DOMINATION OR EMPOWERMENT?
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF 1 AND 2 CORINTHIANS

by

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ABSTRACT

"Domination or Empowerment? A Critical Discourse Analysis of 1 and 2 Corinthians"

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In response to the argument that Paul seeks to dominate his audience through his discourse, I join the current conversation about Paul and power by exploring language and power in the Pauline Epistles. By analyzing Paul's use of power embodied in his use of language, I argue that Paul seeks to empower the Corinthians to think and act according to Jesus Christ's cruciform authority.

I work within a postmodern hermeneutical paradigm of diversity. My study acknowledges the personal interest and subjectivity of any interpreter but seeks to avoid subordinating the notion of understanding to that of self-interest. Thus, it approaches the topic as a dialogue with the author-other Paul and, at the same time, a conversation with other interpreters of Paul. To achieve a dialogic interpretation, I begin by reflecting on my social location and personal interests concerning power and authority and then complete the circle by reflecting theologically on using power in my context. At the core of the dissertation, I appropriate a socio-linguistic approach to analyze, first, the power structure embedded in Paul's discourse and, second, the influence enacted via Paul's discourse—i.e., power in words and power via words. I present my argument in this way owing to my conviction that social structure and power relationships shape linguistic behaviour, and conversely, discursive practices influence social (and personal) formation.

After a thorough analysis and comparative study of 1 and 2 Corinthians, I critically evaluate Paul's use of power, engaging in dialogue with diverse perspectives on various power-related issues, and theologically reflect on ethics of power.

Overall, Paul represents himself as a leader authorized and empowered by God and also as a steward accountable to his Lord Jesus Christ. Although he shows little interest in changing unjust social structures, his discourse indicates an effort to foster a culture of empowering less privileged members within Christian communities. When handling unjust criticisms against him, he stands firm to defend his apostleship and mission. But I suggest that his defense should not be regarded as selfish but as a means to a better end, namely, the protection and upbuilding of the community. Moreover, Paul represents himself as having *long-term responsibility* to care for the congregations he (and his team) has planted without necessarily seeking *permanent control* over them. In conclusion, I argue that *given his social context*, *Paul*, *as God's accountable steward*, *seeks not to dominate the Corinthians but to empower them to mature in their understanding and to conduct themselves appropriately under the cruciform authority of Jesus Christ.*

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION:
WHY STUDIES OF POWER?

Starting in October 2017, the US was rocked by the growing #MeToo movement that has resulted in the subsequent exposure of sexual scandals in North American evangelical circles. Consequently, the phenomenon of subjugation and abuse of power inside Christian churches and institutions has become a public and pressing issue. A handful of scholars have engaged the current situation and sought to reflect on it and respond to it.[1] These scholars have recognized that at the root of these issues lie misconceptions of power and authority in general and, in particular, the misuse of power by people in powerful and privileged positions, including influential Christian leaders.

In the Summer of 2019, while writing my dissertation, I was deeply disturbed by the political threats Hongkongers suffered, yet at the same time so encouraged by their courage to act in concert against social injustices. As a Mainlander, I had mixed feelings of anger and shame. I was angry at the totalitarianism in my home country and ashamed of the damage the self-claimed "people's government" has brought upon Hongkongers. Since I immigrated to Canada in 2001, I had never felt ashamed of being Chinese, even when media posted snapshots of Chinese tourists when they spit or threw garbage to the

[1] For responses among Evangelical circles to the #MeToo movement or general issues regarding abuse of power, listen to presentations of Jacob and Rachael Denhollanders, Ingrid Faro, Steven Tracy, and Mimi Haddad at the "Evangelical and Gender" section (chaired by Cynthia L. Westfall and Gerry Breshears) at the Evangelical Theological Society annual meeting in Denver on Nov 23, 2018 (https://www.wordmp3.com/product-group.aspx?id=573); also, Lamb, "Still Blaming the Victim," and Krueger, *Eyes to See.*

ground or some US universities exposed different kinds of dishonest acts of Chinese international students. But now I am embarrassed to declare my Chinese identity, when the government of my home country acts explicitly as a totalitarian power that suppresses other voices and attempts cultural genocide among minorities, and at the same time, brainwashes her people.

Both the #MeToo movement in North America and the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement in Hong Kong are grassroots movements and have exposed the importance of power and resistance to its abuses. In the wake of these events and responses, I decided to study power and authority.

Why Critical Discourse Analysis?

The phenomenon of power is more complicated than what one study can handle. Here I limit my scope to Paul's use of power embedded in his use of language, which I analyze with a critical socio-linguistic approach, i.e., Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). My dissertation will join the current conversation concerning subjugation and abuse of power by exploring the subject of language and power pertinent to the Pauline texts. Appropriating Theo van Leeuwen's representation theory, I ask, How does Paul's use of language represent his construal of power dynamics? How does he exercise his influence when relating to his audience? For what does he claim authority, and on what basis? In response to studies on Paul and power that suggest Paul is using language to subjugate the Corinthians, *this study will argue that given his social context*, *Paul*, *as God's accountable steward*, *seeks not to dominate the Corinthians but to empower them to mature in their understanding and to conduct themselves appropriately under the cruciform authority of Jesus Christ.*

As a post-structuralist approach to studying language and power, CDA is generally appropriated to *deconstruct* discourse—i.e., to uncover the ideological interests of language use. When ideology is defined solely in negative terms—e.g., as ideas that sustain a systemic dominance of the ruling individual or class[2]—CDA is viewed merely as a tool to criticize the abuse of power implemented via linguistic behaviour. However, Ruth Wodak notes that the "critical" spirit of CDA is not applied only to deal with abuse of power in language use; instead, CDA scholars today can create *critical self-awareness* to produce "enlightenment and emancipation."[3]

In keeping with Wodak's suggestion, I conduct my dissertation not only as an intellectual inquiry but also as a spiritual journey, a search for answers to these questions: Who am I and what kind of scholar and teacher do I want to become? That being said, one of my objectives here is to cultivate not only self-awareness but also courage. As a Chinese-Canadian woman, my background has influenced my understanding, so I will not pretend that I can produce an objective reading or can linearly approach biblical interpretation from unbiased exegesis to application.[4] Therefore, I must delineate my "social location"[5] and interests that will inevitably influence my reading, although, in reality, it requires further dialogue with my readers to truly know my assumptions. Being

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[2] For different ways of defining ideology, see Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture*, 28–73.

[3] Wodak, "Critical Linguistics," 52. Martin ("Positive Discourse Analysis," 179–200) has come to an evaluation of CDA that this study holds here. He points out that CDA should have another more positive function that complements its "deconstructive face" (180). For a critique of the application of CDA in biblical studies, see Porter, "Critical Discourse Analysis," 47–70.

[4] For instance, Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation.*

[5] Drawing on Berger and Luckmann, *Social Construction of Reality*, I use "social location" to loosely mean one's position in a social system that reflects its symbolic universe (i.e., a combination of ideologies, philosophies, world views, cultural habits, and values, etc.). Based on critical social theorists such as Michel Foucault, Basil Bernstein, or Pierre Bourdieu, this symbolic universe is by no means univocal or natural. For a brief review of these scholars, see Lemke, *Textual Politics*, 19–36. Moreover, such socio-linguists as Hassan ("Society, Language and Mind," 48–67) also point out that one's social position influences her or his use of language.

aware of my subjectivity (or bias), however, I have the other objective of studying the Pauline texts as a responsible interpreter seeking understanding and longing for personal transformation. In other words, I attempt to do justice to the Pauline texts by taking into consideration the context where the author first produced them, in addition to the context of myself as a Protestant theologian and minister. My attempt is motivated by my view of interpretation as a dialogue that includes listening and responding, an on-going process of negotiating meanings and changes (more hermeneutical issues will be discussed in Chapters 2 and 3). On the one hand, since interpretation that entails human involvement is inevitably interested (i.e., biased), we must acknowledge that we bring various assumptions, knowingly or unknowingly, into interpretations. These assumptions aid in understanding sometimes but cause misunderstanding other times. On the other hand, although subjectivity is unavoidable, the choice of method is part of seeking understanding because it more or less helps us step back and make sense of the Pauline texts before we decide to adopt, reject, or recontextualize the vision projected by them.[6] To hold the tension between subjectivity and objectivity, it is useful to develop and apply a systemic socio-linguistic approach to study the Pauline texts as discourse. For this reason, I appropriate Thomas Wartenberg's power theory and van Leeuwen's CDA approach, which will be delineated in Chapter 3. Here in this chapter, I must reflect on two questions: What has shaped me as an interpreter? What are my interests in power studies?

[6] Both Gadamer (*Truth and Method*, 3–9) and Einstein (*Out of My Later Years*, Loc 213–404) have warned us that the so-called scientific methods cannot lead us to truth or morality.

The Interpreter and Her Interests

Born in Mainland China[7] right after the ten-year Cultural Revolution, my generation still felt its impact but was able to view it from a distance and witness the rise of modern China.[8] Although the tradition of preferring boys to girls was common in my hometown, my parents treated my brother and me equally. Growing up in a small town in a liberal coastal province (Guangdong), I had little idea of inequality. In the 1980s, hierarchy and the polarization of wealth were not yet evident in post-revolution Guangdong; hence, as long as one worked hard, they would have relatively equal opportunities.

Throughout my upbringing, however, I was told that talking about politics was dangerous, so I became indifferent and oblivious to politics. Nevertheless, when studying the five-thousand-year history of China in high school, I was troubled by an observation of the succession of dynasties. The subversion of a monarchy was often caused by peasant movements or rebellions of the minority. But after the once-oppressed people had gained power, they often turned on the others, oppressing them just as their predecessors had. History repeated itself. The student movement in 1989 opened my eyes; the government of the Communist Party, which claimed to be "people's servants," was no exception. My parents' generation had more or less believed in socialism and communism, but the younger generation was devoid of trust. From a young age, I concluded that power must be inherently evil and that authority must be corrupt.

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[7] Chinese is a broad term that can refer to Mainland Chinese, Taiwanese, and Hong Kong Chinese (or Hongkongers), among others. When I use China or Chinese in my dissertation, I refer to Mainland China and Chinese.

[8] We, as insiders, have not been able to critically study or reflect on the history of the Cultural Revolution. For understanding the Cultural Revolution, see Chan, *Children of Mao*; Li, *Red-Color News Soldier*.

At college, I chose biomedical engineering as my major, partly because critical studies of our Chinese history and society under communism were impossible, and partly because I wanted to escape any involvement in power struggles. My choice of studying hard science, however, did not exempt me from politics. In the third year at college, I became a Christian thanks to an American mission organization and joined an underground church. When I read the New Testament for the first time, I found the meaning of my life and a source of hope for humanity. But soon a problem emerged. My Christian faith conflicted with my membership in the Party.[9] The head of my department insisted I denounce my Christian faith. Instead, I chose to leave the Party. As a result, I was blacklisted and lost any opportunity to work in government-associated organizations, including academic institutions.

In 2001 I came to Canada for religious and academic freedom, only to encounter one disappointment after another. I had thought Western academia must be uncontaminated by politics. However, I quickly realized that research, funding, and politics were closely associated with each other. I was disappointed and lost my enthusiasm for research in the science field. The final turning-point came at an academic conference in November 2003. In an event arranged by the conference, I was in a group that included Dr. Max Valentinuzzi, an Argentinian senior scientist and one of the keynote speakers at the opening session that year.[10] I sat beside him on our way back in

[9] Dialectic materialism or Marxism is the ideological lens in Mainland China, used to interpret the natural world and human history. In our history textbooks, Christianity is tied to the imperial intrusion of the West during the 19th–20th centuries and labeled as the "spiritual opium." I grew up as an idol-worshiper at home but was trained to be an atheist at school. Since membership of the Party is one of the qualifying factors to get a good position in government-associated institutions, even though I was not a staunch Marxist, I still applied for membership.

[10] The annual international conference of the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology (EMB) Society is considered to be the most important conferences of the EMB field. The year of 2003 was the

the evening. As our bus approached the spectacular conference hotel, he spoke, pointing at it: "Esther, this is not real! Poverty in Argentina threatens many lives. I want you to remember, the goal of science is to *help the powerless people*." Inspired by his words, I pondered, Was biomedical engineering the best way to better humanity? That inner agitation caused a sea change in me. Upon my graduation a month later, I enrolled in a seminary to prepare for ministry.

I consider myself blessed to have had a positive experience in my seminary and church ministry, surrounded by godly mentors and friends who supported women in ministry. Having learned about the obstacles for women's ordination in our denomination, however, I was disappointed again. Although I submitted myself to my leaders, I did it reluctantly. Among all the qualifying factors, why did my denomination choose to make gender the biggest deal? They named both the international and national mission offerings after two of our best missionaries—who were women. Why, then, did women in ministry continue to be denied power or else restricted in its use? Why can women be appointed as missionaries but not as pastors or professors in biblical studies and theology? Is it truly about being faithful to Scripture, as claimed, or a fearful reaction to the other? Is it truly kingdom work, or a power struggle?

Struggling with all these questions, I looked for other ways to serve. To pursue a PhD degree so I could teach somewhere else, I chose a graduate school that claimed to advocate Christian faith, academic freedom, and egalitarianism. Through personal observation and experience, however, I came to realize that even Christian educational

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25th anniversary of the EMB society, so the opening service was a big celebration and the keynote speakers were believed to be among the best of the field.

institutions are not as pure as I once thought. Power struggles were everywhere.[11] People were quick to point out others' wrongs but unable or unwilling to engage in open self-critique. Now I became not only disappointed but disillusioned—were all my sacrifices worthwhile?

Although my journey sounds depressing thus far, I do not consider myself powerless or vulnerable. One might view me as less powerful or less privileged because I am a female, a non-white immigrant, or someone dialoguing in her second language. However, I regard myself as privileged. I was educated in an "Ivy League" university in China and granted a full scholarship to study in Canada. I am a Canadian citizen now, training to become a professor. To some, I am privileged, thanks to my educational background and knowledge. Having been on both sides of power, I seek to honestly and critically study Pauline discourse and its reception history to answer this question: *When in positions of privilege and power*, *how can we use power in a way to benefit humanity in general and*, *in particular*, *to build up churches that benefit society?*

Since childhood, I have learned to submit to authority and keep silent. But power struggles intimidate me. In my colleague's joking words, power studies have found me. Now, I am seeking to find my voice and bring it to the table of a scholarly discussion about power and authority. In doing so, I understand I am also exercising power to persuade others to accept my interpretation of Paul. First of all, in order to deal with my anxiety related to power, I must revisit my childhood conclusions about power and

[11] My experience has not been entirely negative. I have seen good examples in people who genuinely commit to empowering both women and men, regardless of race and ethnicity, to find their own voice.

authority: Is power inherently evil, and authority absolutely corrupt? Can power be exercised to have a positive impact on society? If so, how?

On the one hand, I have seen the abuse of power by people in both privileged and less privileged positions. Therefore, I believe power is not a *thing* conditioned only by one's position. The abuse of power can be driven by multiple factors, e.g., one's pride and prejudice, one's bitterness due to previous hurt, one's fear of losing control, one's need to prove something, or one's pursuit of personal interest, to list a few. Therefore, we cannot jump to the conclusion that someone abuses power simply because she or he lacks morality. On the other hand, I have seen people, including myself, who seek to avoid conflict by keeping silent, and who even refuse to take leadership out of fear of power. Therefore, I believe only when we understand the positive face of power will we know what to do with power, in addition to what not to do. Only then will we be able to gladly consider the opportunity to lead when invited into it.

In conclusion, I am a Chinese Canadian egalitarian biblical scholar and theologian in the making. My ultimate goal for this dissertation is to critically reflect on my power as a biblical scholar, theologian, and professor. A combination of traditions has influenced me, such as Chinese culture, dialectical materialism, American evangelicalism, and the house church movement in China, to list the most important ones. My personal experiences of injustice have shaped my interests in the subject of power and authority and will influence my choice of interpretive method. While recognizing the complexity revolving around the antiquity of the Pauline texts, I attempt to "make estrangement and distanciation productive."[12] Furthermore, while acknowledging the

[12] Ricœur, *Interpretation Theory*, 44.

paradoxes in the Pauline texts and the diversity of interpretation, I desire to draw a liberating voice out of the biblical discourse—a message that affirms the dignity of all people and provides power and hope to all people, both women and men, regardless of race and ethnicity.

Outline of the Dissertation

The rest of my dissertation is outlined as follows. Following this chapter, Chapter 2 provides my understanding of power discourses in the humanities and my attempt to define and review Pauline power discourses, including a historical trajectory and a mapping of the current field.

The originality of my research lies in my critical socio-linguistic approach to read the Pauline texts, so Chapter 3 will be dedicated to delineating my methodology, including an introduction to the sociological and linguistic theories I use and a section that outlines the procedure of my analysis.

The following two chapters discuss the findings of my critical discourse analysis of 1 and 2 Corinthians. Chapter 4 focuses on power relationships represented in these letters (power in words), and Chapter 5, on Paul's enactment of influence through these letters (power via words).

Built on Chapters 4 and 5, the first half of Chapter 6 evaluates Paul's use of power in his context by asking, Is Paul's use of power in the Corinthian letters a case of domination or an instance of empowerment? In the second half of Chapter 6, I will provide my theological reflection on the ethics of power in my context.

Lastly, Chapter 7 will conclude my study. In this chapter, I will summarize my findings and discuss the usefulness of a socio-linguistic approach for the analysis of power and discourse.

CHAPTER 2: MAPPING PAULINE POWER DISCOURSES

The second law of thermodynamics states that a closed system tends toward high entropy.[1] In other words, ironically, the most "stable" state of a closed system is chaos, because chaos requires the least energy to maintain. Such "stability," however, is generally unwelcome in human society. When a nation remains in anarchy, it will eventually ruin itself, according to some social theorists.[2] Just as energy is required to reduce the entropy so that an orderly system can be formed and maintained, social power is indispensable for social formation and stabilization.[3] However, resistance to power rises wherever power is abused.[4] Therefore, social power is a paradoxical phenomenon—power is needed but also resisted. Although theorizing and analyzing power has become a mode of academic discourse only since the Enlightenment, power struggles have existed as long as the human species. Discussion about power is disorienting, but silence about power is dangerous, because public discourse itself has the power to hold power accountable. This chapter addresses *academic discussions on power and authority* related to the Pauline letters (i.e., Pauline power discourse). In what follows, I will first briefly discuss power discourse in the humanities, on which critical (or postcritical) Pauline scholars often draw for theories and methods. By doing so, I attempt to present the

[1] Cf. Angrist and Hepler, *Order and Chaos*, 193–215.
[2] Cf. Hobbes, *Leviathan*.
[3] Cf. Arendt, *On Violence*, 41.
[4] Foucault (*History of Sexuality*, 95) argues that power and resistance are coexistent.

challenges of doing power studies. Following this, I will discuss the development and the current situation of Pauline power discourses and in turn, position my work in relation to the specific (post-)critical scholars with whom my work is in dialogue.

Power Discourses in the Humanities

Humanities scholars use the phrase *power discourse* (or discourses) in two interrelated ways. First, in the Foucauldian sense,[5] it refers to studies and discussions about power, or knowledge of power; and secondly, in the critical linguistic sense,[6] it concerns the political aspect of discursive practice. The latter presumes that the use of language itself is not only culturally embedded but also socially constituted and constitutive. In other words, social structures and relationships shape linguistic behaviour, and yet conversely, linguistic behaviour also influences them. Language in use, therefore, is a means to exercise power over others, regardless of the topic, so it is political.

Power discourses in the humanities are essential to my work because the majority of post-1970s New Testament power studies draw on the humanities for theories to conceptualize and analyze social power embodied in the biblical texts and their reception and interpretation. The field of power studies in the humanities is complex and diverse.

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[5] Foucault's use of "discourse" (or discourses) often means ideas or knowledges emerged in discursive formation when discussions associated with a topic are joined together as a web. For his conception of discursive formation, see Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*.

[6] Concerning language studies, the word *critical* was first used to describe "Critical Linguistics" (CL) in the 1970s. The principles and practices of CL were further developed in the late 1990s by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) scholars such as Fairclough, van Dijk, van Leeuwen, and Wodak. Simply put, CDA is a problem-orientated, interdisciplinary, and eclectic program that emphasizes language as social practice and language use in context. It employs a variety of disciplines and approaches to analyze contemporary public discourse, e.g., political speech, news, films, and advertisements, to name a few. For a review of CDA, see Wodak, "Critical Linguistics," 50–70.

Different streams approach power with different interests and methods. Let me illustrate this with examples.

Regarding interests, political theorists are generally concerned about the macro-vertical dimension of power, i.e., control of the ruler(s) (or the ruling class) over the subordinates, and so they ask, Who is in power? What makes power legitimate? What are the checks and balances? Is power totalitarian or shared? To these scholars, power is hierarchical and static. By contrast, recent sociological analysts, influenced mostly by Michel Foucault, are more concerned with the micro-horizontal dimension of power, i.e., power as a social relationship between social members. To Foucauldian scholars, power is ubiquitous, reversible, and dynamic. Thus, they ask, In what kind of environment were ideas or statements related to specific discourses (in the sense of knowledge) formed? Which knowledge was made the norm, by whom and how? To these scholars, how some subjects are chosen for discussion manifests power dynamics more than the content and conclusion of the discussion.

Second, concerning methods among political theorists, Wright Mills and F. Hunters on the one side of the "community power debates" and R. A. Dahl on the other all adopt a behaviorist approach to examine decision-making practices during conflicts.[7] By contrast, Hannah Arendt, also a political theorist, draws on Martin Heidegger for existential analysis, as well as on Greek and Christian classics such as Socrates and Augustine for a political ideal—to name only two of the methods she uses.[8]

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[7] Lukes, *Power*, 14–60. Lukes points out that R. A. Dahl's analysis of political power only touches the "public face" of power by arguing that US is genuinely democratic, because the voting process is fair, while Wright Mills and F. Hunters tackle the "secret face" of power by arguing that elites rule the US, because they control which issues are to be voted on. Furthermore, Lukes argues that both sides only consider action (e.g., decision making), but neglect how the mind can be controlled.

[8] Young-Bruehl's *Hannah Arendt* is regarded as the best biography of Arendt. Cf. Allen, "Power, Subjectivity, and Agency," 131–49; Davies, "Hannah Arendt," 30–37.

