For Derrida, this paradox of gift does not mean that the gift can “[remain] foreign to the circle” of economy, as if it can be outside the circle. If it does, then one cannot speak of it. Yet, one does speak of it, but in the sense that it “must *keep* a relation of foreigners to the circle, a relation without relation of familiar foreigners.” Thus right after the above citation, Derrida continues, “Not impossible but *the* impossible. The very figure of the impossible. It announces itself, gives itself to be thought as the impossible.”⁵⁶ Note the word “figure,” which we can understand in terms of a semantic, not syntactic, metaphor (see sections 3 and 4 in chapter 2) that signifies meaning discursively as a meaning effect. This notion of gift as the figure of the impossible is further fleshed out by Derrida. He writes:

In order for there to be gift, gift event, some “one” has to give some “thing” to someone other, without which “giving” would be meaningless. In other words, if giving indeed means what, in speaking of it among ourselves, we think it means, then it is necessary, in a certain situation, that some “one” give some “thing” to some “one other,” and so forth. This appears tautological, it goes without saying, and seems to imply the defined term in the definition, which is to say it defines nothing at all. Unless the discreet introduction of “one” and of “thing” and especially of “other” (“someone other”) does not portend some disturbance in the tautology of a gift that cannot be satisfied with giving or with giving (to) *itself* [se *donner*] without giving something (other) to someone (other).⁵⁷

Here, the semantic elements that are implicit in Greimas’s (syntactic) actantial model is readily seen (see section 3.3.c in the Methodological Appendix). How? We will refer to Derrida again.

Let us suppose that someone wants or desires to give to someone. In our logic and our language we say it thus: someone wants or desires, someone *intends-to-give* something to someone. Already the complexity of the formula appears formidable. It supposes a subject and a verb, a constituted subject, which can also be

⁵⁶ Ibid., 7. Derrida explains, “If we are going to speak of it [i.e., the impossible], we will have to name something. Not to present the thing, here the impossible, but to try with its name, or with some name, to give an understanding of or to think this impossible thing, this impossible itself. To say we are going to ‘name’ is perhaps already or still to say too much. For it is perhaps the name of name that is going to find itself put in question. If, for example, the gift were impossible, the name or noun ‘gift,’ what the linguist or the grammarian believes he recognizes to be a name, would not be a name. At least, it would not name what one thinks it names, to wit, the unity of a meaning that would be that of the gift. Unless the gift were the impossible but not the unnameable or the unthinkable, and unless in this gap between the impossible and the thinkable a dimension opens up where *there is* gift...” Ibid., 10.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 11-12.

collective ... in any case, a subject identical to itself and conscious of its identity, indeed seeking through the gesture of the gift to constitute its own unity and, precisely, to get its own identity recognized so that that identity comes back to it, so that it can reappropriate its identity: as its property.⁵⁸

As noted, in an actantial model, when a “subject” gives an “object” to a “receiver,” the “subject” is helped or opposed by the actant “helper” or “opponent” – which also includes time, space, knowledge, ability, and will – in giving the “object” to the “receiver.” In fact, the “subject” is not only sent by the “sender” to perform such a giving, s/he may also be moved by the “object” and/or the “receiver” to do so. The example of a lover giving “love” to the beloved is a case in point. Here, the “subject” is de-subjectified by the “beloved” (the intended “receiver”) and/or by the “being in love” feeling (the “object”) as s/he is attracted – that is, no longer acting as a “subject” but a “receiver” of such an attraction – to show her/his love toward the beloved. In this scenario, the giver is also the receiver. Similarly, the “receiver” of love given by the “subject” can also be the “sender” who moves the “subject” to give her/his love to the “receiver.” Regarding the love (i.e., the “object”) that the lover desires to give, it cannot be exhausted by the gift that the lover wants to give to the beloved. It is only a manifestation of love. It is not love itself. Derrida speaks of the complicated relation among giver, gift, and receiver in the following:

These three elements, identical to themselves or on the way to an identification with themselves, look like what is presupposed by every gift event. For the gift to be possible, for there to be gift event, according to our common language and logic, it seems that this compound structure is indispensable. Notice that in order to say this, I must already suppose a certain precomprehension of what *gift* means. I suppose that I know and that you know what “to give,” “gift,” “donor,” “donee” mean in our common language. As well as “to want,” “to desire,” “to intend.”⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ibid., 10-11.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 11. The self-deconstructive relation of gift and desire is also highlighted in a middle voice by Jean-Luc Nancy, “Gift, Desire. ‘Agathon,’” in *The Sense of the World*. Translated and Foreword by Jeffrey S. Librett (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 50-53. Nancy finds that “the pure desire of the gift can only be a desire without object, incapable of ‘envisaging’ in any way whatsoever that which, of the gift and in the gift, must remain foreign not only to the giver but also – absolutely surprising – to the receiver of the gift. The desire of the gift programs an appropriation from which the gift as gift escapes – and desire as well. How could one

Given this inherent ambiguity in what it means for some “one” to give some “thing” to some “one other” – where “one,” “thing,” and “one other” cannot be objectified and neatly identified – Derrida finds that “the conditions of possibility of the gift (that some ‘one’ gives some ‘thing’ to some ‘one other’) designate simultaneously the conditions of the impossibility of the gift.”⁶⁰ Note that here Derrida is not talking about the gift as such but the conditions of the (possibility and impossibility of the) gift, which is one of the complaints that Marion has against his teacher.⁶¹ In light of these conditions, Derrida concludes:

appropriate a gift? Reciprocally, the gift given to desire, in order to be a gift given to what desires in desire, cannot give anything that would fulfill desire. It has to be a gift of desire itself. *The appropriation of giving and the giving of the inappropriable configure the originary chiasmus of philosophy – and of sense...* the desire of the gift should desire essentially not to appropriate its ‘object,’ and that the gift of desire should give that which cannot be given and should give no ‘subject’ of an ‘object.’” Ibid., 52.

⁶⁰ See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*, 12. Derrida writes, “The simple intention to give, insofar as it carries the intentional meaning of the gift, suffices to make a return payment to oneself. The simple consciousness of the gift right away sends itself back the gratifying image of goodness or generosity, of the giving-being who, knowing itself to be such, recognizes itself in a circular, specular fashion, in a sort of auto-recognition, self-approval, and narcissistic gratitude. And this is produced as soon as there is a subject, as soon as donor and donee are constituted as identical, identifiable subjects, capable of identifying themselves by keeping and naming themselves. It is even a matter, in this circle, of the movement of subjectivation, of the constitutive retention of the subject that identifies with itself. The becoming-subject then reckons with itself, it enters into the realm of the calculable as subject. That is why, if there is gift, it cannot take place between two subjects exchanging objects, things, or symbols. The question of the gift should therefore seek its place before any relation to the subject, before any conscious or unconscious relation to self of the subject ... There where there is subject and object, the gift would be excluded. A subject will never give an object to another subject. But the subject and the object are arrested effects of the gift, arrests of the gift. At the zero or infinite speed of the circle. If the gift is annulled in the economic odyssey of the circle as soon as it appears as gift or as soon as it signifies *itself as* gift, there is no longer any ‘logic of the gift,’ and one may safely say that a consistent discourse on the gift becomes impossible: It misses its object and always speaks, finally, of something else.” Ibid., 23-24.

⁶¹ Marion writes: “How can this be understood, if the ‘conditions of the possibility of the gift ... simultaneously designate the conditions of the impossibility of the gift?’ Quite simply, one can note that this objection contains its own refutation: it only establishes the conditions under which the gift becomes impossible. In no way does it establish that what thus becomes impossible merits the name of gift. I respond, therefore, that the conditions of impossibility only prove that what was studied does *not* merit the title of gift and that, if there is to be a gift, it will necessarily have other conditions of possibility than this, namely, conditions of impossibility. Positively, this means that the gift is not given in the system of exchange maintained by the reciprocity that links giver and recipient: in this supposed economy of gift, it is the letter of the gift that one saves [*fait l'économie*] by transforming it into a subsistent being, permanently present, accorded value (of use and/or exchange) and finality (useful, without end, etc.), produced or destroyed by efficiency and calculation, shut in by the stranglehold of its causes, in short, by transforming it into a common being. Such a common being can never appear as a gift, not because the concept of gift is contradictory but precisely because this being in no way gives rise to a gift. Any effort that tries to begin with an already obvious and settled concept of ‘gift’ in order to reach the gift never analyzes anything other than a common being under this name.” See Jean-Luc Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift” (translated by John Conley and Danielle Poe), in *The Visible and the Revealed* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 87-88.

At the limit, the gift as gift ought not appear as gift: either to the donee or to the donor. It cannot be gift as gift except by not being present as gift. Neither to the “one” nor to the “other.” If the other perceives or receives it, if he or she keeps it as gift, the gift is annulled. But the one who gives it must not see it or know it either; otherwise he begins, at the threshold, as soon as he intends to give, to pay himself with a symbolic recognition, to praise himself, to approve of himself, to gratify himself, to congratulate himself, to give back to himself symbolically the value of what he thinks he has given or what he is preparing to give.⁶²

For Antonio Malo, this insistence on the non-identification of the giver and receiver is not practical in our everyday life. As we are “corporal relational beings, we are needy and at the same time able to give. We can give because we have first received from others.”⁶³ Derrida would not disagree with Malo, as he also speaks of our indebtedness to our heritage.⁶⁴ But, the issue is the “what” the “giver” (if it can be clearly identified) gives and the “receiver” (if it can be clearly identified) receives. Does the “receiver” receive exactly “what” the “giver” intends to give? If not, then how do we speak of the “gift”? However, Malo’s point is well taken, in

⁶² See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*, 14. This critique of the presence of the gift is further tied to the notions of secrecy, mystery, responsibility, and sacrifice in Derrida’s reading of the works of Jan Patočka. See Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*. Translated by David Wills (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 29-34, 40-46, 51, 61-64, etc.

⁶³ See Antonio Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” *International Philosophy Quarterly* 52.2 Issue 206 (June 2012): 149-68 (165).

⁶⁴ For example, Derrida argues that “the heir must always respond to a sort of double injunction, a contradictory assignation: It is necessary first of all to know and to know how to *reaffirm* what comes ‘before us,’ which we therefore receive even before choosing, and to behave in this respect as a free subject ... What does it mean to reaffirm? It means not simply accepting this heritage but relaunching it otherwise and keeping it alive ... This reaffirmation, which both continues and interrupts, resembles (at least) an election, a selection, a decision.” Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, “Choosing One’s Heritage,” in *For What Tomorrow ... : A Dialogue*. Translated by Jeff Fort (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 3-4. In other words, for Derrida, the gift is a matter “of responding faithfully but also as rigorously as possible both to the injunction or the order of the *gift* (‘give’ [*donne*]) as well as to the injunction or the order of meaning (presence, science, knowledge): *Know* still what giving *wants to say*, *know how to give*, know what you want and want to say when you give, know what you intend to give, know how the gift annuls itself, commit yourself [*engage-toi*] even if commitment is the destruction of the gift by the gift, give economy its chance.” See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*, 30. Or, in the words of Caputo: “*Know* everything that is about in the gift, *know* how the gift is surreptitiously converted into economy, *know* how much the gift is inclined to produce the circle of debt, *know* all of this – and then *give*. Don’t give *up*, give! For the gift does not belong to the order of truth as knowledge but to the order of the event, of doing or making the truth, *facere veritatem*, and the same thing that is said of ‘give’ can be said of ‘love.’” See John D. Caputo, “Love Among the Deconstructibles: A Response to Gregg Lambert,” *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory* 5.2 (April 2004): 37-57 (56).

particular as he speaks of the love and care that one receives in different stages of life. He continues:

Without the giving of others (nourishment, physical and spiritual care, love) we cannot develop ourselves as humans: we cannot walk, speak, love. Later on, without giving we cannot nourish as personalities: as friend, husband/wife, father/mother. Although receiving physical and spiritual care and giving love have in many cases a different referent (a receiver and a giver), they are equally necessary for us – not only because for each of us to be loved and to love are equally necessary, but above all because the virtues that others put into practice to love us are the same as those that we need to acquire in order to love others. So, both receiving and giving are needed in a double way: naturally and ethically. In other words, the mutual exchanges of giving and receiving are necessary not only in an economic and social way, but in every personal relation, especially in human love, where *eros* and *agape* are two faces of the same love.⁶⁵

In saying that “the mutual exchanges of giving and receiving are necessary not only in an economic and social way, but in every personal relation, especially in human love,” Malo points to different modes of existence, *which then highlights the priority of the mode of heteronomy in Derrida’s notion of gift*. The question is not that “mutual exchanges” contradict the notion of gift as “free.” Rather the question is: In what mode of existence are they understood? As we have noted, heteronomy does not exclude mutuality (see section 2 in chapter 1). Cristina Grenholm’s example of an asymmetrical but mutual relationship between the pregnant woman and her child is a case in point.⁶⁶ In giving care, love, protection, and nourishment to the child, it is unlikely that the mother thinks that she is “giving” to the child; the child is not only part of her life (inside her), the child is her (life). In fact, as the “what” that the mother gives and that the child receives cannot be objectified, it is strange to speak of an economy between the mother and her child. The relationship can certainly be thought in such a way, but it is a syntactic assertion or negation of the mother-child semantic relationship. The relationship between the mother and her child is in

⁶⁵ See Antonio Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” 165.

⁶⁶ See Cristina Grenholm, *Motherhood and Love: Beyond the Gendered Stereotype of Theology*. Translated by Marie Tåqvist (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2011), 27-60, 162-88.

the mode of middle voice without a clear distinction between the giver and receiver. In the words of Derrida, “No one knows who is thanking whom for what.”⁶⁷

In his response to Derrida’s analysis of what constitutes the conditions of gift,⁶⁸ Marion argues that one can phenomenologically reduce – that is, *re-ducere* (“to lead back”) – the gift to its pure givenness that gives the gift itself (cf. Fundamental Semantics) (not constrained by metaphysics and the Heideggerian question of Being)⁶⁹ “by bracketing the transcendence of the giver, the transcendence of the recipient, and the transcendence of the objectivity of the exchanged object.”⁷⁰ For example, in showing that the gift cannot be objectified in our lived

⁶⁷ See “On the Gift: A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion” (Moderated by Richard Kearney), in *God, the Gift, and Postmodernism*, 77.

⁶⁸ For Marion, Derrida’s analysis is based on the principle of sufficient reason that governs the law of economy. He writes, “Let me underline more than Derrida does that this schema, which dominates all the anthropologies of the gift (first among them that of Mauss) remains entirely metaphysical: the giver gives the gift as an efficient cause, uses a formal cause and a material cause (corresponding to the gift), following a final cause (the good of the recipient and/or the glory of the giver). These four causes permit givenness to satisfy the principle of sufficient reason. Reciprocity repeats this sufficient reason right up to the perfect application of the principle of identity in bringing the gift back to itself. It is also by reference to this model that one can measure all the apparently extreme or aberrant forms of givenness, which never really put anything into question. Thinking through givenness always comes down to thinking about the system of exchange, regulated by the terms of causality and the principles of metaphysics. Now as Derrida firmly demonstrates, this model not only enters into self-contradiction with each of its elements, but it actually succeeds in making givenness disappear entirely. The very phenomenon of givenness collapses before our eyes.” See Jean-Luc Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift,” 81-82. For details on Marion’s phenomenological analysis of the gift, see Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*. Translated by Jeffrey L. Kosky. Cultural Memory in the Present series (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 71-118. In this chapter, we will just focus on “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift.”

⁶⁹ For a succinct and informative representation of Marion’s reduction of the gift to givenness, ultimately in an amorous relationship in which the lover and beloved give each other her/his flesh (that is, the lover to the beloved and the beloved to the lover) *as* they receive each other’s *and* their own when they encounter each other face to face in the giving and receiving at the same time, see Christina Gschwandtner, *Reading Jean-Luc Marion: Exceeding Metaphysics* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 205-224. For a debate between Derrida and Marion on the notion of givenness (*Gegebenheit*), see “On the Gift: A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion” (Moderated by Richard Kearney), 66-73.

⁷⁰ He continues, “If one can manage to practice *εποχή* on the gift, it will be practiced by liberating the gift from the terms and the status of object, from any notion of transcendence or of economic exchange. Thus, it will lead the gift back to pure and simple givenness, at least if such a givenness can occur. In this operation, the reduction of the gift to givenness does not come about *despite* the triple objection raised against the gift by Derrida but quite clearly *because* of it: the alleged ‘conditions of the impossibility of gift’ (neither recipient nor giver nor gift) would actually become the conditions for the possibility of the gift’s reduction to pure givenness, by *εποχή* of the transcendent conditions of economic exchange.” *Ibid.*, 89. Caputo points out that Derrida and Marion “have very different conceptions of just what constitutes an ‘economy’ of the gift ... Marion does not dispute the contention that from the very moment that any of the three elements of the gift [i.e., the giver, receiver, and the gift] appear the *movement of debt* is set in motion. That does not present a problem to Marion because debt enters into the very *definition of the*

experience, Marion foregrounds the “givability” (with respect to the giver) and “acceptability” (with respect to the receiver) of gift and argues for the conditions of impossibility of gift as the conditions of possibility of gift.⁷¹ For Marion, however, the gift does not appear “at the moment” when the giver gives it to someone. Rather, it appears “at the moment” when the giver finds it “for the first time” to be “givable.”⁷² In other words, the giver becomes the giver when s/he responds to the gift in recognizing its givability. Marion writes, “The gift decides the giver. The gift itself decides: it resides in the decision of the giver, but this decision rests upon the obligation motivated by an anterior gift.”⁷³ One can object that it is not the gift that gives itself in its giving but the giver who decides the gift as givable. But we cannot deny our lived experience of being drawn to a gift that we find givable.

Similarly, when it comes to the gift-receiver, Marion contends that as the gift can be refused or overlooked, we need to address the “acceptability” of gift. A gift may be imposed upon the receiver, but if the receiver refuses or ignores it, it “could not fulfill itself perfectly, although it does fulfill the real conditions of givability (objectivity, availability, etc.).”⁷⁴ On the other hand, even if a gift is not given, its “availability” can be provoked when the receiver

gift for him – ‘donability,’ he says, means the duty (*devoir*) to give – while for Derrida debt is poison to the gift, *Vergiftung*, and the very *definition of economy*, which annuls the gift. For Marion, to escape economy it is enough to give a non-objectivistic phenomenological description of the gift outside the *chain of the four causes* [see note 69], while for Derrida the defining feature of an economy of exchange is the link or *chain between credit and debt*, even if the chain (*catena, cadeau*) is composed of invisible-moral links, not causal or objectivistic ones... Marion is worrying about causality, Derrida about credit.” See John D. Caputo, “Apostles of the Impossible: On God and the Gift in Derrida and Marion,” in *God, the Gift, and Postmodernism*, 212.

⁷¹ For a sustained evaluation of Derrida’s and Marion’s notion of the gift, see Robyn Horner, *Rethinking God as Gift*. While Horner’s evaluation leans towards Derrida’s position, Gschwandtner’s evaluation is more hospitable. See Christina Gschwandtner, *Reading Jean-Luc Marion*, 59-76.

⁷² See Jean-Luc Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift,” 91.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁷⁴ *Idem.* Here, we can think of Butler’s interpretation of Althusser’s notion of “interpellation” that seeks to subvert the attempted subjugation of interpellation. See Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997).

accepts it as gift.⁷⁵ Here, we can think of the phenomenon of “unintended meaning” in our process of meaning production,⁷⁶ in particular in the case of hidden and public transcripts.⁷⁷ For Marion, in fact, in recognizing and deciding the givability of gift, the giver is already a gift-receiver, since “making oneself a giver cannot be decided without the obligation (weighing upon the giver) of the gift that [s/he] has first received.”⁷⁸ Here, one can complain that the recognition can be egocentric. But, for Marion, the recognition, like anamorphosis, is iconic as the viewer needs to her/his perspective accordingly to the viewpoint demanded by the “object.”

Given this phenomenological reduction of gift to givenness, Marion wants to show that the gift still takes place in our lived experience even with the bracketing of the receiver and giver. Marion further argues that “the bracketing of the recipient belongs intrinsically to the possibility of gift,”⁷⁹ because there is no receiver to restrict and inscribe it into an economy of exchange.

⁷⁵ “If we reflect upon the business of love, it often happens that acceptance provokes the availability of the gift; acceptance does not always hinge on the banal duplicity of seduction, but often on the evidence that I, I alone and more than another, affirm the capacity to let myself be seduced and freely consent to this seduction, like a call inverting the usual chronology. I consent to the possibility of a gift of this person and not of another to me, thus provoking his or her availability.” See Jean-Luc Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift,” 93.

⁷⁶ As Marion uses the example of the “reception of the call,” we can think of the relationship of call and response between God and believers in 1 Corinthians (see section 4 in chapter 1). We find that Marion’s notions of “givability” and “acceptability” echo his notion of “self” as a “dative self” in which the self is a dynamic product and production in the sense of being called and responsive to the call (see section 4 in the Introduction chapter). The “self” is not only de-subjectified by the call; s/he also manifests the calls as s/he registers and reconstitutes the call.

⁷⁷ See James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990).

⁷⁸ See Jean-Luc Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift,” 91. Marion writes, “Seeing the gift implies seeing it from the starting point of givenness. If the gift decides *itself*, it decides from the power of givenness, which weighs equally upon the giver and the recipient. Both only devote themselves [*s’adonnent*] to the gift inasmuch as they yield to the moment of givenness. The instant power of givenness makes the gift determine *itself* as gift through the double consent of the giver and of the recipient, who are less often agents of the gift and are more often acted upon by givenness.” *Ibid.*, 94. One may argue that the “seeing” is already an interpretation, which then is perspectival, if not also ideological, but for Marion, hermeneutics “involves less a gift of meaning than the meaning of gift – coming from the gift, or rather, seeing the fact as a gift, because it is envisioned from the starting point of givenness.” *Idem.*

⁷⁹ See Jean-Luc Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift,” 95. One may wonder whether this bracketing supports Derrida’s argument that the gift cannot appear as such, in particular if the notion of gift is constituted by the giver, receiver, and gift.