To complicate the situation, current studies are becoming even more interdisciplinary and eclectic in terms of methodology. For instance, Theo van Leeuwen's representation model (one stream of CDA) integrates the power theories of neo-Marxism and Foucault with Hallidayan linguistics.[9]

One of the consequences of this complexity is confusion in defining and conceptualizing such terms as power, authority, right, influence, and force, to name a few. For instance, how should one define power? More particularly, what should be defined: the lexeme, the concept, or the phenomenon of power? In terms of methods of defining power, should we use the "ordinary language philosophy" approach—originated by Ludwig Wittgenstein and developed further by J. L. Austin—as Thomas Wartenberg and Hanna Pitkin do?[10] Or should we go back to classical traditions, such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, or the modern republican ideal, as Arendt does?[11] From a linguistic perspective, should power be used as a dispositional term ("power-to"), regardless of its potentiality or its actualization, or should it be used as a relational term ("power-over")? Should power or ideology be defined as a neutral term, or as one with inherently negative connotations? Moreover, how should power be evaluated: according to one's intention (purpose or interest), according to one's exercise of power, or according to power's consequences regardless of intention? More particularly for biblical scholars, should divine power (or spiritual power) be seen as a different category from human power (or material power)? Should we choose an anthropological starting point or a theological one? On the one hand, it is somewhat naïve to ignore all the challenges and

[9] van Leeuwen, "Language and Representation."
[10] Pitkin, *Wittgenstein and Justice*; Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*.
[11] Arendt, *Human Condition*; Arendt, *Between Past and Future.*

assume there is a shared understanding of power. On the other hand, it is impossible to consider all these factors in speaking about power. Clearly, scholars face many decisions when discussing power.

Despite numerous attempts to resolve the uncertainties that surround defining and conceptualizing power, confusion persists with respect to terms and concepts. Similar to Richard Palmer's conclusion about hermeneutic diversity,[12] I will argue that the variety in power studies illustrates in itself what is typical for power discourse: the conception and analysis of power are shaped by the interests and questions with which scholars approach the subject and by the experiences (individual or collective) that have prompted their research. Any conception of power is a value judgment driven by value assumptions and closely relates to existential interests. In other words, power studies can never be completely objective;[13] they are always "problem-oriented,"[14] and it is best to acknowledge that developments within power studies are "thematizations of responses" to the experience, interests, and questions by which scholars themselves are motivated.[15] This being the case, when I dialogue with other scholars who address issues of power, whether in the humanities or biblical studies, I must do my best to listen to different voices and to understand their interests and perspectives. However, while being aware of my personal biases, I must seek to bring my voice to the discussion. In the following

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[12] Palmer (*Hermeneutics*, 66) writes, "The diverse directions in hermeneutical theory illustrate in themselves a hermeneutical principle: interpretation is shaped by the question with which the interpreter approaches his subject. It is best to acknowledge that the various directions of development in hermeneutics are thematizations of responses to questions the several interpreters themselves have raised."

[13] This does not mean that we cannot scientifically or systemically analyze power to a certain degree. The main point here is that when evaluating power studies, one must acknowledge the intense emotion that is caused by real experience (e.g., suffering due to oppression) and brought into power studies.

[14] Wodak and Meyer, "Critical Discourse Studies," 4.

[15] Palmer, *Hermeneutics*, 66. For a similar view of power studies, see Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 65; Lukes, *Power*, 30; Allen, *Power of Feminist Theory*, 1, 127; Jaggar, *Feminist Politics*, 20.

section, I will provide a preliminary review of existing studies of power and authority in relation to Pauline discourse.

Power Discourses in Pauline Studies

To my knowledge, no one has attempted to define Pauline power discourses as a field systematically. Combining several different but interrelated disciplines here, I seek to trace and describe the contours of this emerging field. Poststructuralist critical scholars may resist being labeled or categorized. But any general overview needs a structure and must presume some continuity. Therefore, in what follows, I will perform both diachronic and synchronic analyses, hoping to provide a trajectory and a map—though sketchy and fuzzy—to locate my reading of Paul in relation to (post-)critical scholars.

Diachronic Analysis of the Field

The trajectory of Pauline power discourses can be traced back to Clement's discussion about authority, a topic not explicitly associated with power until the 1970s.[16] Clement, in his letters to the Corinthians, is considered to be the first church Father to legitimate the authority of church leadership based on his argument of apostolic succession.[17] Clement's teaching guided the church as *the discourse of power* up to the middle age.

J. B. Lightfoot, based on a historical-critical investigation, challenged Clement's view and argued in favor of severing the later institution of apostolic authority from the Twelve.[18] Since then, more studies about authority have emerged. For instance, Adolf

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[16] Schütz, *Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 4–5, quoting 1 Clem. 42. For surveys of studies on authority before the 1970s, see Kirk, "Apostleship," 249–65; Schütz, *Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 22–34; Kittredge, *Community and Authority*, 1–12; Agnew, "Origin," 75–96.

[17] Cf. Stepp, *Leadership Succession*, 2–8.

[18] Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 92–101.

von Harnack, picking up Lightfoot's argument, further proposed a Jewish understanding of authority.[19]

Two broad trends are observed among pre-1970s studies. On the one hand, K. H. Rengstorf, W. Schmithals, and Anton Fridrichsen, arguing from the authoritative side, sought to understand apostolic authority in light of, respectively, the rabbinic tradition of the shaliach (i.e., "sent man"), the gnostic tradition of "redeemer-apostle," and New Testament eschatology.[20] On the other hand, Rudolf Bultmann and Victor Furnish, arguing from the congregational side, sought to interpret obedience or submission in terms of faith or love.[21] On both sides, therefore, Pauline power studies before the 1970s sought to identify (and justify) some source that legitimized Paul's authority. Their research questions mostly revolved around apostleship, e.g., the meaning and origin of ἀπόστολος and the nature and development of apostolic authority.[22] Accordingly, historical inquiries often affirmed, knowingly or unknowingly, the existing

[19] Harnack, *Mission and Expansion*, 1:319–68.

[20] Rengstorf, "ἀπόστολος," 407–47; Schmithals, *Office of Apostle*, 114–92; Fridrichsen, "Apostle and His Message," 1–23.

[21] Critiquing scholars who work within a rational framework, e.g., Bultmann (*Theology*) and Furnish (*Theology and Ethics*), and scholars who work within a sociological framework, e.g., Meeks (*Origins*) and Martin (*Slavery as Salvation*), Kittredge (*Community and Authority*, 1–36, especially 36 here) points out their common problem is that they take Paul's voice as authoritative, but do not critically assess Paul's kyriarchy language of obedience.

[22] The theme of apostleship was carried into the 1970s and later. For instance, both Paul Barrett and J. Christiaan Beker regard the content of the gospel as the basis of Paul's apostolic authority. Barrett (*Signs of an Apostle*) seeks to balance between the need for leadership and the abuse of power, and Beker (*Paul the Apostle*, ix) attempts to balance between the "coherent theme of Paul's gospel" and the "contingent particularities of the human situation." Differing from them, Hanson (*Pioneer Ministry*) argues that the apostolic authority lies in the church, not in any individual. More recently, Harrill (*Paul the Apostle*, 76–96) tries to understand Paul's notion of authority in light of the Roman idea of *auctoritas* (i.e., influential power). Some critical works continue to hold the assumption of Paul's separation from Jesus. For instance, reading via a political lens, Shaw (*Cost of Authority*) argues that Paul wielded power and promoted dominating authority, which violated Jesus' original "good news."

hierarchy within their traditions—a tendency that quickly became the target of postmodern and deconstructionist power theorists and analysts.[23]

The decade of the 1970s witnessed a paradigm shift within New Testament studies in general and, in particular, within Pauline power studies, from a preoccupation with the spiritual and theological domains to a preoccupation with the social domain.[24] Notably, a wave of discussions on ideology emerged in the 1970s. For instance, John Gager raised the problem of ideology in interpreting the biblical texts within the early Christian church.[25] In conjunction with Gager, Mary Daly pointed out the ideology of gender-hierarchy in the Jesus movement.[26] Similarly, Rosemary Ruether traced the ideology of anti-Judaism back to the New Testament,[27] and Krister Stendahl found nascent anti-Semitism in the Augustine-Lutheran tradition of Pauline theology.[28] By contrast, scholars also applied the biblical texts to critique the ideology of their age. For

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[23] Some exceptions began to tackle the problem of abusing power within the church. For example, Barrett (*Signs of an Apostle*) argues that there is no biblical foundation for apostolicity, and it is a mistake to use apostolic tradition as a tool for power.

[24] At the same time, parallel with the trend of studying power as a social relationship, a group of works continued to focus on the spiritual and mythic aspects of power. They often use *power* in its plural form to speak of *powers* and refer to powerful beings and principalities, e.g., evil spirits and angelic powers. These works, e.g., Wink (*Naming the Powers*; *Unmasking the Powers*; *Engaging the Powers*), seek to uncover unseen spiritual influences behind the power of human organizations and activities. In fact, they continue to argue for an old tradition. Among them, Wink's works are probably the best known. He points out that all the works with a sociological starting point presume a dualism and separate material power from spiritual power. He maintains that power was good, is now fallen, and will someday be redeemed. To him, material power is the concretion of spiritual power. I appreciate Wink's effort to bring back the spiritual focus, but I consider his critique of the works that draw on sociology to be an unwarranted generalization. On the one hand, in my assessment, scholars who choose a social method to interpret a social phenomenon do not necessarily separate material power from spiritual power. On the other hand, the mythic works tend to oversimplify and abstract the complexity around human social relationships by over-spiritualizing everything. In the end, one must learn to recognize and live with (and be held by) the tensions that exist between Christian theologizing and secular theorizing. Both have influenced and informed biblical interpretations.

[25] Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 66–92.

[26] Daly, *Beyond God the Father*.

[27] Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*.

[28] Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles*.

instance, William Stringfellow tackled the ideology of imperialism of US politics through a political reading of the book of Revelation.[29]

It is beyond the scope here to investigate whether it is problematic to set the spiritual and theological domains and the social domain as a binary opposition or whether these new readings are as biased as previous interpretations. An observation, however, merits our critical self-reflection. The aforementioned paradigm shift was in keeping with those that were happening in relation to broader power discourses in the US at the time, much of which began earlier but carried into the 1970s—e.g., the civil rights movement, the controversy caused by Arendt's journalist report on the Eichmann trial, the so-called second wave of feminism, the student movement, and the community power debates. This conjunction implies that concerns for social problems and interest in the social sciences increased in the West as the influence of Christendom declined. I believe it was not accidental that biblical scholars who studied power began to explore power discourses within the humanities during the 1970s. At least, critical social theories allowed theologians to ask new questions about social problems and challenged the Western ideologies embedded in biblical interpretations—e.g., individualism, idealism, universalism, and ethnocentrism, to list a few.[30]

Synchronic Analysis of the Field

Since the 1970s, Pauline power studies have become as diverse as power studies in the wider humanities. In my definition of the field, I combine four groups of studies: history-

[29] Stringfellow, *An Ethic for Christians*.

[30] For discussions on the use of sociological theories in biblical studies, see such examples as Gager, "Shall We Marry Our Enemies," 256–65; Theissen, "Die soziologische Auswertung," 284–99.

orientated critical approach, gender-orientated critical approach, empire-orientated critical approach, and language-orientated critical approach.[31] Since power discourses are problem-oriented by nature, I will use *interest* as the parameter to describe the field. In what follows, I will discuss first the common interest and secondly the specific perspective of each group.

First, Pauline power studies share a common interest to liberate the oppressed. However, (post-)critical scholars differ in answering the key questions: What is liberated, from what, and to what? Their liberating motive also implies an oppressor, with different figures identified: Jesus of Nazareth, Paul of Tarsus, Simon Peter (or other Palestine apostles), Augustine of Hippo (or other Fathers), Martin Luther (or other Reformers), or white-male scholars. To consider some specific examples, New Perspective scholars such as Gager seek to liberate Paul from the "dominant view of Paul across nearly two thousand years" and reinvent Paul's Jewish identity.[32] Empire-critical scholars such as Neil Elliot seek to liberate Paul from "Lutheran captivity."[33] Following Elliot, Richard Horsley seeks to liberate Paul from a preoccupation with spirituality into a preoccupation with politics.[34] Similarly, gender-critical scholars such as Davina Lopez seek to liberate Paul from the "appropriations and interpretations aligned with privilege, elitism, and imperialism that masquerade as value-neutral."[35] While approaching Pauline discourse from different perspectives, Elliot, Horsley, and Lopez all find the liberating message in Paul and set Paul against Roman imperialism. Differing from them, Elizabeth Schüssler

[31] Although not all empire-critical and gender-critical studies explicitly label themselves as power studies, their concerns about imperial or patriarchal power qualify them as power studies.

[32] Gager, *Reinventing Paul*, viii.

[33] Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 109.

[34] Horsley, *Paul and Empire*.

[35] Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered*, 8.

Fiorenza (followed by Elizabeth Castelli, Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, and Joseph Marchal) seeks to liberate the canon in general, and Pauline discourse in particular, from the kyriarchal bias of interpretation history in order to create a "radical democratically hermeneutical space."[36] In these more critical readings, Paul is problematic and hence must be presumed as unauthorized.

Second, although studies on power and authority share the common interest of liberation, they differ in terms of their specific perspective(s). Scholars interested in power issues started with a shared focus, but as studies about intersectionality arose, it become popular to mingle different interests and perspectives.

(1) A history-orientated critical approach concerns historical reconstruction, among other interests.[37] E. A. Judge is considered to be the first social historian to understand first-century Christian groups against the background of the patronage system.[38] Judge represents a stream of social power studies that object to the use of anachronistic models to study ancient social phenomenon. But such scholars as Judge, who use descriptive and comparative studies, generally assume that objective and disinterested historical studies are possible. Such an assumption becomes the target of deconstruction in postmodern hermeneutics. Beginning in the 1970s, continuing the

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[36] Schüssler Fiorenza, *Power of the Word*, 81–82. Russell ("Introduction," 11–20) notes that positions concerning the nature of the Christian canon fall on the spectrum between two poles: (1) seeing the canon as the liberating word and (2) seeing the need to liberate the canon.

[37] History-orientated critical studies here are different from modern historical-critical criticism (or the so-called German higher criticism) in two ways. First, history-orientated critical studies question the modern view of interpretation that regards objective or scientific research as possible and the philosophical-historical approach to history. In this respect, history-oriented critical studies are, in fact, postcritical. Second, influenced by deconstructionism, history-oriented critical studies seek to reconstruct the history of the "other" by investigating the "difference" that Jacques Derrida emphasizes.

[38] Judge was among the first generation of biblical social historians who emerged in the 1960s. For samples of his work, see Judge, *Social Pattern*; Judge, "Classical Society," 19–36; Judge, "Social Identity," 201–17; Judge, "Radical Critic," 191–203. For an evaluation of his work, see Chow, *Patronage and Power*, 16–21.

previous discussion on authority, scholars started to appropriate social power theories to understand authority and power in Pauline communities or the primitive church. For instance, John Schütz, followed by Bengt Holmberg, conducts a Weberian reading of Paul.[39] While Schütz asks how Paul's apostolic authority relates to his charismatic power, Holmberg asks about the making of the authority structure of the primitive church.

Many of these pioneers are still asking historical questions but have begun to challenge the predominant modern historical-critical methods and free later scholars to read Paul with other approaches. More recently, Kittredge approaches historical reconstruction from a postmodern perspective and methodologically combines it with rhetorical criticism.[40] She starts with the assumption that Pauline discourse should be understood in light of the struggle between the emerging vision of equality and Paul's limitation due to his social location and the convention of language. Therefore, Kittredge presupposes that Pauline discourse does not reflect historical reality, but somewhat obscures it. Her rhetorical analysis seeks to reconstruct the historical situation related to Paul's use of authority, not as it is, but as it is not written. In other words, her interest is to give voice to the silenced.

(2) A gender-orientated critical approach addresses the "woman problem," among other issues. In the 1970s, a wave of gender-critical readings emerged, primarily under the influence of the second wave of feminism and French poststructuralism. To feminists who are regarded as revolutionist and reconstructionist,[41] Paul is considered to be a

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[39] Schütz, *Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*; Holmberg, *Paul and Power*.

[40] Kittredge, *Community and Authority*.

[41] Here, I borrow Clifford's categories, see Clifford, *Feminist Theology*, 32–34. She classifies Christian feminism into three categories: reformist, reconstructionist, and revolutionist. Simply put, reformists refer to Protestant feminists who adhere to biblical authority, and reconstructionists refer to scholars who seek to deconstruct the Bible within a hermeneutic of suspicion. Both reformists and reconstructionists remain within the Christian system. By contrast, revolutionists believe the existing

misogynist.[42] While revolutionists usually choose to leave Christianity, reconstructionists still adhere to Christian faith, but their choice of a hermeneutic of suspicion often presumes a need to de-authorize Paul. In reaction to feminism in general, traditionalist scholars maintain a complementary view—i.e., men and women have equal value but unequal roles.[43] Both reconstructionists and traditionalists interpret Paul as a promoter of the subordination of women but draw opposite conclusions. When interpreting the biblical texts, the former insists on a reading "against the grain," while the latter insist on a reading "along the grain." But the practice of both groups implies a common tendency—namely, knowingly or unknowingly, they obscure the distinction between the Pauline texts and interpretations of those texts. Taking a middle position between reconstructionists and traditionalists, reformists advocate a biblical egalitarian view—namely, men and women are equal in both value and function.[44] By taking a middle position, however, an egalitarian reading is neither neutral nor objective. As indicated above, all power studies are biased and problem oriented.

Christian system is inherently male-hierarchal, so it must be overturned. For surveys of feminist readings of Paul, see Polaski, *Feminist Introduction*; Ehrensperger, "Paul and Feminism," 1–23.

[42] For examples, Økland (*Women in Their Place*) argues that Paul did not even have a view of women, because he could not escape the "one-sex" ideology of his age; hence although Paul might not intend to dominate, he was unable to escape the control of the thinking of the Hellenistic culture. More radically, Wire (*Corinthian Women Prophets*) argues that out of the fear that his social status was declining Paul sought to dominate when facing the challenges from the Corinthian women prophets, who were more faithful to Christ and gifted by the Spirit. Similarly, Jodamus ("Gendered Ideology," 29–58) argues that Paul sought to advocate and maintain the ideology of male-domination in the Corinthian church, which was also inherent in the Greco-Roman culture.

[43] For examples, Knight, *Role Relationship*; Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism & Biblical Truth*; Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*; Hurley, *Man and Woman*. By advocating inequality in roles, traditionalists deny women's legitimacy in ministry that assumes power. The extreme traditionalist position affirms the inferiority of women and advocates "the subordination of *all* women to *all* men, *because they are women*" (Jewett, *Man as Male and Female*, 131 [italics original]).

[44] For examples, Polaski, *Feminist Introduction*; Payne, *Man and Woman*; Peppiatt, *Women and Worship*; Westfall, *Paul and Gender*.

(3) An empire-orientated critical approach focuses on the promotion or resistance of imperialism and colonization, among other themes. Beginning in the 1990s, empire-critical studies, including postcolonial studies, emerged to examine the influence of imperialism on the Jesus movement, as well as on the later development of the Christian church and its mission in the majority world.[45] Among empire-critical studies, e.g., Elliot and Horsley, the political agenda (instead of the spiritual agenda) takes priority. Through their political lens, Jesus is studied as the Messiah of politics, and Paul, the apostle of politics. Moreover, the focus is shifted from justification by faith or salvation of souls from sin to liberation from imperial oppression.[46]

Among empire-critical studies, postcolonial studies stand out as a branch on its own terms. Christopher Stanley points out that postcolonialism is a product of Western literary studies with the primary concern to "identify and combat the negative social, economic, political, and psychological effects of colonialism in all its forms . . ."[47] Beginning with the pioneering works of R. S. Sugirtharajah and Fernando F. Segovia, biblical postcolonial studies entail two broad currents: first, to study how the Bible was used to promote or combat "the ideology, activities, and institutions of Western colonialism" and second, to illuminate the historical contexts where biblical texts were translated, composed, and transmitted in light of insights from postcolonial theorists.[48] Scholars of the second current also presume a hermeneutic of suspicion, as reconstructionist feminists do.

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[45] For examples, Elliott, *Liberating Paul*; Horsley, ed., *Paul and Empire*; Sugirtharajah, ed., *Voice from the Margin*; Sugirtharajah, ed., *Still at the Margins*; Elliott, *Arrogance of Nations*; Stanley, ed., *Colonized Apostle.*

[46] Liberation theologians have already tackled similar issues, see Cone, *Black Theology*; Gutiérrez, *Theology of Liberation*.

[47] Stanley, "Introduction," 4.

[48] Stanley, "Introduction," 4–5.

(4) A language-orientated critical approach is concerned with language in use, among other interests. Influenced by the New Rhetoric, modern linguistics, or French poststructuralism—or some other language-oriented approach—(post-)critical scholars began to incorporate the notion of discourse into their studies of power and authority since the 1990s. Concerning the relation between language and power, language-critical studies entail two broad streams. The first concerns Paul's *talk* about power, and the second concerns Paul's use of power (or persuasive influence) embedded in his *talking*—i.e., in his rhetoric, speech acts, or language use.[49] These two currents cover the two major questions related to Paul's language: What does Pauline discourse say and what does Pauline discourse do?[50]

Among language-critical studies today, Vernon Robbins's socio-rhetorical model is regarded as the most developed within biblical studies. The model includes investigation into four arenas of a text: inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture, and ideological texture.[51] Robbins's model is an interdisciplinary interpretive

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[49] Scholars who are appropriating different theories use different expressions to describe a similar phenomenon. For example, with the focus on persuasion, rhetorical critics use "rhetoric"; with the focus on text and context, Systemic Functional linguists use "language in use"; with the focus on interpersonal communication, scholars who draw on J. L. Austin and John Searle use "speech acts." Regardless of the different expressions, all of them ask a similar question: What is language doing?