Marion uses three figures – i.e., an enemy, an ungrateful person, and an anonymous person – to show the necessity, possibility, and desirability to bracket the receiver.⁸⁰

First, citing Luke 6:33 – “If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you?” (ποία ὑμῶν χάρις ἐστίν) – Marion points out that since the gift “would lose all gratuity and hence also all grace if it were given to a recipient liable to ‘return’ it,”⁸¹ one’s enemy becomes “the ally of the gift”⁸² as s/he is incapable or unwilling to reciprocate the gift that s/he has received. Even when one’s enemy rejects the gift, the refusal indirectly attests to the (appearance of the) gift. Secondly, as Marion cites John 4:10 – “... If you knew the gift of God (τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ θεοῦ)...” – to show that the gift can be ignored or unacknowledged. But, even if someone is ungrateful, her/his ingratitude reveals her/his encountering with the gift.⁸³ Thirdly, referring to Matthew 25:37 (cf. v. 44) – “... Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and gave you drink?” – Marion speaks of the desirability of an invisible receiver in a situation where the figure who wants to be received and whom people want to receive and yet fail to receive or fail to realize that they have received. For Marion, the anonymity of the receiver in the case of Matthew 25:31-46 not only universalizes the gift, since no one can tell through whom Christ works and hence must treat everyone as if s/he were Christ. It also lets the gift give “without making distinctions between people, in complete indifference to the recipient’s merit or

⁸⁰ Here, we find that Paul’s description of the crucified Christ echoes Marion’s illustration of these figures. For example, the world undoubtedly wants to receive the (hidden) wisdom of God and the Lord of glory, but because of ignorance, it killed him (1 Cor. 2:8). Indeed, because the world has its own notion of wisdom and power, it rejects and against the wisdom of God (1:21), even though God, Holy Spirit, and Jesus apparently want people to receive and acknowledge the call of God into the fellowship of Jesus (1:9; 2:2; 12:3). In spite of the world’s derision, rejection, and condemnation, the call of God remains, as God is *pistos* (cf. 1:9, 10:13).

⁸¹ See Jean-Luc Marion, “Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift,” 95.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 96.

⁸³ Marion writes, “The ungrateful person suffers from the principle and the very possibility that a gift might affect and come to him or her. He does not refuse this or that gift with this or that objective support; he refuses the debt, or rather, the self-avowal of being indebted. In his obstinate effort to reestablish the principle that ‘I owe no one anything,’ he thus confirms *a contrario* the sudden appearance of the gift, which decides itself from itself and which places this principle in question. By this principle, the ungrateful person reveals negatively the gift reduced to givenness in all of its purity.” *Ibid.*, 97.

demerit, in perfect ignorance of any possible reciprocity (in other words, in complete conformity with the gratuity of givenness).”⁸⁴

In the case of charity and inheritance, the figures of an anonymous receiver and of an anonymous giver share similar qualities. Just as the receiver is unknown to the giver in the case of charity, the giver is also unknown to the receiver in the case of inheritance. For Derrida, as we noted, both these scenarios do not make the gift “free” without presence. As long as the giver is aware of her/his gift, the gift disappears. In the case of the anonymous giver, the situation is worse because now the receiver is forever indebted since s/he will never be able to repay the unknown giver. However, citing Matthew 6:3 – “... do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing” – Marion argues that for a “giver who gives according to the mode of givenness does not know what he gives.”⁸⁵ That is to say, the giver is not the “subject” who gives, but a “subject” who in “the mode of givenness” accepts the gift and gives accordingly. In the words of Marion, “Perhaps [the giver] does not even know if he is giving ... He gives not in order to know or to make it known or to make himself seen – but rather in order to give.”⁸⁶ Is such a giving is possible? Let us recall Paul’s saying in 1 Cor. 9:16-17:

For if I gospelize (εὐαγγελίζωμαι), it is not for me a boasting because the necessity (ἀνάγκη) presses upon me; for woe to me if I do not gospelize (εὐαγγελίσωμαι); for if I do this willingly, I have a wage, but if not willingly, I have been entrusted the stewardship (οἰκονομίαν πεπίστευμαι).

⁸⁴ Ibid., 98. For Paul, this last description of the gift poses a tremendous demand upon believers to be always vigilant towards the works of God among people. We can see why Paul would go to the Corinthian believers in weakness, fear, and much trembling (1 Cor. 2:3). If no one can possibly be responsible and response-able to all situations, the discernment and decision that one makes is necessarily delimited, if not also flawed. Perhaps this is why Paul desperately wants the *pistis* of believers to be in the power of God (2:5). Paul realizes that since only the spirit from God knows the things of God (2:12), believers must speak of the gifts in the teachings of the spirit as they discern spiritual matters *with* spiritual people (or matters) (λαλοῦμεν ... ἐν δικακτοῖς πνεύματος, πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες) (2:13). The gifts, in other words, cannot be objectified and possessed. They can only be spoken of *in the teachings of the spirit*. Believers cannot discern by themselves. They must discern spiritual matters *together with* spiritual (people or matters). The gift-giver is God and the spirit and they cannot be objectified.

⁸⁵ Idem.

⁸⁶ Idem.

We have already noted the middle voice of “gospelize” (see section 3.3 in chapter 2). “To gospelize” does not mean to *give* the gospel to someone as if one possesses it. Rather, to gospelize means to manifest the gospel *so that* one may become its participant (ἵνα συγ-κοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι) (9:23). Herein lies the wage of the gospel. We can go beyond Marion’s explanation and say that Paul gospelizes as he is gospelized (i.e., the gospel presses upon him). This is why Paul is careful not to gospelize (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι) in the wisdom of *logos*, lest the cross of Christ may be emptied (κενωθῆ) (of its power) (1:17). Paul is aware that he is only a medium of the gospel and as a medium he is vigilant that he is not the owner of the gospel, lest the (gift of the) gospel is emptied of its potentiality. In the language of Marion, the middle voice of “gospelize” points to the bracketing of the receiver and the giver at the same time.

This notion of giving in terms of “in order to give” introduces a sense of indebtedness in Marion’s notion of gift, which then can circum-scribe the gift into an economy of exchange. But in his clarification, Marion writes, “The debt here does not designate an act or a situation of the self, but rather its state, its definition – possibly, its manner of being.”⁸⁷ This indebted “manner of being,” for Marion, highlights the fact that “[i]t is in recognizing its debt that consciousness becomes conscious of itself, because the debt precedes all consciousness and defines the self: the self, as such, the self of consciousness, receives *itself* right away as a gift (given) without giver (giving).”⁸⁸ In a group-oriented culture where everything is always already interrelated, we can agree with Marion that “[t]he debt brings about the self so that the self discovers itself already there – that is, as a fact and thus as given.”⁸⁹ The notion of “debt,” in other words, is like a

⁸⁷ Ibid., 99.

⁸⁸ Idem.

⁸⁹ Idem.

middle voice that does not clearly define the “subject,” “object,” and “receiver.” The “subject,” “object,” and “receiver” co-arise at the same time,⁹⁰ *as they are always already interrelated.*

(iii) The (Conditions) of Possibility of Gift in the Mode of Heteronomy

Given the ambiguity and ambivalence in the notion of gift – that is, whether a gift is really *free* or disguised as a “down payment” for further benefit – we see instances in Western antiquity where gift discourse and terminology were developed to identify different types of gifts to ensure that gifts are *freely* given without obligations and expectations of reciprocation. For example, in pointing out different gift-giving relationships, Marcel Hénaff further categorizes gifts into three types: (1) “ceremonial,” (2) “gracious,” and (3) “solidarity-based.”⁹¹ For Hénaff, the first type of gift “is always described as *public* and *reciprocal*” with the “lexical field ... of *dosis/antidosis* in Greek, in which *anti* always indicates the *action in return* that is called for by the initial action.”⁹² The second type is “a spontaneous generosity toward those close to the giver” and its “lexical field is that of *charis* in Greek (one of the primary meanings of which is

⁹⁰ Concerning the relation between time and gift, Derrida writes, “There would be a gift only at the instant when the *paradoxical* instant (in the sense in which Kierkegaard says of the paradoxical instant of decision that it is madness) tears time apart. In this sense one would never have the time of a gift. In any case, time, the ‘present’ of the gift, is no longer thinkable as a now, that is, as a present bound up in the temporal synthesis.” See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*, 9. This importance of the “instant” comes to the fore in the work of Bourdieu: “It is the lapse of time between the gift and the counter-gift that makes it possible to mask the contradiction between the experienced (or desired) truth of the gift as generous, gratuitous, unrequited act, and the truth that emerges from the model, which makes it a stage in in a relationship of exchange that transcends singular acts of exchange. In other words, the interval that makes it possible to experience the objective exchange as a discontinuous series of free and generous acts is what makes gift exchange viable and acceptable by facilitating and favoring self-deception, a lie told to oneself, as the condition of the coexistence of recognition and misrecognition of the logic of the exchange.” See Pierre Bourdieu, “Marginalia – Some Additional Notes on the Gift,” in *The Logic of the Gift*, 231-32. Through his notion of *habitus* that explains the recognition and misrecognition of the gift that are supported by social conventions, Bourdieu criticizes that “if some writers can go so far as to say that the intention of giving destroys the gift ... this is because ... they are seeing the two agents involved in the gift as calculators who assign themselves the subjective project of doing what they are objectively doing ... an exchange obeying the logic of reciprocity. To put it another way, such an analysis puts into the minds of the agents the model that science has had to construct in order to account of their practice (here, the model of gift exchange). This amounts to producing a kind of theoretical monster, impossible in practice...” Ibid., 234.

⁹¹ See Marcel Hénaff, “Ceremonial Gift-Giving: The Lessons of Anthropology from Mauss and Beyond,” in *The Gift in Antiquity*, 16-17.

⁹² Ibid., 16.

‘joy’), that of unilateral giving (there is no such thing as ‘*anti-charis*’).”⁹³ The third type, “as opposed to the second, expresses a much more social dimension of generosity toward either close associates ... or strangers...: this would be the field of the *philia* or *philanthropia* discussed by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics*.”⁹⁴ One may disagree with Hénaff’s classification and definition, but our analysis of gift must be diachronic and synchronic. Since the gifts are often understood within the system of reciprocity, we will in the following examples show how a notion of free gifts was attempted in Roman, early rabbinic, and early Byzantium periods.

First, in pointing out that “Roman gift practices were not only diffuse but also uniquely institutionalized,”⁹⁵ Coffee argues that “Romans rejected the intrusion of the instrumental, goal-directed gift-giving so common the public sphere into affectionate relations between men and women. This rejection took the practical form of a legal ban on large gifts between husbands and wives.”⁹⁶ From Coffee’s analysis of Ovid’s love poem that he finds supporting his argument, we see that the *affective* aspect of gift was so widely abused that the Romans had to ban the gifts (exchange) in marriage, lest it became utilitarian and transactional, which could then hurt the moral integrity of family (cf. *Lex Julia*). One may find the legal ban ideologically constructed, but one cannot deny that the ban shows that certain Romans were concerned with the “misuse” of gift in supposedly genuine relationships. This trouble with the gift is also found in early rabbinic Judaism, where early rabbis instructed the benefactors to convert their charitable gifts to the poor into loans “secured by pledges” so that the poor may not be insulted when receiving

⁹³ *Idem*.

⁹⁴ *Idem*. Focusing on the first type of gift, Hénaff argues that the gift functions as a symbolic third party that mediates and binds the two parties in the gift-giving relationship together. He writes, “To form an alliance – a pact – means bringing together one’s own self and the otherness of the other person through a thing that comes from oneself and is desirable to the other. This third party brings the two sides together: there is no alliance without an Ark of the Covenant. The thing given binds the two parties primarily by bearing witness that the bond has been accepted.” *Ibid.*, 20.

⁹⁵ See Neil Coffee, “Ovid Negotiates with His Mistress,” 77.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 78.

them.⁹⁷ Thirdly, in early Byzantium period, an interpretation of 2 Cor. 9:5-12 that highlights the superabundance of God's grace introduced a gift-giving called "blessing" as "an alternative Christian model of disinterested religious gift-giving."⁹⁸ Different from "alms" and offerings," the "blessing" not only "made charitable generosity seem easy for all but also made asymmetrical giving seem possible without need for replenishing one's supplies through labor or reciprocity."⁹⁹ These examples show that the gift, like love, can be thematized and configured in various ways that highlight different modes of existence.

III. A Semantic Analysis of Love in 1 Cor. 12:1–14:40

In this section we will first address the theme of 12:1–14:40, manifested by the inverted parallelism between 12:1-3 and 14:37-40. Then we will present our understanding of the story progression from the pairs of opposed actions in the dialogic level (see Appendix 3 in chapter 3) so that through this syntactic analysis we can formulate a series of semiotic squares on the topic of love for our semantic analysis.

⁹⁷ "This enabled the poor to save face, maintaining at least the appearance of independence and a modicum of personal dignity. It completed the transaction, which, in turn, enabled the giver to fulfill his obligation of *ṣedaqah* – 'a monetary or material support for the living poor (*t. Pe'ah* 4.19)' (175). Because gifts were prone to creating dependency and other hierarchical relationships that challenged rabbinic ideals of an egalitarian Israelite society, converting the gift into a loan diminished this particular threat." See Gregg E. Gardner, "Charity Wounds: Gifts to the Poor in Early Rabbinic Judaism," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, 174.

⁹⁸ See Daniel F. Caner, "Alms, Blessings, Offerings: The Repertoire of Christian Gifts in Early Byzantium," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, 25.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 28. In his summary of different kinds of gift-giving, Caner writes, "Alms were charitable gifts given either to display mercy or to obtain mercy, which it *did* by prompting positive remembrance among those likely to have suffered from a donor's past transgressions or sins. Because they were closely associated with sin, it was not appropriate that they be received by either God or holy people. Offerings were sacrificial gifts given to thank God and obtain future benefits through liturgical remembrances of holy people; because such gifts were meant to thank God, they could not be given to thank a holy person, and therefore sometimes had to be rejected or converted. Fruitbearings, however, though little discussed here, were sacerdotal gifts that seem to have been given to thank holy people, perhaps for some intercessory service. Yet, as one example suggests, if given to thank a saint for God's work – a healing performed through a saint – then this too had to be rejected or given away by the saint. Blessings, finally, reflected only God's own divine, impersonal benevolence. They therefore carried no human taint or need to reciprocate. This made them ideal not only as charitable gifts but as sacerdotal gifts, whether given by lay people to support holy people, or by holy people to support others." *Ibid.*, 36-37.

(i) “A Non-Objectifying Knowing”: An Inverted Parallelism and Its Theme

The theme of “a non-objectifying knowing” comes to the fore when we examine the inverted parallelism between 12:1-3 and 14:37-40. For example, notice all the γινώσκειν-related (“to know”) words in these verses. In 12:1, Paul tells believers that he does not want them to be ignorant (ἀγνοεῖν) and that he wants to make it known (γνωρίζειν) to them that no one is *able* (δύναται) to say “Jesus is Lord” except *in* (ἐν) the Holy Spirit (12:3). Likewise, in the end of the complete discourse unit, Paul challenges believers: “If anyone thinks that s/he is a prophet or spiritual, let her/him acknowledge (ἐπιγνωσκέτω) what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord” (14:37).¹⁰⁰ “If,” Paul continues, “someone disregards (ἀγνοεῖ), let her/him be disregarded (ἀγνοεῖται)” (14:38). These verses show that, for Paul, to know is to be addressed by and to be responsive to the other/Other. This echoes 13:12: “I will know fully (ἐπιγνώσομαι) insofar as (καθὼς καὶ) I am fully known (ἐπεγνώσθην)” (see section 2 in chapter 2). Indeed, if it is *in* the Holy Spirit that believers are *empowered* to confess “Jesus is Lord” and if *gnosis* is the gift of God and the spirit (cf. 1:5; 12:8), then believers, *including Paul himself*, must not think that they *possess gnosis*. They must be able or enabled (empowered by the Holy Spirit) to be addressed and corrected by the other/Other. Paul makes this point rather clear in 14:40: “But let *everything* become proper (εὐσχημόνως) and according to order (κατὰ τάξιν).” According to whose order? Paul’s? No. Because as Paul mentions, “God is not of disorder (ἀκαταστασίας) but of peace (εἰρήνης), as (ὡς) in *all* the churches of the holy ones” (14:33).¹⁰¹ Paul underscores this God-orientation in 14:36: “Did the *logos* of God go out from you or did it go to you only (εἰς ὑμᾶς

¹⁰⁰ For the possibility that the person is a female prophet, see Antoinette Clark Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul’s Rhetoric* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990).

¹⁰¹ Given that the sociopolitical and military connotations of the words τάξις and εἰρήνη in the Roman Empire, one can suggest that Paul is perhaps pitching God’s order against the imperial order.

μόνους)?”¹⁰² Moreover, in posing the challenge to believers in 14:37 – “If anyone thinks that s/he is a prophet or spiritual (πνευματικός)...” – Paul brings us back to the beginning of the complete discourse unit: “Περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν ...” (12:1). Now, as τῶν πνευματικῶν can be a masculine, feminine, or a neuter noun, scholars have debated whether it refers to spiritual people or spiritual matters. “Most interpreters, however, believe that the term denotes *spiritual gifts* ... This is adopted by AV/KJV, RSV, NRSV, JB, and NIV (cf. NJB, REB, *gifts of the Spirit*).”¹⁰³ Ralph Martin and Siegfried Schatzmann further argue that the term πνευματικά (when πνευματικῶν is taken as a neuter noun) was used by the Corinthian believers, whereas Paul “introduced χάρισμα[τα] as an apostolic corrective.”¹⁰⁴ Anthony Thiselton, however, points out that “if both the writer and the readers well knew that the Greek ending included *both* genders (i.e., excluded neither), why should the meaning be construed in either-or terms at all?”¹⁰⁵

From the perspective of our structural semiotic analysis, we agree that it is not necessary to determine whether Paul refers to spiritual people or gifts – actually it is impossible to establish it one way or the other. But, we are not surprised by this ambiguity. This ambiguity can help Paul get the attention of his enunciatee (i.e., the Corinthian believers) so that, at least, they will

¹⁰² For Odell-Scott, 14:36 is Paul’s reply to the Corinthian saying to refute “the self-righteous assumptions of the men voiced in vv 34 & 35.” See David W. Odell-Scott, *A Post-Patriarchal Christology*. AAR Academy Series 78 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991), 188. Odell-Scott further points out that “when the text was transcribed into Byzantine characters and punctuation, the H which introduces v 36 was marked to be a particle ἦ and not an adverb ἦ.” Ibid., 186. Iannaccone also argues that 14:34-35 is a quotation that Paul retorts in 14:36. See Laurence R. Iannaccone, “Let the Women Be Silent,” *Sunstone* 7 (May-June 1982): 38-45.

¹⁰³ See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2000), 909-10.

¹⁰⁴ Siegfried S. Schatzmann, *A Pauline Theology of Charismata*, 4. As of the relationship between πνευματικά and χάρισμα, some claim that they are “completely synonymous,” others a “qualified synonymity between the two terms,” or “not equivalent” to each other. Ibid., 6-7. As of the meaning of χάρισμα, Schatzmann lists five possibilities: (1) “concrete expression of grace” (cf. Ernst Käsemann), (2) “experiential” (cf. James Dunn), (3) “idealistic-naturalistic” (cf. F. C. Baur), (4) “dogmatic-institutional” (cf. Karl Rahner), and (5) “multiplex” (cf. John Koenig). For details, see pages 7-10. Also, see Ralph P. Martin, *The Spirit and the Congregation: Studies in 1 Corinthians 12-15* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 65.

¹⁰⁵ See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 910.

hear him out. We find a similar situation in the complete discourse unit of 11:17-34 when we read Paul telling believers that “it is necessary for *haireseis* to exist among them” (11:19) (see chapter 5). The ambiguous meaning of *haireseis* could lead the Corinthian believers, both the wealthier and the less well-off, to think that Paul is speaking from their perspective. But as believers continue to listen, they are then put in a position to hear what Paul wants to say about *haireseis*, namely that the differences (and thus the choices that become apparent when they gather together) can help them not to objectify their relationship with the other/Other. So perhaps Paul’s usage of τῶν πνευματικῶν in 12:1 has similar effects. Yet at the end of the complete discourse unit in 14:37 the word πνευματικός may lend support to the argument that τῶν πνευματικῶν in 12:1 refers to spiritual people. Yet our position is that in using τῶν πνευματικῶν, Paul is simultaneously pointing to both spiritual people and spiritual gifts. This becomes clear in light of our discussions of the constitution of gift through the interaction of giver, receiver, and gift. Since, for Paul, none of the three constitutive elements of gift can be objectified – they only interact “in love,” when to give is to receive and to receive is to give for the common good (12:7) – then we cannot separate spiritual gifts from spiritual people. Paul’s notion of the body of Christ as “parts beyond a part” (12:27), where believers are *continuously* hyphenated with each other and with God, spirit, and Christ (12:12-13), also shows that what makes believers “spiritual” are not the gifts but the hyphenated relations of believers with God, spirit, Christ, and people.

(ii) Pairs of Opposition of Actions and the Story Progression

This theme of “non-objectifying knowing” is manifested in Paul’s dealing with the problems of speaking in tongues in the church of Corinth. Note that Paul is not against speaking in tongues. As Paul readily admits, he also speaks in tongues (14:18). The main issue is that the one who speaks in tongues speaks *not* to people but to God; in fact, it is in the spirit that s/he

speaks the mystery (πνεύματι δὲ λαλεῖ μυστήρια) (14:2). Whether we take the dative of πνεύματι as an instrumental dative or a dative of sphere, it appears that the one who speaks in tongues is not totally in charge of the speaking in tongues. First, it is in the sphere of the spirit or by the spirit that s/he speaks in tongues. Secondly, s/he speaks to God. Thirdly, s/he speaks mysteries. Hence, it does not make sense for the person speaking in tongues to flaunt and objectify the gift as if s/he possessed it. In fact, s/he should not speak to others in tongues. Since speaking in tongues is a conversation between the person and God, it is not a surprise that it becomes meaningless when it is performed in public. Since mystery cannot be articulated, speaking in tongues becomes a mere noise. Paul makes this point rather clear in 13:1 and 14:6-11.