[50] For examples, Castelli (*Imitating Paul*) appropriates Foucault's analysis of "regimes of truth" and "technologies of power" to argue that the notion of imitation functions as a strategy of domination in Pauline discourse. Similarly, Kittredge (*Community and Authority*) draws on Schüssler Fiorenza's hermeneutic model and Norman Petersen's theory of "symbolic universe" to reconstruct the historical situation of Paul not as it is in his letters, but as it is not, based on her assumption that Pauline discourse does not reflect historical reality but rather obscures it. As a result, Paul is described by Kittredge as a dominator who deviated from Jesus' message of equality. Extending Castelli's work, Wannamaker ("A Rhetoric of Power," 115–38; "Power of the Absent Father," 339–64) appropriates John Thomson's study on ideology and Vernon Robbins's socio-rhetoric method to argue that Paul applied rhetoric to dominate the Corinthians. By contrast, not assuming Paul as a dominator, Polaski (*Paul and Discourse of Power*) appropriates Foucault's power theories to ask new questions related to what gets to be talked about in Paul's letters. Similarly, Ehrensperger (*Paul and the Dynamics of Power*) draws on the so-called feminist conception of power to identify the different forms of power in Paul's letters and understand Paul's talk about power in Jewish context.

[51] See Robbins, *Tapestry*; Robbins, *Sea Voyages*.

paradigm that brings a variety of disciplines into dialogue with each other. Combining socio-scientific criticism and literary criticism and stressing the relation between text and context, Robbins's model is socio-literary by nature and particularly suitable for reading narratives.[52]

In recent studies, interdisciplinary and eclectic works have become the trend. These works indicate a confluence of various interests and approaches. Robbins's model is a good illustration of this trend, but the work of Schüssler Fiorenza is also noteworthy. She begins her work by borrowing the framework of Latin American liberation theology but soon shifts to a "critical feminist theology of liberation," adding a gender focus to the concerns of class relations and economics in Latin American liberation works.[53] Similarly, Kathy Ehrensperger seeks to move beyond both the traditional male-stream interpretations that see Paul as a theologian of "a law-free Gentile church" and the traditional feminist interpretations that see Paul as "the father of misogyny and dominating power." By incorporating new insights from feminist theologies and theologies of the Shoah into Pauline studies, her works address both the woman problem and the Jewish problem.[54] With the increasing awareness of intersectionality, most recent studies expand the scope of inquiry by taking into consideration multiple issues, such as

[52] My methodology, which will be developed in the next chapter, shares Robbins's concern for text and context but differs from his model in two ways. First, my methodology is socio-linguistic by nature, combining socio-scientific criticism and linguistic criticism. It appropriates a critical socio-linguistic theory to investigate textual politics, i.e., how the use of language embodies the use of power. Second, my methodology is designed for reading real letters with the assumption that some particular author(s) have written them to a particular audience under particular circumstance with particular interests and purposes, even though none of these elements can be completely reconstructed.

[53] Segovia, ed., *Toward a New Heaven*, 17; cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, "Ethics of Biblical Interpretation," 3–17.

[54] Ehrensperger, *Mutually Encouraged*, 1.

gender, sex, race, ethnicity, and class.[55] The phrase "Paul in critical context" well represents this recent trend.[56]

Assessment of Pauline Power Discourses

Up to this point, I have attempted to outline the field of Pauline power discourses based on the parameter of interest. Now I will offer some assessments. Generally speaking, Pauline power discourses can be appreciated in three respects. First, they are *hermeneutically aware*. Ehrensperger notes "a hermeneutical paradigm shift from hegemony to diversity" in the 1970s.[57] In keeping with this hermeneutical turn, (post-)critical scholars usually state their interests and assumptions from the outset, not pretending to escape ideological bias. The majority of critical or radical power studies promote a hermeneutic of suspicion, but scholars who assume biblical authority prefer other labels. For instance, Latin-American liberation theologians consider their hermeneutical paradigm to be a hermeneutic of liberation.[58] I prefer the label of a hermeneutic of diversity, within which I do not assume a hermeneutic of suspicion but neither do I presume it as problematic or useless. Second, they are *practical*. Power studies are concerned with social issues, be they national, international, or transnational (i.e., pertaining to different ethnicities living in the same nation). (Post-)critical scholars usually aim at having a direct impact such as changing policy in society and the church—e.g., gender-critical studies have fought for women to have the right to be ordained.

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[55] For examples, Schüssler Fiorenza, "Ethics of Biblical Interpretation," 3–7; Horsley, ed., *Paul and Politics*; Segovia, ed., *Toward a New Heaven*; Marchal, *Politics of Heaven*.

[56] I borrow the phrase from the series "Paul in Critical Context" published by Fortress Press. Besides the works in that series, see also Ehrensperger and Tucker, eds., *Reading Paul in Context*; Marchal, ed., *Studying Paul's Letters*.

[57] Ehrensperger, *Mutually Encouraged*, 2–42.

[58] Andiñach and Botta, "Hermeneutics of Liberation," 1–12.

Third, they are *meta-critical*. (Post-)critical scholars seek to uncover the Western ideological bias in Christian traditions, including their translations, compositions, and interpretations of the Bible. Regardless of how one evaluates their arguments, no one can neglect these other voices resulted in reading Paul in critical context. It is rather naïve to continue to read Paul as if the Holocaust or the #MeToo movement had never taken place. We have a lot to learn from critics of Paul—e.g., they can help us see our own ideological bias and point out the blind spots in our interpretations.[59] However, we also must apply the same critical approach to critics of Paul. With this in mind, I see three perils in Pauline power discourses.

First, the most subtle peril is the confusion between the Pauline texts themselves and the interpretation of them. Although (post-)critical scholars rightly point out the challenge of establishing a clear demarcation, I still wish to distinguish two distinct factors that are at stake in the discussion: first, Paul's discourse, and second, its interpretation. Inevitably, these two issues are connected in practice because none of us can escape the influence of our interpretative traditions. Nevertheless, it is helpful to ask, What is being deconstructed, Paul or the so-called Western white-male interpretations of Paul?

On the one hand, postmodern philosophers are as biased as their predecessors, and their ideological interests often *determine* the outcome of their reading, if the text is read at all. For instance, Brian Ingraffia rightly points out what the postmodern founders—Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, and Jacques Derrida—seek to deconstruct is indeed the modern philosophical construction of theology, i.e., "onto-theology," but not

[59] Gray (*Paul as a Problem*, 210) writes, "There is much to be learned by listening to Paul's critics, even if it is not always what his gainsayers think."

biblical theology *per se*.[60] Similarly, Ehrensperger points out that Castelli, in her commentary on Romans, deconstructs not the text itself but one perception of the text—i.e., F. C. Baur's Hegelian dualistic reading.[61] Moreover, Peter Frick points out that while postmodern philosophers deconstruct Paul in order to recover the voice of the "other," they inevitably commit the same mistake to suspend the "author-other Paul."[62] So, without text-based investigation, Paul's critics might only deconstruct a straw-man set up by previous Pauline interpretations, without ever seeking to give Paul a fresh hearing. Joel Green honestly notes that theological reading (i.e., interpretation with the telos to do theology) is inevitably "interested exegesis."[63] At the same time, we must also remember Anthony Thiselton's words that hermeneutics can constrain or serve interest. When hermeneutics is seen merely as *serving* interest, it is used as "a means of 'coping'." By contrast, when hermeneutics is seen as *constraining* interest, it promotes understanding.[64] In other words, with awareness of our involvement in interpretation, we must not subject the notion of understanding to that of interest.

On the other hand, we must also ask, Can we construct biblical theology without any influence of the philosophies or ideologies of the age? More soberly, can we construct biblical theology at all?[65] Since any construction requires some structure to make it coherent, the task of constructing theology itself, regardless of its content, will

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[60] Ingraffia, *Postmodern Theory*. Cf. Frick, *Paul in the Grip of the Philosophers*.
[61] Ehrensperger, *Mutually Encouraged*, 163–69.
[62] Frick, "Paul in the Grip of Continental Philosophers," 11.
[63] Green, *Practicing Theological Interpretation*, 2.
[64] Thiselton, *Interpreting God*, 41.
[65] Since J. P. Gabler's attempt to distinguish biblical theology from systematic theology inaugurated the modern discipline of biblical theology, scholars have not yet reached any consensus on how to define "biblical theology," much less how to conduct it. But Carson ("Biblical Theology," 35) notes that in a general sense any sort of "disciplined theological reflection" on Scripture could be viewed as biblical theology. I use it here loosely to refer to any theological reflection on Scripture or any theologizing that appropriates Scripture as one of its sources, if not the only one.

invite poststructuralist objections. Especially in post-Christendom today—an inclusive age of post-everything and de-everything—it is risky for theologians to do theological or ethical studies that promote Christian values in the name of the Bible. This anxiety is particularly real for Protestant theologians who commit themselves to both biblical authority and ideological studies.[66] On the one hand, from a Protestant perspective, although Scripture, including the Pauline texts, can be approached and interpreted from different perspectives, it still serves as the authoritative voice. On the other hand, power studies cannot ignore passages that suppress the less privileged and powerless. Admittedly, it is not an easy task to do both well at the same time, but it is not all impossible to create strategies to hold the tension. I suggest the same reform spirit applied to Catholicism in the course of the Reformation should also be applied to Protestantism itself. In other words, Protestant theologies are also subject to revision or recontextualization within and for different communities in their changing contexts. In summary, biblical theologians require both humility and courage to respond to culture in their theological reflection.

Second, closely associated with the preceding discussion, another peril is the lack of sensitivity to historical context or the *dialogic* nature of effective theological discourse. Informed by Mikhail Bakhtin, I believe that our theological discourse should be done as giving a response to others and provoking a response from others.[67] While (post-)critical scholars are sensitive to their contemporary context, they often interpret and critique previous interpretations out of context. In other words, not only Jesus or Paul is often taken out of context, but Augustine, Luther, and John Calvin also endure the

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[66] Russell, "Authority and the Challenge of Feminist Interpretation," 137–46.
[67] Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*.

same (mis-)treatment. Followers of the Augustine-Lutheran tradition abstract and generalize Augustine's or Luther's ideas, without taking this question seriously: In dialogue with whom did Augustine or Luther conduct their theological discourse? Opponents of the Augustine-Lutheran tradition fall into the same peril, albeit while coming to opposite conclusions.

To remain balanced, if possible, we should not accept or dismiss interpretive traditions without critical assessment. On the one hand, as Paul discourages the Corinthians from overestimating human leaders, including himself (1 Cor 4:1–6), we must not "worship" (or centralize) Paul or any Pauline theologian. On the other hand, despite weakness and mistakes, church Fathers and theologians have shown courage and faithfulness. They have raised and answered the questions in their contexts and have done the theological reflection required of their age. Although their interpretations are biased, or even problematic (just like ours), their interpretive work is still valuable, at least valuable in their contexts. It is our responsibility today to continue their line of practice to ask and answer theological questions for our age, while also growing in awareness of the influence of ideologies of our age and in humility that shows willingness to listen and understand other voices.

In summary, I suggest a hermeneutic of diversity, within which some of us choose to adhere to biblical authority (however that might be defined for different communities) but make space for "others" to bring their voices, even if they choose a hermeneutic of suspicion. As Ehrensperger suggests, we can consider theological diversity and particularity—instead of systematic theology or universal principles—as the norm for

Pauline texts and their interpretation.[68] If Paul's theology conveyed via his discourse is contextual theology, we can follow his example to conduct contextual theology in and for our contexts. However, while welcoming the other voices, we must not shy away from holding onto our own identity and appreciating our own traditions.

Lastly, the third peril is potential violence. Readings in critical context that draw on critical social and political theories must watch for the tendency of the "glorification of violence" visible in some critical theories such as Marxism or neo-Marxism.[69] Arendt notes that belief in violence as a means for life-production is the root of the rationalization of violence in the works of Georges Sorel, Vilfredo Pareto, and Frantz Fanon.[70] If violence is rationalized, or even praised, as a life-promoting force, both people in powerful and powerless positions can use violence to achieve their purposes. This reasoning is dangerous, especially when it comes from those in authoritative positions because they have legal access to the power apparatus.

For the suppressed who seek to resist subjugation, however, it is more challenging to discern the fine line between violence and resistance. In a nutshell, to fight for liberation, (post-)critical scholars must try their best not to cause harm. For instance, when liberating women, (post-)critical scholars must not shame the other gender; when liberating the marginalized lower class, (post-)critical scholars must not devalue the contribution of the middle class; when welcoming immigrants, (post-)critical scholars must not neglect the concerns of local citizens; and when fighting for social justice,

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[68] Ehrensperger, *Mutually Encouraged*, 133–36.

[69] Arendt, *On Violence*, 3–31. Arendt points out that although some New Left politicians (e.g., Georges Sorel and Mao Tse-Tung) use the Marxist rhetoric, their preaching of violence contradict with Marx's own words in regard to violence.

[70] Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, 73–74.

(post-)critical scholars must watch for anarchism and nihilism. In summary, when fighting against evil, we must not become evil ourselves.[71]

From another perspective, readings that aim at critical self-reflection must also watch for the tendency of self-destruction. Radical or (post-)critical power theories aim at uncovering hidden ideology (in an only negative sense); thus, Pauline power studies that appropriate these theories also tend to merely deconstruct theological discourse, including Scripture. An only negative view of power or ideology will lead us towards disillusion and despair, as well as a spirit of hatred and violence toward our own theological traditions and even our Christian identity. Thus, when power studies adopt only negative notions of power and ideology, deconstruction will lead to annihilation. Besides critical self-reflection, the Christian church and academy are also in need of theological discourse that provides hope and assures Christians that transformative power is available and can be used to build up individuals and communities.

Understanding these perils will help us to restrain our "critical spirit" when approaching Paul with non-traditional methods so that we can still seek justice and truth. Up to this point, I have provided a trajectory and a map for Pauline power discourses. In what follows, I will locate my work in relation to specific (post-)critical scholars.

Positioning My Work: Is Paul a Dominator?

As indicated above, Paul is likely the most controversial figure in the history of biblical interpretation. Through different readings, we encounter different images of Paul—e.g., as an influential missionary, a liberator against legalistic Judaism, a propagandist of

[71] Wink, *Engaging the Powers*.

imperialism, and a misogynist. Dialogue partners of Paul's critics might wonder: Are Paul's critics describing and discussing the same person? Which image of Paul is correct? To obtain a single and simple answer is likely impossible, since both Christian and Jewish Pauline scholars admit to some degree of "inconsistency" (or complexity) in Paul's thoughts.[72] Nevertheless, I will attempt to provide *an* image of Paul by studying how Paul uses power via his speech. I am particularly interested in examining whether Paul is a dominator who promoted domination. Pertinent to this question, the spectrum ranges across three or four positions.

First, the radical position does not want to distinguish Paul from interpretations of Paul.[73] For instance, Mary Daly maintains that even though Paul himself might have been innocent, the fact is that for nearly two thousand years, male ministers, theologians, and biblical scholars have used specific Pauline passages to dominate and suppress women at home, in the church, in the academy, and in society. These radical reader-oriented critics usually end up dismissing even Jesus or God, because Jesus is called the "Son of God," and God is called "Father."

Second, the critical position denounces Paul only to preserve Jesus. Following certain critical theories from the humanities, it usually ascribes to radically negative definitions of power, ideology, structure, and instruction. To these scholars, without any nuance, power is equivalent to domination; ideology is equivalent to meanings that serve the interests of the ruling class by providing the means to sustain their domination;

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[72] Gray, *Paul as a Problem*, 38. Cf. Ehrensperger (*Mutually Encouraged*, 43–120) points out that the perception of "consistency" can be drawn from the belief that "Western Greco-Roman Enlightenment logic" is the only standard to judge one's thinking (48).

[73] Daly, *Beyond God the Father*.

structure is equivalent to hierarchy or kyriarchy;[74] and instruction is equivalent to manipulation or domination. Besides, without taking intentionality and purpose into consideration, any asymmetric relationship or exercise of power over others is seen as evil and hence should be denounced. For instance, Castelli presumes that power is domination and thus evil, when she studies the "imitation" passages in Pauline letters.[75] Similarly, Schüssler Fiorenza attempts to modify every linguistic sign that implies kyriarchal power and argues that only the "ekklesia of wo/men" has the *authority* to make decisions.[76] Differing from radical scholars, (post-)critical scholars avoid applying the same analyses to Jesus and presume egalitarianism in the early Jesus movement so that Jesus is exempted from deconstruction. Such (post-)critical scholars as Elsa Tamez argue (or perhaps, assume) that later Christian development diverges from the initial "egalitarian and democratic principles"[77] of the earliest Jesus movement.

Third, the egalitarian position argues against the conclusion that Paul dominates. Taking a middle position between the (post-)critical scholars and traditionalist scholars and adhering to the orthodox tradition regarding scriptural authority, these scholars ask

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[74] Schüssler Fiorenza creates this neologism to entail all hierarchical dominations besides patriarchy.

[75] Castelli, *Imitating Paul*.

[76] Schüssler Fiorenza (*Power of the Word*, 81–82) defines the "ekklesia of wo/men" as a "radical democratically hermeneutical space that seeks to make connections between ancient and modern democratic discourses." Supposing we grant Schüssler Fiorenza's vision for the ekklesia of wo/men, however, one might wonder how decisions can be made at all when there is no leadership or norm. Furthermore, if only the ekklesia of wo/men has the authority to make decisions about which scriptures should be in or out, is this not another version of domination?

[77] Tamez, *Struggles for Power*, xxiv, 38, 67. Based on the hints of conflict in 1 Timothy and reflection on her Latin-American liberation context, Tamez assumes that power struggles existed in the Ephesian Christian community at the turn of the first century. According to her reading, the author of 1 Timothy diverged from the "egalitarian and democratic principles" of the primitive Jesus movement and retreated to the Greco-Roman patri-hierarchy, when seeking to resolve the internal power struggles and external hostility from the Greco-Roman society. Similarly, Kittredge (*Community and Authority*, 6) assumes that the emerging Christian movement "entails a vision of equality" and that Paul diverges from this initial egalitarianism.

this: Have either the radical left or the fundamentalist right done justice to Paul? For instance, Ehrensperger's work, drawing on feminist theories of power, including Amy Allen's categories of power as "power-over," "power-to," and "power-with," and Wartenberg's transformative use of power, yields a positive view of Paul's use of power.[78] Similarly, Cynthia Westfall, drawing on the social sciences and modern linguistics, concludes positively that Paul held to an egalitarian view of women.[79] Elliott and Horsley argue in favor of an anti-imperial Paul, even though the Pauline corpus was "polluted" by later writers.[80] In order to excuse Paul, Elliot regards 1 Timothy, Titus, and Ephesians as pseudo-Pauline and proposes that 1 Cor 14:34–35 is likely an interpolation.[81]

Different readings, therefore, have resulted from the different interests of different interpreters and interpretive communities, from different assumptions about Paul's social location (Hellenistic, Jewish, or Greco-Roman), from competing theories of power or approaches to the discourse of power, and from selective choices of Pauline passages, to name a few factors. In order to contribute to the discussion of Paul and power discourse,

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[78] To my knowledge, Ehrensperger's *Paul and the Dynamics of Power* is the only book-length power discourse in the New Testament studies that draws on the so-called feminist conception of power. She classifies Paul's power discourse (in the sense of knowledge) into several subgroups, e.g., the discourse of grace, of weakness, of parental metaphor, of imitation, and of obedience, and identifies each as one of these three categories: power-to, power-over, and power-with. Interpreting Paul against a Hebrew background, Ehrensperger examines each subgroup in light of Jewish Scripture and tradition. Although Ehrensperger concludes that the power dynamics embedded in Paul's discourse are multi-dimensional, she often perceives Paul's power as transformative empowerment during her analysis. Besides such methodological issues as unclear criteria about picking the so-called power discourse, Ehrensperger's work lacks attention to biblical passages that reveal the domination inherent in a patriarchal society and the violent nature of God's wrath and punishment. In other words, Ehrensperger's general claim of a positive view of Paul and Jewish tradition is considered to be overly simplistic. Nevertheless, she is one of the few that labours to bring out the positive aspects of power and attempts to study power in the Pauline corpus somewhat systematically. I am indebted to her work for pointing me to the feminist conception of power, especially Wartenberg's work.

[79] Westfall, *Paul and Gender*.

[80] Elliott, *Liberating Paul*; Horsley, ed., *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*.

[81] Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 26, 35.

my study seeks to examine Paul's use of power in his use of language in 1 and 2 Corinthians. Power studies often examine many passages in these two letters *selectively*—e.g., 1 Cor 1–4, 1 Cor 11:2–16, 14:34–35, all the imitation passages such as 1 Cor 4:16 and 1 Cor 11:1, and 2 Cor 10–13—but no one has attempted to *systematically* examine the linguistic behaviour of both letters in relation to Paul's use of power.[82] Since one of the critiques given to power studies is the cherry-picking of data, my study not only employs a more systemic approach of discourse analysis but also pay attention to controversial details.[83] On the one hand, I agree with the majority of Pauline power studies that Paul, as a leader, has an asymmetric relationship with the Corinthians; simply put, Paul is exercising power over them. On the other hand, I question (post-)critical scholars' uncritical collocation of (or even equation of) leadership with domination.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have pointed out the challenges involved in power studies. Owing to their problem-orientated nature, we must be willing to appreciate their inherent subjectivity and dialogue with poststructuralist critical scholars. Accordingly, I have mapped the development and current situation of Pauline power discourses. Since the field is still under development and thus fragmented, I loosely define four types: history-orientated critical approach, gender-orientated critical approach, empire-orientated

[82] Regarding discussions on integrity, see Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 36–41 (for 1 Corinthians) and Land, *Integrity*, 7–20 (for 2 Corinthians). I assume the integrity of both letters, and that 1 Corinthians was written before 2 Corinthians.