Paul's metaphor of musical instruments producing their own distinctive sounds is a case in point. The flute (αὐλός) should produce the "flute" sound. The harp (κιθάρα) should produce the "harp" sound. Regardless of how great the flute may be, if it produces the "harp" sound, it is not a flute. The "harp" sound can be wonderful, but the flute is a "malfunctioning" flute. The point is not that the flute must produce the "flute" sound; rather, each musical instrument has its own singularity and purpose that cannot be replaced. Similarly, it is not that speaking in tongues produces noise. Rather, when it is not performed in the spirit, it becomes nonsensical. In the words of Paul, speaking in tongues becomes like speaking into the air (14:9). Here, Paul's notion of the body of Christ as "parts beyond a part" (12:27) is another case in point. In this example, the eye is the eye and the ear is the ear. The eye and the ear are intimately interrelated. However, they have their own singularity and purpose.

Moreover, for Paul, singularity comes to the fore when all the singularities are in relation with each other. But, how can singularity and plurality work together? This is why in the midst of his discussion of spiritual people, spiritual gifts, and the body of Christ, he speaks of love. For

Paul, love bears *all* things (or always bears), trusts/believes *all* things (or always trusts/believes), hopes for *all* things (or always hopes), and endures *all* things (or always endures) (13:7). But, how does love do so? This is “what” we flesh out below in our semantic analysis of love in 12:1–14:40 (cf. section 2 in chapter 4).

With this introduction, we now present our story progression from the fourteen pairs of oppositions of actions in the dialogic level. For the sake of convenience to form our semiotic squares later, the order of our story progression is presented from the bottom up.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (+) 14:37 – believers should acknowledge Paul’s command | (-) 14:38 – should not disregard Paul’s command |
| (+) 14:24-25 – prophecy causes conviction and worship | (-) 14:23 – speaking in tongues causes confusion |
| (+) 14:3 – the one who prophesies speaks to people | (-) 14:2 – the one speaks in tongue does not speak to people |
| (+) 14:3, 4b – the one who prophesies builds up the <i>ekklēsia</i> | (-) 14:4a – the one who speaks in tongue builds up her/himself |
| (+) 14:16 – people can respond if blessing with the mind | (-) 14:16 – people will not understand if blessing in spirit |
| (+) 14:22b – speaking in tongues are a sign with “for” unbelievers | (-) 14:22a – speaking in tongues are not a sign “for” believers |
| (+) 14:5 – speaking in tongues and interpretation build up the <i>ekklēsia</i> | (-) 14:5 – [implied] speaking in tongues [alone] will not build up the <i>ekklēsia</i> |
| (+) 14:6b – prophecy... <i>gnosis</i> , <i>apocalypse</i> benefit believers | (-) 14:6a – speaking in tongues is not beneficial |
| (+) 13:2 – I should have love when I have prophecy, know all mysteries... | (-) 13:2 – I have prophecy... without love |
| (+) 13:1 – I should have love when I speak in tongues | (-) 13:1 – I become a roaring brass... when I speak in tongues without love |
| (+) 13:3 – I should have love when I give away possession and body | (-) 13:3 – I “benefit” nothing when I give away all possession and body without love |
| (+) 13:13a – faith, hope, and love will remain (with them) | (-) 13:8b-d – prophecy, tongues, and <i>gnosis</i> will pass away |
| (+) 14:20c – believers should become mature in prudence | (-) 14:20a – do not become children in prudence |
| (+) 12:3c – people in the Holy Spirit say Jesus is Lord | (-) 12:3b – people say anathema concerning the Lord |

Below, in the discussion of these pairs of oppositions, we **bold** the verse numbers (e.g., **12:3**) to indicate that we are commenting on a particular pair of opposed actions.

In 12:1–14:40, Paul focuses on the believers’ relationship with God, Holy Spirit, and Christ, whereas the Corinthian believers focus on the spiritual gifts. They mistake the manifestation of the spirit as the spirit itself and ignore the purpose of the manifestation (cf. 12:7). Paul has to remind them that it is only *in* the Holy Spirit that they *can* confess that Jesus is Lord (**12:3**). Without being *in* the Holy Spirit, they are not able to make such a confession. Such a confession, in other words, is spirit-enabled. This orientation of being addressed by the Holy Spirit and responsive to the Holy Spirit contrasts sharply with the believers’ previous lifestyle as gentiles (ἔθνη), when they, being used to their semantic *habitus*, were led to mute idols (τὰ εἰδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα) that do not address them and do not challenge their objectifying gaze (12:2).

Now, if believers acknowledge and submit to the lordship of Jesus, which is itself beyond human comprehension (as the crucified Lord is a contradictory name, if not also a scandalous name), they should *become* mature (τέλειοι) *in* “the process of careful consideration” (ταῖς φρεσίν; *BDAG* 1065) (**14:20**). With this new orientation provided by this renewed semantic *habitus*, believers should come to see that what really matters is their relationship with the other/Other. If in the end (τὸ τέλειον) (13:10), it is *pistis*, hope, and love that remain (**13:13**) – i.e., that stay with them – and the greater of these is love, then it only makes sense for believers to be love-oriented. After all, it is in love that Jesus died for/concerning them (cf. 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Rom. 5:8).¹⁰⁶ Indeed, if love is not delimited by time and space, believers should *always* be “in love” (namely, be God-spirit-Christ-oriented) regardless of their circumstances. This is why Paul stresses that love must be performative (**13:1-3**). It is not that prophecy, speaking in tongues, and *gnosis* are not important (cf. 13:8). Rather, as they are marked by and framed with love (cf. 13:1-

¹⁰⁶ For our discussion of the notion of “dying for/concerning,” see note 36 in chapter 4.

3), they should be the embodiment of love. As manifestations of love, they withdraw from themselves in their manifestations, lest love be obscured by them. Thus, whether in giving away possession and even body (13:3), in speaking in tongues (13:1), or in prophesying, in knowing *all* mysteries and *gnosis*, and in having *all pistis* to move mountains (13:2), believers must *have* love. As noted in our semantic analysis in chapter 4, “having” (love) is not possessive but performative; “having love” is attentive and considerate of the other/Other.

For example, when Paul implies that speaking in tongue is not beneficial (14:6a), it is because it cannot be understood in public. In fact, it is by contrast with the speaking of *apocalypse*, *gnosis*, prophecy, and teaching that can be understood in public (14:6b) that the speaking in tongue is not beneficial. Paul’s focus is upon the edification of the community. This is why the gift of speaking in tongues, if it were to be performed in public in the church, must be accompanied by its interpretation (14:5); otherwise such a private-oriented gift will not benefit the public. Thus Paul thinks that speaking in tongues is not (a sign) for (the benefit of) believers in the church (14:22a), but a sign “for” unbelievers (14:22b).¹⁰⁷ Paul makes this point when he alludes to Isaiah 28:11-12 in 14:21; even though the Lord tries to address the Israelite believers “in foreign tongues and in the lips of others” they will not listen. Here, Paul is practical and other-oriented. Likewise, concerning the blessing in spirit, Paul asks: “how will the one in the position of an inquirer (i.e., a non-initiated) say ‘amen’ to your thanksgiving since s/he does not

¹⁰⁷ Thiselton calls 14:22 as “one of the most difficult verses in our epistle.” See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1122. The dative in αἱ γλῶσσαι εἰς σημεῖόν εἰσιν οὐ τοῖς πιστευούουσιν ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀπίστοις in 14:22 can be taken as a dative of reference or a dative of interest (whether as “to the advantage of” or as “to the disadvantage of”). Here, the word “sign” can also be taken positively or negatively. Now, *with respect to those who believe*, they already have a certain perspective and know that the gift of speaking in tongues is a manifestation of the spirit. As a result, the speaking in tongues probably will not cause too much misunderstanding for believers, by contrast with those who do not believe and do not know about the manifestation of the spirit. The gift of speaking in tongues can thus cause misunderstanding among non-believers. They may think that the speaking in tongues is a “madness” (probably in a negative sense, although “madness” can also be understood aesthetically) (14:23) or they may mistake it as a sign demonstrating the reputation of the person speaking in tongues and her/his recognition by the spirit, and as such, these unbelievers would objectify the gift. Paul seems to say that speaking in tongues is not beneficial in a public setting, as it can easily be misunderstood. Believers may be able to handle it and not to objectify the sign, but non-believers will not have the understanding to handle it.

know what you say?” (14:16). This is why, for Paul, the one who prophesies can build up the church because s/he speaks to people in a language that they can understand (14:3), as opposed to the one who speaks in tongues. Paul is not against the benefit of speaking in tongues that edifies oneself. Rather, the issue is that both prophesying and speaking in tongues have their own specific avenue and venue. Just as it is in the Holy Spirit that believers confess “Jesus is Lord” and it is the spirit that gives a varieties of *charismata* – which are probably manifestations of the spirit (cf. 12:7-11) – then believers need to be *in* the Holy Spirit to receive the gifts. Here, as believers also need to examine their own gifts and the other’s gifts (12:10; 14:29, 32), the receiving of gifts is not a receiving without examination. In the language of Marion’s “givability” and “acceptability” that highlights the “dative” orientation of the self, it is *in* the Holy Spirit that believers recognize the “givability” *and* “acceptability” of gifts. The Holy Spirit neither imposes gifts upon believers nor gives without reasons. In light of the common good and the coming together of the Holy Spirit *and* believers that we find that the giving and receiving of spiritual gifts take place in a middle voice. There are no *fixed* “subject,” “object,” and “receiver” in this giving and receiving of spiritual gifts. For this reason, Paul asks believers to examine and recognize his command to them (14:37) so that everything may be done properly focusing on God (14:33, 40).

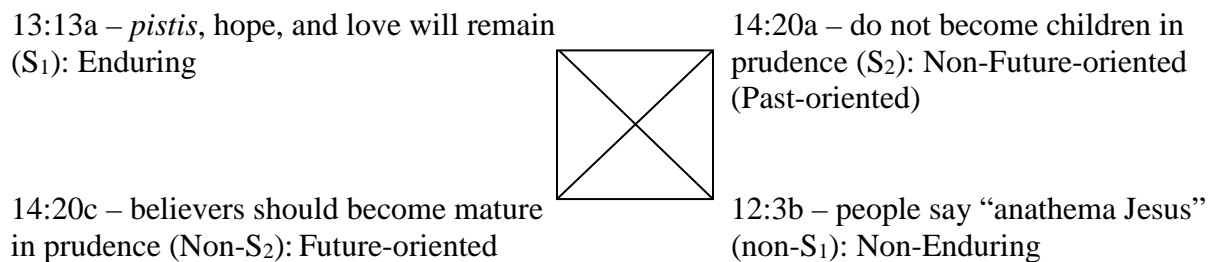
In view of this relation between gifts and love, gifts for Paul certainly cannot be objectified. They are not to be treated as if one can earn them, possess them, flaunt them, and use them for their own gains. The gift is not an object. It should not be used to objectify and pigeonhole the giver and the receiver. The manifestations of the gift are only parts of the gift. The gift, moreover, as the manifestation of the spirit (12:7), is the fruit of the relationship between believers and the spirit, Lord, and God. It signifies the relationship between believers

towards the common good. When there is no relationship, there is no gift and there is no giver and no receiver. Just as it is only in the spirit that believers *can* confess “Jesus is Lord,” it is only in a love relationship between believers and God (cf. 2:9-14) that the gift is given and received. As Paul tells us that God has prepared for those who love God (2:9) and that whatever believers receive comes from God (cf. 4:7), believers must not lose their love towards the other/Other. It is “in love” and in the coming together of all these factors that believers can speak of gifts without objectifying, categorizing, and misusing them.

(iii) A Semantic Analysis of Love in 1 Cor. 12:1 –14:40

In this concluding section we only focus on the pairs of opposed actions that are related to love. Since we have addressed most of the verses in 1 Cor. 13 in our semantic analysis in chapter 4, these concluding remarks can be brief and to the point. The values that we find in the following five semiotic squares are: (1) Love is Enduring, (2) Love is to Let Go and be Transformed, (3) Love Cannot be Reduced to Giving A Gift-Object, (4) Love is Interactive, and (5) Love is Response-Enabling.

(a) Semiotic Square 1: Love is Enduring



In this semiotic square, the value of being able to last until the end comes to the fore. If it is *pistis*, hope, and love that remain in the end (τὸ τέλειον) (13:10) and if love is the greatest among them (13:13), then believers are to be marked by love if they want to remain in the end. Note, however, it is not a certainty that one can remain till the end. It is “in” *pistis*, hope, and

love that one remains till the end. In other words, to remain till the end is to remain steadfast, faithful, and hopeful regardless of the situation. Paul thus urges believers to be very careful with what they build on the foundation of the building of God. Whatever they build must be able to withstand the test of fire (3:12-15). Believers cannot just think of the present gains and convenience and avoid making difficult decision and commitment. They must also consider the present in terms of the future, that is, of the outcome of what they say and do, even though they cannot guarantee that the outcome is what they desire. Thus Paul says that nobody *in* the spirit of God says “Anathema Jesus”¹⁰⁸ (12:3b). Paul, however, does not tell us how one can be *in* the spirit of God. Thus, even though God glorifies Jesus (cf. 2:8), Jesus can still appear to be rejected and cursed by society. There is no guarantee that Jesus will not be cursed. It is only in *pistis* and hope that as time goes on, people will come to see the past differently and therefore recognize that there is no “Anathema Jesus.”

For this reason, Paul does not want believers to dwell in the past in the perspective of the past. He wants believers to become mature (τέλειοι) in “the process of careful consideration” (ταῖς φρεσίν; *BDAG*, 1065) (14:20). To be mature is to make sure that whatever one does can withstand the test, so that one does not regret and need to redo what one has done. It is to learn from the past and re-imagine the past so that the present – as the future of the past and the past of the future – can redeem the past (i.e., from “Anathema Jesus” to “Jesus is Lord”) and prepare for the future. For Paul, time is not linear; the past still haunts the present and the future is embedded in the present (cf. 15:36). This interweaving of past, present, and future comes to the fore in love. Love changes one’s perspective and one’s perception of time and history. There may be a sense of causality of the past into the present but the causality is not a necessity; it can be thought

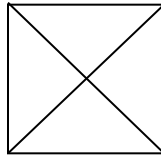
¹⁰⁸ For “no less than twelve distinct explanations” on this phrase, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 918-27.

otherwise. This is what Paul means by there is no “Anathema Jesus” in the spirit of God. This is what Paul means by saying that in the end *pistis*, hope, and love remain. Note that none of these three elements can be ascertained. The future cannot be ascertained and objectified. Just as the present is passing away into the past, the future is also passing into the past in the moment of the present. For Paul, to say that believers should become future-oriented – that is, ταῖς δὲ φρεσὶν τέλειοι γίνεσθε; 14:20 – instead of past-oriented is to say that they should always be open to new possibilities.

(b) Semiotic Square 2: Love is to Let Go and be Transformed

13:3 – I should have love when I give away all possessions and body (S₁): Letting Go

13:8b-d – prophecy, tongues, and *gnosis* will pass away (S₂): Time Limited



13:13a – *pistis*, hope, and love will remain (non-S₂): Non-Time-Limited

14:20a – do not become children in prudence (non-S₁): Non-Letting Go (Insistence)

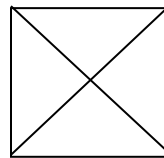
Just as the past can be re-imagined otherwise, the present can also be thought otherwise. To remain till the end is to not be caught up in the past, present, and even the future, as if they were fixed. To remain till the end is to be contextually dynamic; it is not only to be vigilant regarding one’s and other’s situations, but also to be careful not to objectify one’s and other’s contexts, as if these contexts did not change. To remain till the end does not mean to be rigid and inflexible. Neither does it mean to be opportunistic, without principle.

As noted above, one’s giving not only can insult the intended recipient, it can also be a “disguised giving” that returns to the giver in the forms of reputation, self-congratulations, gratitude, etc. For Paul, to let go of one’s possession and even of one’s body is to avoid being constrained by them. But, such an extreme giving, which can hurt oneself, can be risky and

dangerous, in particular when it is given without love. It can invite exploitation and abuse. It is not a necessity, lest it becomes objectified. The basic point is that one must still have love in such an extreme giving; otherwise the giver will not “be benefited” (ὠφελοῦμαι). Why? Because one’s possessions and one’s body will not last, just as prophecy, tongues, and *gnosis* will not last (13:8b-d). Only *pistis*, hope, and love will last. Note the middle voice of ὠφελοῦμαι. The benefit takes place in the benefiting itself. Thus Paul urges believers not to become children in prudence (14:20a). He wants them to be prudent in considering their and other’s situations. He wants them to let go and not to insist on their perspective so that they may see other possibilities. This is why Paul says that prophecy will pass away (καταργηθήσονται), tongues will cease (παύσονται), and *gnosis* will pass away (καταργηθήσεται) (13:8b-d). With the time change, the forms and ways of communication also change. Believers must not insist and focus on the forms at the expense of what they seek to convey.

(c) Semiotic Square 3: Love Cannot be Reduced to Giving A Gift-Object

13:1 – I should have love when I speak in tongues (S₁): Fundamental



13:3 – I “benefit” nothing when I give away all possessions and body without love (S₂): Non-Sincere

13:3 – I give away all possessions and body with love (non-S₂): Sincere

13:8b-d – prophecy, tongues, and *gnosis* will pass away (non-S₁): Non-Fundamental

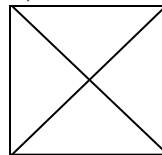
Since we have discussed most of the characteristics of love in 1 Cor. 13 in chapter 4, we will just highlight what stands out for us in this semiotic square. First, note the dative in ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων in 13:1, which for Thiselton, “is a straightforward instrumental use: **to speak with human or angelic tongues.**”¹⁰⁹ We are not arguing against this notion of dative. But, in a proprioceptive and group-oriented culture, the

¹⁰⁹ See Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1033.

dative can highlight the fact that an individual is always already an individual-with-others in the world, where “others” are not delimited to human beings. Thus, whether the tongues are human or angelic, one does not speak by oneself. It is *with* and *in the sphere* of these tongues that one speaks. This communal orientation comes to the fore as Paul reminds believers that everything that they have received comes from God (cf. 4:7). If this is the case, then “what” do believers give when they give all their possessions and even their body? Likewise, if the spiritual gifts are the gifts of the spirit, then “what” do believers give when they perform them? If God has prepared for those who love God (2:9), then the giving and receiving of gifts take place in love. If, in the first place, all the giving and receiving happens in love, whatever believers say and do must be done in love. Indeed, if it is in loving that God gives and that believers receive, believers should also, in loving, give so that whatever they give is marked by love, which is the source of their relationship with God in the first place. In the language of sign, Paul is wary that the signifier (i.e., the gift) be detached from the signified (i.e., love). The gift must not obscure and replace love. It should manifest love. But, it is not love. Love cannot be objectified into a gift-object.

(d) Semiotic Square 4: Love is Interactive

13:2 – I should have love when I have prophecy, know all mysteries and all *gnosis*, and have *all pistis* to move mountains (S₁): Meaning-full



13:1 – I become a roaring brass when I speak in tongues without love (S₂): Non-Relational (noise)

13:1 – I should have love when I speak in tongues (non-S₂): Relational

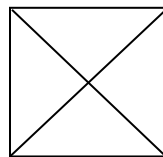
13:3 – I “benefit” nothing when I give all possessions and body without love (non-S₁): Non-meaning-full

This semiotic square shows that since love fundamentally marks the performance of the gift, the performance of the gift should manifest love. Here, the focus is not on the gift, giver,

and receiver; it is on the giver and receiver experiencing love in the performance of the gift. As the gift, giver, and receiver are oriented towards the common good (cf. 12:7), love can transform the giver and receiver and build them up (8:1). Note that Paul does not say that love is a spiritual gift. For Paul, love is “the far better way” (καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὁδόν) (12:31). It is a venue and an avenue that empowers the spiritual gifts to be meaning-full. It is a way that is always on its way. Love, in other words, takes place in loving itself. When the believer performs the gift with love, s/he does not just give her/his love to the other/Other, s/he also receives her/his love. The love of the believer is not just her/his love towards the other/Other. It is, moreover, the fruit (or the dynamic result) of her/his love *and* the love of the other/Other as s/he performs the gift. This is the feature of the middle voice of ὠφελοῦμαι that we struggle to highlight in 13:3. That is to say, one can give all possessions and even one’s body to the other/Other because such a middle-voice giving in love is not calculative, self-congratulatory, self-abusive, and condescending.

(e) Semiotic Square 5: Love is Response-Enabling

14:16 – people can respond if bless with the mind (S₁): Response-Enabling



13:2 – I am “nothing” when I have prophecy, know all mysteries ... without love (S₂): Meaning-less

13:2 – I should have love when I have prophecy, know all mysteries and all *gnosis*, and have all *pistis* to move mountains (non-S₂): Non-Meaning-less

13:1 – I become a roaring brass when I speak in tongues without love (non-S₁): Non-Response-Enabling

Paul’s concern for others comes to the fore in this semiotic square, whether they are believers or not (cf. 14:16). For Paul, just as others cannot benefit from the believers’ blessing in the spirit if they cannot understand it, they also cannot benefit from believers who perform the gifts without love. It is clear that the gifts are given for the common good (πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον) (12:7). We have already noted the figure of “togetherness” in συμφέρον; this “togetherness” is

the “coming together” of God, Holy Spirit, Jesus, and believers towards the *common* good. It is *not* a fixed common good or a common good only from one perspective. In fact, it is a common good that includes non-believers, since believers should not perform gifts without being considerate of the effects on non-believers. Performed in love, the believers’ gifts are to trigger and enable a positive response towards the common good.