[83] As regards the use of the canon, three general ways are discussed by Katharine Sakenfeld ("Feminist Uses," 55–64): (1) reinterpreting or deconstructing "problematic" passages, (2) using biblical figures as positive or negative paradigms, and (3) attempting a more holistic treatment of biblical discourse. On the one hand, the first group is critiqued for committing the fallacy of cherry-picking data, and on the other, the third group is critiqued for avoiding problematic passages that indicate patriarchal biases. That said, with a systematic analysis, I address critiques leveled against scholars who use the first approach.

critical approach, and language-orientated critical approach. These groups share the common interest of liberation but differ firstly in their specific objectives of liberation and secondly in their specific perspectives. My work falls under the category of language-critical studies. I have adopted a reformist feminist (egalitarian) perspective, although my concern is broader than the woman problem. Focusing on the relation between language and power, I seek to examine Paul's use of power embedded in his use of language in 1 and 2 Corinthians with the reading techniques of Critical Discourse Analysis. Ultimately, my dissertation seeks to ask new questions and to develop a new reading method in order to answer them. In what follows, I will delineate my methodology of critical discourse analysis.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY:
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

My methodology integrates social power theories into a socio-linguistic model that is facilitated by using Microsoft Excel.[1] The invention of computational technology makes the handling of large datasets a possibility on the one hand, but, on the other, leads us away from the inherent spirituality of the topic that is accessed through spiritual disciplines such as contemplative prayer and meditation on Scripture. Whereas understanding and theological reflection inevitably require time and are subjective, technology often deceives us into believing that we can produce scientific and objective results within a shorter time. I understand the perils of appropriating technology in theological studies, besides being aware of the long-standing criticism of anachronism in applying modern theoretical models to interpret ancient texts.[2] Still, I regard a methodology as useful in guiding my research. On the one hand, no method can be completely objective because of the involvement of the researcher in every decision from

[1] For a study on research methods in social science, see Gilbert, "Research," 21–40.

[2] For a critique of applying modern theories to biblical power studies, see Wink, *Naming the Powers*, 4, 101–2; for a counterargument, see Polaski, *Discourse of Power*, 18–20. Wink warns that the application of modern sociological theories to the interpretation of ancient texts often imposes on ancient people modern frameworks and categories that are foreign to them. Wink's warning is legitimate. However, my assumption in this study is that none of us, as modern readers, can escape Wink's critique of applying modern theories and categories to read ancient texts, including Wink himself (e.g., he appropriates semantic domain theory and uses Louw-Nida's Greek lexicon, both of which are drawn from modern linguistics). I am aware of the complexity revolving around the antiquity of biblical texts; yet on the other hand, following Ricoeur (*Interpretation Theory*), I seek to make the estrangement and distanciation productive. Cf. Gager, "Shall We Marry Our Enemies," 256–65; Scroggs, "Sociological Interpretation," 164–79.

the outset.[3] On the other hand, a quantitatively-informed qualitative analysis is useful for identifying patterns of linguistic behaviour and regulating (or questioning) intuition (or bias) when studying long discourses. Michael Halliday asserts that the frequency of a pattern provides information about the prominence of a discourse.[4] Informed by Halliday, I believe that explicit data analysis and counting provide a relatively rigorous way to quantify abstract and implicit power relationships embedded in discourse, particularly when the discourse itself is not explicitly about power and authority.

In what follows, I will first introduce the theories appropriated in my study and then delineate my procedure. Regarding the linguistic dimension of my method, I must stress that I am not modeling how social meanings are realized in the koine Greek language system. Instead, my linguistic model only attempts to propose ways that social practices can be observed in Pauline texts and made the explicit focus of academic discussion. Regarding the ideological dimension of my method, I must stress that I appropriate social theories *strategically*. Although my goal is to develop an integrated socio-linguistic model, I admit that these theories entail incompatible elements and that I only use the parts relevant to my research question and with modification.[5] My ultimate goal is to engage in theological reflection.

Before introducing the theories employed in my study, I shall provide working definitions for three basic terms: power, authority, and control. Following Jean Miller,

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[3] Heidegger, *Being and Time*; Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. Heidegger's work shifts the hermeneutical paradigm from a preoccupation with epistemological interests to a preoccupation with existential interests. Since then, hermeneutics is no longer seen only as an approach to knowledge or an art of understanding, but also as a mode of being in the world.

[4] Halliday, "Linguistic Function," 330–68.

[5] On compatibility in linguistic modeling, see Hasan, *Language*, *Society and Consciousness*, 3–17.

power is used in this study in the sense of "capacity to produce a change."[6] Although power as defined here is a dispositional term, within the purview of my study it is viewed as inherently relational, because power in a social sense is the ability to produce change that impacts others, either harmfully or beneficially. Drawn from Cynthia Westfall, *authority* is used to mean "having the appropriate status, position, office, legal right or authorization to do the action."[7] As regards *control*, I use it loosely here to mean capacity to maintain management, such as maintaining boundaries, restraining power and freedom, or regulating social practices and the course of events.[8]

Simply put, my methodology integrates the reading techniques of Theo van Leeuwen's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with Thomas Wartenberg's field theory of social power. I will introduce these in reverse order.

Thomas Wartenberg: A Field Theory of Social Power

Before delineating Wartenberg's theory, I must first explain why I need another social power theory in addition to van Leeuwen's representation theory, which is also a social

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[6] Miller, "Colloquium," 2. My definition of power does not completely follow Thomas Wartenberg, my primary power theorist. He (*Forms of Power*, 23–24) argues that power has two distinct meanings, "power-to" and "power-over," although he does not completely separate these two in his discussion. He further notes that his field theory of social power seeks to understand the aspect of power as "power-over" (27). Wartenberg's focus on "power-over" is motivated by his interest in hierarchical social relationships. In my opinion, his "ordinary language" approach indicates confusion between defining a word and conceptualizing a social phenomenon. Whether the word has one meaning or two distinct meanings will not make a massive difference in appropriating Wartenberg's field theory to understand the phenomenon of social power, since the phenomenon of social power inevitably involves one's ability to impact and the effect of impact on others.

[7] Westfall, "αὐθεντέω," 145. Regarding "authority" as evaluable, Westfall differs from traditionalist scholars who equate "authority" with "legitimacy." Her definition accounts for both divine and human authorities. On the other hand, Polaski (*Discourse of Power*, 35) also seeks to distinguish "authority" from "legitimacy," but her working definition accounts only for human authority—i.e., "leadership and decision-making that is culturally legitimated." Similarly, Ehrensperger (*Dynamics of Power*, 91–95) warns of equating authority with domination.

[8] All these three terms (power, authority, and control) are used neutrally in my work. Control under specific circumstances can be evaluated positively as empowerment or negatively as domination.

power theory. As indicated in my previous chapters, CDA presupposes that language in use is political; thus, social control through discourse is assumed by critical linguists. Many CDA approaches, including van Leeuwen's, are built on Michel Foucault's theory of power and knowledge.[9] Foucault's theory assumes that power is inherently negative and that humans are inherently incapable of recognizing or resisting domination.[10] Despite its usefulness to criticize social power, Foucault's theory is unbalanced. My experience of both positive and negative sides of power, together with my desire to draw the liberating voice out of the biblical discourse, has motivated me to search for a more balanced theory that can account for the complexity of social power, including not only the negative use but also the positive use of power. That is why I turn to Wartenberg.

Wartenberg conceptualizes social power as *a field of dynamic social relationships*—compared to a magnetic field—instead of a property possessed by a social agent or a group of social agents. Wartenberg notes that social power is enacted through alignments between the peripheral relationships and the superordinate agent of the central power dyad at stake.[11] The theorization of the social "situatedness" of power relationships recognizes the secret face of power—namely, that social power needs no

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[9] van Leeuwen, "Recontextualization of Social Practice," 138.

[10] Foucault ("Two Lectures," 78–108) conceptualizes power as a dynamic "relation of force" existing in actions, in contrast to the previous understanding of power as something to be possessed or an "organ of repression" (89–90). In Foucault's conception of power in relation to knowledge, truth is considered to be the dominating knowledge. Power relations are established through discourse, and power reversely reinforces the discourse through which knowledge becomes naturalized. By repeating this process, truth is established, and power is exercised through the truth. This conception of power and knowledge lays a foundation for CDA scholars who seek to uncover the underlying ideology that naturalizes one version of knowledge over others through discursive formation.

[11] I use "superordinate" and "subordinate" neutrally. Their use is a simple way to refer to people in more powerful and privileged positions (i.e., the superordinate agents) and people in less powerful and privileged positions (i.e., the subordinate agents). By contrast, I use "dominating" and "dominated" evaluatively, referring to the superordinate agent and the subordinate agent in a domination-oppression relationship. Cf. Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 184.

direct or visible enactment to be effective.[12] Besides the situatedness of social power, Wartenberg adds a temporal dimension to his conceptualization of power. The temporality of power denotes that social power is dynamic and subject to change.[13]

In addition to the strength that it tackles both public and secret faces of power, Wartenberg's theory is more balanced for two more reasons. First, he distinguishes forms of power, which are morally *neutral*, from uses of power, which are ethically *evaluable*. Thus, analysts have space to separate analysis of social power from its evaluation, and when evaluating use of power, analysts have tools to take into consideration the superordinate agent's aim and interest. Although identifying types of power is not within my purview, it is worth noting that Wartenberg defines *influence* as a purely discursive form of power and *manipulation* as a form of influence that is prejudged as morally suspect.[14] By comparison, his categories regarding use of power are particularly relevant to my study. He notes that power can be used negatively as domination or positively as empowerment. In the case of *domination*, power is abused to fulfill the selfish interests of the superordinate agent(s) at the expense of the subordinate agent(s). In addition, it is an activity that benefits from the production and maintenance of systemic and longstanding power relationships over others.[15] By contrast, *empowerment* refers to the

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[12] Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 141–61.

[13] Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 163–81. I must stress that Wartenberg's theory is a social theory of social power. In the introduction of his book, he clarifies that his theory presupposes "power relationships are the result of the ongoing interactions of human beings" (6). In other words, Wartenberg believes that social power relationships, albeit structural, can be challenged and altered. With this purview, religion is analyzed as a social phenomenon in his work. By contrast, my work is a theological interpretation of theological discourse and presupposes God's sovereignty and Jesus Christ's cruciform lordship over Christians. According to my analysis, God's power-over relationship with humans remains unchangeable in Paul's discourse, but I also observe dynamics between other agents.

[14] Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 104–12.

[15] Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 115–40. He writes, "I shall use the term 'domination' to refer to the power that one social agent has over another in situations in which that power is exercised by the dominating social agent over the dominated social agent repeatedly, systematically, and to the detriment of

positive use of power with the aim of bringing others to maturity and independence. More particularly, empowerment seeks to preserve life, foster growth, and train for social acceptability and responsibility.[16] Accordingly, it is an activity that effects the obsolescence of the power-over relationship.[17] It is worth noting that Wartenberg's notion of empowerment is informed by the so-called feminist conception of power, a theory that emerged in response to radical views of mothering experiences.[18] Adopting a positive view of mothering, less-radical feminists formed a conception of the positive use of power to empower others,[19] also called the "transformative use of power."[20] Both empowerment and domination are ways of exercising power in asymmetric power relationships (e.g., between parents and children, teachers and students, counselors and

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the dominated agent. The concept of domination, therefore, refers to a specific manner of exercising power. Such an exercise of power must be one that conditions the relationship between two agents in a longstanding manner" (117).

[16] Ruddick, "Maternal Thinking," 214.

[17] Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 183–202. When distinguishing empowerment from paternalism, Wartenberg writes, "In a transformative use of power, a dominant agent also exercises power over a subordinate agent for the latter's benefit. In doing so, however, the dominant agent's aim is not simply to act for the benefit of the subordinate agent; rather, the dominant agent attempts to exercise his power in such a way that the subordinate agent learns certain skills that undercut the power differential between her and the dominant agent. The transformative use of power is a use of power that seeks to bring about its own obsolescence by means of the empowerment of the subordinate agent" (184).

[18] Likely ignited by Nancy Chodorow's work (*Reproduction of Mothering*) on mothering, a debate revolving around the practice of mothering became heated among feminists in the US See, Trebilcot, ed., *Mothering*. Differing from the feminists who viewed mothering only negatively and advocated turning traditional values about childbearing and childrearing upside down, other feminists, such as Sara Ruddick, saw the positive side of mothering. Through reflecting on "maternal thinking" during the practice of mothering, Ruddick ("Maternal Thinking," 214) concluded that maternal practice was governed by three interests: preserving life, fostering growth, and teaching social acceptability and responsibility. For a critique of this feminist conception of power, see Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 186–93.

[19] See also Miller, "Colloquium"; Allen, *Power of Feminist Theory*; Kuykendall, "Toward an Ethic of Nurturance"; Wartenberg, "Concept of Power"; Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*. Wartenberg's review article ("Concept of Power") helpfully traces the history of this development of empowerment theory of power.

[20] Wartenberg ("Concept of Power," 301–16) points out that Eléanor H. Kuykendall is the first one to coin this phrase, "the transformative use of power" (quoted from Kuykendall, "Toward an Ethic of Nurturance," 263–74), but Jean Baker Miller ("Colloquium") is the first one to conceptualize power as transformation (*Forms of Power*, 184). Wartenberg (*Forms of Power*, 184) defines "transformative use of power" as "a use of power that seeks to bring about its own obsolescence by means of the empowerment of the subordinate agent." He continues (p. 195), "A transformative use of power, although it involves exercising power over a social agent, seeks to empower that agent by developing that agent's capabilities more fully."

counselees, or pastors and congregants) and have the potential to produce change in humans.

The second reason that I regard Wartenberg's theory as more balanced is that he applies the metaphor "superposition of power relationships" to explain why a transformative use of power can also be conceived of as domination simultaneously.[21] Although he advocates transformative use of power, he asserts that no pure empowerment is possible, even if its aim is purely unselfish. The primary reason for this assertion lies in the situated nature of social power. Since the objective of empowerment is to foster personal maturity and social responsibility, what the superordinate agent empowers the subordinate agent to do often reflects more or less conformity to cultural expectations. The acquiescence of conventional practices is controversial because it can be viewed as reinforcing the existing unjust social structure or as other alternatives, such as a pragmatic strategy of survival. By stressing the multiple layers of the same phenomenon, Wartenberg's theory explains why the same data often results in two opposite interpretive directions. An analyst's interest and aim will inevitably lead her or him to focus on one layer and neglect another. For instance, with the aim to subvert *structural constraints* over women, a critic might interpret any discourse that is situated in a patriarchal culture and that does not overtly undermine its culture as affirming patriarchy, even if the text reveals the potential of women in a countercultural way. Thus, some critics might evaluate a discourse as a transformative use of power, but at the same time, others might see the same address as domination. Having delineated Wartenberg's

[21] Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 214–21.

field theory of social power, now I will turn to discuss van Leeuwen's socio-linguistic approach.

Theo van Leeuwen: The Representation of Social Practices

Although Wartenberg attempts to provide a general social theory, his notion of influence—namely, the type of power enacted in a purely discursive form—provides an interface between his critical field theory and van Leeuwen's critical socio-linguistic approach. So, to analyze Paul's use of power embedded in his discursive practice, van Leeuwen's approach is a way forward because he assimilates social science into a useful linguistic model. Integrating social studies (e.g., Basil Bernstein, Pierre Bourdieu, Michell Foucault, and Jürgen Habermas) with Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL; e.g., Michael Halliday and James Martin), van Leeuwen develops what he calls a "representation" approach.[22] Interested in both reconstruction and deconstruction, he views discourse as a social practice as well as a representation of other social practices.[23] To describe these two kinds of relations between discourse and social practices, van Leeuwen redefines the notions of field and genre. According to him, the *field* structure of discourse refers to the "recontextualization of social practice[s]," whereby discourse is viewed as an interested interpretation (i.e., knowledge in the Foucauldian sense) of social

[22] For an overview of van Leeuwen's methodological framework, see his PhD dissertation, *Language and Representation*; for a shorter version, see van Leeuwen, "Recontextualization of Social Practice," 137–53. Machin and Mayr's work (*Critical Discourse Analysis*), in the same line of van Leeuwen, provides a simplified version of the analysis. Van Leeuwen's published articles after his dissertation further develop specific components of his model, e.g., van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 81–106; van Leeuwen, "Social Actors," 32–70; van Leeuwen, "Purpose," 66–81; van Leeuwen, "Time," 127–45; van Leeuwen, "Legitimation," 91–112. For understanding his conception framework, see van Leeuwen, *Introducing Social Semiotics*.

[23] van Leeuwen, "Genre and Field," 193–223. In van Leeuwen's works, "representation" is used interchangeably with "recontextualization."

practices. Moreover, the *generic* structure of discourse refers to the "sequencing of speech acts," whereby discourse is regarded as a social practice in itself.[24] The phrase "speech acts" is often associated with James Austin's and John Searle's works on pragmatics, with reference to the phenomenon that language in use performs many other functions besides making propositions.[25] Working within the framework of SFL, van Leeuwen develops his own notion and analysis of speech acts.[26] He maintains that a speech act is the basic element "that can realize a unit of discursive practice, a move in the interaction."[27]

Informed by van Leeuwen, I divide my power analysis into two interrelated tasks. My first task is to reconstruct a web of power relationships by analyzing Paul's representation of social practices embedded in his letters, and the second is to uncover his purpose and interest in using his influence by investigating what his speech acts do and how his instructions are legitimated. Accordingly, the first task concerns Paul's *representation of social agency*, and the second, *Paul's enactment of his own agency*.

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[24] van Leeuwen ("Genre and Field," 193). He writes, "Generic structure is described in terms of the sequencing of speech acts, and as realizing the activity sequences which form the core of discursive practices. Field structure is reinterpreted as the recontextualization of social practice[s] and as realizing discourses, that is, context-specific knowledge constructions about social practices." I must stress that van Leeuwen's notion of field differs from Halliday's. Van Leeuwen defines field as "social cognition," namely, a "way of knowing," while Halliday regards field as "a way of doing" ("Language and Representation," 93). In other words, Halliday's notion of field is more descriptive, whereas van Leeuwen's is more critical and reflects Foucault's understanding of discourses.

[25] For example, Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*; Searle, *Speech Acts*; Searle, "What Is a Speech Act?"; Searle, "Indirect Speech Acts."

[26] van Leeuwen, "Genre and Field," 193–223.

[27] van Leeuwen, "Genre and Field," 195. While Austin's and Searle's categorization of speech acts is based more on cognitive criteria, particularly Paul Grice's meaning-intention theory, van Leeuwen's is based more on SFL lexical-grammatical criteria. More particularly, Searle ("Indirect Speech Acts") asks how the reader recognizes the intention of the speech acts, so his focus is more on illocution effect, and van Leeuwen ("Genre and Field") asks how the discourse enacts different social functions. To me, both of these theories are useful in some ways. SFL offers more objective criteria in the analysis. But when power is the subject, it is difficult not to think about the author's intent (e.g., what motivates an indirect move) and effect (e.g., what effect a move might produce in the reader).

From a Foucauldian perspective, Paul's representation of social agency can also be a way of enacting his agency by forming a discourse (i.e., a version of knowledge) about specific power structures. Thus, it is an interpretation of probability as to whether his representation is "accurate," or "manipulative," or something in between. I will offer my own evaluation of Paul's use of power after completing my power discourse analysis, drawing on Wartenberg's notions of domination and empowerment. For now, I will prioritize introducing analytical tools to perform these two tasks: power in words (representation of power relationships) and power via words (power negotiations).[28]

Analysis of Power in Words

In this section I will discuss how van Leeuwen's representation theory can be appropriated for the analysis of power in words. In general, when social practices are represented in discursive practice, the components of those social practices (e.g., actions and actors) are recontextualized.[29] By investigating the traces that the representation leaves behind in the discourse, one can uncover embedded ideologies and interests. According to van Leeuwen, social actions include *material actions* (doing) and *semiotic*

[28] Cf. Polaski, *Discourse of Power*, 73–103. Polaski notes that the previous power studies have oversimplified the power dynamics in Paul's situation because they draw on political and institutional models (instead of social models) to describe social power relationships. Instead, she draws on Foucault to uncover the working of power among a web of relations (36). In her interpretation of Gal 1–2, she also seeks to uncover how Paul views his power relations with others and how he negotiates and handle conflict, with the goal of discourse analysis rather than historical reconstruction (84). While developing a reading method is not Polaski's concern (13), I attempt to provide a reading method that integrates social theory and critical linguistics. An explicit method is important because it constrains interpreters' interests.

[29] Regarding assumptions about language, van Leeuwen ("Social Actors," 32–33) asserts that there is no biuniqueness between socio-semantic categories and lexicogrammar and that "meaning belongs to culture rather than to language" (33). In practice, he first creates an inventory of social practice, which includes action, actor, manner, time, place, and source, to list the most important ones. He then develops respectively how each component can be realized by discourse. For instance, an agent can be realized grammatically in the subject of a process (i.e., the verbal component of a clause), e.g., I write a letter to John, or in the modifier of a process noun, e.g., my writing. The latter is regarded as a kind of de-activation. Notably, it is not simple to decide whether a noun is a process noun or a simple entity. Thus, annotating the social meaning of discourse entails more involvement of the interpreter.

actions (meaning), namely, actions that have "material purposes or effects" and those that do not.[30] Material actions can be realized by, but are not limited to, verbs that construe material processes, and semiotic actions can be realized by, but are not limited to, verbs that construe semiotic processes.[31] Furthermore, van Leeuwen defines reactions as referring to "emotions and attitudes" associated with social actions.[32]

Three primary categories of recontextualization are possible in a discursive practice: *deletion*, *substitution*, and *addition*.[33] First, regarding deletion, van Leeuwen assumes that any representation is selective. For instance, a speaker chooses to talk about some actions and actors but not others. In other words, the decision of what to talk about and what not to talk about is itself meaningful and exclusive.[34] Second, as regards substitution, van Leeuwen notes that discourses use various strategies to transform actual elements of social actions and actors into elements of discourse. In my analysis of material and semiotic actions, I analyze three types of substitution: *agentialization*, *transaction*, and *activation*. For semiotic actions, I then analyze one additional type of substitution: *projection* (i.e., the meaning or content of the semiotic actions). Third, regarding addition, discourse can supplement what is absent in a real event—e.g., social actors' reactions or commentaries, which can reveal purposes or attempt to legitimize social practices. In what follows, I will elaborate on each of these analyses in turn.[35]

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[30] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 89.

[31] According to van Leeuwen ("Representing Social Action," 93), for example, de-activated social actions can be realized by "nominalizations or process nouns."

[32] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 85.

[33] van Leeuwen, "Recontextualization of Social Practice," 143–44.

[34] Deletion should be taken with caution in biblical studies. Whereas attending to exclusion is one of the main techniques of CDA (e.g., van Leeuwen, "Social Actors," 38), an argument from silence is usually not taken positively in biblical studies.

[35] Admittedly, since I am dealing with ancient texts and a dead language, decisions about social meanings are made according to a combination of several factors, e.g., lexical meaning, use in context, and my understanding (or imagination) of the social actions in light of my understanding of the culture, to list a

Deletion

Regarding deletion, critical linguists can only imagine who and what are *not* represented by studying first who and what *are* represented. Here I will introduce two sets of socio-semantic categories by which social actors are referred. My first set of categories concerns those associated with material actions: agent, patient, and receiver.

An *agent* refers to the social actor who causes or performs an action that impacts others.[36] Grammatically, different wordings can be used to realize agents in discourse. For instance, an agent can be realized by the explicit or implied first participant (i.e., subject) of an active process, by a genitive qualification, or by an adjunct introduced by the preposition *by* in a mediopassive process. Regarding the second category *patient*, I use it to mean the social actor directly impacted by an action. As in the case of agents, patients can be realized grammatically in several ways. For instance, a patient can be realized by the second participant (i.e., direct object) of an active process, by the first participant (i.e., subject) of a mediopassive process, or by a genitive qualification. Lastly, a *receiver* refers to the social actor who is indirectly impacted by an action. She or he can be realized by the third participant (i.e., indirect object) of a process, by one of the second participants

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few. It follows that others might disagree with my interpretations, but my framework has in its favour that I must explicitly relate the data that informs my interpretation to an explicit model of discursive power. Moreover, this representation analysis is built on Halliday's transitivity analysis. For the application of SFL transitivity analysis in Greek discourse analysis, see Westfall, "αὐθεντέω," 138–73 and Cen, "What the Church Should Do," 233–50.

[36] Cf. Wartenberg (*Forms of Power*, 76). He notes that "the term 'agent' makes a specific characterization of the sort of entity that is capable of having power in society. To speak of an agent is to speak of a being that is able to act, not simply to behave." It is worth noting that the definition that considers effect is in the strictest sense of social agency. According to this definition, a behaviour is not a social agent. However, when the term agent appears in my discussion about semiotic actions, it is used loosely as interchangeable with the term speaker since it is more challenging to consider the impact of semiotic actions.

in ditransitive constructions (i.e., double object), or by an adjunct introduced by the preposition *to*.

A second set of categories concerns the social actors pertinent to semiotic actions: speaker and recipient. First, a *speaker* refers to the social actor that performs semiotic actions. It is worth noting that the construal of a verbal process is not the only way of realizing a semiotic action, although it is the most common way in the Corinthian letters. For instance, in such case as *God reveals his knowledge to us*, the act of revealing is not explicitly construed as speaking *per se* but definitely brings something into meaning and results in knowledge, so it is interpreted as a semiotic action with God as the speaker. Second, a *recipient* refers to the social actor that receives semiotic actions. Similar to receivers discussed above, a recipient is often realized by the third participant of a verbal process, e.g., John in *Mary is giving a lecture to John*. But it can also be realized by one of second participants in ditransitive constructions, e.g., *Mary is giving John a lecture*, or the first participant of a mediopassive verbal process, e.g., *John is given a lecture*.

Substitution

Under the category of substitution, I will use three of van Leeuwen's binaries to discuss how material and semiotic actions are represented in terms of substitution: *agentialization vs. de-agentialization*, *transaction vs. non-transaction*, and *activation vs. de-activation*. In addition to these ways of substitution, semiotic actions are distinct in that they encode meanings; hence, after the discussion of these three binaries, I will also discuss *projection* of semiotic actions.

The first and most critical binary for my study is agentialization and de-agentialization. As indicated by their names, these binary categories concern

the *agency* (which term is used loosely for now) of social actions—i.e., who takes responsibility for bringing about the material action or semiotic action at stake. According to van Leeuwen, in an instance of agentialization, actions are represented as brought about through "human agency,"[37] whereas, in an instance of de-agentialization, actions are represented as being brought about through other means, such as "natural forces" or "unconscious processes."[38] In other words, de-agentialization leaves an impression that something just happens or comes into existence. Some of the relevant actions are realized in grammatically active processes with lexical meanings that have an inherently passive sense, such as "undergo," "experience," and "suffer,"[39] some are simply represented as existents, and others are linked to specific interpretation of material processes, such as discourse of "rise and fall," "birth and death," and "growth and decay."[40] These kinds of representations of actions are identified as de-agentialization because human agency is not an explicit matter of discussion.

Second, having discussed the agency, I will now discuss how the *effect* or *impact* of social actions can be represented. Van Leeuwen uses a binary opposition between transaction and non-transaction to distinguish processes that include two animate participants and processes that include only one animate participant. According to him, an agent's power is manifested in the range of the impact of her or his actions. He writes, "Clearly the ability to 'transact' requires a certain power, and the greater that power, the greater the range of 'goals' that may be affected by an actor's

[37] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 96.
[38] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 96.
[39] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 96.
[40] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 97.

actions."[41] In my study, I extend van Leeuwen's definition to include both direct and indirect impact as relevant to transaction. In other words, in my analysis, material actions that encode patients and receivers are identified as transactive, and semiotic actions that encode recipients are identified as transactive. Given that other conditions remain the same, the higher the proportion of transactive actions attributed to an agent, the more the agent is being presented as powerful.

Lastly, the third binary relevant to both material and semiotic actions is between activation and de-activation. In instances of activation, social actions are realized by verbal groups, and in instances of de-activation, actions are realized by other types of wording such as "nominalizations or process nouns."[42] According to van Leeuwen, an analysis of activation reveals whether actions are represented dynamically or statically.[43] When an action is downgraded to de-activation, priority is given to something else, e.g., legitimation or appraisal of the action.

A fourth type of substitution, projection, is relevant only to semiotic actions. Since semiotic actions encode meaning, we must understand how meaning is represented in discourse. If the meaning of a semiotic action is not specified, van Leeuwen considers it behavioural. He notes that when a semiotic action is represented as behavioural, it loses its particular potential to "remember the past" and "imagine the future."[44] By contrast, if

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[41] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 90. Cf. Clarke, *Church Leadership*, 114–18. Clarke points out the limitation of identifying and evaluating power in terms of actions and effects. Although van Leeuwen's representation theory has the primacy of actions, it does not assume that power is merely manifested or identified in actions.

[42] Van Leeuwen has a stricter definition for activation. He ("Representing Social Action," 93) writes, "When activated, the actions or reactions are grammatically realized by the verbal group of a non-embedded clause." I have simplified his analysis when it is applied to Greek discourse. I regard all actions and reactions that are realized by verbal groups as activated, and those that are realized by nominal groups as de-activated.

[43] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 93.

[44] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 91.

a semiotic action is identified as non-behavioural, we encounter an *embedded* representation of meaning. In order of increasing complexity, non-behavioural semiotic actions can be classified into four types depending on what exactly they represent with regard to the projected meaning: its presentation mode, its topic, a loose rendition of its content, or a quotation of its wording.

The meaning projected by a semiotic action can be represented in an abbreviated form, either specifying the "nature of the signifier (*form specification*)" or the nature "of the signified (*topic specification*)."[45] For instance, *speaking in tongues* presents an action that is form-specified, whereas *talking about spiritual gifts* presents an action that is topic-specified. Compared with these first two types, a *rendition* is a more complicated way of representing meanings and is usually realized by reported speech and, sometimes, by non-finite clauses that indicate projected meanings. The last and most effective type of representation employs a quotation. According to van Leeuwen, lower-status or less powerful social actors are more often represented as behavioural, if their voices are represented at all;[46] by contrast, the more authoritative the voices, the more likely their speech content is quoted. This analysis of meaning of semiotic actions is particularly useful in the analysis regarding power via words, which will be discussed later.

Addition

Up to this point, I have discussed two categories regarding representation of actions, namely, deletion and substitution, now I turn to the last type of representation, addition. Here I will define two types of addition: reaction and legitimation. First, regarding

[45] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 91.
[46] van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 92.

reaction, van Leeuwen uses three categories: cognition, emotion, and perception. Each of these three can be realized by verbs that construe related mental processes (i.e., cognitive, emotive, and perceptive). However, van Leeuwen notes that many other wordings can also realize reactions; take for instance, *I am afraid of failure*, *my joy is great*, *I write with much sorrow*, *I have worries*, *I write with tears in my eyes*, and so on. According to van Leeuwen, people in powerful positions are more often represented as rational, but the construal of emotive reactions tends to increase as an agent's power decreases.[47]

Second, regarding legitimation,[48] van Leeuwen has these two questions in mind: "Why should we do this?" and "Why should we do this in this way?"[49] When classifying legitimation strategies, he uses this taxonomy: authorization, moralization, rationalization, and mythopoesis.[50] First, authorization includes strategies such as referring to authority (personal or impersonal), custom, and commendation (e.g., role model). In Pauline discourse, authorization is identified as a popular legitimation strategy, such as referring to personal authority like God or Paul and alluding to impersonal authority like Scripture and tradition. Second, moralization includes strategies such as moral evaluation and comparison of positive and negative analogies. Van Leeuwen rightly notes that finding "an explicit, linguistically motivated method" is

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[47] For discussion on reactions, see van Leeuwen, "Representing Social Action," 85–88. Van Leeuwen's conclusion could be biased and caused by the influence of rationalism.

[48] van Leeuwen, "Legitimation," 91–112. It is worth noting that legitimation strategies might occur in combination or in separation and might be used to legitimate or de-legitimate actions. Besides, the analysis of legitimation requires a higher degree of interpretation because it not only has no direct link with any particular grammatical unit but also is not limited to the sentence level.

[49] van Leeuwen, "Legitimation," 93.

[50] van Leeuwen, "Legitimation," 91. He writes, "Four key categories of legitimation are distinguished: 1) 'authorization', legitimation by reference to the authority of tradition, custom and law, and persons in whom institutional authority is vested; 2) 'moral evaluation', legitimation by reference to discourses of value; 3) rationalization, legitimation by reference to the goals and uses of institutionalized social action, and to the social knowledges that endow them with cognitive validity; and 4) mythopoesis, legitimation conveyed through narratives whose outcomes reward legitimate actions and punish non-legitimate actions."

impossible in identifying moral evaluation because it requires "common-sense cultural knowledge."[51] In my study of an ancient text, I look for words implying appraisal for hints, e.g., good and evil, shame and honour, worthy or unworthy, or more subtly, natural and unnatural, normal and abnormal, and so on. Third, rationalization includes strategies such as reasoning and elaborating on purpose. Van Leeuwen notes that moralization and rationalization are mutually informed.[52] In short, rationalization is meant to provide a piece of knowledge as a theoretical base. Fourth, mythopoesis is legitimation given through storytelling, including such forms of tales, parables, and symbolization. When studying the Corinthian letters, I add one category to legitimation: relationship. As indicated by the name, it is legitimation given by reference to relationship or to memories of once-close relationship between relevant social actors.

Compared with van Leeuwen's legitimation analysis, my concern in legitimation analysis remains narrow—namely, how Paul's *instructions* are legitimated (or justified). Polaski points out two concerns in previous Pauline power studies: (1) to demonstrate that "Paul claims authority," and (2) to understand "the basis of that authority."[53] The appropriation of van Leeuwen's approach provides a way to look into the linguistic evidence and answer Polaski's second inquiry. Admittedly, Paul's representation of social practices and his interpretation (i.e., legitimation) of his own discursive practices are mutually informed. Both parts can reveal the general ideologies of Paul's age as well as his own personal interests. Regardless of how one evaluates Paul's interests or

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[51] van Leeuwen, "Legitimation," 98. He further writes, "The usefulness of linguistic discourse analysis stops at this point. Historical discourse research has to take over. Only the social and cultural historian can explain the moral status of these expressions, by tracing them back to the moral discourses that underlie them, and by undoing the 'genesis amnesia' (Bourdieu) that allows us to treat such moral evaluations as commonsense values."

[52] van Leeuwen, "Legitimation," 101.

[53] Polaski, *Discourse of Power*, 14.

ideologies (or theology), we can find ways to analyze his legitimation from a relatively neutral perspective. Without assessing whether or not Paul is a dominator, the extent to which he offers explicit legitimations indicates more or less his *awareness* of his authority as well as an *effort* to negotiate (or communicate). The absence of legitimations is also meaningful. On the one hand, the more that a discourse gives instructions without any legitimation, the more authoritarian the discourse will appear to be. On the other hand, instructions accompanied by legitimation explicitly open up the possibility that they may be judged either moral or immoral. So, legitimation is a strategy that can be used to influence one's audience, but it does not in itself reveal whether a person's use of power is domination or empowerment.

Quantifying Representations: Modeling Power in Words

Having introduced van Leeuwen's categories of representation—namely, deletion, substitution, and addition—I will now discuss how I quantify the patterns derived from analyzing Paul's representations of social actions (including material and semiotic actions) and reactions and how in turn these patterns inform my interpretation of power relationships. First of all, I must define what I mean by a *power action*. Since my study concerns actions that impact social actors, I define power actions *as agentialized*, *transactive*, *and activated material actions*. In a strict sense, therefore, I define social agents as social actors that actively impact others. It is worth stressing again that when performing my analyses, I am examining Paul's representations rather than offering a (critical) analysis of first-century social dynamics, although interpreting Paul's representation of power structure and interpreting his social context are inseparable if our objective is to understand him. But since my goal is not to use Paul's discourse as a

window to investigate the past, the measure in question at this point is a measure of how power relationships are represented in Paul's discourse.

On this note, I use a combination of three indicators to model social power, each of which applies to each of these three categories: material actions, semiotic actions, and reactions. The first indicator is called the ratio of impact (RI). RI is defined by the equation RI=A/P (P≠0), in which A is the sum of the instances of a social actor playing the role of the *agent* in power actions and P is the sum of the instances of that social actor playing the role of *patient* or *receiver*. When other factors remain the same, the higher one's RI, the more powerful she or he is represented to be. This inference is based on my assumption that whoever is represented more often as an agent and less often as a patient in power actions is depicted as having more power to act.

A second indicator is called the ratio of speech (RS). RS is defined by the equation RS=S/R (R≠0), in which S is the sum of the instances of a social actor playing the role of *speaker* in non-behavioural semiotic actions (i.e., those that encode meanings) and R is the sum of the instances of that same social actor playing the role of *recipient* of non-behavioural semiotic actions.[54] When other factors remain the same, the *higher* one's RS, the more powerful she or he is represented to be. This inference is based on my assumption that whoever is represented more often as a speaker (whose meaning is recorded) and less as a receiver is depicted as more powerful in a conversation.

My last indicator is called the ratio of reaction (RR). RR is defined by the equation RR=R/(S+A) ([S+A]≠0), in which R is the sum of the instances of a social actor

[54] As indicated above, lower-status or less powerful social actors are more often represented as behavioural with the implication that their content is not significant enough to be encoded. So, it would be only logical to count the non-behavioural semiotic actions here.

reacting (thinking, feeling, and sensing) and S+A is the sum of the instances of that same social actor playing the role of *speaker* of semiotic actions and the instances of she or he playing the role of *agent* of material actions. When other factors remain the same, the *lower* one's RR, the more powerful one is represented to be. This inference is based on yet another assumption: the more powerful a person, the less need she or he usually has to legitimate their actions and encode their own reactions (as indicated above).

Analysis of Power via Words

All the techniques introduced above tackle the field of a discourse, which involves structures *in* the discourse at stake. In uncovering genre, the structure *of* a discourse, van Leeuwen uses primarily the technique of "sequencing speech acts," as mentioned above. In order to simplify my study, I have not used his taxonomy of speech acts but instead a simpler method informed by Christopher Land. Applying SFL to study koine Greek discourse, Land notes that every sentence of a discourse enacts a social action, such as making statements, asking questions, and giving instructions.[55] In my study, I define

[55] I am indebted to Christopher Land, Associate Professor of New Testament and Linguistics at McMaster Divinity College, for sharing with me the draft of his forthcoming book, *How Sentences Mean*, although I must stress that my definition and analysis of direct and indirect moves do not completely follow his. In the discussion concerning speech acts (whatever I am citing here could be revisited and revised in his new book), he states, "Most moves relate *directly* to the social behaviour that is being enacted by a discourse, so I will call them **direct moves**. These wordings construe some kind of experience and then frame it using interpersonal meanings (esp. mood) so as to signal a discourse move. These types of moves *make statements*, *ask questions*, *give instructions*, etc. They represent the vast majority of sentences in the Greek New Testament. Other moves relate less directly to whatever social behaviour is being enacted, so I will call them **indirect moves**. In other models, indirect moves are often called 'indirect speech acts' or 'grammatical metaphors.' These moves still construe experiential meanings, and they still frame those meanings so as to signal a discourse move. The difference is that indirect moves do not employ the normal interpersonal resources of the clause in order to signal what type of move is being made (e.g., mood choices); rather, they place the main experiential meanings in an embedded clause and then employ lexical and syntactic resources in order to interpersonally frame them. This allows authors to be much more explicit about what they are doing even while they are doing it, using resources that are much more precise than the very indelicate mood system. It also allows speakers to state the immediate relevance of the experiential meanings they are making" (emphasis original). Cf. Searle, "Indirect Speech Acts," 30–57; Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 45–85.

moves at the sentence level and *primarily* according to formal features; thus, the default and most basic types of statements, questions, and instructions correspond to declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences.[56] In order to simplify the task of identifying grammatical (rather than orthographic) sentences, I have relied on Bible software such as Accordance and OpenText 2.0 for sentence demarcation.[57] In what follows, I will elaborate on, first, how to identify the moves enacted by these sentences (Table 3.1) and, second, how to quantify them.

	Statement	Question	Instruction
Direct	The weather is good.	How is the weather?	Go out.
Indirect	I say that the weather is good	Don't you know that the weather is good?	I urge/want you to go out.

Table 3.1 Examples of a Simple Move System[58]

Identifying Moves: Direct or Indirect, *Giving or Demanding*

The grammatical difference between direct and indirect moves is that in an indirect move, the content is downranked and wrapped into an embedded clause, as defined in my study. In general, one of the effects of indirect moves is that a buffer zone is placed between a discourse and whatever effect its power via words is meant to produce. In what follows, I will illustrate direct and indirect moves for each of the three types.

[56] The definition of these functions—namely, making statement, asking question, and giving instruction—is not strictly related to formal features. In addition, the corresponding relationship between statements, questions, and instructions and declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences are neither biunique nor neatly defined. For instance, whereas *I want to understand you* is a declarative sentence and makes a statement, *I want you to open the door* is a declarative sentence but gives instruction.

[57] I am also indebted to Land for sharing with me his new annotations for OpenText.org 2.0.

[58] The gray cells are "giving" moves and the white cells are "demanding" moves.

First, both direct and indirect statements *give* information.[59] Direct statements are easy to identify, but indirect statements can be realized in a variety of forms, as illustrated below:

(1) The weather is good. (direct statement)
(2) I say that the weather is good. (indirect statement)
(3) You know that the weather is good. (indirect statement)
(4) It is reported that the weather is good. (indirect statement)

All these statements give information about the weather, i.e., it is good. While this information is given directly in the direct move (1), it is downranked into a participant (either an object or a subject complement) by being wrapped in an embedded clause in (2–4). In the second example, both the speaker's subjectivity and what her or his discourse is doing with the information are encoded explicitly. Similarly, in the third example, both the recipient's subjectivity and what she or he is supposed to do with the information are encoded explicitly. While the subjectivity in the last example is hidden, how the information is received is encoded explicitly, which provides a way to imply how the information is received on the speaker's side. In short, indirect statements add information about the act of informing and at the same time place a *distance* between the actual informing and the recipient. When studied in context, statements do all kinds of things besides making propositions, such as commenting, reporting, narrating, and so on.

Second, while all statements are defined as "giving" moves, questions are divided—namely, direct questions *demand* information, whereas indirect questions *give* information.[60]

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[59] Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 79–80; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Halliday's Introduction*, 134–38.

[60] Cf. Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 79–80; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Halliday's Introduction*, 134–38. This is the primary difference between my scheme and the SFL scheme of interpersonal meaning regarding "giving" and "demanding." Halliday and Matthiessen (*Halliday's*

(5) How is the weather? (direct question)
(6) Don't you know that the weather is good? (indirect question)

Embedded in a letter, which is a one-sided conversation, both kinds of questions can cause the effect of what Wartenberg talks about in his discussion on "elenchic interrogation," an effect that moves the audience to acknowledge their ignorance or neglect of important knowledge or action.[61] Only context can decide what kind of concrete effect a question might produce.

Third, both direct and indirect instructions *demand* goods and services.[62] A direct instruction is usually realized by second-person or third-person imperatives or by first-person subjunctives.[63] Although Stanley Porter points out that "the third person Greek imperative is as strongly directive as the second person,"[64] the third-person imperative often implies a generalized individual or a group of generalized individuals, which puts some distance between the instructions and those to whom the instructions are directed. This distance often has the effect of reducing the tension in a negotiation. Take 1 Cor 7,

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Introduction, 134–38) define "questions" as "demanding information," without differentiating direct and indirect questions. But they do not differentiate direct and indirect moves in general.

[61] Wartenberg (*Forms of Power*, 204–9) argues that Socrates' appropriation of elenchic interrogation is an example of empowerment (204). Wartenberg points out, "The aim of an elenchic interrogation is primarily negative in that it seeks to show that a certain claim to knowledge cannot be sustained in the face of persistent questions" (204). To Socrates, as Wartenberg indicates, the creation of self-awareness of ignorance is the first step of an extensive process of personal growth. Since no real growth can be forced, one's willingness to change from habitual thinking and living to embrace something new is the beginning of that personal transformation.

[62] Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 79–80; Halliday and Matthiessen, *Halliday's Introduction*, 134–38. Instruction, though not ideal, is used as a generic term to include more forceful/direct functions such as commands and prohibitions and less forceful/direct functions such as suggestions and advice.

[63] For discussion on non-indicative Greek mood forms, see Porter, *Idioms*, 52–61. Sometimes in Greek, an auxiliary word instead of mood inflection is used to indicate modality, e.g., ὀφείλει and δεῖ. Decisions about whether these are instruction-giving or statement-making only to explain the necessity of an action should be made in context. Cf. Searle, "Indirect Speech Acts," 30–57. Searle does not see "ought" as having an imperative meaning, but treats it as "Can you reach the salt?" (32). To simplify my analysis, I still group them under the category of direct Moves. In addition, independent participles and infinitives can, albeit rare, sometimes function like imperatives (as "commanding use"), see Porter, *Idioms*, 185–86, 201–2.