IV. Conclusion

In a group-oriented culture where everyone is interrelated, Paul reminds believers that they are hyphenated with each other towards the common good. In performing their gifts, they need to be responsible for the response of others. Even God does not impose gifts upon believers, but give the spirit from God so that those who love God may receive it and know the gifts of God for their benefits (2:9, 12). Indeed, if believers love God, they should also love those whom God loves. They cannot love God and not love those whom God loves. If the body of Christ is “parts beyond a part” (12:27) (see the conclusion in the Introduction chapter) that keeps expanding its border and limit as God calls people from *every* place to participate in the fellowship of Jesus (cf. 1:2, 9), then believers cannot just love the hand and not the foot. The hand is a hand insofar as it is hand-foot-eye-ear-etc. To love one is to love those who are hyphenated with her/him. It is because of these (conjunctive-disjunctive) hyphens, which are not unlike our notion of typology in Narrative Semantics (see section 3 in chapter 2 and section 3.3.a in the Methodological Appendix), that believers cannot objectify love and spiritual gifts. For Paul, as everything is tied to love (cf. 13:1-3), both the gifts and believers are insignificant without the performative love (see chapter 4). This love is, moreover, a cruciform love (see the conclusion of section 3.2 in

chapter 3). Paul writes, “God demonstrates his love toward us, in that even though we are sinners Christ died for/concerning us” (Rom. 5:8; cf. 2 Cor. 5:14-15).

Now, if the Lord is the Lord of everyone who calls upon “the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” in every place (1:2), then nobody has the exclusive claim upon the Lord. It is ironic for anyone to make such a claim, as if the Lord can be lorded. This is why throughout 1 Corinthians, Paul’s frequent usage of “every” or “all” (πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν) seems to signify the dynamics of singularity and plurality. For example, in 12:1–14:40, after saying that no one can confess “Jesus is Lord” without being *in* the Holy Spirit (12:3), Paul tells believers that there are many kinds (δι-αιρέσεις) of *charismata* but the *same spirit*, many kinds (δι-αιρέσεις) of services but the *same Lord*, and many kinds (δι-αιρέσεις) of workings, but the *same God* who works *all* things in *everyone* (τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν) (12:4-6). Indeed, not only “the body is *one* and has *many* members” and “*all* the members of the body are *many* but are *one* body” (12:12), “*all* believers were baptized into *one* body, whether Jews or Greeks or slaves or free, and we *all* were given drink by *one* spirit” (12:13). Thus, when believers come together (συν-ἐρχησθε) – notice the middle voice and the preposition συν (“with”) – *all* the believers’ gifts should gear towards building each other up (πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω) (14:26). In the words of Paul, “love builds up” (8:1). As the building of God, with the crucified Christ as the foundation, believers must build each other up in love (3:9-11), just as it is because of his love for life that Christ was crucified (see section 3.2 in chapter 3).

In a multiracial, multicultural, and multireligious environment in Malaysia, the issues of singularity and plurality are always foregrounded, whether in terms of sociopolitical, economic, religious, education, etc. policies. It is because of this contextual concern that this study focused on Paul’s notion of love in his handling of conflicts in the church of Corinth. How can

singularity be honored without being reified and absolutized? How can plurality be honored without relativizing and erasing singularity? Here, we find that neither singularity nor plurality should not be objectified. There are singularity and plurality when both come together face-to-face. It is nonsensical to speak of one without the other. This is why in emphasizing a heteronomous mode of love in our interpretation of 1 Corinthians, we stressed that love can also be conceived of in the modes of autonomy and relationality. We also stressed that heteronomy is not without mutuality; after all, in a group-oriented and honor-and-shame culture, communal values are always foregrounded as everyone is always already interrelated.

For Paul, this dynamic tension between singularity and plurality is founded upon the cruciform love that cannot be objectified. Thus, in our semantic analysis of different passages in 1 Corinthians, we find that Paul keeps emphasizing a non-objectifying knowing in the believers' relationship with the other/Other. Such a knowing comes to the fore in Paul's usage of the middle voice, in particular when he speaks of εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, where believers are gospelized in gospelizing. This is why when believers "come together" to observe the Lord's Supper, Paul says that *haireseis* are necessary among them. Without being confronted with *choices*, believers can easily objectify the other/Other. The conflict over the "idol food" issue further highlights the utmost importance of an iconic seeing in Paul's semantic universe, in which believers must be able to be both addressed and corrected. It is this sense of response-enabling that we also find in Paul's discussion of the spiritual gifts. If the giving and receiving of gifts takes place in response to love, then love must characterize the performance of gifts.

Methodological Appendix

The semiotician's know-how ... helps them to deconstruct the way they read in order to try to elucidate, to imagine, to describe the operations that we accomplish *in spite of ourselves* when we construct as text and as discourse whatever we read.¹ – Jean Delorme

Deconstruction ... never proceeds without love...² – Jacques Derrida

I. Introduction

In this appendix, we will show that A. J. Greimas's "Generative Trajectory" can help us clarify the different modes of existence of our meaning-producing dimensions in our textual analysis, in particular the mode of heteronomy that is characteristic of a proprioceptive and communal culture of honor and shame. We will highlight the important difference between the "semantics" and the "syntax," in which the latter is the assertion or negation of the former (the semantic being the "gut feeling" or religious experience). We foreground this difference not only because of "the felt" (cf. heteronomy), "the claimed" (cf. autonomy), and "the paid" (cf. relationality) aspects of honor, but also because of the plurality of possible and plausible views of Paul's love in 1 Corinthians (see section 1 in chapter 1). As an introduction, let us first refer to the debate of "faith vs. reason" in biblical studies, exemplified by the so-called "quest for the historical Jesus," so that we may find a way of presenting the various meaning-producing dimensions of the text without confusing them with arguments made *primarily* from the perspective of a single mode of existence – namely an autonomous mode of existence.

¹ See Jean Delorme, "Orientations of a Literary Semiotics Questioned by the Bible" (translated by Jean-Paul Pichot, Daniel Patte and Victoria Phillips), *Semeia* 81: *Thinking in Signs: Semiotics and Biblical Studies ... Thirty Years After*. Edited by Daniel Patte (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998), 52. Emphasis added.

² Jacques Derrida, "The Almost Nothing of the Unpresentable," in *Points ... Interviews, 1974-1994*. Edited by Elisabeth Weber. Translated by Peggy Kamuf and others (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 83.

II. The Heritage of Critical Biblical Studies

The Christian Scripture has multiple layers of traditions and meaning effects. In light of the different ways biblical texts (re-)interpret one another in the Scripture,³ we need to be cautious not to foreclose the “hermeneutical circle” of our interpretive process. The multiplicity of the Scriptural meaning effects was well illustrated in the early patristic period by the conflicts between the Alexandrian School (that privileged the allegorical-mystical interpretations of Scripture)⁴ and the Antiochene School (that emphasized the historical and literal interpretations of Scripture)⁵ as well as by the “fourfold sense” of the Scripture (e.g. literal, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical) in the late patristic period and the Middle ages,⁶ by the Catholic Renewal Movement and by the European Reformation that argued for such notions as *sola scriptura*, etc.⁷ All these indicate that, depending on the contexts and the perspectives of the interpreters, biblical texts, for various reasons, can be interpreted differently.

³ This becomes manifest, for instance, in the case of the re-interpretation of the Deuteronomistic History by the Chronicler. See Thomas Römer and Albert de Pury, “Deuteronomistic Historiography (DH): History of Research and Debated Issues,” in *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*. Edited by Albert de Pury, Thomas Römer, and Jean-Daniel Macchi. JSOT Supplement Series 306 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 24-141; Thomas C. Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History: Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction* (London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2005); Raymond F. Person, Jr., *The Deuteronomistic History and The Book of Chronicles: Scribal Works in An Oral World* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010); Isaac Kalimi, *The Reshaping of Ancient Israelite History in Chronicles* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005).

⁴ For example, based on 1 Thess. 5:23 that speaks of a human being in terms of spirit, soul, and body, Origen (185-254CE), the most famous representative of the Alexandrian school, argues that the Scripture has threefold senses. These are (1) spiritual or allegorical-mystical sense, (2) psychical or moral sense, and (3) bodily or literal sense. The level of understanding goes from the bodily sense to the spiritual sense. See Robert M. Grant with David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*. Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 52-62. “In the West, such Latin Fathers as Hilary of Poitiers (315-67), Ambrose (339-97), the early Jerome (3291-419), and especially Augustine (354-430) made liberal use of the Alexandrian mode of allegorical exegesis.” See Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures*. Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), 23.

⁵ See Robert M. Grant with David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 63-72.

⁶ The four senses are represented in the following saying: *Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria, moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia*, meaning, “the letter shows us what God and our fathers did; the allegory shows us where our faith is hid; the moral meaning gives us rules of daily life; the anagogy shows us where we end our strife.” See Robert M. Grant with David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 85.

⁷ “The Bible is not one standard of authority among others, as it was for medieval Catholicism. It is the sole standard. And it is not an objective standard, as it was for Thomas Aquinas. It is a standard at once objective and subjective, for in it and through it God himself speaks to the human heart. The Bible authenticates itself.” Ibid., 99. Grant

The critical analysis of Scripture, along with “the rise of philosophy as an autonomous science and its gradual divorce from theology” in the seventeenth-century Europe,⁸ opens door for non-confessional studies of Scripture. The works of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)⁹ and Baruch Spinoza (1632-77)¹⁰ are some of the representatives. Their focus on reason questions the legitimacy of the divine authority of the ecclesiastical institution (cf. autonomy vs. relationality). It further renders the religious experience recorded in the Scripture superstitious and obstructive to a judicious state governing. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), however, in pointing out the infinite character of religion (cf. heteronomy),¹¹ argues that one’s horizon of vision is always

further writes, “In Luther’s insistence on the subjective element in interpretation we are close to modern theories of exegesis which stress the ultimate impossibility of ‘objective’ analysis of human thought” (ibid., 104). This “subjective element” of biblical interpretation does not mean that the social locations of the interpreters are foregrounded. Not yet. It will take a few more centuries until the late twentieth century. Neither does it mean that the critical studies of the Scripture are sidelined. To the contrary, the historical and grammatical analyses are emphasized. The “subjective element” refers to the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon the interpreters (i.e., the Reformers) that are not constrained by the Church dogma and traditions (i.e. the Catholic Church).

⁸ Ibid., 104.

⁹ While Hobbes argues that we “Captivate our Understanding and Reason, when we forbear contradiction,” his notion of the Leviathan as the justification for the sovereignty of the Commonwealth is a mystical figure in the Hebrew Bible. See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*. Revised student edition. Edited by Richard Tuck. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 256 (chapter 32). Given the nature of human being against each other (i.e., competition, diffidence, and glory) (ibid. 88, chapter 13), the figure of Leviathan as a body politic makes people entrust their individual interest and sovereignty unto the sovereign power that will preserve peace and prevent conflicts and wars. Also, see Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1972), 171-80. Here, Hobbes’s critical reading of the Scripture that reduces the revelation of God to the socio-political function of the revelation helps justify the sovereignty of the Commonwealth from being subjected by the Catholic Church and the Protestant movements.

¹⁰ Highlighting the importance of nature and reason in our interpretation of the Scripture, Spinoza explains away biblical events that contradict the laws of nature and argues for the moral lessons of these events. He writes, “If anything be found in Scripture which can be conclusively proved to contravene the laws of Nature, or which could not be possibly follow from them, we have to believe that this was inserted into the Holy Scripture by sacrilegious men. For whatever is contrary to Nature is contrary to reason, and whatever is contrary to reason is absurd, and should therefore be rejected.” See Baruch Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*. Gebhardt Edition. Second edition. Translated by Samuel Shirley. Introduction and Annotation by Seymour Feldman (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2001), 80 (chapter 6). This focus on reason aims to create and preserve peace and safety among the people of the state. Spinoza also speaks of a check and balance of power between the people and the sovereign.

¹¹ Schleiermacher writes, “You cannot say that your horizon, even the broadest, comprehends everything and that nothing more is to be intuited beyond it, or that nothing within this horizon escapes your eye, even the best aided. You find limits nowhere and are not able to think of any. This is true of religion in an even far higher sense ... Religion is infinite not only because acting and being acted upon ceaselessly alternate between the same limited matter and the mind ... not only because it is, like morality, internally incapable of completion; it is infinite in all respects, an infinity of matter and form, of being, of vision, and of knowledge about it. This feeling must accompany everyone who really has religion. Each person must be conscious that his religion is only a part of the whole...” See

partial and delimited. Given this limitation of human understanding, “[r]eligion’s essence is neither thinking nor acting, but intuition and feeling”¹² that are in an utter dependence on God.

The conflicts between institutionalized theology (cf. heteronomy in the framework of autonomy and relationality) and secular philosophy (cf. autonomy) in Western critical studies of the Scripture continue into the eighteenth, nineteenth, and mid-twentieth centuries.¹³ A great illustration of this division are the three phases of the search for “the historical Jesus” in the West.¹⁴ The first phase of the quest that dismisses supernatural stories in the Scripture on the ground that they contradict the laws of nature and reason¹⁵ (cf. autonomy) ends with the critique of Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965): “The historical investigation of the life of Jesus did not take its rise from a purely historical interest; it turned to the Jesus of history as an ally in the struggle against the tyranny of dogma.”¹⁶ Schweitzer, in fact, writes, “There is no historical task which so reveals [an interpreter’s] true self as the writing of a Life of Jesus.”¹⁷ One should recognize what the historical method can and cannot accomplish.¹⁸ However, the critical tools often aim to

Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*. Translated and edited by Richard Crouter. Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 27.

¹² Ibid., 22. For Schleiermacher, “All intuition proceeds from an influence of the intuited on the one who intuits, from an original and independent action of the former, which is then grasped, apprehended, and conceived by the latter according to one’s own nature.” Ibid., 24-25.

¹³ For details, see Robert M. Grant with David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 110-33.

¹⁴ For a concise review on these quests of the historical Jesus, see Colin Brown, “Historical Jesus, Quest of,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Edited by Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 326-41.

¹⁵ Herman Samuel Reimarus (1694-1768), for example, “stripped the Gospels of all supernatural trappings,” and “subtracted any materials said to be in fulfillment of Scripture, claiming that all such material was back-projected by the disciples.” See Clinton Bennett, *In Search of Jesus: Insider and Outsider Images* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 96; *Reimarus: Fragments*. Edited by Charles Talbert. Translated by Ralph S. Fraser (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), 64, 151-52. Likewise, Strauss (1808-74) also explains the supernatural phenomena in the Gospels as mythical imaginations. See David Friedrich Strauss, *The Life Of Jesus Critically Examined*. Translated by George Eliot (New York: Macmillan, 1892).

¹⁶ Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Translated by W. Montgomery. Preface by F. C. Burkitt (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2005), 4.

¹⁷ Idem.

¹⁸ “The study of the Life of Jesus has had a curious history. It set out in quest of the historical Jesus, believing that when it had found Him it could bring Him straight into our time as a Teacher and Saviour ... The historical foundation of Christianity as built up by rationalistic, by liberal, and by modern theology no longer exists; but that does not mean that Christianity has lost its historical foundation ... Jesus means something to our world because a

construct a “safe” Jesus who confirms the ethos of the world;¹⁹ someone who is not in the grip of the ecclesiastical institution.²⁰ In the words of Martin Kähler (1835-1912), the “historical Jesus” was created by modern scholars “to set the biblical Christ over against the dogmatic Christ.”²¹ But in pushing for an eschatological Jesus, Schweitzer may have overreacted to the rationalistic and liberal renderings of Jesus that, for him, have domesticated Jesus’s revolutionary teachings.²² His argument could suggest that historical analyses are not important to our understanding of Jesus.²³ This argument is made explicit by Kähler. He contends that “we do not possess any sources for a ‘Life of Jesus’ which a historian can accept as reliable and adequate.”²⁴ Highlighting “the conditions of historical knowledge,”²⁵ Kähler argues against that one’s faith is

mighty spiritual force streams forth from Him and flows through our time also. This fact can neither be shaken nor confirmed by any historical discovery. It is the solid foundation of Christianity. The mistake was to suppose that Jesus could come to mean more to our time by entering into it as a man like ourselves. This is not possible. First because such a Jesus never existed. Secondly because, although historical knowledge can no doubt introduce greater clearness into an existing spiritual life, it cannot call spiritual life into existence. History can destroy the present; it can reconcile the present with the past; can even to a certain extent transport the present into the past; but to contribute to the making of the present is not given unto it.” Ibid., 397.

¹⁹ “We modern theologians are too proud of our historical method, too proud of our historical Jesus, too confident in our belief in the spiritual gains which our historical theology can bring to the world. The thought that we could build up by the increase of historical knowledge a new and vigorous Christianity and set free new spiritual forces, rules us like a fixed idea, and prevents us from seeing that the task which we have grappled with and in some measure discharged is only one of the intellectual preliminaries of the great religious task.” Ibid., 398.

²⁰ The search “was concerned with presenting a historically true life of Jesus that functioned theologically as a critical force over against churchly Christology.” See Gerd Theissen and Dagmar Winter, *The Quest for the Plausible Jesus: The Question of Criteria*. Translated by M. Eugene Boring (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 1. “To the extent that criteria for Jesus research were formulated, their content approximated a ‘criterion of dissimilarity.’ Such criteria were one-sidedly applied to distinguishing Jesus from early Christianity: that which contradicted the later church’s exalted view of Jesus was considered especially authentic.” Idem.

²¹ See Martin Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*. Translated, edited and with an introduction by Carl E. Braaten. Foreword by Paul J. Tillich (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), 44.

²² For example, he writes, “But the truth is, it is not Jesus as historically known, but Jesus as spiritually arisen within men, who is significant for our time and can help it. Not the historical Jesus, but the spirit which goes forth from Him and in the spirits of men strives for new influence and rule, is that which overcomes the world ... The abiding and eternal in Jesus is absolutely independent of historical knowledge and can only be understood by contact with His spirit which is still at work in the world.” Ibid., 399.

²³ It is, however, important to note that, as Brown points out, Schweitzer’s work “did not show, as is often assumed, that recovery of the historical Jesus was impossible. Rather, it presented a massive critique of the views of the theological establishment, set out in such a way as to show that all paths but Schweitzer’s proved to be dead ends.” See Colin Brown, “Historical Jesus, Quest of,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, 332.

²⁴ Martin Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*, 48.

²⁵ Ibid., 145. Kähler even writes, “There is no more effective method for securing the gradual triumph of a political party than to write a history of one’s country... Stripped of its historical dress, the bare thesis of the ‘historian’ would arouse too many suspicions. Disguised as history, the historian’s theory passes imperceptibly into our thought

subjected to the authority of the discipline of history. He also claims that the “historical Jesus” cannot be known apart from the “Christ of faith;” the Gospels are confessional accounts of Christ as the Lord. Implied in this argument is that the “Jesus of history as such is no longer considered of decisive importance,” a mistake that Ernst Käsemann finds also suggested in the works of his teacher, Rudolf Bultmann.²⁶

However, in pointing out the dialectics in-between the “historical Jesus” and the “Christ of faith” argued by the critical and conservative schools of thought, Käsemann finds that “the two might be more than mere opponents; they might be partners in a genuine theological conversation.”²⁷ This dialectic movement shows that the “historical Jesus” and the “Christ of faith” actually inform one another. One cannot be separated from the other.²⁸ Käsemann highlights this intertwining relation by showing how the eschatological character in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew fades out in the Gospels of Luke and John.²⁹ In his exposition, Käsemann

and convictions as an authentic piece of reality, as a law emanating therefrom ... when Christology appears in the form of a ‘Life of Jesus,’ there are not many who will perceive the stage manager behind the scenes, manipulating, according to his own dogmatic *script*, the fascinating spectacle of a colorful biography.” Ibid., 56.

²⁶ Ernst Käsemann, “The Problem of the Historical Jesus,” in *Essays on New Testament Themes*. Studies in Biblical Theology 41. Translated by W. J. Montague (London: SCM Press, 1971), 16. Käsemann writes, “after sixty years, [Kähler’s *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*] is hardly dated and, in spite of many attacks and many possible reservations, has never really been refuted. In essence, Bultmann has merely, in his own way, underpinned and rendered more precise the thesis of this book.” Idem.

²⁷ Ibid., 18. He continues, “Such an assumption ... simply postulates the dialectic of two distinct standpoints. An over-emphasis on the one aspect is then met by a like over-emphasis on the other, and the change of posture by the first partner leads, provided that the conversation is conducted on a reasonable basis, to a corresponding change on the part of the other.” Idem.

²⁸ Käsemann writes, “Primitive Christianity is obviously of the opinion that the earthly Jesus cannot be understood otherwise than from the far side of Easter, that is, in his majesty as Lord of the community and that, conversely, the event of Easter cannot be adequately comprehended if it is looked at apart from the earthly Jesus. The Gospel is always involved in a war on two fronts.” Ibid., 25. Indeed, we “cannot do away with the identity between the exalted and the earthly Lord without falling into docetism and depriving ourselves of the possibility of drawing a line between the Easter faith of the community and myth. Conversely, neither our sources nor the insights we have gained from what has gone before permit us to substitute the historical Jesus for the exalted Lord.” Ibid., 34.