[64] Porter, *Idioms*, 55.

for instance, where third-person imperatives are repeatedly used to give instructions along with a conditional clause, a practice that is interpreted as contextualizing and generalizing the instructions. As regards first-person conjunctives, the use of "we" in the "plural hortatory subjective"[65] conveys a sense of common ground. So, compared with second-person imperatives, first-person subjective can imply the author's interest in consolidation during negotiation. Besides, the use of we-they language often creates a sense of social grouping that differentiates insiders from outsiders.[66] When a direct instruction is identified, the primary process is what the instruction seeks to produce. For instance, in the case *go out*, *go* is identified as a direct instruction to engage in material action; thus, the change type of this direct instruction is labeled as "doing." Similarly, in the case *tell me his story*, *tell* is identified as a direct instruction to engage in semiotic action; thus, the change type of this direct instruction is labeled as "speaking." And, in the case *know that God loves you*, *know* is identified as a direct instruction to engage in cognitive reaction; thus, the change type of this direct instruction is labeled as "thinking." In the case *rejoice*, *rejoice* is identified as a direct instruction to engage in emotive reaction; thus, the change type of this instruction is labeled as "feeling." Lastly, in the case *become my imitators*, *becoming* is identified as a direct instruction to engage in identity formation; thus, the change type of this direct instruction is labeled as "becoming." In summary, identifying the process type used in instructions determines its change type.

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[65] Porter, *Idioms*, 58.

[66] Machin and Mayr (*Critical Discourse Analysis*, 84–85) note that the use of "we" and "they" can create social alignment along or against a particular group. Similarly, van Leeuwen ("Social Actors," 50) sees the use of "we" as a strategy of assimilation, namely, collectivization.

As regards indirect instructions, I identify two types: directive (e.g., *I urge you to know that the weather is good*) and desiderative (e.g., *I want you to know that the weather is good*).[67] The latter typically uses an emotive process to convey an instruction. These indirect moves allow the speakers to specify what they are *doing* or *desiring* to do with their language, in addition to what their instruction is. In general, desiderative instructions are realized by verbs that construe mental processes, and the use of them conveys less force and sounds more personal and relational; in other words, desiderative instructions are more indirect compared with directive instructions. In terms of identifying the change type related to an indirect instruction, I study the second participant, which is often realized in embedded finite clauses or infinitives or participles. For instance, in the case *I urge you to go out*, *go* indicates that this indirect instruction pertains to the audience's material action of doing. Similarly, in the case *I urge you to tell me his story*, *tell* indicates that this indirect instruction pertains to the audience's semiotic action of speaking. And, in the case *I urge you to know*, *know* indicates that this indirect instruction pertains to the audience's cognitive reaction of thinking. In the case *I urge you to rejoice*, *rejoice* indicates that this indirect instruction pertains to the audience's emotive reaction of feeling. Lastly, in the case *I urge you to become my imitators*, *become* indicates that this indirect instruction pertains to the audience's identity formation of becoming. This identification of change types in directive instructions is also applied to the analysis of desiderative instructions. In summary, the second participant of an indirect instruction (i.e., the object clause or infinitive of the directive or desiderative) denotes its change type.

[67] By directive, I mean social actions such as ordering, commanding, requesting, instructing, and forbidding, and others. By desiderative, I mean reactions such as thinking, desiring, seeking, and wanting.

Quantifying Moves: Modeling Power via Words

I use two indicators to model the patterns of moves in discourse: ratio of directness (RD) and ratio of interactiveness (RI). First, the ratio of directness is used to quantify the ratio of direct moves to indirect moves. It is calculated by the formula RD=DM/IM (IM≠0), in which DM refers to the total number of *direct moves*, and IM refers to the total number of *indirect moves*.[68] The distribution of RD will be graphed, and its trendline will inform us of any trends in (in)directness from the beginning of each discourse to its end. The second indicator I use to model the pattern of moves is the ratio of interactiveness, which is used to quantify the ratio of moves that *give information or goods and services to the audience* to moves that *demand information or goods and services from the audience*. To repeat, statements and indirect questions are defined as "giving" moves, and instructions and direct questions are defined as "demanding" moves. This ratio is an indicator of whether a discourse sounds more interactive or more monological. The ratio of interactiveness (RI) is calculated by the formula: RI= "Demanding" Moves/ "Giving" Moves.[69] Like RD, the distribution of RI will be graphed, and its trendline will inform us of any trends in interactiveness from the beginning of each discourse to its end.

Conclusion

To summarize, my analysis integrates the theories of two scholars, Wartenberg and van Leeuwen, into a socio-linguistic model relevant to Pauline studies, with the purpose of

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[68] The formula has three exceptions. First, if IM=0 and DM≠0, RD=DM; second, if DM=0 and IM≠0, RD=-IM; third, if DM=IM=0, RD=0. Therefore, if RD is below zero, the discourse at stake entails only indirect moves, which is a least direct case.

[69] The formula has three exceptions as discussed above regarding the ratio of directness. First, if "Giving" Moves=0 and "Demanding" Moves≠0, RI="Demanding" Moves; second, if "Demanding" Moves=0 and "Giving" Moves≠0, RI=-"Giving" Moves; third, if "Giving" Moves="Demanding" Moves=0, RI=0. Therefore, if RI is below zero, the discourse at stake entails only "Giving" Moves.

analyzing (not yet evaluating) Paul's use of power. Wartenberg's field theory is drawn on for conceptualizing social power, and van Leeuwen's critical socio-linguistic approach serves as a bridge between social power theories and textual analysis.

My analytical approach includes two tasks, namely, an analysis of power in words and an analysis of power via words. The first task seeks to reconstruct the web of dynamic power relationships represented in Paul's discourse, and the second task seeks to reconstruct how his discourse negotiates with its audience and seeks to induce change. From a critical perspective, representation is also a kind of negotiation, one that projects a new vision of power structures. Reversely, negotiation is also a kind of representation, one that represents the speaker's own discursive practice. In reality, these two parts are inseparable and mutually informed. But for the purpose of a clearer presentation, I separate them in my work. This critical discourse analysis—which combines power in words and power via words—forms the basis of my subsequent task, which is to *critically evaluate* Paul's use of power according to Wartenberg's definitions of empowerment and domination.

Procedure

My procedure will unfold in five stages: (1) text annotation (charting in Excel), (2) coding (calculation in Excel), (3) power dynamics analysis, (4) power negotiation analysis, and (5) evaluation of Paul's use of power and theological reflection.

Annotating the Texts

During the annotation stage, I identify and analyze all social actions and reactions and their related social actors according to the analyses spelled out above. This includes (1)

identifying and labeling the agents, patients, and receivers of material actions and the speakers and recipients of semiotic actions, (2) identifying and labeling agentialization, transaction, and activation for both material and semiotic actions, as well as projection types for semiotic actions, and (3) identifying and labeling reactions and the actors to whom they belong.

Calculating the General Patterns

Since my data is charted in an Excel spreadsheet, calculations are programed, tabled, and graphed in the same workbook. These tables and graphs provide information of general patterns that serve as references for the next step.

Analyzing Paul's Representation of the Power Dynamics: Power in Words

For my power dynamics analysis, I investigate power actions, non-behavioural semiotic actions, and reactions to interpret Paul's understanding of power dynamics among the social agents represented in the text. My procedure can be broken down into three steps. First, I analyze and synthesize my descriptions of the individual identities and interpersonal relationships of the social actors. Second, I analyze the representation of primary agents' social actions (including power actions and non-behavioural semiotic actions), giving attention to the manner and motives associated with these actions, the changes the actions seek to produce, and Paul's appraisal of these actions. Third, I analyze the patterns of these primary agents' reactions, including cognitive, emotive, and perceptive reactions, giving attention to whether a social actor is represented as a rational thinker, an emotional reactor, neither, or both.

Analyzing Paul's Power Negotiations: Power via Words

At the stage of negotiation analysis, I investigate instructions to understand what Paul seeks to move his audience to do and how he legitimates his instructions. Specifically, two steps are involved. First, I identify the change types of Paul's instructions. Then, by grouping them according to their change types, I synthesize the major areas in which Paul seeks to influence the Corinthians. Second, I identify and summarize the strategies that Paul uses to explain and justify his instructions, by analyzing any legitimations associated with them.

Evaluating Paul's Use of Power and Moving toward an Ethic of Empowerment

At the last stage of my work, I undertake two tasks. One is more deconstructive, the other more constructive. First, I critically evaluate Paul's use of power by using the results derived from the previous analyses. Without assuming a hermeneutic of suspicion, I seek to understand and evaluate Paul's use of power first in his own narrative world by taking into consideration his "situatedness,"[70] his relationship and tension with the Corinthians, his careful navigation between Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures, and his personal struggles as a missionary and leader, to list a few. At the same time, since I assume a hermeneutic of diversity, I entertain alternative interpretations by engaging in dialogue with (post-)critical scholars. Following my critical evaluation, I move on to theological reflection and to an ethic of power. In what follows, I will present my analysis of Paul's power in words and power via words, respectively.

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[70] Here I am using this term in Heidegger's sense. Heidegger (*Being and Time*) points out one's present understanding is influenced by her or his traditions and future, which is understood as one's "situatedness." When Heidegger talks about one's future, however, he refers to one's destiny of *death*. Here, in terms of the influence of future, I think Paul is rather influenced by his conviction of the resurrection of believers and his anticipation of the end time.

CHAPTER 4: POWER IN WORDS: REPRESENTATION OF POWER RELATIONSHIPS

This chapter concerns how Paul represents power relationships in his discourse. From a critical perspective, even if I could do everything accurately and objectively, I can only obtain Paul's view of power relationships, which is, at best, his interpretation of part of his social context and, at worst, a construction of reality produced for selfish or manipulative purposes. For this reason, I, informed by van Leeuwen, call the social practices identified in 1 and 2 Corinthians Paul's *representations* of social practices. As indicated in my methodology section, we can appropriate CDA's reading techniques without uncritically agreeing with its notion of power or its ideological assumptions and interests. As an interpreter, however, I can never eliminate the possibility that a particular vision of social power structures is indeed part of Paul's manipulation. Therefore, it is inevitable that those who agree with Paul's idea of power relationships are more willing to accept Paul's negotiation and that those who disagree with his vision are more ready to reject Paul's voice altogether. That being the case, I suggest we practise *listening* when approaching Paul, the "author-other," before we make up our mind to adopt his vision or reject his voice. We should also consider the power relationships embedded *in* his words when trying to understand or evaluate the power he enacts *via* his words, since it is likely (though not certain) that he construes power structures in accordance with the interpretation of them that undergirds his own enactment of power.

Preamble

Mainly, I will discuss in this chapter the representations of actions and reactions embedded in 1 and 2 Corinthians and seek to reconstruct the power relationships construed in Paul's discourse. I hypothesize that this reconstructed web of power relationships implies the "action environment"[1] in which Paul attempts to negotiate with the Corinthians in order to change their thoughts and practices.

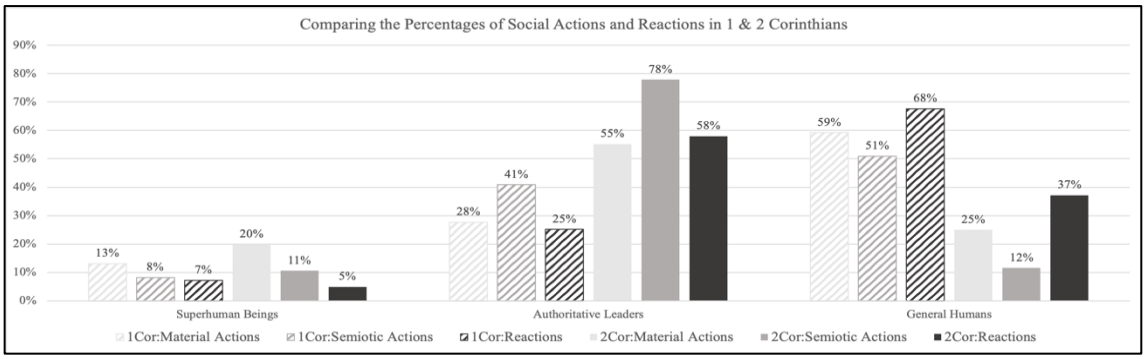

Figure 4.1 General Patterns of Agents in 1 & 2 Corinthians I[2]

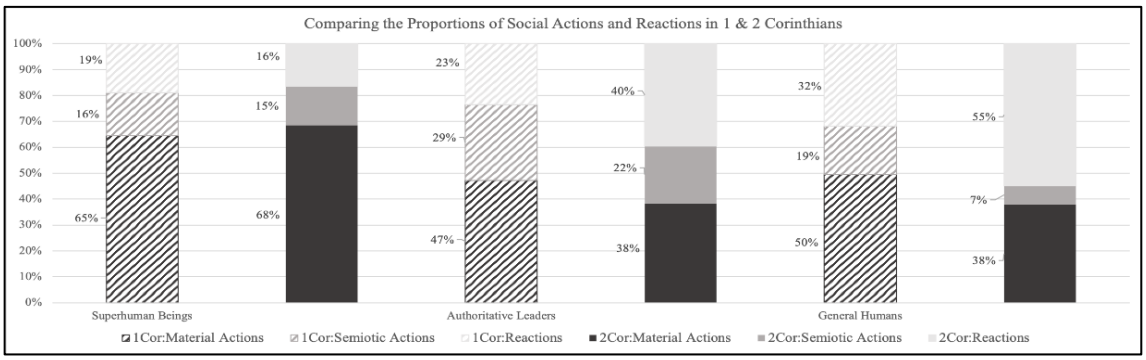

Figure 4.2 General Patterns of Agents in 1 & 2 Corinthians II[3]

[1] Wartenberg (*Forms of Power*, 163) writes, "My own use of the concept of an agent's action-environment in the definition of power attempted to demonstrate that power is located within the sphere of intentional concepts in that the possible targets of a power relationship between two agents include an agent's understanding of her situation."

[2] Here is a guide on how to interpret this chart. The number 13 percent above the first column means that within 1 Corinthians the superhuman beings are identified as the agent of 13 percent of agentialized material actions (i.e., actions represented as brought about by human agency).

[3] Here is a guide on how to interpret this chart. The numbers beside the first column mean that among the superhuman beings' representations (as the agent) within 1 Corinthians, 69 percent are material actions, 16 percent are semiotic actions, and 19 percent are reactions.

Here I use Figures 4.1 and 4.2 to illustrate some general patterns of representation when 1 and 2 Corinthians are compared. Figure 4.1 graphs the percentage of actions or reactions for each agent type, relative to the sum of the actions or reactions found in the discourse. Figure 4.2 shows the percentage of actions or reactions for each agent type, relative to the amount of all actions and reactions associated with the same agent type in the discourse. As indicated in my methodology, actions are classified into material actions (doing) and semiotic actions (meaning), and reactions are classified into cognitive (thinking), emotive (feeling), and perceptive (sensing). As regards the categories for social actors, I use this taxonomy: superhuman beings,[4] authoritative leaders,[5] and general humans.[6]

According to Figure 4.1, in 1 Corinthians, superhuman beings have the smallest percentage of actions or reactions, and general humans have the largest percentage. This pattern changes in 2 Corinthians, as the percentage of actions or reactions for authoritative leaders significantly goes up, whereas the percentage for general humans goes down substantially. The most striking change to notice is the increase of the

[4] The superhuman beings in the Corinthian letters include the triune God (God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) and evil spiritual powers, e.g., Satan.

[5] The authoritative leaders in the Corinthian letters include God's workers in general, the Pauline ministers (identified as an "exclusive we" [the use of first-person plural pronouns that excludes the Corinthians, as interpreted in context]), Paul, and the critics. The category of "critics" is a fuzzy and even controversial one. I use it for political authorities and intellectual elites in 1 Corinthians, as well as the so-called false apostles in 2 Corinthians. This label is not ideal because Paul rarely names or identifies these actors but rather generally describes them when representing them in his discourse. The use of descriptive language as a representation strategy for the so-called critics makes it almost impossible for us, who lack shared knowledge, to identify them, because it is an interpretive decision whether "they" were real or hypothesized opponents. Since the critics in 2 Corinthians appear in Paul's representation when he defends his leadership, I suggest we place them in the category of authoritative leaders for the sake of discussion, regardless of whether their influence is legitimate or not from Paul's perspective. By doing so, I can postpone adopting Paul's judgement in my work and give space to others who disagree with Paul's perspective.

[6] The general humans in the Corinthian letters include universal humans, believers in general, and the Corinthians, as well as Paul and the Corinthians together (identified as an "inclusive we" [the use of first-person plural pronouns that include the Corinthians, as interpreted in context]).

authoritative leaders' semiotic actions in 2 Corinthians. These increases imply that in 2 Corinthians, Paul not only talks most about the authoritative leaders' actions and reactions but also represents the authoritative leaders as most *talkative*. Although the authoritative leaders' overall representations of social actions increase along with their global representations of reactions, their ratio of social actions to reactions goes down significantly, as illustrated by Figure 4.2. This drop means that authoritative leaders are represented as more *reactive* in 2 Corinthians than in 1 Corinthians. Also, in 1 Corinthians, authoritative leaders are represented as more active than reactive. But in 2 Corinthians, they change to be slightly more reactive than active. Furthermore, the general humans' ratio of social actions to reactions goes down even more significantly. In other words, humans in general are also represented as more *reactive* in 2 Corinthians than in 1 Corinthians. I will elaborate on these observations later. Before further elaboration, it is also useful to discuss respectively the general patterns of three indicators of power: the ratio of impact, the ratio of speech, and the ratio of reaction.

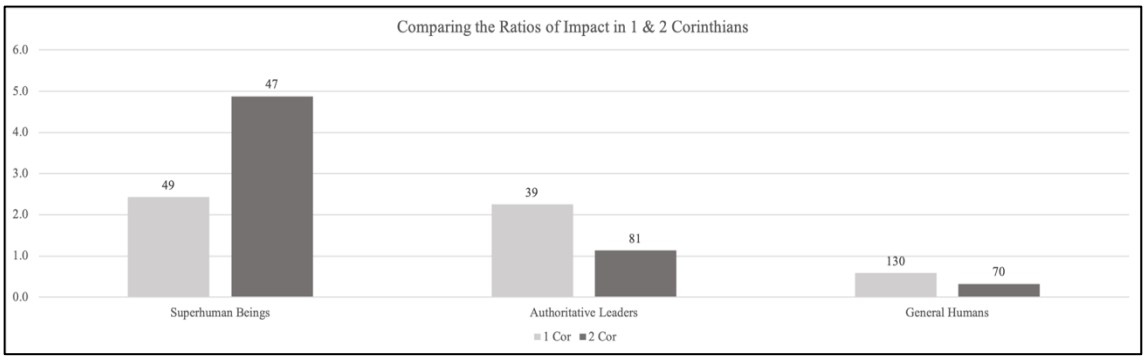

Figure 4.3 Power to Act in 1 & 2 Corinthians[7]

First, as indicated in Figure 4.3, in both letters, superhuman beings are represented as the most powerful agents concerning material actions, and general humans

[7] As defined in Chapter 3 ("Methodology"), a *power action* is defined as an agentialized, transactive, and activated material action. To repeat, agentialization means that an action is brought about

remain the least powerful agents. Also, human agents' power to act decreases in 2 Corinthians. Whereas the ratios of impact for the superhuman beings and the authoritative leaders are comparable in 1 Corinthians, the difference between them becomes more outstanding in 2 Corinthians. The contrast between the superhuman beings and the authoritative leaders in 2 Corinthians makes the authoritative leaders look increasingly powerless, even though they are still more powerful than the general humans.

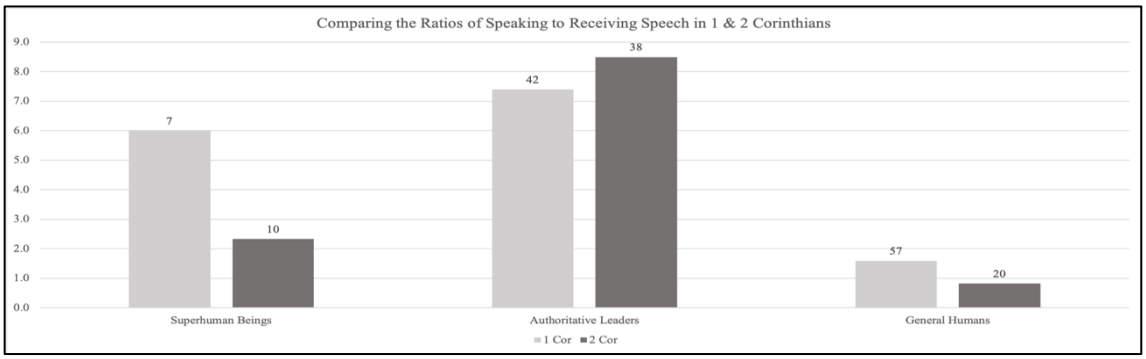

Figure 4.4 Power to Speak in 1 & 2 Corinthians[8]

As regards the power to speak, authoritative leaders are represented clearly as the primary voices in both letters, as illustrated in Figure 4.4. This is not surprising, granted that both books are Paul's letters written to the Corinthians. But it is worth noting that the representation of the subjectivity of semiotic actions matches the genre of the discourse,

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by human agency, transaction means that the actions are represented as impacting others, and activation means that the action in question is realized in a verbal group. With this definition of power action, the ratio of impact (RI) is defined by the equation RI=A/P, in which A is the sum of the instances of an actor as an agent of power actions and P is the sum of the instances of that actor as a patient or receiver of power actions. When other factors remain the same, the higher one's RI, the more powerful one is represented to be. The number above each bar is (A+P). Take the first number for instance, the superhuman beings in 1 Corinthians are associated with 49 instances of power actions, in 34 of which they are the agent and in 15 of which they are the patient; thus, the RI is approximately 2.3 (34/15).

[8] The ratio of speech (RS) is defined by the equation RS=S/R, in which S is the sum of the instances of an actor as an agent of non-behavioural semiotic actions and R is the sum of the instances of that actor as a receiver of non-behavioural semiotic actions. When other factors remain the same, the higher one's RS, the more powerful one is represented to be. The number above each bar is (S+R). For instance, the superhuman beings are involved in 7 semiotic actions, in 6 of which they are the speaker and in 1 of which they are the recipient; thus, the RS is approximately 6 (6/1).

which means Paul does not seek to hide his subjectivity in using power via his words. Furthermore, the ratios of speech for both superhuman beings and general humans fall in 2 Corinthians, but the authoritative leaders' ratio of speech increases in 2 Corinthians. The greater difference between the authoritative leaders and the general humans in 2 Corinthians, compared with 1 Corinthians, indicates that in 2 Corinthians, authoritative leaders are represented as more *vocal*, and general humans are represented as even more *taciturn*.

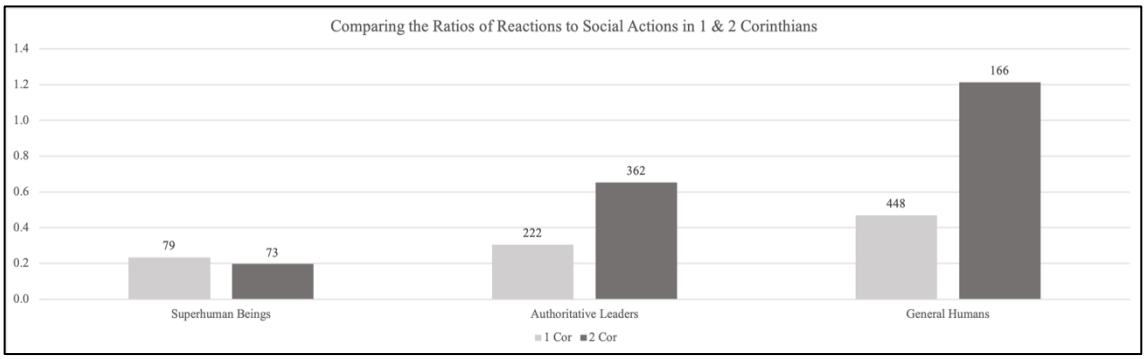

Figure 4.5 Representation of Reactions in 1 & 2 Corinthians[9]

Lastly, as regards reactions, I have observed a reverse pattern between the ratios of reactions (Figure 4.5) and the ratios of impact (Figure 4.3). The superhuman beings' ratio of reactions to social actions remains the lowest, and the general humans' ratio of reactions to social actions remains the highest. In fact, all human agents' reactions increase in 2 Corinthians, as already mentioned. Specifically, there is a rise of *emotive* reactions for all human agents (which is not indicated in any graph here), and the rise is especially significant for the general humans. The increasing representation of emotive reactions is the number-one reason that 2 Corinthians often gives its readers an

[9] The ratio of reaction (RR) is defined by the equation RR=R/(S+A), in which R is the sum of the instances of one's reactions and SA is the sum of the instances of the same agent's social actions. When other factors remain the same, the higher one's RR, the *less* powerful she or he is represented to be. The number on each bar is (R+S+A). For instance, the superhuman beings are the agent or speaker of 64 social actions and the sensor of 15 reactions; thus, the RR is approximately 0.2 (15/64).

immediate impression that it is a letter filled with emotions. This pattern indicates that superhuman beings are generally represented as the least vulnerable agents, and general humans as the most vulnerable agents.

In summary, Paul's representations of social actions and reactions indicate that superhuman beings are the most powerful agents in terms of action, even though they are not the most vocal ones. By contrast, general humans remain the least powerful in every aspect of power. The most striking and meaningful change of patterns is found in the representation of authoritative leaders. When 1 and 2 Corinthians are compared, the authoritative leaders' power to act decreases in 2 Corinthians, but their power to speak increases significantly, and at the same time, their reactions also significantly increase. I will postpone discussing the implications of this change for interpreting Paul's use of power until the end of this chapter. Now I turn to reconstructing the web of power relationships and teasing out some of its significant elements, and I will do this first for 1 Corinthians and then for 2 Corinthians.

Reconstruction of Social Power Relationships in 1 Corinthians

The power relationships embedded in 1 Corinthians are structural, situated, and dynamic. All social actors encoded in 1 Corinthians impact others and are also impacted by others, more or less, good or bad. Even the triune God, who has absolute authority and power, can be impacted by human agents. Clearly, Paul represents himself as having authority and power over the Corinthians. Still, the representation of power actions in 1 Corinthians suggests that his power over the Corinthians is not dyadic or static but rather socially situated and dynamic. He represents himself as one who plays different roles in influencing those under his care from a distance. Also, his influence on the Corinthians is

represented as subject to change. This change of influence, whether real or merely construed, becomes more evident when 1 and 2 Corinthians are compared, as mentioned above.

In what follows, I will describe the web of social power relationships as illustrated in Figure 4.6, in which the size of each bubble visualizes one's power to act and the size of each arrow line illustrates the degree of one's impact on the other to whom the line points. The reconstruction will focus on these primary agents (i.e., actors identified with a significant percentage of representation): God, the evil spiritual powers, Paul, the critics, and the Corinthians. When discussing each agent, I will follow the order of relational identity,[10] power actions, semiotic actions, and reactions.

Superhuman Beings

Regarding superhuman beings, I will first discuss the triune God, including the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, respectively, and then the evil spiritual powers. In a nutshell, all superhuman beings have control over humans; God is paradoxically represented as absolutely powerful and yet cruciform,[11] whereas the evil spiritual powers are represented as powerful and yet inferior to God.

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[10] Malina and Neyrey (*Portraits of Paul*, 154–57) note that the first-century Mediterranean was a group-oriented culture. Their work, however, like any other (including mine), is biased, owing to their assumptions (e.g., the ancient Mediterranean culture is uniform), approach (e.g., anthropological study of the "model or national personality"), and choice of primary sources (e.g., the manuals of rhetoric). Nevertheless, their anthropological research on the first-century Mediterranean culture is useful. Assuming each person is primarily a *social* being, I also stress one's relational identity, namely, who they are *in relation to* others.

[11] Gorman (*Cruciformity*, 4) is considered to be the first biblical scholar to use the term *cruciformity* in discussing Paul's spirituality in light of the cross and resurrection. He defines cruciformity as the "conformity of crucified Christ" and sees it as "the center of the theology and ethics of Paul." Later in his scholarship, Gorman (*Inhabiting the Cruciform God*, 1) extends his thesis concerning cruciformity to argue that "God is cruciform" based on his study on Phil 2:6–11.

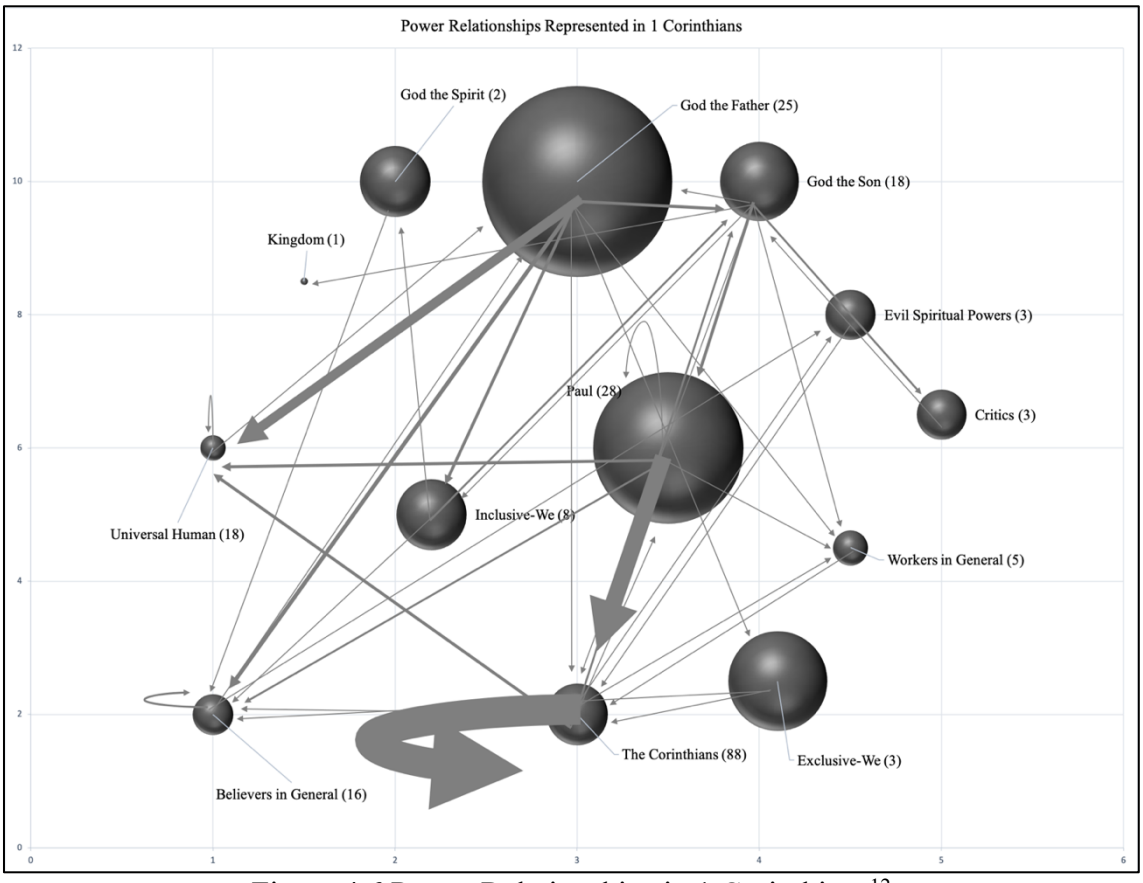

Figure 4.6 Power Relationships in 1 Corinthians[12]

God as the Absolutely Powerful and Cruciform Lord

According to Paul's representation, the triune God is the most powerful, wise, and just power agent. He has absolute power over humans and other spiritual powers from past to future.[13] First Corinthians construes all three persons of the Trinity.[14] Regarding their identities, first, God the Father is represented as faithful (1:9; 10:13), wise and strong

[12] The size of each bubble is determined by the represented agent's ratio of impact, so the higher the ratio of impact, the bigger the bubble. The size of the arrow line is determined by the number of instances of the actor's action(s) done to the other, to whom the endpoint of the arrow point. The number in the parenthesis beside each actor is all her or his associated power actions (as the agent or the patient). A curved arrow connect indicates that the agent of the power action is also its patient.

[13] Although δύναμις is used for both secular rulers and sin (15:24, 56), it collocates with God most frequently (1:18, 24; 2:4–5; 4:20; 5:4; 6:14).

[14] These descriptions include (1) relative-pronoun clauses, (2) descriptive participles and infinitives, and (3) adjectives or nominal oppositions.

(1:25), and peaceful (14:33). Paul calls him "our Father" (1:3), to whom the earth and all that dwell in it belong (10:26), and sometimes, in a more personal and intimate manner, "my Father" (1:4).[15] The Father is the head of Christ (11:3), regardless of how one would interpret κεφαλή. Second, Paul often refers to God the Son, Jesus Christ, with the honorific, the "Lord" (1:3) or "our Lord" (15:57). The Son is also referred to as the sacrificed "Passover lamb" (5:7). As the crucified Lord, Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church (3:11), the head of men (11:3), and the judge of God's workers (4:4). Lastly, the Holy Spirit is regarded as the one dwelling among God's people (3:16). In short, the Father is represented as the source and *telos* of all the living (8:6), the Son is represented as the means to the *telos* (8:6), and the Spirit is represented as the working power in humans (12:7, 11).[16]

In keeping with the identities of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the representations of their social actions and reactions further indicate that God the Father has *systemic* and *eternal* power over all creatures, and God the Son has a cruciform lordship over his believers, as construed in Paul's discourse. It is worth noting that the actions of the Son and the Spirit are particularly relevant to God's congregations and their

[15] Daly (*Beyond God the Father*, 69) argues that Christian doctrines about God and Christ, together with the Father and Son language, have created and confirmed the sexual hierarchy. Differing from such radical feminists as Daly, egalitarian feminists seek to revisit the patriarchal language using more balanced approaches. For instance, Moder ("Women," 85–103) appropriates Jürgen Moltmann's social Trinitarian theology and stresses the mutuality and equality within the Trinity. Similarly, the Denhollanders ("Justice," 1–20) suggest that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit will and act voluntarily together on the cross to condemn injustices. Regarding the language of God, Catholic feminist Johnson (*She Who Is*, 191–205) challenges the traditional description of the Trinity. Understanding that the biblical God has no inherent sexual distinction, she seeks to talk about God as Mother without attempting to argue in favor of an ontological mother God. The feminist concerns about repeating the use of patriarchal language to describe the Trinity are heard. But my goal here is to synthesize Paul's representation of God, so I will use Paul's symbols.

[16] Thiselton (*First Epistle*, 1237–38) warns us of the peril of stressing the different functions and forgetting the shared purpose and mutuality of the three persons of the Trinity.

ministry. In what follows, I will elaborate on each person's actions and reactions, giving attention to the Father because he is the most powerful agent, as illustrated in Figure 4.6.

First, God the Father is represented as the author of all living beings' life and death, including other spiritual powers. As the author of life, God gives bodily forms to each creature just as he wills (15:38), saves whoever believes (1:21), grows believers (3:6), and raises the dead (6:14; 15:15). As the author of death, God will destroy whoever destroys his congregations (3:17) and subjugate all, including secular rulers and spiritual powers, at the end (15:24–27).

As regards semiotic actions, God is represented as an authoritative voice, even though the percentage of the representation of his speech is low. In Paul's discourse, God is represented as speaking in two ways: revealing knowledge about himself via his Spirit (2:10) and speaking via Scripture (14:21). The effect of God's speaking on humans is often indicated in the use of the language of calling and invitation (1:9; 7:15, 17).

As regards reactions, God is represented as a powerful thinker. He is represented as acting not on impulse but rather willfully and wisely in creating (15:38), saving (1:21; 2:7), arranging his congregations (12:18), and enabling and instructing his workers (1:1; 12:6). This representation not only affirms God's sovereignty but also implies that humans can know God's will and that his will has a direct impact on humanity. For instance, he is pleased to save believers through the gospel (1:21) and not pleased by his people's rebellion (10:5). Moreover, he is represented as potent to control humans' understanding by knowing, rejecting, and nullifying their thought and wit (1:19–20; 3:20). In short, the Father reigns from the beginning to the end of time. It will become

more evident when the study unfolds that Paul's understanding of God has shaped his view of his own identity and ministry, especially his use of power.

Although God has absolute control over his creatures, as discussed above, he is not represented as an authoritarian or cold-hearted tyrant; instead, he is represented as a loving Father who empowers his children to participate in his work. For instance, he is represented as calling people into a fellowship with Jesus (1:9), enabling them to know him (2:9–12), and create a community for them (12:18, 24–25, 28). It is worth noting that God elects the foolish (1:27), the weak (1:27), the low (1:28), and the despised (1:28) of the world and that he gives special attention to the weaker (12:22), the less honourable (12:23), and those in want (12:24) within the community. Both God's election and arrangement of his congregation indicate his desire to empower those in less powerful and privileged positions. Paradoxically, although God has absolute authority, humans, even including his people, are able to rebel against him. He is represented as testing his people (10:13) and yet strengthening them until the end (1:8). What is even more paradoxical is that the Father invites fallible humans to participate in his work, assigning roles and tasks to human workers (12:28) and yet allowing them to suffer when carrying out his calling (4:9). All these representations of God's power imply that God's people must continue to rely on God. In summary, Paul's representation provides an image of God the Father as authoritative and powerful, yet also loving and empowering.

Second, as regards God the Son, we obtain a very different image. Jesus Christ is called the Lord, but his ratio of impact (RI=1.3) is relatively low when compared with the Father (RI=7.3) and even with human leaders such as Paul (RI=4.6) and the Pauline ministers (RI=2.0). As the Lord, the Son assigns life roles and positions to humans

(7:17), sends human workers out to preach the gospel (1:17; 3:5), and disciplines God's congregations (11:32). In the end, the Son will abolish the reign of all rulers, authorities, and powers of the world (15:24–25). Regarding semiotic actions, Paul represents the Son's voice as authoritative, by observing Jesus's traditions passed down onto him (11:24–25) and alluding to Jesus's instructions (7:25; 9:14; 11:32; 14:37) and his final judgement (4:4–5). In Paul's representation, Jesus will judge believers by illuminating even the deepest darkness of human thoughts and the hidden desires of human hearts.

However, Jesus's power is not represented as absolute. For instance, he is betrayed (11:23) and crucified (2:2, 8), though raised by God the Father from death (6:14; 15:12–17, 20). The Son will also be subjected to the Father (15:28) at the end.[17] Therefore, unlike the Father, the authority of the Son is not absolute; instead, his lordship is manifested paradoxically as cruciform.[18]

Lastly, the Spirit's role is significant because he seems to have a direct impact on believers, albeit lacking representation. The only instance of the Spirit's power action is

[17] The hierarchy implied in 1 Cor 11:3 and 15:28 is often used to support a subordinationist Christology. Thiselton (*First Epistle*, 1238) reminds us that regardless of how one interprets verses such as 15:28, she or he must remember the co-existence of the primacy of θεός as the source and goal and the mutuality that marks "God's own self-differentiation." On the other hand, Kittredge (*Community and Authority*, 5) argues that Paul's use of the obedience language, ὑπακούειν or ὑποτάσσεσθαι, indicates the influence of the predominant patriarchal ethos of Paul's age. Based on the assumption that the emerging Christ movement promotes a vision of equality and that Paul is a cultural product and thus must be limited by the symbolic universe of his age, Kittredge considers Paul's voice unauthoritative. It is valuable to bring into consideration Paul's social location. However, both assumptions are questionable. First, the historical Jesus stresses obedience as much as Paul does, although Jesus uses different linguistic signs and expressions (e.g., Matt 7:21; 28:20; Luke 9:23). Secondly, Paul cannot escape the influence of the ideology of his age, but that does not mean that Paul cannot be different at all. His letters indicate conflicting attitudes toward culture. So, Paul sometimes translates between cultures, as Ehrensperger (*Paul at the Crossroads of Culture*) suggests, sometimes compromises on cultural issues, and other times, also challenges cultural ethos.

[18] Richardson (*Paul's Language*, 134) rightly points out the weakness/strength paradox implied in Paul's God language. He writes that "since the cross is the basis for Paul's double contrast of power with weakness and wisdom with foolishness, it follows that the cross is the key to Paul's language about God in this section." Furthermore, he writes that "the language of weakness and foolishness . . . is an important key to Paul's understanding of God."

associated with spiritual gifts—namely, he enables individual members to serve and build up the congregation by providing them with spiritual gifts as he wills (12:11).

In summary, according to Paul's representation, despite God the Father's absolute authority and power over all creatures, what God the Son has shown is a cruciform lordship. This absolutely powerful yet cruciform Lord is also represented as a relatable person who invites and enables humans to join in his work under the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Evil Spiritual Powers: Powerful yet Limited

Paul's discourse represents the evil spiritual powers as powerful yet limited. There are three instances associated with the evil spiritual powers, once as the agent and twice as the receiver. Represented as the agent, Satan can tempt believers to commit sexual sins (7:5). Thus, believers are warned of the evil spiritual powers, which are represented as working to lead them to impurity. Represented as the receiver, Satan is given the body of those who committed sexual immorality with the hope that their spirits can be saved on the day of the Lord (5:5). The meaning of 1 Cor 5:5 is puzzling, but the verse implies that what Satan can do to harm humans is rather limited.[19] The third representation is regarding demons, which are set in competition with God for the believers' sacrifice (10:20). In short, the spiritual powers other than God in 1 Corinthians are generally represented as negative forces that lead believers astray from holiness or devotion to God.[20] Now I will turn to the representations of the authoritative leaders.

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[19] Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 393–400.

[20] First Corinthians mentions angels (ἄγγελος) four times, e.g., 1 Cor 4:9 and 6:3, but they are not encoded as participants of actions or reactions. Therefore, angels are not discussed here.

Authoritative Leaders

As regards the authoritative leaders, I will first discuss Paul and the Pauline ministers and then the political and intellectual elites. In a nutshell, Paul sets the apostles, including himself, in opposition to the so-called rulers of the age, who are held accountable for Jesus's violent death and also to the intellectual elites whose knowledge and wisdom are useless in understanding the message of the cross.

Paul and the Pauline Ministers: Authoritative yet Cruciform

In general, Paul represents himself as a cruciform leader called and empowered by God the Father to proclaim Christ's gospel and to plant churches. Mainly, seeing himself as a spiritual parent to the Corinthians and a struggling servant of Jesus Christ, Paul represents himself as a responsible leader who takes his calling to apostolic leadership seriously and uses his power to foster growth in the Corinthians.

In his representation, Paul sometimes lumps himself and other apostles together by using first plural pronouns, which are interpreted as an exclusive-we[21] in context (4:8–13) and, other times, highlights his unique role by comparing himself with other apostles (3:5–15). Compared with 2 Corinthians, 1 Corinthians has a much lower percentage of representation for the Pauline ministers. Throughout the discourse, Paul represents himself as playing multiple roles in relation to different social actors, such as God, other apostles, and the Corinthians.

[21] The exclusive-we is the pronoun "we" used in a co-text where the Corinthians are excluded, while the inclusive-we is the pronoun "we" used to include the Corinthians. The exclusive-we is often used in 1 and 2 Corinthians when the discourse explains and defends the Pauline mission. The percentage of exclusive-we is 4 percent in 1 Corinthians, and it increases to 19 percent in 2 Corinthians. Ehrensperger (*Dynamics of Power*, 35–62) rightly notes that collaboration characterizes the Pauline mission.