²⁹ Ibid., 25-29. In light of the representation of eschatology into history, Käsemann writes, “To cleave firmly to history is one way of giving expression to the *extra nos* of salvation. Yet Luke proves how dangerous this method is, by making the *kairos* into a mere epoch, predestination into the initial impulse of a development and the givenness of salvation to our faith into the accessibility of verifiable facts to our knowledge; and by making grace (which is our destiny, compelling every one of us to make the decision between faith and unbelief) into the validation of the Church as the organization of the *religio christiana*.” Ibid., 33.

further displays an “analogical imagination” (see chapter 2).³⁰ Here, let us cite a part of an essay presented by Käsemann in 1953 that jumpstarted the second phase or the “New Quest” for the “historical Jesus.” This long quotation is important because it shows that just as a same figure can be conceptualized differently in different narratives, different figures may also be conceptualized similarly.³¹ He writes:

The community [of primitive Christianity] did not inadvertently and senselessly amalgamate its own message with that of its Lord, much less did it merely repeat the latter ... It interprets out of its own experience what for it has already become mere history and employs for this purpose the medium of its preaching. It is precisely by this method that the community rescues the facts of the past from being regarded only as prodigies and wonders ... To state the paradox as sharply as possible: the community takes so much trouble to maintain historical continuity with him who once trod this earth that it allows the historical events of this earthly life to pass for the most part into oblivion and replaces them by its own message. It is not only at this point in its history that the community does this. The same process is always being repeated in the course of Church history. Time and again, continuity with the past is preserved by shattering the received terminology, the received imagery, the received theology – in short, by shattering the tradition ... There is an ever-present temptation into which many have fallen, to infer from this variation the complete discontinuity of Christian history. The truth is that it is this variation which makes continuity possible at all. For mere history becomes significant history not through tradition as such but through interpretation, not through the simple establishment of facts but through the understanding of the events of the past which have become objectified and frozen into facts ... Mere history only takes on genuine historical significance in so far as it can address both a question and an answer to our contemporary situation...³²

Here, we note that Scripture comes to life in preaching: in the reinterpretation of Scripture for the *contemporary* audience. As a result, the “continuity with the past is preserved ... by shattering

³⁰ See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 246 n. 25

³¹ Let us use the example of the figure “baptism” as an illustration. The belief and practice of baptism may appear in various contexts and our study of these appearances can certainly inform us of, let us say, the nature and function of John’s baptism in the four Gospels, and hence provides us a tentative range of possible notion of “baptism.” But this diachronic study does not mean that John’s baptism cannot be conceptualized otherwise. A synchronic study that analyzes the paradigmatic pattern in the four Gospels is still needed to show how the baptism of John is similar or different from the figure of “baptism” in other contexts. A mere inter-textual allusion to a same figure without examining how the figure is conceptualized in various contexts can lead to an ossification of the figure.

³² Ernst Käsemann, “The Problem of the Historical Jesus,” in *Essays on New Testament Themes*, 20-21.

the tradition.” Without this deconstruction (that takes places because of the change of contexts), the tradition will become a mere relic. It is when history and tradition are re-interpreted to the audience’s situation that they become meaningful to them. Bultmann’s demythologization that renders the biblical stories relevant to the audience is a case in point, albeit he, unfortunately, tends to subsume his contemporary situation to that of the biblical narratives.

A sense of discontinuity with the past may appear, but it also signifies a continuity with the past. We inherit the past. We are the product of the past, but we are also the production of the past as we inherit it. A similar argument is made by Günther Bornkamm in 1956.³³ In his words, the task of the critical biblical scholars “is to seek the history *in* the Kerygma of the Gospels, and in this history to seek the Kerygma. If we are asked to differentiate between the two, that is only for the purpose of revealing more clearly their inter-connection and interpenetration.”³⁴ This inter-connection and interpenetration of “the Kerygma of the Gospels” and history supports Van Harvey’s argument that history “is not so much itself a field as a field-encompassing field.”³⁵ This “field-encompassing field” notion of history is inevitable given that our perception of the

³³ He argues that “what belongs to the past in the history of Jesus should always be investigated and understood in relation to its significance for the present time and for the coming time of God’s future.” A good example of this contemporariness the parallel stories that we see in the Gospels. See Günther Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*. Translated by Irene and Fraser McLuskey with James M. Robinson (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969), 17. “Because the earthly Jesus is for the Church at the same time the Risen Lord, his word takes on, in the tradition, the features of the present. From this standpoint are to be explained two apparently conflicting characteristics of the tradition which nearly every page of the Synoptics presents: an incontestable loyalty and adherence to the word of Jesus, and at the same time an astonishing degree of freedom as to the original wording. The word of Jesus is preserved, and yet not with the piety of an archivist, nor is it passed on like the utterances of famous rabbis with expositions attached. 4 In fact, one can go on to say this: the tradition is not really the repetition and transmission of the word he spoke: once upon a time, but rather *is* his word today.” Idem.

³⁴ Ibid., 21. Consider this: “Did not the Church fall into a strange anachronism? She made herself contemporary with her earthly pre-Easter Lord. She made herself contemporary with the Pharisees and high priests of long ago. She made herself contemporary with the first hearers of Jesus who heard his message of the coming of God’s kingdom, with the disciples who followed after him, with the sick whom he healed, with the tax collectors and sinners with whom he sat down at table. But what may appear here as anachronism corresponds exactly with the Church’s understanding of herself and her situation. She made herself one with those who did not already live by faith, but who at the beginning were called to obedience and faith by the word of Jesus. In this she confessed at the same time that her faith can be nothing else but following her earthly Master who is yet to face the cross and resurrection.” Ibid., 23-24.

³⁵ Van A. Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer: The Morality of Historical Knowledge and Christian Belief*. With a New Introduction by the Author (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 81.

world is proprioceptive and correlative. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty puts it, our “body ... is the point of view upon the world”³⁶ in which “to look at an object is to inhabit it, and from this habitation to grasp all things in terms of the aspect which they present to it.”³⁷

Commenting on the search for the “historical Jesus” in the West, Kwok Pui-Lan’s remarks are noteworthy, as she links the search with the East-West encounters. She writes,

Isn’t it interesting that the quests are always located in Europe and North America? I have not seen such obsession in Asia, Africa, Latin America, or the Caribbean. People living outside the metropolitan centers do not seem to be terribly concerned with the quest. Some African Christians have even said: ‘We do not need to quest for Jesus, we have never lost him.’ I have also observed that the first quest took place in Europe when the colonization of the world was at its zenith. Today, the United States has become the only Superpower and the newest quest has caught the popular imagination. Do you think this is mere coincidence?³⁸

For Kwok, the quest is not a simple “quest for origins.” It is, moreover, a quest for power; an Orientalist quest that seeks to justify the Western superiority. Again, in her words:

The first quest could not have taken place without the new knowledge brought to the metropolitan centers about the myths, cultures, and religions of the colonized people ... the search for Jesus must be read against the search for ‘natives’ to conquer and subdue. The encounter with the ‘natives’ created anxiety and necessitated the quest for self-identity. The epistemological framework of the first quest was constructed out of a combination of Orientalist philology, racist ideology, and Eurocentric study of other people’s mythology and religions.³⁹

When asked whether the first quest was conducted as a means to challenge “the doctrinal authority of the church,” Kwok’s response is likewise remarkable.

For a long time I was taught to read the historical quest in that way. But I have come to see that that was basically a European script. Where in the Third World

³⁶ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Collin Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 81.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 79.

³⁸ Kwok Pui-Lan, “On Color-Coding Jesus: An Interview with Kwok Pui-lan,” in *The Postcolonial Bible*. The Bible and Postcolonialism. Edited by R. S. Sugirtharajah (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 177.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 178.

did you see people using the historical quest to challenge the church, except maybe in very tiny academic enclaves?⁴⁰

With this observation that focuses on power relations, Kwok finds the “Third Quest,” mainly conducted in the United States since 1970s, reflects the anxiety of the “straight white males in America” when they feel that “they have lost a lot of ground to women, minorities, and gays and lesbians.”⁴¹ So for her, “the newest quest of Jesus in America is simultaneously a quest for the Jews, the blacks, the gays, the dangerous women, the immigrants, the Indians, the women with brown skin, the loss, the decline...”⁴² Consequently, “Jesus has many identities in the newest quest: a political revolutionary, a magician, a Galilean charismatic, a rabbi, a proto-Pharisee, an Essene, an eschatological prophet, a healer, a sage, and so on.”⁴³

One may brush aside Kwok’s comment as too general and exaggerating, but if the “Third Quest” calls attention to the first-century Jewish religious, cultural, sociopolitical, and economic contexts of the Jesus movements, then the social locations of the interpreters should come to the fore as well.⁴⁴ This is precisely what Kwok does. Our critical studies of the biblical texts cannot be conducted without critical examinations of the contexts of the interpreters. The voyeurism of

⁴⁰ Idem. Of course, one may point out the different sociopolitical and religious contexts in different countries.

⁴¹ Idem. Echoing the conclusion of Dieter Georgi’s comments on the search for the historical Jesus in the US, Koester writes, “It indeed seems that the recent wave of attempts to recover the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth unwittingly mirrored a movement that reached its apex in Newt Gingrich’s ‘Contract with America.’ There is a considerable movement from the very guarded steps, taken by German scholars in the first two decades after World War II, to the confidence of the last fifteen years; especially in the United States, the victorious leader of the capitalist world. It is perhaps no accident that almost all the major recent works on the historical Jesus have been produced by American scholars.” See Helmut Koester, “The Historical Jesus and the Cult of the *Kyrios Christos*” (The Annual Faculty Research Lecture at HDS), *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* 24.3 (1995): 13-18 (14). Also, see Dieter Georgi, “The Interest in Life of Jesus Theology as a Paradigm for the Social History of Biblical Criticism,” *The Harvard Theological Review*, 85.1 (January 19912): 51-83 (83).

⁴² See Kwok Pui-Lan, “On Color-Coding Jesus: An Interview with Kwok Pui-lan,” 181.

⁴³ Ibid., 183. For details on these different portrayals of Jesus, see Ben Witherington, III, *The Jesus Quest: The Third Search For the Jew of Nazareth*. 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1997).

⁴⁴ Ithe beginning of his article, Georgi notes that “Historians, including biblical critics, are not known for exposing themselves to the same kind of historical criticism that they apply to everything and everyone else. The historical situation of contemporary exegetes and their social conditions usually remain uninvestigated and thus – from a historical-critical and socio-historical perspective – unquestioned.” See Dieter Georgi, “The Interest in Life of Jesus Theology as a Paradigm for the Social History of Biblical Criticism,” 51.

the interpreters that objectifies the others should be exposed. The multiple biblical criticisms used to analyze the texts in the “Third Quest” do not arise without their social locations. Fernando Segovia points this out rather clearly as he foregrounds the power relations entailed in the en-gendering of Western modern biblical criticisms.⁴⁵ Critical biblical studies are not without ethical⁴⁶ and political⁴⁷ impacts upon their audience. We cannot deny that it is the product and production of certain configurations of power relations.

However, it appears that many in the field of Western critical biblical studies fail to see that the biblical texts have multiple textual elements and levels that render a same biblical text polyvalent in meanings. We sideline the “fourfold sense” of Scripture (e.g. literal, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical). We ignore the religious dimensions of the Jesus Movement and of Scripture that Alfred Loisy (1857-1940)⁴⁸ highlights in the interweaving of the “historical Jesus” and the “Christ of faith,” as foregrounded in the “New Quest” (the second quest) that are mainly led by Bultmann’s students. We disregard Eastern Orthodox’s interpretations of the Scripture that remind us of the religious dimension of the biblical texts. We forget about the works of Baron Friedrich von Hügel (1852-1925) that foreground three *intertwining* elements of religion – (1) “historical and institutional,” (2) “emotional and volitional,” and (3) “analytic and speculative” elements – which for von Hügel, echo the “three elements or forces of our nature,

⁴⁵ See Fernando F. Segovia, *Decolonizing Biblical Studies: A View from the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 3-52.

⁴⁶ See Daniel Patte, *Ethics of Biblical Interpretation: A Reevaluation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995).

⁴⁷ See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999).

⁴⁸ See Alfred Firmin Loisy, *The Birth of the Christian Religion* and *The Origins of the New Testament*. Two books in one volume. Translated by L. P. Jacks (New Hyde Park, New York: University Books, 1962). Consider the last words in *The Origins of the New Testament*, “What matters is the fire they [Jesus, Peter, Paul or John] kindled, and it is a fire that will never die till mankind is no more. Men pass away, but humanity remains; religion die, but religion shines for ever. Man would have perished long ago, victim of his own folly, had not the religious ideal of humanity rescued him from the edge of the abyss. May he mend his ways and himself establish this law of his progress on an ever firmer foundation.” *Ibid.*, 330.

the sensational, the rational, [and] the ethico-mystical.”⁴⁹ Depending on which element is privileged, the other elements recede to the background.⁵⁰ This history of different trajectories in biblical interpretation, even if most of them are Western White Male centered, should not be simply dismissed as irrelevant or oppressive. To dismiss them is to deny their contextuality and to forget our own contextuality.

This heritage of critical biblical studies, whether we like it or not, offers us many lessons. The quests of the “historical Jesus” teach us the ethics and politics of biblical interpretations. They enlighten us that meaning is multidimensional and relational. We certainly want to reject the parts of our heritage that marginalize the others. But, we cannot discard it entirely; it already marks us. We need to engage it and learn from its positive and negative influences. Let us recall Käsemann’s argument that “continuity with the past is preserved by shattering the received terminology, the receive imagery, the received theology – in short, by shattering the tradition.”⁵¹ To be faithful to the past is to be “unfaithful” to it: to engage it in the *contemporary* situation. In the words of Jacques Derrida,

the heir must always respond to a sort of double injunction, a contradictory assignation: It is necessary first of all to know and to know how to *reaffirm* what comes ‘before us,’ which we therefore receive even before choosing, and to behave in this respect as a free subject ... What does it mean to reaffirm? It means

⁴⁹ See Baron Friedrich von Hügel, *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and Her Friends*. 2 vols. Vol. 1: *Introduction and Biographies* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co; London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1923), 55-56. He writes, “Religion is at all times more or less both traditional and individual; both external and internal; both institutional, rational, and volitional. It always answers more or less to the needs of authority and society; of reason and proof; of interior sustenance and purification. I believe because I am told, because it is true, because it answers to my deepest interior experiences and needs.” *Ibid.*, 54. In light of our discussion of the modes of existence in chapter 1, we can further say that (1) is a mode of relationality, (2) is heteronomy, and (3) is autonomy. Just as the modes of existence are intertwined, for von Hügel too, these elements are interwoven.

⁵⁰ For example, speaking of the potential challenge of “emotional and volitional element” (heteronomy) to “historical and institutional element” (relationality) and “analytic and speculative element” (autonomy), von Hügel writes: “To the external force this emotional power will tend to appear as akin to revolution; to the intellectual side it will readily seem mere subjectivity and sentimentality ever verging on delusion. And the emotional-experimental force will, in its turn, be tempted to sweep aside both the external, as so much oppressive ballast; and the intellectual, as so much hair-splitting or rationalism. And if it succeeds, a shifting subjectivity, and all but incurable tyranny of mood and fancy, will result, – fanaticism is in full sight.” *Ibid.*, 55.

⁵¹ Ernst Käsemann, “The Problem of the Historical Jesus,” in *Essays on New Testament Themes*, 20.

not simply accepting this heritage but relaunching it otherwise and keeping it alive ... This reaffirmation, which both continues and interrupts, resembles (at least) an election, a selection, a decision.⁵²

To be faithful to one's heritage is to keep it alive. But to keep it alive is to engage it. To engage it is to transform it; to save it from being left behind as a relic collecting dust.⁵³ In order to save the tradition, the shattering must take place within the tradition. This resurrection of the tradition is rather common in new renditions of the classic songs and movies. Reaffirmation is "not simply accepting this heritage but relaunching it otherwise and keeping it alive." To relaunch it *otherwise* and to keep it alive is to be responsible for it. Derrida writes,

The concept of responsibility has no sense at all outside of an experience of inheritance ... One is responsible before what comes before one but also before what is to come, and therefore *before oneself* ... It is always a question of a sort of anachronism: to come before [*devancer*] in the name of what came before us, and to come before the name itself! To invent one's name, to sign otherwise, uniquely in each case but in the name of the name passed down, if that's possible!⁵⁴

For Derrida, this double "before" is a gesture of love. It is to let heritage be heritage; to let it go; to leave it. "Not to leave it safe: to save it, perhaps, yet again, for a time, but without the illusion of a final salvation."⁵⁵ This is why for Derrida, deconstruction "never proceeds without love" (see the epigraph).⁵⁶ This is another reason why we use structural semiotics to interpret the theme and figure of love in 1 Corinthians and scholarly rendering of them. It helps us "to

⁵² Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, "Choosing One's Heritage," in *For What Tomorrow ... : A Dialogue*. Translated by Jeff Fort (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 3-4.

⁵³ "It is always by reaffirming the heritage that one can avoid this putting to death. Even at the moment ... when this very heritage, in order to save its life ... demands reinterpretation, critique, displacement, that is, an active intervention, so that a transformation worthy of the name might take place: so that something might happen, an event, *some* history, an unforeseeable future-to-come." Ibid., 4.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 6.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁶ "To know how to 'leave' and to 'let' [*laisser*], and to know the meaning of 'leaving' and 'letting' – that is one of the most beautiful, most hazardous, most necessary things I know of. It is in close proximity with giving up and giving over, the gift, and forgiveness. The experience of a 'deconstruction' is never without this, without this love, if you prefer that word." Ibid., 4-5.

elucidate, to imagine, to describe the operations that we accomplish *in spite of ourselves* when we construct as text and as discourse whatever we read” (see the epigraph). The prepositional phrase “in spite of ourselves” highlights our construction “as text and as discourse [of] whatever we read” is only one possible representation. This one possibility should not exclude other possibilities. We do not live in a vacuum. Paul makes this point rather clearly in 1 Corinthians.

As Paul argues for the singularity and plurality of believers in Christ through the calling of God (cf. 1 Cor. 1:9 as contrasted with 7:17-24), he exhorts them not to forget what they have experienced in Christ (1:4-6). He reminds them of their situations before the call (1:26). The partaking of the Lord’s Supper in the gatherings should further remind them of the body of Christ (11:24-26) that gives them life. Remembering is not a mere cognitive recollection. It is above all a *habitus* – which can be a semantic or a syntactic *habitus* (see chapter 2) – that marks one’s body and mind. Paul thus speaks of the remembering as a proclamation of the Lord’s death until he comes (11:26). Similarly, our interpretation of love in 1 Corinthians recalls the history of interpretation. Because of various voices in Malaysia and 1 Corinthians, we use Greimas’s semiotic theory, in particular his model of the “Generative Trajectory,” to engage the text and its interpretations. Not only does the trajectory highlight the meaning-producing dimensions and how they are produced, it also underlines the proprioceptive (or convictional) aspect of meaning production. Greimas’s “semiotic square” further fleshes out this aspect in Paul’s notion of love, which is often sidelined in scholarly interpretations (see chapter 1).

For Julia Kristeva, the convictional aspect also marks the text, as she speaks of a text in terms of a genotext (the “semiotic”) and a phenotext (the “symbolic”). She writes:

The genotext can thus be seen as language’s underlying foundation ... The phenotext is constantly split up and divided, and is irreducible to the semiotic process that works through the genotext. The phenotext is a structure ... it obeys rules of communication and *presupposes a subject of enunciation and an*

addressee. The genotext, on the other hand, is a process; it moves through zones that have relative and transitory borders and constitutes a *path* that is not restricted to the two poles of univocal information between two full-fledged subjects ... one might say that the genotext is a matter of topology, whereas the phenotext is one of algebra.⁵⁷

Here, we see that while the genotext undergirds the phenotext, the latter manifests the former. Such a manifestation is only one possibility. Regardless of how much “the phenotext is constantly split up and divided” to represent the genotext, it is “irreducible to the semiotic process that works through the genotext.” To marginalize the genotext is to objectify the “subject of enunciation and an addressee” and reduce the text to a mere “punctual presentation of meaning in words” instead of an “engendering of meaning.”⁵⁸ What we have learnt from Käsemann, Bornkamm, and Derrida is that tradition and heritage are not relic precisely because those who inherit and engage them are flesh-and-blood people.

Paul Ricoeur’s notion of “the symbol gives rise to thought” (*le symbole donne à penser*)⁵⁹ further shows that the genotext can be hermeneutically fleshed out in something else than symbol, namely “thought” – syntactically articulated thought. If “the *immediacy* of the symbol and the *mediation* of thought” are held together in the symbol itself,⁶⁰ then the dialectic of the symbol *giving* rise to thoughts *and* thoughts returning to the symbol (in a second naïveté) allows us to access the symbol.⁶¹ This place of the symbol in the hermeneutical circle is crucial; “the symbol

⁵⁷ Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*. Introduction by Leon S. Roudiez. Translated by Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 87. Emphasis added.

⁵⁸ See John Lechte, *Julia Kristeva* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 128.

⁵⁹ See Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*. Translated by Emerson Buchanan (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1969), 3-24, 347-57; idem, “The Hermeneutics of Symbols and Philosophical Reflection: I” (translated by Denis Savage) and “The Hermeneutics of Symbols and Philosophical Reflection: II” (translated by Charles Freilich) in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*. Edited by Don Ihde (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 287-334.

⁶⁰ Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 350. Emphasis added.

⁶¹ Or as Berger and Luckmann put it, “Language is capable not only of constructing symbols that are highly abstracted from everyday experience, but also of ‘bringing back’ these symbols and appresenting them as objectively real elements in everyday life. In this manner, symbolism and symbolic language become essential constituents of the reality of everyday life and of the common-sense apprehension of this reality. I live in a world of

is the *movement* of the primary meaning which *makes us participate* in the *latent* meaning and thus assimilates us to that which is symbolized *without our being able to master* the similitude intellectually.”⁶² As the symbol draws us into its world as we try to explain it, we can only explain and understand it better *in relation* to its own logic. Ricoeur writes:

[While] we can no longer live the great symbolisms of the sacred in accordance with the original belief in them [first naïveté], we can, we modern men [sic], aim at a second naïveté in and through criticism. In short, it is by *interpreting* that we can *hear* again. Thus it is in hermeneutics that the symbol’s gift of meaning and the endeavor to understand by deciphering are knotted together.⁶³

For Ricoeur, we can “communicate with the sacred” because our understanding “proceeds from a prior understanding of the very thing that it tries to understand by interpreting it.”⁶⁴ While we disagree with Ricoeur’s tendency to overemphasize the articulation of thought in the second naïveté (see section 3 in chapter 2),⁶⁵ we nonetheless find Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of symbols helpful to highlight the vital role of symbols in our articulation of thought. Given this hermeneutics of symbols, our use of structural semiotics is further justified to textually and analytically flesh out the proprioceptive and religious dimensions of 1 Corinthians.

III. What Is A Structural Semiotics?

[T]he production of meaning is meaningful only if it is the transformation of a meaning already given: the production of meaning is consequently a signifying

signs and symbols every day.” See Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Penguin Books, 1967), 55.

⁶² See Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 16. Emphasis added.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 351.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 352. In his reading of Ricoeur, Bourgeois further points out that “hermeneutics and interpretation of texts must be instructed by a structural approach to the text” as it brings us “from a naïve or superficial interpretation of a text to a depth or critical interpretation.” See Patrick L. Bourgeois, “From Hermeneutics of Symbols to the Interpretation of Texts,” in *Studies in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*. Edited by Charles E. Regan (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1979), 91, 93.

⁶⁵ See Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, 351. Also, see Mary Gerhart and Allan Melvin Russell, *Metaphoric Process: The Creation of Scientific and Religious Understanding* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1984), 64-65, 196 n. 8.

endowment with form indifferent to whatever content it may be called on to transform. *Meaning, in the sense of the forming of meaning, can thus be defined as the possibility of the transformation of meaning.*⁶⁶ – A. J. Greimas

In this section, we will explain Greimas’s semiotic square and each of the six components in the “Generative Trajectory.” This explanation is crucial. In chapters 3-7, we will use them to analyze and interpret Paul’s love in 1 Corinthians.

The word “structural” often gives people the bad impression that it is mechanical, ahistorical, anti-material, colonialist, universalizing, etc. Even until now, we still come across scathing criticism of structural (semiotic) exegesis that seriously mischaracterizes it.⁶⁷ So, let us first note that structural semiotics delineates the discursive structuration of meaning so that we can deconstruct not just the text and context, but also the way we interpret.⁶⁸ In his review of the development of semiotics in biblical studies, Jean Delorme points out that the field in 1980s

⁶⁶ Algirdas Julien Greimas, “The Meaning of Meaning,” in *The Social Sciences: A Semiotic View*. Foreword by Paolo Fabbri and Paul Perron. Translated by Paul Perron and Frank H. Collins (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 9.

⁶⁷ For example, Hurtado argues that “although handbooks and student guides on NT exegesis continue to include references to and descriptions of structuralist exegesis, it appears to have peaked some time ago in NT studies and is no longer the ‘now’ fashion that it was for Patte in 1976. This is for two reasons. First, ‘structuralism’ simply suffered the fate of fashions, which is to be superseded by subsequent fashions, in this case ‘post-structuralism’ and ‘deconstructionism.’ Indeed, already in 1975 (ironically for the date of Patte’s book), Roland Barthes (sometimes credited with the founding publication of structuralism in his book *S/Z* in 1953) asked, ‘Who is still a structuralist?’ (Barthes 1977: 117).” See Larry W. Hurtado, “Fashions, Fallacies, and Future Prospects in New Testament Studies,” *JSNT* 36.4 (2014): 299-324 (301). The book by Barthes in 1997 is Roland Barthes, *Roland Barthes* (ET; New York: Macmillan, 1997; French original: 1975). Here, Hurtado only cites one book by Patte and problematically ignores all the subsequent development in structural semiotics. Moreover, the title of the book that Hurtado refers to should be “What is Structural Exegesis?” instead of “What is Structuralist Exegesis?” To be fair, in this book, Patte makes it clear that the book is still in an experimental stage to see how the synchronic studies in semiotics can be applicable to critical biblical studies (which tends to focus on the diachronic studies of the text) to flesh out the paradigmatic pattern or the semantic universe of the text. Patte does this by showing how meanings are mediated and produced in the religious discourse.

⁶⁸ Patte succinctly points out that structural exegesis “is self-consciously developed on the basis of semiotic theories – that is, the theories that extend structural linguistic theories (how meaningful communication takes place in and through language; the grammar of sentence) to encompass all means of human communication (including through entire discourses and texts) and semantic theories (how meaning is produced and communicated). It is called ‘structural’ because, according to these theories, a text is meaningful for readers only insofar as they recognize (1) *different* features in this texts and (2) an interrelation – a *structure* – among different features.” See Daniel Patte, “Structural Criticism,” in *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*. Revised and expanded edition. Edited by Steven L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 183.

already stressed the *subject of enunciation* in the *discourse*: how meaning is engendered discursively in a particular situation between the *flesh-and-blood* enunciator and enunciatee.⁶⁹

Further clarification. First, a semiotic theory is not a fossilized formal language about a static structure. Insofar as it is viewed in the way that it presents itself, namely as a “theory”⁷⁰ – a “meta-language” (or more specifically, a “hierarchy of meta-languages”), it is open to critical analysis, even as it is ever in process (see “Generative Trajectory”). It should be clear that the semiotic theory treats both the text and context as sociopolitical and socio-religious productions, which involve the interplay of forces and relations. Both text and context not only reflect a reality (each time from a certain perspective), but also (re)produce and even (re)inscribe a certain representation of this reality as the norm for their enunciatee or the flesh-and-blood reader.

Secondly, the word “semiotics,” for Greimas’s, refers to a systematic study of the signifying process – the production of meaning – which includes among many other things the study of signs. It is different from Kristeva’s notion of “semiotic,” which from Greimas’s perspective, would be one of the many features of semiotics as a theory. Thirdly, the term “structural” underscores how meaning-producing dimensions are interrelated in the signifying process. As such, it foregrounds meaning as meaning effects.

Fourthly, at the core of Greimas’s semiotic theory is the “Generative Trajectory” that highlights the interaction in the signifying process of the “semantics” and the “syntax.” The “semantics” is for Greimas where feelings (i.e., Fundamental Semantics) are thematized (organized around certain conceptualization of themes in Narrative Semantics) and figurativized (represented by certain figures that embody the themes in a discourse) in Discursive Semantics.

⁶⁹ See Jean Delorme, “Orientations of a Literary Semiotics Questioned by the Bible,” 27-61; Louis Panier, “From Biblical Text to Literary Enunciation and Its Subject,” *Semeia* 81: 63-75.

⁷⁰ Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Joseph Courtés, “Theory,” in *Semiotics and Language: An Analytical Dictionary*, Vol. I. Translated by Larry Crist, Daniel Patte, James Lee, Edward McMahon II, Gary Phillips, and Michael Rengstorf (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), 344-46.

Given this signifying process, Greimas suggests that semiotics “is first and foremost a state of mind before it is a method. It is an ethic which expresses the demand for rigor both with respect to itself and to others...”⁷¹

Fifthly, as the proprioceptive features of signifying are fleshed out in our analysis of the semiotic square, it is noteworthy that the square is *not* a logical square;⁷² the values in the square are *semantically* invested. The semiotic square is primarily a symbolic square that helps us visualize the interrelation of the values at each corner of the square.⁷³

(i) What Is A Semiotic Square?

In a thymic-oriented culture such as Paul’s, features of human existence are intuitively *felt* “to have a value.”⁷⁴ They are so embodied in our perception that we call these *felt* values our convictions (i.e., self-evident truths). Following Timothy Cargal, who points out the contextuality of Greimas’s semiotic theory in privileging the veridictory instead of the thymic category, we put the predicate in quotation marks to indicate the felt value of a “feature of human existence” or a “reality” in terms of an euphoria (feeling good) or a dysphoria (feeling bad).⁷⁵ A good example is the value of holiness. It is because certain sayings, doings, and states are felt to

⁷¹ See A. J. Greimas, “Postface,” in *Signs and Parables: Semiotics and Gospel Texts, with a Study by Jacques Geninasca*. The Entrevernes Group. Translated by Gary Phillips (Pittsburgh, PA: The Pickwick Press, 1978), 297.

⁷²For example, see Paul Ricoeur, “Greimas’s Narrative Grammar,” in *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination*. Edited by Mario J. Valdés (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 256-86. For Greimas’s response, see “On Narrativity: Debate with A. J. Greimas,” in *A Ricoeur Reader*, 287-99.

⁷³For Greimas, the semiotic square is not appropriately used for presenting how an ideology functions, although it is possible as is suggested for example by Fredric Jameson, “Foreword,” in *On Meaning: Selected Writings in Semiotic Theory*. Introduction by Paul J. Perron. Translated by Paul J. Perron and Frank H. Collins (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), vi-xxii.

⁷⁴ We can think of the values of sacredness, purity, goodness, glory, honor, etc. in the biblical world. For example, addressing the classification of dirt, Douglas writes, “biologists have thought that dirt, in the form of bodily excretions, produces a universal feeling of disgust. They should remember that there is no such thing as dirt; no single item is dirty apart from a particular system of classification in which it does not fit ... But what counts as dirt? It depends on the classification in use.” See Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2002), xvii-xviii. In a veridictory semiotic system, features of human existence are intuitively *felt* “to be.”

⁷⁵ See Timothy B. Cargal, “The Generative Trajectory in Certain Non-Western Cultures,” in Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts: Greimas’s Structural Semiotics and Biblical Exegesis* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 265-75.

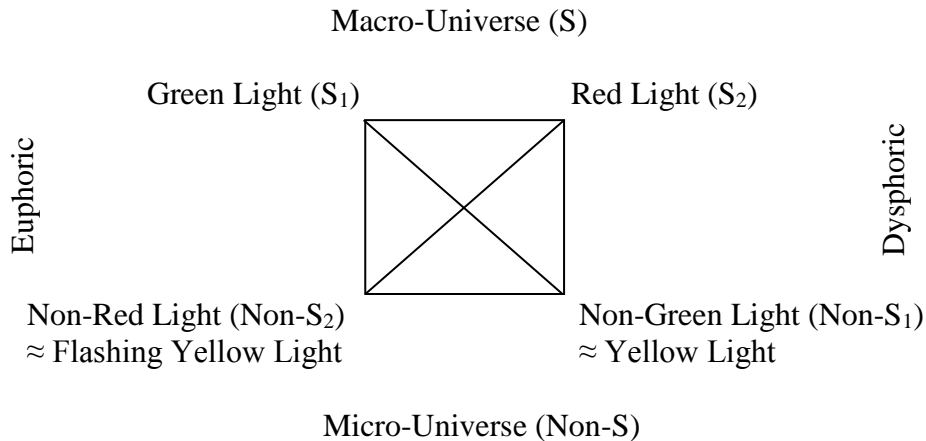
be holy that they are then felt to be real and true. Holiness is not a state of being but a state of felt being but a state of felt value. Since Western cultures are veridictory-oriented,⁷⁶ it is important to stress that the terms in a semiotic square are *felt* “to be” (seem to exist) in relations with each other. Let us use Daniel Patte’s example of the “traffic light” to explain.⁷⁷

First, this semiotic square is situated in a US context. The color of the traffic lights may signify different things in different countries. Secondly, we can arrange these light-values in the way that seems to be good to us. Thirdly, how we relate these light-values signifies certain values in our context. By putting the green and flashing yellow lights on the left of the square, we indicate that they are euphoric, good, or desirable. Most drivers probably prefer the green light. The usage of the lights may also imply that our context perceives the “green” to be approving while “red” to be less approving, and hence, a warning. Fourthly, the way the light-values are interrelated indicates a certain conception that links them together. One can think of other conceptualizations to explain how these light-values are interconnected. In the US context, one potential theme that we can think of is “progress” as a desirable value. Lastly, each value at the four corners of the square is in three relations: contrariety, contradiction, and implication.⁷⁸ While a semiotic square focusing on the “semantics” privileges the contrary relationship (Green vs. Red), a semiotic square highlighting the “syntax” prioritizes the contradiction relationship (Green vs. Yellow/Non-Green).

⁷⁶ Scott writes, “In metaphysical traditions, for example, a person wants to know what is real and what is not real. One feels obligated to find norms of judgment. One feels acutely the danger of despair if ultimate reality and meaning are threatened...” See Charles E. Scott, *The Language of Difference* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1989), 7.

⁷⁷ See Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 15.

⁷⁸ For linguistic details concerning the duality in language between contrast and combination in Greimas’s semiotic theory, see Ronald Schleifer, *A. J. Greimas and the Nature of Meaning: Linguistic, Semiotics and Discourse Theory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 1-43.



More explanations. First, the Green Light (S₁) is in a *contrary* relationship with the Red Light (S₂). There is no particular reason why we juxtapose the Green Light and the Red Light. Remember, a semiotic square is a symbolic square, not a logical square. Secondly, the Green Light (S₁) is also in a *contradiction* relationship with the Non-Green Light (Non-S₁) ≈ Yellow Light. As is readily seen, the Yellow Light is the logical negation of the Green Light. Hence we say that the contradiction relationship is underscored by the syntax, as the syntax is about logical rules. Thirdly, the Green Light (S₁) is also in an *implication* relationship with the Non-Red Light (Non-S₂) ≈ Flashing Yellow Light. Fourthly, while this implication relationship is metaphorical, note that the Flashing Yellow Light (Non-S₂) is also in a contradiction relationship with the Red Light (S₂). Thus, fifthly, the sub-contrary relationship that we see between Non-S₂ and Non-S₁ can become complicated.

Now, if we are to translate all these technical terms into our everyday life experience in the US that privileges “progress,” we see that we desire “moving” (the Green Light) and do not like “stopping” (the Red Light). “To go” is euphoric and “to stop” is dysphoric. In life, the Green Light (“to go”) and the Red Light (“to stop”) are often mixed with setbacks and successes. They may be “ideal,” the Macro-Universe (S), but in life, there are such nuances in between the Green

Light and the Red Light as the Yellow Light (Non-S₁) and the Flashing Yellow Light (Non-S₂). That is to say, we do not always get to progress smoothly. More often than not, we need to proceed with caution (the Flashing Yellow Light) and be prepared to halt the progress (the Yellow Light). While the Flashing Yellow Light (Non-S₂) and the Yellow Light (Non-S₁) are not ideal – and hence, the sub-contrary indicates a Micro-Universe (non-S) – they are realistic.

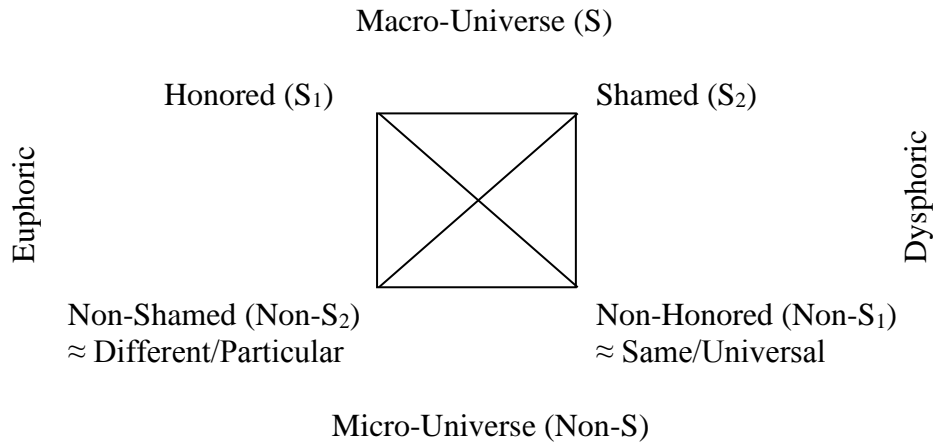
As the Flashing Yellow Light is like the Green Light, it implies the Green Light. But, it also contradicts the Red Light, as it signifies “do not stop,” but “proceed with caution.” Similarly, the Yellow Light is like the Red Light in the US context, as it implies “prepare to stop.” But, it also contradicts the Green Light that means “go,” as it indicates “do not go.”

While the Macro-Universe is ideal, it is not necessarily better than the Micro-Universe. Some cultures may prefer the Micro-Universe to the Macro-Universe.⁷⁹ One last thing to note is the symbolic feature of the square. As a symbolic square, the arrangement and interpretation of the values at each corner of the square are contextual. Depending on how we place and interpret the values in relations with each other, the conceptualization that links these values varies. Given these features of a semiotic square, we thus call it an “elementary structure of signification.”

In the semiotic square below, the honor and shame values are felt to be real and true. Because honor is felt euphoric, it is assessed to “be” good. And, because it “is” good, we should acquire and maintain honor. Note that this feeling of honor does not concern whether honor is associated with “real” or “illusory” situations/contexts. Now, since Malaysia takes prides (or perceives honor) in its multi-racial, multi-religious, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual society, the particularity of each culture, whatever it might be, is celebrated. It is a shame when distinctive characteristics of individual culture are marginalized, even when unity is advocated for the

⁷⁹ Patte illustrates this point as he deconstructs and reconstructs the story of Luke 10:30-35. See Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 81-102.

advantage of the Malays. Nonetheless, the strategy to retain and promote differences has become a communal tactic of survival and success.



As we noted about the relations in a semiotic square, the value “honored” (S₁) contrasts “shamed” (S₂), contradicts “non-honored” (Non-S₁), and implies “non-shamed” (Non-S₂). We want to stress that the implication relation is a metaphorical relation that creates a simulacrum that can be readily perceived. That is to say, since the value “honored” is so fundamental, it is often mediated by other values so that it can be expressed concretely in real life.⁸⁰ As such, the values “different” and “same” can mediate the ideal world (the Macro-Universe) and the realistic world (the Micro-Universe) and negotiate their differences.

Concerning the interrelation of the values on a semiotic square, Ronald Schleifer suggests that the position of Non-S₁ is an operation of a “both-and,” while the position of Non-S₂ is an operation of a “neither-nor,”⁸¹ which Fredric Jameson calls the “fourth term, the negation of the negation.”⁸² So if “honored” is contrary to “shamed,” then the value “non-honored” (Non-S₁)

⁸⁰ For an illustration of how this works, see Daniel Patte, *What is Structural Exegesis?*, 53-83. Also, see Ronald Schleifer, *A. J. Greimas and the Nature of Meaning*, 30-33.

⁸¹ See Ronald Schleifer, *A. J. Greimas and the Nature of Meaning*, 28-29.

⁸² Jameson writes, “This must be (where the operation is successful) the place of novelty and of paradoxical emergence. It is always the most critical position and the one that remains open or empty for the longest time, for its identification completes the process and in that sense constitutes the most creative act of the construction. Once again, it is simply a matter of experience that the first three terms are relatively ‘given’ and demand no great acts of intellection, but the fourth one is the place of the great leap, the great deduction, the intuition that falls from the

can be conceived in terms of *both* “honored” *and* “shamed.” If non-honored (Non-S₁) is seen as “same/universal,” then it has the qualities of *both* “honored” *and* “shamed.” While the notion of hybridity has been greatly employed in postcolonial theory and criticism, it can be dysphoric in Malaysia if it is used to win votes. We see too many politicians making blank promises to please many groups without delivering on them. If each “race” and “religion” has its own uniqueness, is it not suspicious that we can bring everyone together without respecting their distinctions?

On the other hand, the “neither-nor” possibility (Non-S₂) is appealing; it underscores the difficulty to bring differences together. What common ground can we share as we celebrate our differences? Can differences be our commonality? We can see why Jameson calls this “fourth term” in the semiotic square (Non-S₂) most explosive and disruptive. It calls for a creative imagination. This operation of a “neither-nor” does not trivialize differences. Neither does it say that all differences are welcome. The challenge is how to engage differences creatively not in oppositional but complementary terms. To do this, the value of “both-and” must be qualified by a “neither-nor.” We will see this being done in a series of semiotic squares, where the subcontrary terms (i.e., Non-S₂ and Non-S₁) in a semiotic square become the contrary terms (e.g., a new S₁ and a new S₂) for the *following* semiotic square (see the “Narrative Semantics” below).

(ii) The Semantics and The Syntax

For Greimas, the “semantics” refers (1) to the “gut feeling” or self-evident truths or values that are imposed upon and shape one’s identity and (2) to their figurative expression, such as honor and shame values in the Chinese worldview. Following Merleau-Ponty’s embodied perception of the world, Greimas and Jacques Fontanille write: “It is *by means of the perceiving body* that the world is transformed into meaning (into language), that the exteroceptive figures

ceiling, or from heaven.” See Fredric Jameson, “Foreword,” in *On Meaning: Selected Writings in Semiotic Theory*, xvi. For more illustration, idem, *The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972), 163ff.

are internalized, and that figurativity can be envisaged as the subject's mode of thinking."⁸³ Our perception of the world is not only initially proprioceptive, it is also proprioceptive as we reason and articulate it. Greimas and Fontanille thus find that "what is most remarkable is that the figures of the world can 'make sense' *only* through the sensitization imposed on them by the mediation of the body."⁸⁴ Note that the "sensitization" is "imposed ... by the mediation of the body." As "feeling is directly experienced as a self-evident mode of existence, prior to any impressions received,"⁸⁵ it makes sense for Greimas to give priority to the "semantics."⁸⁶

The "syntax," on the other hand, is the rule and grammar that seeks to make sense, organize, and systematize the felt and intuited values or perceptions *imposed* upon our body. The Lacanian "mirror stage" illustrates this identification and differentiation between the subject and the other in our attempt to make sense of our subjectivity and to interact with the other in the world. As such, the "syntax" refers (1) to the *demonstrated* truths that results from asserting or negating the felt, self-evident truth or convictions (of the semantics) and their narrative expression and (2) to the verisimilitudinous discursive expressions that relate these demonstrated truths to historical realities (characters, times, spaces) recognizable by an intended audience.

To use our example from chapter 1 about "honor felt," "honor claimed," and "honor paid," we can say that the dynamic relationship between "honor felt" and "honor claimed" and "honor paid" depict the discursive relation between the "semantics" ("honor felt") and the

⁸³ Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Jacques Fontanille, *The Semiotics of Passions: From States of Affairs to States of Feeling*. Translated by Paul Perron and Frank Collins. Foreword by Paul Perron and Paolo Fabri (Minnesota, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), xxi. Emphasis added.

⁸⁴ Emphasis added. They continue, "This is why the epistemological subject of theoretical construction cannot present itself as a pure rational cognitive subject. In fact, during its trajectory that leads to the advent of signification and to its discursive manifestation, it automatically encounters a phase of thymic 'sensitization.'" Idem.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸⁶ While Porter and Robinson most recently give a fair review of Greimas's "Generative Trajectory" and Patte's structural semiotics, they miss out the proprioceptive or thymic aspect of meaning production that characterize their works. This blunder is perhaps not too surprising given that Western cultures are primarily metaphysical or veridictory, i.e., non-thymic, centered. See Stanley E. Porter and Jason C. Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpretive Theory* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2011), 179-82.

“syntax” (“honor claimed” and “honor paid”). As “honor claimed” and “honor paid” cannot fully represent “honor felt,” in trying to articulate and manifest “honor felt,” something is created and missed out in our definition of honor through “honor claimed” and “honor paid.”

In sum, Patte writes: “*Syntactic components* involve those relations that contribute to the production of the narrative or discourse *development* (e.g., the unfolding of a story, the unfolding or an argument) ... the *semantic components* involve those relations that govern values and symbolic systems.”⁸⁷ Note that the “syntax” concerns how to present the narrative plot in a way that is real – verisimilitude – so that the audience may be convinced by the validity of the ideas and ideologies of the story. On the other hand, the “semantics,” as it is governed by those feelings, drives, and convictions that undergird the narrative world, is not at the forefront of the text but is expressed through the symbolic and figurative relations in the text.⁸⁸

(iii) The Generative Trajectory

We began with the semiotic square in our discussion of the semiotic theory because it underlines the dynamic feature of the “Generative Trajectory.” As a textual analytical framework, the trajectory highlights the generation and transformation of meaning. As the name indicates, the trajectory is *not* a superstructure of meaning production. Rather, it highlights the trajectory and characteristics of the meaning-producing dimensions, which can then help us identify the pertinent textual dimension that warrants our interpretation so that we do not make unwarranted claims.⁸⁹ A syntactic analysis of Paul’s love, for instance, should not be mistaken for a semantic

⁸⁷ Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 77. “The syntactic components are the necessary re-expressions (in a new form) of the semantic components. No syntax can exist apart from the semantics that it re-expresses. Conversely, no semantic system can be maintained if it is not re-expressed in a syntactic form.” *Ibid.*, 174.

⁸⁸ Patte finds that “the distinction between ‘syntax’ and ‘semantics’ and between ‘syntagmatic’ and ‘paradigmatic’ are more or less equivalent.” Greimas prefers to syntax and semantics because he “wants to avoid predetermining the structure of these dimensions [of the text] (by calling them syntagmatic and paradigmatic).” *Ibid.*, 77, n. 8.

⁸⁹ For an excellent demonstration of this point, see Mieke Bal, *Murder and Difference: Gender, Genre, and Scholarship on Sisera’s Death*. Translated by Matthew Gumpert (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

analysis. The diagram of the generative trajectory below illustrates the modes of generation and existence of meaning effects.⁹⁰

	Syntactic Components		Semantic Components
Semio-Narrative Structures	Deep level	Fundamental Syntax (3)	Fundamental Semantics (1)
	Surface level	Narrative Syntax (4)	Narrative Semantics (2)
Discursive Structures	Discursive Syntax (5) Discursivization: - Actorialization - Temporalization - Spatialization		Discursive Semantics (6) Thematization Figurativization

It is important to reiterate that the “Generative Trajectory” does *not* aim to show “in any way the process through which somebody produces a discourse.”⁹¹ The term “generative” highlights the “mode of production” of every semiotic object, “from the simplest to the most complex, from the most abstract to the most concrete.”⁹² The trajectory illustrates the production of meaning from potential conditions such as the “felt sense of incomprehension”⁹³ to virtualization and actualization of such sense in the text before realized in the discourse before the enunciatee, the flesh-and-blood reader.⁹⁴ Greimas argues that “the production of meaning is

⁹⁰ See Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 78. Also, see Algirdas Julien Greimas and Joseph Courtés, “Generative Trajectory,” in *Semiotics and Language*, 132-34.

⁹¹ Patte clarifies, “it should be noted that the term ‘generative’ does not intend to connote that this model represents in any way the process through which somebody produces a discourse. This model aims rather at representing the hierarchical interrelation of the components that together participate in the production of the meaning-effect.” See Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 74-75.

⁹² Algirdas Julien Greimas and Joseph Courtés, “Generative Trajectory,” in *Semiotics and Language*, 132.

⁹³ Ronald Schleifer, *A. J. Greimas and the Nature of Meaning*, 86.

⁹⁴ “To conceive semiotic theory in terms of a trajectory thus consisted in imagining it as, on the one hand, a pathway crossed by markers but, on the other, as a coagulating seeping of meaning, meaning continuously taking on substance, starting from its original nebulosity and ‘potential’ [fundamental and narrative semantics], and continuing

meaningful only if it is the transformation of a meaning already given.”⁹⁵ As meaning is always in the process of transformation, from Fundamental Semantics (1) to Discursive Semantics (6), it is noteworthy that depending on the sub-components or meaning producing dimensions that we focus on, we construct different texts out of a same text, and hence, interpret the text differently. We call this analytical phenomenon “textualization” because it shows how we, in trying to make sense/meaning of the text, actually create different texts out of the same printed text. We create different texts because in highlighting certain sub-components, we read the text *as if* it only has those highlighted meaning producing dimensions.

Secondly, the hierarchical relationship from the “deep level” to the “surface level” in enunciation is not only a question of strategy. It is also “related to the passage from meaning to signification” that points to the modalities and the “fundamental element of the modulations of sentences constituted by aspectualities.”⁹⁶ That is to say, as the “subject of enunciation” is saturated with passion, s/he is given to the elements of “modulations” and “aspectualities” in meaning production.⁹⁷ Here, the words “modulations” and “aspectualities” highlight the mood and feeling of the flesh-and-blood subjects.

With these clarifications, let us go over the “Generative Trajectory.” The trajectory has two components: the “semantics” and the “syntax.” Under each of them, we have three sub-components. The numeral in the parenthesis behind each sub-component indicates the trajectory of meaning generation and transformation. For example, the number (2) in Narrative Semantics (2) indicates that it is built upon the Fundamental Semantics (1). Likewise, the Narrative Syntax

with its ‘virtualization’ and ‘actualization’ [fundamental and narrative syntax], before finishing with its ‘realization’ [syntactic and semantic discursive manifestations], passing from epistemological preconditions to discursive manifestations.” See Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Jacques Fontanille, *The Semiotics of Passions*, xx.

⁹⁵ Algirdas Julien Greimas, “The Meaning of Meaning,” in *The Social Sciences: A Semiotic View*. Translated by Paul Perron and Frank H. Collins (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 9.

⁹⁶ See “On Narrativity: Debate with A. J. Greimas,” in *A Ricoeur Reader*, 296.

⁹⁷ For details, see Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Jacques Fontanille, *The Semiotics of Passions*, 1-16.

(4) goes through the trajectories of the Fundamental Syntax (3), Narrative Semantics (2), and Fundamental Semantics (1). So the numeral (1) of the Fundamental Semantics (1) indicates how meaning is *first* felt. Depending on how we interpret this felt meaning in our *first* semiotic square, we derive a *basic pattern* that makes sense of it.⁹⁸ As this pattern is applied and “actualized” in different aspects of life, we have a series of semiotic squares manifesting a similar pattern of the first square. These squares that form the Narrative Semantics (2) is what we will try to flesh out in chapter 2 about the notion of typology. In light of our discussion of modes of existence in chapter 1, all the components of the “semantics” – i.e., Fundamental, Narrative, and Discursive Semantics – are heteronomy-oriented, whereas the Fundamental Syntax is autonomy-centered, and Narrative Syntax and Discursive Syntax are relationality-centered.

When the individuals *affirm*, either assert or negate, the basic pattern of the Fundamental Semantics (1), they transform the *felt* meaning. This *logical* transformation of meaning in Fundamental Syntax (3) is like an individual’s subjectivity is formed as s/he tries to profess the meaning *for* her/himself (cf. the “mirror stage”). When this affirmation of the felt meaning is “actualized” in the text, with various social positions assigned to different characters/actants, we see Narrative Syntax (4) at work. Because Narrative Semantics (2) and Narrative Syntax (4) manifest the “deep level” that we see in Fundamental Semantics (1) and Fundamental Syntax (3), they are at the “surface level.” Just as a symptom may point to this or that illness and different symptoms can be triggered by one illness, the representation of the “deep level” at the “surface level” is also dynamic.

The dynamic representation comes to the fore at the “Discursive Structures,” where the enunciator tailors her/his message to the enunciatee’s situation so that the enunciatee can engage

⁹⁸ As we noted, while many Western scholars privilege the veridictory category of Fundamental Semantics (1), we prioritize the thymic category of Fundamental Semantics (1), which Patte and Cargal stress is characteristic of Paul’s semantic universe.

it. As the words “enunciator” and “enunciatee” indicate the dynamic flesh-and-blood subjects, where an enunciator is the writer/speaker and the enunciatee is the reader/audience, it would be naïve to simply assume that Paul’s enunciation to different churches of God is similar. Unless these churches have the same contexts and issues, it is unlikely that Paul’s enunciation is context-free. Paul’s convictions remain the same, but it does not mean that his enunciation will remain the same. The way he expresses his convictions will vary according to the context of the church of God that he addresses. J. Christiaan Beker makes this point rather clear in his notions of the “coherence” and “contingency” of the gospel.⁹⁹

To be persuasive in his message, Paul would use real life examples, pertinent to the specific enunciatee, to substantiate the validity of his message, a prominent feature highlighted in the Discursive Syntax (5). The “actorialization,” “temporalization,” and “spatialization” not only familiarize us to the verisimilitude and validity of the story,¹⁰⁰ they also create a “safe” distance for the enunciatee to engage the story since it happens somewhere else to somebody at a certain time. But, for the enunciatee to immerse her/himself in the story and be transformed through it, “thematization”¹⁰¹ and “figuratization” have to take place, as we see in the Discursive Semantics (6). “Thematization” and “figuratization” have to take place especially if the enunciator wants to persuade the enunciatee’s convictions or instinctive views of life be transformed. Just making the story verisimilitude through Discursive Syntax (5) will probably not convince the enunciatee to change her/his convictions. If the enunciator wants her/his story

⁹⁹ See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980).

¹⁰⁰ For details, see Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

¹⁰¹ I find Tracy’s “analogical imagination” comparable to Greimas’s notion of thematization (see chapter 2). See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*.

to be real, plausible, *and valuable* to the enunciatee, s/he must also transform the themes and figures of the story (see below).¹⁰²

(a) Fundamental Semantics (1) and Narrative Semantics (2)

In this sub-section we focus on the notions of convictions and typology. In an early collaborated work, Daniel and Aline Patte illustrate the difference between syntax and semantics in terms of ideas (i.e., Narrative Syntax) and deep values (i.e., Fundamental Semantics and Narrative Semantics). Using the language of sign, they point out that as the relation between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary and relational in signification, the relation is slippery and can be manipulated. They write: “Because a distance separates these two elements [i.e., the signifier and the signified], the sign can be manipulated by the intellectual activity that governs the (syntagmatic) logic of any discourse. Therefore an idea is manifested by a sign (or by a series of signs).”¹⁰³ This manipulation of the sign, however, does not work in the case of a conviction because the self-evident quality of a conviction means that one cannot tell the signifier from the signified. They are non-differentiated, non-representable, and indifferent. They are felt and lived. We can think of the numinous experience that Rudolf Otto speaks of in which one is overwhelmed by a feeling. The feeling is so intense that it is simply a “pure feeling” that we cannot even tell whether it is euphoric or dysphoric.¹⁰⁴ Or in the words of Jean-Luc Marion:

¹⁰² For details on how thematization and figurativization work in transforming the semantic universe of the enunciatee, see Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Joseph Courtés, “Figurativization,” “Figure,” “Thematic,” “Thematization,” and “Theme,” in *Semiotics and Language*, 118-20, 120-21, and 343-44. Also, see Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 98-101.

¹⁰³ See Aline Patte and Daniel Patte, *Structural Exegesis: From Theory to Practice (Exegesis of Mark 15 and 16: Hermeneutical Implications)* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1978), 101. “By contrast, a deep value *cannot be directly manifested by a sign* ... A deep value is an ‘immediate’ truth that as such cannot tolerate the distance separating signifier from signified. We could say that it refers to nothing other than itself ... Instead of being manifested by a sign (as is an idea) *it is manifested by the relations that exist between the signs of a given system*. Because of its self-evidence and immediacy, *a deep value has the power to impose itself upon a person apart from conscious intellectual activity*. Such activity cannot manipulate a deep value because, in its case, there is no distance comparable to that which exists in the sign between signifier and signified.” *Ibid.*, 101-102.

¹⁰⁴ For details, see Algirdas Julien Greimas and Jacques Fontanille, *The Semiotics of Passions*, xvii-16.

In the case of saturated phenomena, I no longer see anything by an excess of light; I no longer hear anything by an excess of sound; I no longer sense, taste, or smell anything by an excess of excitations – at least nothing objectifiable, realizable as a thing other than myself and able to be looked at as placed before me. Here it must be emphasized that these excesses never face the danger of being illusory – for example, of imagining there to be excess of intuition while there is “nothing.”¹⁰⁵

In stressing and explaining why “saturated phenomena” are not illusory,¹⁰⁶ Marion shows the self-evidence of the Fundamental Semantics (1) that is thymic-oriented in many non-Western cultures. Patte and Patte’s language of the opaque relation between the signifier and the signified further explains why convictions are like “feeling [that] is directly experienced as a self-evident mode of existence, prior to any impressions received.”¹⁰⁷

How can we flesh out convictions without reducing their otherness? How can we map out convictions without reducing their quality of immediacy? We noted the potential problem in Bultmann’s demythologization when the immediacy of the “myth” is explained away for the sake of the existential concerns. But, in Ricoeur’s hermeneutics the symbols show that the immediacy can be somehow mediated. That is to say, if we want to flesh out the conviction, it is within and from “the relations that exist between the signs of a given system” that we see how

¹⁰⁵ See Jean-Luc Marion, “The Banality of Saturation,” in *The Visible and the Revealed*. Translated by Christina M. Gschwandtner and others (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 138.

¹⁰⁶ “This is so, first because the (supposed) illusion of an intuitive excess becomes at once an intuitive excess of the illusion itself, since I undoubtedly undergo this excess (it alters me, perturbs me, disappoints me, etc.) as genuine and verifiable. If I believe I see too much light, even if no excess of ‘objective’ light can be found, I do indeed undergo an excess. Second (and the excess is verified precisely for this reason), the ordeal of excess is actually attested by the resistance, possibly the pain, that it imposes on the one who receives it, and this resistance can no more be disputed than on can doubt undergoing one’s own pain (for we ‘feel our pain’ without any doubt or separation. This *resistance* suggest a wholly other sense of objectivity: objectivity would no longer mean access to an objective that is targeted, foreseen, and constructed according only to the demands and possibilities of intelligibility, such that ‘object’ ends up designating precisely what does *not resist* the cognitive intention but yields to it without offering any resistance whatsoever, to the point that the object designates the alienation of the thing from itself and its seizure by method...” Idem. For Marion’s notion of the “saturated phenomena” (e.g., “event,” “idol,” “icon,” “flesh,” and “revelation”), see his *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomenon*. Translated by Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002).

¹⁰⁷ Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Jacques Fontanille, *The Semiotics of Passions*, 2.

signs are interrelated to manifest the deep values.¹⁰⁸ To highlight this “self-evident mode of existence,”¹⁰⁹ we thus examine how values are interrelated in the semiotic square. Depending on how we interpret the relations of the values at the four corners of the square, we can get a glimpse of a possible undergirding or overarching value that links the values together.

The first and fundamental semiotic square that delineates the *basic pattern* of convictions is characteristic of Fundamental Semantics (1). The values expressed in the basic pattern cannot be fully thematized, however; there are various ways to conceptualize the relations of these “potential” and “virtual” values at the four corners of the square. When the values of this initial semiotic square (or elementary structure of signification) are further “actualized,” they give rise to a series of semiotic squares that cover different aspects of life following the same basic pattern in the Fundamental Semantics (1). We call this series or homologation of squares the Narrative Semantics (2). It is in terms of this homologation of semiotic squares that we define typology.

In this notion of typology, the conception manifested in each semiotic square is interlinked to another semiotic square like a dynamic, open-ended hermeneutical circle. It is *open-ended* because each square is *both* like *and* unlike the previous and the following squares. One can think of a Freudian *das Unheimliche* (the uncanny) that is unfamiliar and familiar at the same time, as each destabilizes and shatters each other. The semiotic squares are interdependent of each other, with each square pointing toward its new possible squares and backward to its preceding squares, simultaneously. Like the Derridean notion of “heritage,” as every person inherits her/his tradition, “it is necessary first of all to know and to know how to *reaffirm* what comes ‘before us.’”¹¹⁰ To reaffirm does not mean to accept everything. It means to decide what to do with what comes “before” us, what is presented to us as a gift. In the face of what comes

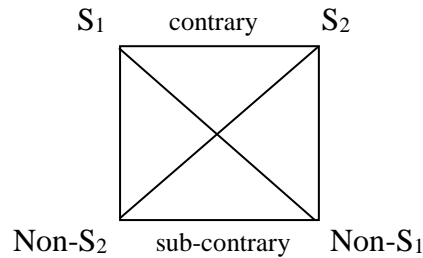
¹⁰⁸ See Aline Patte and Daniel Patte, *Structural Exegesis*, 102.

¹⁰⁹ Algirdas Julien Greimas, and Jacques Fontanille, *The Semiotics of Passions*, 2.

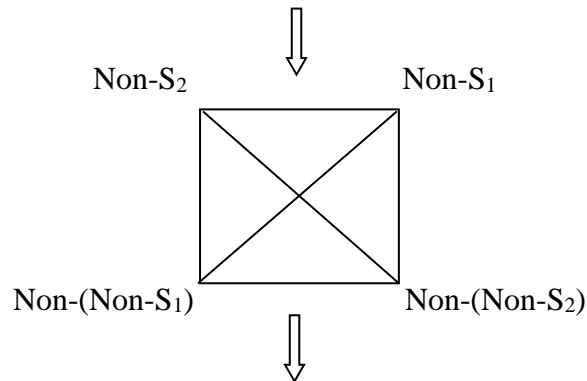
¹¹⁰ Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, “Choosing One’s Heritage,” in *For What Tomorrow*, 3.

before us, we are already indebted as we respond to what is before us with what comes before us. This responsibility towards memory and what is to come is an essential quality of typology in Narrative Semantics (2). Let us refer to the following series of semiotic squares as an example. And, this is one of the main points that Patte and Patte try to highlight to show how a semiotic square contextually gives rise to a series of semiotic squares.

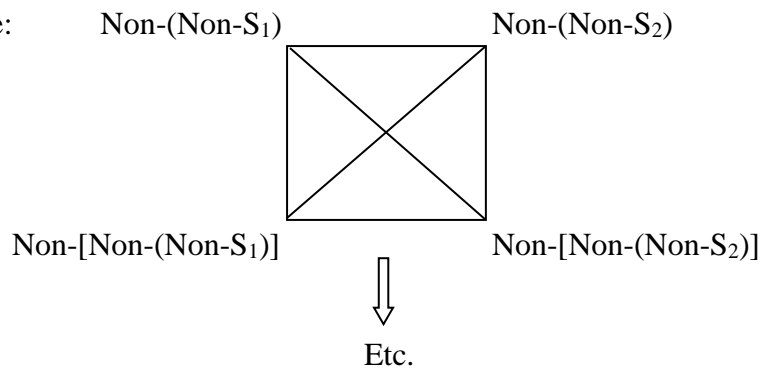
First Square:



Second Square:



Third Square:



Note that the values of Non-S₂ and Non-S₁ that are in a sub-contrary relation of the “First Square” are in a contrary relation of the “Second Square.” Likewise, the values of Non-(Non-S₁)

and Non-(Non-S₂) that are in a sub-contrary relation of the “Second Square” are in a contrary relation of the “Third Square.” So on and so forth.

As we have noted that the contrary-relation is “semantics”-oriented (because it is juxtaposed according to one’s conviction) – whereas the contradiction-relations is “syntax”-oriented (since it is a logical relation) – this overlapping of contrary-values can prevent the conceptualization of the theme of each semiotic square from being fixed. Because the contrary-values of the preceding square are being re-interpreted in the following square that has different sub-contrary values. Consequently, the conceptualization of a theme in each square is dynamic and discursive. It cannot be objectified. The linkage between the semiotic squares, as a result, is also dynamic. It, in fact, manifests a correlative thinking and an embodied perception of the world. In the words of Merleau-Ponty: “The perceptual ‘something’ is always in the middle of something else, it always forms part of a ‘field.’”¹¹¹ This simultaneous connection and separation between semiotic squares is what makes David Tracy’s “analogical imagination” possible (see chapter 2). This is how one can be faithful to one’s heritage by being “unfaithful” to it. This is how the “continuity with the past is preserved by shattering the received terminology, the receive imagery, the received theology – in short, by shattering the tradition...”¹¹²

(b) Fundamental Syntax (3) and Narrative Syntax (4)

On the other hand, this linkage can be easily mistaken for an ideology (see the next subsection). We will see this danger in chapter 2 when we discuss Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus*, namely, “systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be *objectively adapted* to their outcomes *without*

¹¹¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 4.

¹¹² Ernst Käsemann, “The Problem of the Historical Jesus,” 20.

presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them."¹¹³ As *systems* and *principles* that can "generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends," *habitus* according to Terry Eagleton, can highlight the unconsciousness and the forms of power and capitals at work in each social field.¹¹⁴

This focus on the embodiment of practice in terms of structuring and being structured by social norms¹¹⁵ leads Bourdieu to stress the difficulty to analyze the corporeal, temporal, and spatial aspects of practice.¹¹⁶ The difficulty is further compounded by the artificiality of our analytical model and our flesh-and-bloodness. Bourdieu writes, "The unanalyzed element in every theoretical analysis ... is the theorist's subjective relation to the social world the objective (social) relation presupposed by this subjective relation."¹¹⁷ This "unanalyzed element" points to our embodied mode of existence that is so integral to our being that we can only speak of it in terms of an analogy-metaphor or a typology (see chapter 2, where I argue that while Bourdieu's *habitus* can be understood in terms of Fundamental and Narrative Syntax, my proprioceptive and

¹¹³ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 53. Emphasis added.

¹¹⁴ Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 156-58. Also, see Pierre Bourdieu and Terry Eagleton, "Doxa and Common Life: An Interview," in *Mapping Ideology*. Edited by Slavoj Žižek (London and New York: Verso, 1994), 265-77. Although many have critiqued the Marxist notion of ideology as "false consciousness," Eagleton parses various understanding of "false" in this definition. In pointing out the internalization and externalization of our beliefs and practices in our lived relations with others, Eagleton cautions us that not all ideology involves falsehood or delusions in its attempt to justify and sustain certain domination of social order. See Terry Eagleton, *Ideology*, 1-31.

¹¹⁵ Žižek also highlights the "doing" aspect of ideology. He writes, "If our concept of ideology remains the [Marxist] classic one in which the illusion [or false consciousness] is located in knowledge, then today's society must appear post-ideological: the prevailing ideology is that of cynicism; people no longer believe in ideological truth; they do not take ideological propositions seriously. The fundamental level of ideology, however, is not of an illusion masking the real state of things but that of an (unconscious) fantasy structuring our social reality itself." See Slavoj Žižek, "How did Marx Invent the Symptom?" in *Mapping Ideology*, 316.

¹¹⁶ Bourdieu argues that "one has no chance of giving a scientific account of practice – and in particular of the properties it derives from the fact that it unfolds in time – unless one is aware of the effects that scientific practice produces by mere totalization." See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 82. For more details, see pages 98-111.

¹¹⁷ He continues, "Intellectualism, is, so to speak, an 'intellectualocentrism' in which the observer's relation to the social world, and therefore the social relation which makes observation possible, is made the basis of the practice analyzed, through the representations constructed to account for it (rules, models, etc.)." *Ibid.*, 29.

communal culture envisions *habitus* in terms of Fundamental and Narrative Semantics). Given that *habitus* is the site of the “externalization of internality” and the internalization of externality,”¹¹⁸ where the subject is both acting and being acted upon, Bourdieu writes:

*Probably the only way to give an account of the practical coherence of practices and works is to construct generative models which reproduce in their own terms the logic from which that coherence is generated; and to devise diagrams which, through their synoptic power of synchronization and totalization, quietly and directly manifest the objective systematicity of practice and which ... may even have the merit of speaking directly to the body schema (as all those who have to transmit motor skills are well aware).*¹¹⁹

To address “probably the only way” to speak “directly to the body schema,” Bourdieu then uses homological and analogical approach to analyze the embodiment of practice.¹²⁰ In his study of practices in the Kabyle tradition,¹²¹ for example, Bourdieu notes that “the generative schemes [used to explain the logic of practice] are interchangeable in practice. This is why they can *only* generate systematic products, but with an *approximate, fuzzy coherence* that cannot withstand the test of logical criticism.”¹²² He writes, “Practice has a logic which is not that of the logician. This has to be acknowledged in order to avoid asking of it more logic than it can give, thereby condemning oneself either to wring incoherences out of it or to thrust a forced coherence upon it.”¹²³ Since we cannot cut “practices off from their real conditions of existence,”¹²⁴ Bourdieu thus highlights the symbolic and analogical features of practice.

For us, this homological feature in practice resembles the mode of production and existence of Fundamental Syntax (3) and Narrative Syntax (4), in particular when we note the interrelated production of alethic, deontic, epistemic, and ethical modalities in *veridictory*

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 45.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 92-93. Emphasis added.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 87-97.

¹²¹ Ibid., 200-70.

¹²² Ibid., 87. Emphasis added.

¹²³ Ibid., 86.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 98.

semiotics (viz., metaphysics-oriented),¹²⁵ and the interrelated production of valuative, deontic, epistemic, and ethical modalities in *thymic* semiotics (viz., feeling-oriented).¹²⁶ Of course, the homologation is also prominent in Narrative Semantics (2) where a series of semiotic squares are interlinked after a pattern of convictions. This homologation that we find in the “semantics” and the “syntax” should not surprise us; after all, our perception of the world is proprioceptive and correlative.

The crucial difference between semantic and syntactic homologations is that in Fundamental Syntax (3) and Narrative Syntax (4), the power relations among characters/actants are assigned and represented through a series of social positions (see the actantial model below). By contrast, the homologation in Narrative Semantics (2) delineates a *pattern*, not a representation, of values without positing social positions and hierarchy. In Fundamental Syntax (3) and Narrative Syntax (4), the positioning of characters/actants is problematic not because we are “always-already interpellated by ideology as subjects”¹²⁷ or “the existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing.”¹²⁸ It is problematic *when* it becomes “a matter of fact” (and thus fixed), as if certain subjects *by nature* should be in certain social positions.

(c) The Actantial Model¹²⁹

The power relations that characterize the Narrative Syntax (4) come to the fore in Greimas’s actantial model. The model helps us see the interaction among different

¹²⁵ For details, see Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of the Biblical Texts*, 230-39, 243-58.

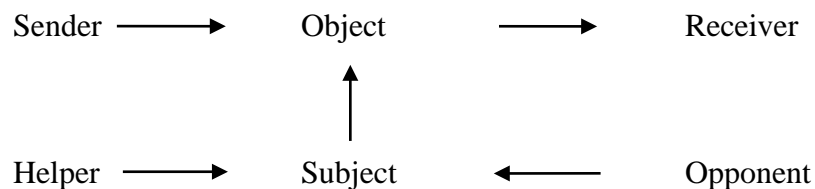
¹²⁶ For details, see Timothy B. Cargal, “The Generative Trajectory in Certain Non-Western Cultures,” 267-75.

¹²⁷ See Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation),” in *Essays on Ideology* (London: Verso, 1984), 50.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 49. Note that for Althusser, ideology is not static but dynamic. Compare this notion of ideology with Bourdieu’s descriptive notion of *doxa* (“the undiscussed universe”) in Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 159-71.

¹²⁹ Here, the actantial model manifests the “surface” Narrative Syntax that anthropomorphizes the “deep” Narrative Syntax and the “intermediate” Narrative Syntax. For details, see Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 243-58.

characters/actants and how an object is (or is not) given and received from one character/actant to another. We wrote “character/actant” to denote the function and role of the characters (whether in the text or the context) because a character can play many actantial roles (i.e., sender, subject, object, receiver, helper, and opponent). The word “actant” can also refer to the roles of ability, knowledge, will, or vision that helps or opposes the “subject” to give the “object” to the “receiver.” It is important to note that an actantial role is not limited to one character. A same character can be the “subject” and “object” at the same time in certain situations. In some situation, a same character can even ironically be a “sender” and an “opponent” to the “subject” whom s/he sends to give a certain “object” to the “receiver.” As we can see from the Greimas’s actantial model below, the roles can make visible the power relations among the actants as we trace how an “object,” whether abstract (e.g., power, honor, money, etc.) or concrete, is transformed and transferred from one actant to another.



Note that these actants are not concretized. If we assign characters to these roles, then we have a notion similar to that of ideology propounded by Louis Althusser: “a ‘representation’ of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.”¹³⁰ This representation, of course, consists of a series of actantial models, as the “object” is given from a

¹³⁰ Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation),” 36. In his critique of Althusser’s definition as lacking the critical edge to expose the power relations in domination, Thompson’s definition of ideology, which highlights the interrelations of meaning and power where meaning is in the service of power, seems to put the “semantics” at the service of “syntax.” He writes: “to interpret ideology is to explicate the connection between the meaning mobilized by symbolic forms and the relations of domination which that meaning serves to maintain.” While Thompson alludes to Greimas’s syntactic analysis, he does not mention Greimas’s “semantics.” He focuses on the communication process. But, what do we do with the affective and unconscious features of ideology in Althusser’s definition? See John B. Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 23, 287-88; Terry Eagleton, *Ideology*, 18-19.

“subject” to a “receiver,” and the “receiver” *in turn* becomes the “subject” who gives the “object” to another “receiver,” so on and so forth. In this syntactic representation of power relations, where Fundamental Semantics (1) and Narrative Semantics (2) are affirmed in a syntactic way (viz., logically asserted or negated) and reformulated, we note that the role of the “sender” can be complicated, in particular when the “sender” is a heteronomous other (such as the divine, feeling, mood, etc.) that cannot be objectified. In fact, this originally syntactic actantial model can be saturated by the “semantics” when we consider the mood and feeling of the actantial roles. In other words, this syntactic model is periodically transgressed and supplemented by the “semantics,” like what we shall see in Kristeva’s notions of the “semiotic” and the “symbolic.”

We highlight this actantial model because a syntactic analysis of the text focusing on the “pairs of opposition of actions” can verify our semantic analysis of the text (see chapter 3). If the enunciator’s conviction is so integral to her/his “being,” then s/he would want to be very clear in conveying it to her/his enunciatee. S/he would probably try to contrast two opposing actions to make her/his conviction clearly perceived. An examination of these “pairs of opposition of actions” will help us interweave a picture of the enunciator’s conviction. To highlight the “pairs of opposition of actions” in the text, we can simplify the actantial model into the following: (Object \rightarrow Receiver), meaning, an “object” is given to a “receiver.” In receiving an “object,” the “receiver” is then transformed by the reception. This successful receiving can be contrasted to three failures of receiving: (1) the “object” is not given to the “receiver” (Object $/\rightarrow$ Receiver), (2) the “object” is given to the wrong “receiver” (Object \rightarrow non-Receiver), or (3) the wrong “object” is given to the “receiver” (non-Object \rightarrow Receiver).

When the enunciator contrasts two actions, the juxtaposition signals something is at stake. Whether the enunciator is intentional or not in contrasting these actions, the oppositions indicate that s/he wants to stress what s/he thinks is important and cannot be mistaken for.¹³¹ Hence different from the reader-response criticism that focuses on what is not made explicit in the text – which then means that we cannot verify the existence and importance of the assumed – the stark presence of the oppositions of actions calls our attentions *simultaneously* to the situations of both the enunciator and the enunciatee. An analysis of these “pairs of opposition of actions” can further help us analyze the system of convictions of the enunciator (see chapter 3).

(d) “Thematization” And “Figurativization” in Discursive Semantics (6)

When the actants in the Narrative Syntax (4) are concretized with credible and verisimilar characters that interact with each other in time and space – viz., the process of “actorialization,” “temporalization,” and “spatialization” in Discursive Syntax (5) – they are then portrayed to interact in such a way to express a certain conceptualization of a theme that the enunciator wants to convey to the enunciatee. Note that as the Discursive Syntax (5) and Discursive Semantics (6) are discursive, they bring to the fore the dynamic contextuality of both the narrative and its interpretation. For an illustration, we will use Patte’s example of how the theme and figure of “the Good Samaritan” story in Luke 10:30-35 are presented to transform the vision of the enunciatee.¹³²

First of all, a figure can be anything or anyone; even a place, time, abstract noun, etc. can be a figure. To make her/his enunciation believable, the enunciator chooses a figure that makes sense to the enunciatee. This figure is the site of the common ground between the enunciator and the enunciatee. While it is a site of shared connotation, it is also a site of difference, as the

¹³¹ See Daniel Patte, *Structural Exegesis for New Testament Critics* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 9-72.

¹³² For details, see Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 98-101.

enunciator wants to convey a different notion of the figure to the enunciatee. As we noted that the conviction is manifested in a series of homologated semiotic squares in Fundamental Semantics (1) and Narrative Semantics (2), if the enunciator wants to transform the enunciatee's convictions, s/he needs to transform the homologation of the semiotic squares in the semantic universe of the enunciatee. To do so, s/he needs to get the enunciatee to re-conceptualize or re-thematize the interrelation of the values of the four corners of the initial semiotic square and to dissociate the set of values from the figures so that the figures do not necessarily carry certain connotations. Hence, the choice of the figure is crucial as the point of departure.

Note that as this figure is familiar to both the enunciator and the enunciatee, it functions like a metaphor that bridges the semantic universes of both the enunciator and the enunciatee. It can extend, retract, and create new meanings. The fluidity and symbolic features of the figure allow the figure to be configured and refigured in various ways.

In our narrative, the enunciatee (the Jewish audience) probably views the figure "Samaritan" negatively and the figures "priest" and "Levite" positively. The enunciatee would very likely assume the Samaritan to do bad things while the priest and Levite doing good things. If the enunciator simply says that that the Samaritan is good while the priest and Levite are bad, the enunciatee would treat the story as a non-sense.

For her/his message to be trustworthy to the enunciatee, the enunciator needs to first highlight the values that both s/he and the enunciatee hold to be self-evident. These basic values include compassion, altruism, and courage. Note the participial and finite verbs in Luke 10:33-35, as if the enunciator wants to highlight the circumstances of the actions.¹³³ The finite verbs may

¹³³ Luke 10:33-35: While a certain Samaritan was on the road (ὁδεύων) he came down to the place and when he saw him (ἰδὼν) he was deeply moved by pity, and when he went to him (προσελθὼν) he bandaged his wounds as he poured upon (ἐπιχέων) oil and wine. After putting him on (ἐπιβιβάσας) his on animal, he led him to an inn and took

be the main actions, but they are qualified by the participles. It is notable that piety and devotion are less fundamental than the basic values of being compassionate and altruistic.

In this story, as the enunciator tries to transform the enunciatee's convictions, s/he describes how an *unidentified* person was terribly robbed and beaten. This beaten person thus can be anyone. As many have noted: "The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was notoriously dangerous. It descended nearly 3,300 feet in 17 miles. The roads ran through narrow passes at points, and the terrain offered easy hiding for the bandits who terrorized travelers."¹³⁴ If this is a common knowledge to first-century Palestinians, then the story will probably hit home more closely. The enunciatee will probably be more sympathetic to the beaten person. Something must have happened that made the person take such a route by himself. However, the beauty of the story is that as none of this background information is spelled out, the imagination of the enunciatee can run in any direction. If such a terrible misfortune happened, one would certainly hope that s/he would be helped.

Thus what the Samaritan did for the beaten person was really unexpected. This surprise is further dramatized by what the priest and the Levite did. However, notice that their actions were briefly noted. This passing comment may seem to steer the enunciatee away from the response of the priest and the Levite to the situation of the victim and the Samaritan, but it actually accentuates it. The enunciatee is gradually changing the concept of the "neighbor" figure from a self-centered notion to an other-oriented notion; after all, Jesus told this story in response to the question of the expert in the law "who is my neighbor."¹³⁵ Consequently, the question is not

care of him. The next day, taking out (ἐκβαλὼν) two denarii, he gave to the innkeeper and said, "Take care of him, and whatever extra you spend, I will repay you when I come back (ἐν τῷ ἐπανέρχεσθαι με)."

¹³⁴ R. Alan Culpepper, "The Gospel of Luke: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*. 12 vols. Vol. 9: *The Gospel of Luke and The Gospel of John* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 229.

¹³⁵ Needless to say, this relation between law and justice is very significant and complicated. The notions of law and justice are not equivalent.

“who is my neighbor.” Rather, “am I a neighbor?” If a “neighbor” is someone who is hospitable to the others, then am I hospitable? Or should I first define what the others mean? If so, is my hospitality conditional? But, if we do not know anything about the others, in this case, the beaten person, then how do I know whether he fits my definition and condition?

Now, if the beaten person is deformed into an abjection by the bandits (the abjection of the society), then the well-respected priest and Levite (who are not the abjections of the society) should have helped transformed the beaten up and abjected person (into the society?). Are they not the ones who are more holy; after all, they sound and look authoritative in religious, legal, and political matters. But, this expectation is not fulfilled. So, who is the “subject” who gives the “object” (“transformation”) to the “receiver” (“the beaten person”)?¹³⁶ It was simply *a certain Samaritan*; an abjection to the Jewish enunciatee. The enunciator does not tell us any background information about him. But, we are told about the “helper,” namely, his compassion, altruism, and courage. So, what kind of “object” that the Samaritan gives to the beaten person. It is a healing. Indeed, the healing scene is depicted in details. We know that the Samaritan was deeply moved when he saw the beaten person. He went to him, poured out oil and wine onto his wounds, bandaged him, put him onto his mount, took him to the inn to take care of him, gave two denarii to the innkeeper the next day to take care of the person, promised to pay back any extra that the innkeeper spent, and left. Apparently, the Samaritan had to go somewhere to do something too. Yet, he stopped. Something more urgent caught his attention: the beaten person. It could be a ploy or a trap; after all, the place was known for banditry activities. Yet, he stopped. And, he went through so much trouble to get the beaten person healed and taken care of.

¹³⁶ Of course, we can ask this question for each action when an “object” is (or is not) given and received and how that “object” is given and received.

Note that we are not told of anything about the beaten person either. So the transformation is not about a restoration to a certain social status, etc. Rather, it is a fundamental restoration: a renewal of life. It is not a restoration or a re-integration into the society. Why not? Because the social norm that create and maintain our notions of honor and shame fail to work. If the social norm is good, it will surely take care of the fundamental issues: the well-being of people. But here, the system breaks down. The priest and the Levite did not take care of the beaten person. For the pries and the Levite, obviously something is more important and urgent than to approach and to take care of him. They saw him but they passed him by and avoided him through the opposing path. The beaten person is further abjected; in fact, triply abjected. First, by the bandits, then the priest, and finally the Levite. Is the social norm an operation of abjection? It is a system that excludes the other (i.e., the foreign) so that its integrity can be upheld?

In summary. What we see in this story is how the fundamental values are highlighted, embodied through the figures, and then re-thematized through the figures. While such value as the compassion is highlighted, it is re-thematized in relation to other social values like order, chaos, purpose, purity, etc.¹³⁷ This intertwining of thematization and figurativization is well captured by Cargal: “a figure can be invested with new meanings and nuances by being set in new relations of meaning, or conversely a theme can be invested with additional nuances by finding expression through new figures.”¹³⁸

In light of the fluid and discursive features of Discursive Syntax (5) and Discursive Semantics (6), it is important to note that the “Discursive Structures” of the diagram is reiterative. The diagram is an open-ended diagram, as another “surface level” – e.g., Narrative Semantics (2) and Narrative Syntax (4) – and “discursive level” – e.g., Discursive Syntax (5) and Discursive

¹³⁷ For details, see Daniel Patte, *The Religious Dimensions of Biblical Texts*, 81-92.

¹³⁸ Timothy B. Cargal, *Restoring the Diaspora: Discursive Structure and Purpose in the Epistle of James*. SBL Dissertation Series 144 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993), 39.

Semantics (6) – are interconnected to it (see below). If we can imagine this diagram as a “semiotic square,” then the “surface level” and the “discursive level” is another “semiotic square” that is in a relation of implication or homologation with the diagram. That is to say, depending on the context of the flesh-and-blood enunciatee, one may interpret the theme and figure accordingly. As such, one may “actualize” the Fundamental Semantics (1) and Fundamental Syntax (3) differently at the “surface level.” Given one’s context, one may also “realize” differently and discursively the Narrative Semantics (2) and Narrative Syntax (4). Let me illustrate this interrelation.

Semio-Narrative Structures	Surface level	Narrative Syntax (4)	Narrative Semantics (2)
Discursive Structures	Discursive Syntax (5) Discursivization: - Actorialization - Temporalization - Spatialization		Discursive Semantics (6) Themmatization Figurativization



Semio-Narrative Structures	Surface level	Narrative Syntax (4)	Narrative Semantics (2)
Discursive Structures	Discursive Syntax (5) Discursivization: - Actorialization - Temporalization - Spatialization		Discursive Semantics (6) Themmatization Figurativization



Etc.

IV. Conclusion

The “textualization” of a same text on a printed page should be apparent by now. Depending on which semantic or syntactical components that one focuses on, different texts and meanings can then be generated and transformed. The conflicts of interpretations from how the Chronicler interpret the Deuteronomistic History in the Hebrew Bible¹³⁹ to the debates between the Alexandrian School and the Antiochene School to the three phases in the quests of the “historical Jesus,” etc. are clear demonstrations of this hermeneutical and semiotic phenomenon of “textualization.” In fact, the power relations in the ethics and politics of biblical interpretation always characterize the critical biblical studies, whether in the background or the foreground.

Because of the polyvalence of meanings, the polyphony of renditions of Paul’s notion of love in 1 Corinthians, and most importantly, because of the intersectionality of so many racial, religious, gender, cultural, political, and economic issues in Malaysia and Roman Corinth, we need to use Greimas’s “Generative Trajectory” and thymic-oriented “semiotic square” to flesh out all the explicit and implicit meaning-producing dimensions in our process of meaning production in biblical interpretation. This attention and examination of how meaning is produced helps us critically appreciate and learn from different interpretations. It helps us from making unwarranted claims as if an interpretation derived from a “syntactical analysis” of 1 Corinthians can speak for and even against the semantic universe of the text. It can, however, certainly speak *with* an interpretation derived from a “semantic analysis” of 1 Corinthians, and vice versa. Why am I so concerned with the intertwining of these two meaning-producing dimensions? Because when they are confused and collapsed together, misunderstanding and violence happen; a rather unfortunate experience that is not uncommon in Malaysia.

¹³⁹ See n. 3.

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