First, concerning his relationship with God, Paul represents himself as an "apostle" of Jesus Christ (ἀπόστολος, 1:1; 9:1),[22] a "co-worker" with God (συνεργοί, 3:9), a "servant" of Christ, and a "steward" of God's mystery (διάκονοι, 3:5; ὑπηρέτας, οἰκονόμους, 4:1).[23] From Paul's perspective, what human leaders produce is nothing compared with God's life-giving power, even though he never devalues his responsibility (3:5–7). Repeatedly, Paul indicates his submission to God's authority. For instance, his

[22] As mentioned in my literature review above, much has been said about how to interpret ἀπόστολος. For some sample readings, see Schmithals, *Office of Apostle*; Barrett, *Signs of Apostles*; Schütz, *Apostolic Authority*; Agnew, "Origin," 75–96; Barnett, "Apostle," 45–51; Elliott, *Liberating Paul* (listed in chronological order). Pre-1970 power studies often focus on *apostolic authority* and approach it from the perspective of legitimacy—i.e., what is the basis of Paul's authority? Schütz shifts to study *power* and asks: How is authority related to power? He argues that Paul views his apostolic authority as the manifestation of the working power of Jesus Christ and the gospel. By presupposing that authority is the *right* to power, Schütz gives the impression that power is inherently positive. Although I differ from him on defining power and authority, I agree with him that Paul considers his calling as the basis of his authority. On the other hand, Elliott points out that imperialist and fundamentalist scholars, influenced by the Lutheran tradition and individualism, tend to over-spiritualize Paul as one who is only concerned about heavenly things. By contrast, Elliott considers Paul an apostle of social justice. My focus is broader than how ἀπόστολος should be understood, although Paul's use of power is obviously related to his understanding of his identity as Christ's apostle. Perhaps, 2 Corinthians sheds more light into his understanding of his apostolic authority, namely, that it means more *responsibility* to build up God's community than right to control. Instead, I focus on the use of power because I believe humans' use of power is not always legitimate, even if the status of power is legitimate.

[23] Louw and Nida (*Greek-English Lexicon*, 1:460–61) see διάκονος and ὑπηρέτης as synonyms. Classifying them into the domain of HELP, CARE FOR, Louw and Nida suggest a rendering of servant or helper. On the other hand, Louw and Nida place οἰκονόμος in the domain of CONTROL, RULE, and suggest that it refers to "one who has the authority and responsibility for something." Pauline commentators cannot reach a consensus on the meanings of ὑπηρέτης, διάκονος, and οἰκονόμος. For instance, Byron ("Slave of Christ," 179–98) renders ὑπηρέτας as a "willing servant." As regards διάκονος, Collins (*Diakonia*, 195–226) loads a theology of "sacred duty" into it and interprets it as an authoritative spokesman and emissary within the ecumenical church. Differing from Collins, Clarke (*Serve the Community*, 233–43) renders διάκονοι merely as an equivalent to "servant." As regards οἰκονόμος, Fitzmyer (*First Corinthians*, 212) notes that although it usually refers to the chief slave of a household, its use is much broader. For instance, it can refer to a political administrator or city treasurer, and Paul applies it to Christian preachers. Concerning the sense of authority implied in οἰκονόμος, Fee (*First Corinthians*, 159–60) argues that οἰκονόμος in Paul's context indicates accountability and that her or his authority is based on what οἰκονόμος is responsible for. But Barrett (*First Epistle*, 100) notes that although οἰκονόμους might imply a sense of administrative authority, Paul probably uses it as a synonym of ὑπηρέτας. Similarly, Garland (*1 Corinthians*, 125–26) maintains that the collocation of all these terms is in keeping with Jesus' teaching about servant leadership and that this leadership style contrasts with the "world's perception of leaders as free, high-status dons bestowing benevolences on those of lesser status." In summary, in the context of the Corinthian letters, Paul's representation of himself indicates both (1) authority as the leader of God's congregation and (2) accountability to and more severe judgement from God (1 Cor 4:2).

apostleship is enacted through God's will (1:1), his particular assignment as an evangelist and church planter is assigned by Christ (1:17; 3:5; 9:17), and he waits for the Lord's direction regarding his next move (4:19; 16:7). Notably, Paul's representation implies that he is aware of his *authority and responsibility* and that he believes his Lord both empowers and controls him (2:4–5; 9:16–17; 15:10).

Second, as regards his relationship with the Corinthians, Paul seems to wear multiple hats, namely, as a spiritual parent (4:14–15), an apostolic pioneer (3:10; 9:2), and a brother (e.g., 1:10–11, 26). Paul notes his authority over the Corinthians by representing himself as their spiritual parent and founding leader. But Paul's discourse also indicates he sees the Corinthians as fellow believers before the Lord, according to his use of vocatives such as "my beloved brothers and sisters" (15:58).[24] Paradoxically, although he calls himself Christ's apostle, Paul represents himself as belonging to the Corinthians but not vice versa (3:22). Similarly, he asks them not to overestimate him or other apostles (4:6) and shares transparently with them about his suffering (4:9–13). He also confesses his fear and weakness (2:3) and implies his awareness of the controversy about him now (4:3; 9:3). In short, Paul's power over the Corinthians is represented as dynamic, regardless of whether his representation is sincere or accurate.

[24] As regards whether the ἀδελφοί language implies a sense of egalitarianism, socio-historical scholars cannot reach a consensus. For instance, Horrell ("From αδελφοι to οικος θεου," 310) regards the brother language as a hint of a "model of an egalitarian community." By contrast, Clarke ("Equality or Mutuality," 164) notes that the use of ἀδελφοί is not inherently equal, but is more concerned with mutuality. However, neither scholar clearly defines their notions of equality or mutuality. To a certain extent, I agree with Clarke ("Equality or Mutuality," 158) that modern concept of egalitarianism can colour our interpretation of some biblical terms, e.g., ἀδελφοί. But some of Clarke's argument is also questionable. For instance, he points out that Paul cannot be seen as the brother and at the same time the father of the Corinthians, if the ἀδελφοί language signifies equality. As my analysis shows, however, Paul's relationship with the Corinthians is dynamic, and Paul is playing multiple roles, when relating to them in different contexts. If one can accept this observation, the co-existence of sibling and parent metaphors indeed makes sense. For a book-length study on Paul's understanding of siblingship, see Aasgaard, *Brothers and Sisters*.

Third, as regards his relationship with other apostles, Paul sees himself as merely one of the fellow-workers of Christ and values collaboration with other workers (3:6, 9–10; 4:1). He considers himself to have the same right as other apostles to eat and drink, to marry, and to receive payment (9:4–6, 11). But he also represents himself as the least of the apostles and as one having persecuted God's church (15:9). Moreover, Paul represents the apostles, including himself, as sentenced to death (4:9) and as the dirt of the world (4:13).[25]

As indicated at the beginning, I assume that an agent's understanding of her or his social relationships influences her or his use of power. So, I have laboured to discuss Paul's representation of his identity in relation to other primary agents. My following analysis of his social actions and reactions further demonstrates that Paul represents himself as a responsible leader empowered by God to plant and strengthen God's congregations.

Indicated in Figure 4.6, the primary patient impacted by Paul's power actions is the Corinthians as a collective body. My analysis of Paul's power actions that impact the Corinthians suggests that Paul sees the Corinthians as his children for whom he still takes responsibility. From Paul's perspective, having evangelized and baptized the Corinthians as a parent who has given spiritual life to them (1:14, 16; 3:10; 4:15; 15:1, 3), he has credibility as their parent-like leader. The parental role does not cease even though he has left Corinth. Paul still considers himself authoritative and responsible for nourishing them

[25] The majority of commentators note that Paul has all apostles (including the pillars) in mind. See Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 359–60; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 218–19; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 139–40; Fee, *First Corinthians*, 174–75.

as his beloved children, albeit in a limited manner from a distance (3:1–3; 4:14–21).[26] His current interest, as represented, is in growing the Corinthians into maturity by helping them become socially responsible persons when interacting with each other within the community (3:1–3; 4:14–21; 6:1–11; 11:17–34; 12:31) and when supporting other congregations (16:1–3). Moreover, Paul emphasizes that when carrying out his responsibility, he collaborates and shares power with other workers who are approved or appointed by the church (4:17; 16:3). But at the same time, Paul defends himself by stressing that he does *not* seek to manipulate the Corinthians (4:14; 7:35) or pursue personal gain (10:33) and that he voluntarily becomes enslaved to save more people (9:19, 22). His defence suggests that some of the Corinthians might have expressed suspicion regarding his interests.

Interwoven with Paul's power actions is the representation of his past transgressions (15:9) and present sufferings (4:9; 15:31–32; 16:8–9). Despite limitations, Paul considers himself to be forgiven mercifully and enabled by the Lord to become a self-disciplined and hardworking minister (7:25; 9:26–27; 15:9–10). Thus, Paul repeatedly attributes any success of his ministry to God (2:5; 15:10). In short, while Paul labours to carry out his calling, he is not exempted from being severely challenged and persecuted, as represented. Like his crucified Lord, Paul represents himself as suffering

[26] Scholars differ in interpreting the parental metaphors. For instance, Wanamaker ("Power of the Absent Father," 339–64, especially 362) argues that Paul, describing himself as the father (founder), seeks to establish "hierarchal dominance" over the Corinthian church in 1 Cor 1–4 in order to exercise power over them in the rest of the letter. By contrast, Gaventa ("Our Mother," 41–50) points out that Paul's maternal metaphor not only indicates his understanding of the apostolic task but also undermines the dominant patriarchal culture of his age. On what bases, therefore, can we decide whether Paul's use of power as a spiritual parent is appropriate or not? Admittedly, one must make her or his decision based on a chosen hermeneutic paradigm. I propose that the use of the parental metaphor indicates not dominance but a responsibility. Paul sees himself as having the burden of what the role requires. Like a parent, Paul has a vested interest in his spiritual children's development.

in carrying out God's assignments. From Paul's perspective, apostolic leadership is costly.

As regards semiotic actions, Paul represents himself as the primary voice in 1 Corinthians. Admittedly, he repeatedly appeals to the authority of God and Scripture in his discourse for legitimizing his instructions, the details of which will be discussed in the next chapter. Some of his semiotic actions represent his authorized ministry as an evangelist and teacher (1:17; 2:1; 4:14, 17; 7:17; 9:16, 18, 27; 11:34; 15:1–2; 16:1), as well as his spiritual gifts in speech, such as prophesizing and speaking in tongues (13:1, 3; 14:6, 14–15, 18–19). Others represent his commentaries on his own semiotic actions (3:1; 4:14; 6:5; 7:6, 35; 9:8, 15; 15:34, 51), or specify what he is doing via his words, such as making statements (1:12; 5:9, 11; 7:8; 7:29; 10:19; 11:22) and giving instructions (1:10; 4:16; 7:12; 10:15; 12:31; 16:12, 15). It is worth noting that Paul also represents his act of self-defence in response to the Corinthians' judgement (9:3) and his act of appraising their social practices (11:2, 17, 22).

Lastly, as regards reactions, Paul represents himself as a leader who has both emotional intelligence and cognitive strength. It is not difficult to infer that Paul is a rational thinker. His problem-solving skill is implied in his instructions and legitimizations when responding to the different issues reported to him. In addition, Paul also explicitly represents his cognitive reactions in a positive way. For instance, he indicates that he has determined to know only Jesus Christ and the message of crucifixion when visiting the Corinthians (2:2). Due to his conviction about Christ's judgement, he represents himself as not being bothered by human evaluation but, at the same time, not lacking critical self-reflection (4:3–4, 9; 7:40; 13:12). As a leader, he also judges immoral

practices (5:3, 12) and discerns what is reported to him (11:18). Despite his rationality, Paul is not an indifferent or cold-hearted leader, as represented. For instance, he feels thankful for the Corinthians (1:4) and desires to visit and spend quality time with them (16:7). On the one hand, Paul represents his positive emotions. He perseveres in suffering for the gospel (4:12; 9:12) and rejoices in the coming of the Corinthian members and their service to him (16:17). On the other hand, he does not hide his negative emotions. For instance, he acknowledges his weakness and fear (2:3). The representation of his reactions indicates both strengths and limitation as a leader. In other words, although he has the mental power to make judgements and strength to endure difficulties, he shares human emotions and needs, such as fear and discouragement, as well as the desire and need for comfort and support.

In summary, according to my analysis of the representations of Paul's social actions and reactions, Paul provides a self-portrait of a servant and leader who displays a combination of humanness and faithfulness, even if it remains an open question whether or not Paul's self-presentation should be taken at face value. In addition to Paul and his co-workers, 1 Corinthians also mentions another group of authoritative leaders, the political authorities and intellectual elites, albeit rather briefly.

Political Authorities and Intellectual Elites: Influential yet Under God's Reign

The political authorities in 1 Corinthians are represented as ignorant power-abusers, but their power is rather limited. The privileged social class, including the intellectual elites, are represented as not knowing God and not able to do so (1:21; 2:8, 14). But their schemes are represented as under God's control (1:19–20). Although the so-called rulers of this age are held accountable for crucifying the Lord owing to their ignorance (2:8),

Jesus Christ will put an end to all political authorities' ruling and will subjugate them at the end (15:24).[27] This representation indicates that the ruling authorities' power is only temporary, compared with God's sovereignty in eternality. But it is also worth noting that Paul's discourse does not advise human violent resistance to these ruling powers. So, although he speaks against those in powerful and privileged positions, Paul is not as critical of the regime of his day as we would like. After discussing the representation of the authoritative leaders, I will now turn to consider general humans and, in particular, the Corinthians.

General Humans

Here I will focus my discussion on the Corinthians, collectively as God's congregation. Although they are represented as the least powerful, they are not absolutely powerless.[28] In fact, when acting in concert according to Christ's cruciform authority, they have the potential to impact insiders and outsiders positively, as represented by Paul's discourse.

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[27] According to Elliott's reading of Paul (*Liberating Paul*, 93–140), the cross of Jesus "by itself shows only the power of violence" that serves the crucifiers' interest, and the resurrection "reveals the imminent defeat of the Powers" (118, 124). I do not doubt that the cross of Jesus shows the power of violence, but I am not convinced that it only does so. First Corinthians clearly indicates the "sacrificial logic" (e.g., the use of "Passover lamb") that Elliott seeks to disregard.

[28] (Post-)critical scholars who consider Paul as dominating rarely discuss the power of the Corinthians as a community, because the majority of these scholars adopt a static and negative conceptualization of social power. By contrast, Arendt (*Human Condition*, 200) defines power as the ability produced when people act in concert, when assuming a more positive view of humans' rationality and freedom to act. Though biased, her positive conception of social power touches a facet of power that is often neglected by (post-)critical scholars who adopt a completely negative view of human nature. Cf. Arendt, *Human Condition*, 53–54.

God's Congregations: Least Powerful yet Full of Potential

Before analyzing the power actions of the Corinthians, I will first describe their identity in relation to God and God's workers, respectively. Some of these observations were already mentioned above when God's workers were discussed.

When describing the Corinthians, Paul emphasizes their "collective identity."[29] Several metaphors illustrate that the Corinthians are represented collectively as the sanctified congregation of God (1:2). For instance, the Corinthians are the field and building of God on which God continues to work through his workers (3:9), the holy temple of God where the Holy Spirit dwells (3:17; 6:19),[30] and the body of Christ, composed of multiple but diverse parts (12:27).[31] So, the Corinthians do not belong to themselves (6:19–20) or human leaders (3:22) but belong to God alone (3:23; 6:20; 7:23). Although Paul stresses that the Corinthians are not his personal property, he considers his relationship with the Corinthians special—namely, they are his beloved children (4:14) and the evidence of his apostleship (9:2). Paul asserts that he relates to the Corinthians not only as a teacher to students but also as a parent to children (4:15). Paul bases his authority to influence the Corinthians on his confidence in this close and unique

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[29] Malina, *New Testament World*, 62. I suggest that this emphasis is likely caused by the report of Chloe's associates, which tells that the Corinthians dispute with each other concerning different alignments with individual leaders (1:11–12).

[30] For sample studies on the temple and purity, see Rosner, "Temple," 137–45; Liu, *Temple Purity*; cf. Fetherolf ("The Body," 88–106). Fetherolf links the two metaphors, temple and body, together to stress the theme of unity.

[31] For sample studies on the body metaphor, Neyrey, "Body Language," 129–70; Fetherolf, "The Body," 88–106; Marshall, "Community," 833–47; Kim, *Christ's Body*. What is worth noting is Kim's postcolonial reading. Without assuming suspicion, Kim suggests revisiting the metaphor of the "body of Christ" by stressing diversity instead of unity. He (*Christ's Body*, 101) argues that the cross condemns the "self-seeking glory of the powerful." According to Kim, Christian communities must hold to the common denominators as Christ's body and embrace diversity, when seeking dialogues between different cultures and creating co-dependent human life.

relationship, besides an understanding of his responsibility as God's servant to bring God's congregation to maturity, as discussed above.[32]

As indicated in Figure 4.6, the majority of the Corinthians' actions impact themselves. On the one hand, the individual who has committed a sexual offence is represented as damaging the Corinthians' collective purity (5:6).[33] Similarly, in Paul's representation, some members have wronged and defrauded other members (6:8), and others have wounded the consciences of "the weak," regardless of how "the weak" are interpreted (8:12). On the other hand, the local leaders are represented as having a positive impact. For instance, the household of Stephanas is remembered for giving themselves away to the service of the saints, and, therefore, their leadership must be obeyed by the congregants (16:15).

Despite many problems, the Corinthians are also represented as having the potential to influence both insiders and outsiders toward holiness when *acting in concert* according to Christ's authority. For instance, as a congregation, they have the potential to discipline sexually immoral members (5:2, 12–13), to settle the conflicts among believers (6:4), to edify each other for maturity (14:3–5, 12, 26, 31), to help the uneducated in faith to know God (14:24–25), to support other congregations in need (16:2–4), and to send Paul on his way (16:7).[34] All these actions can be interpreted as having the potential to nourish spiritual life and foster social responsibility. In short, the Corinthians are represented as potential agents who have transformative power over both fellow insiders and outsiders when acting in concert.

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[32] Cf. Belleville, "Authority," 57–59.

[33] Cen, "What the Church Should Do," 233–50; Cen, "Metaphor," 1–26.

[34] Louw and Nida (*Greek-English Lexicon*, 1:191) note that the word προπέμπω probably implies help on one's journey.

As regards semiotic actions, although the Corinthians have the second-largest representation of semiotic actions, they have a relatively low ratio of speech (RS=0.7), compared with Paul (RS=12). The reason for this disproportion is that the Corinthians are represented as the primary receiver of meaning, accounting for sixty-eight percent of total instances of receiving speech in 1 Corinthians. Among the Corinthians' semiotic actions, ninety-two percent are non-transactional (i.e., without encoding receivers), and seventy-one percent are behavioural (i.e., without encoding meanings). This means that they are not represented as a powerful speaker, even though they are represented as the second primary speaker after Paul. The implied situations of their semiotic actions can be classified into three categories. The majority of the representation of the Corinthians' talk is found in 1 Cor 11 and 14 in which the background seems to be a liturgical service. The semiotic actions against this background are religious practices such as praying and prophesizing. So, the implied receivers are likely those who attend the service. The second category is associated with their problems, such as arguing (1:11–12; 3:3–4) and boasting (5:6). The last category is related to their previous writing to Paul (7:1) or individuals' reporting to him (1:11), with part of Paul's discourse being a response to what he receives. In summary, the Corinthians are represented as having a negative semiotic influence by means of their arguments and boastings but also as having the potential to nourish each other via words in liturgical settings.

As regards reactions, it is worth noting that the Corinthians account for the highest percentage of reactions in 1 Corinthians and that the majority of these reactions are cognitive. The Corinthians are represented as having the authority to judge ethical issues among themselves (6:2, 5–6) and approve or appoint workers (16:3). But

according to Paul's representation, the Corinthians not only have failed to use the potential to judge the wrongdoers among them (5:2; 6:1) but also have abused it by misjudging Paul's leadership (4:1–6). In short, the Corinthians are represented as having the potential to judge and yet misusing their power in formulating an inaccurate conclusion or failing to judge at all.

Although the representation of the Corinthians' cognitive reactions is two times more than that of their emotive reactions, the percentage of their emotive reactions still ranks first among all the agents. In other words, the Corinthians are represented as the most emotional agent in 1 Corinthians, even though they are represented as more rational than emotional. Besides, Paul's representation of their emotive reactions conveys a negative connotation. For instance, Paul regards them as arrogant (4:6, 18; 5:2).[35] Similarly, the report from Chloe's associates indicates the existence of jealousy among the Corinthians (3:3). These negative representations imply the Corinthians' immaturity. Regardless of whether or not we evaluate Paul's perception of reality as correct, his use of power via words seems to be based on this understanding of their problematic situation, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

In summary, God's congregations, though immature and full of problems, are represented as having the potential to build up their community, influence outsiders to know God, and support other congregations in need.

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[35] Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 31–43) points out that the Corinthians were influenced by the Greco-Roman elitist educational mores of Corinth, based on his interpretation of their advocacy of the exclusive relationship of students to their teacher and the "effect of jealousness in promoting loyalty to one and criticism of others" (43). Marshall (*Enmity in Corinth*, 178–218) suggests that the notion of ὕβρις underlies 1 Cor 4:6–13 although the word is not in the text. Regarding the idea of ὕβρις, he writes "[it] is conceived of as arrogance or insolence borne out of an ignorance (*anoētos*, *amathia*) of one's true self. The hybristic person's failure to think mortal thoughts leads to an arrogant violation of limits, of both human and divine law" (194).

Conclusion of Representations in 1 Corinthians

Up to this point, I have discussed the representations of social actions and reactions in 1 Corinthians. My analysis seeks to uncover Paul's representation of the structural, situated, and dynamic aspects of the social power relationships embedded in his discourse. Among all the actors, God the Father is represented as not only most powerful and absolutely authoritative but also loving and faithful to keep his own. Although Jesus Christ is represented as the Lord, he is represented as the crucified Lord; hence, his authority is represented as a cruciform lordship. In other words, incarnation allowed a sovereign God to play multiple power roles in relation to his creatures. The Holy Spirit is the working power in believers to empower them for services by assigning spiritual gifts. At the same time, evil spiritual powers are represented as working power to keep humans from knowing and following God.

In general, whether one aligns with the cruciform authority of Jesus Christ is often the line of appraising one's power actions. Accordingly, the political leaders and intellectual elites are represented as powerful enemies of God, but their power is limited. By contrast, Paul, together with other ministers, is represented as God's servants who are empowered and given the responsibility to lead humans to God and bring his congregations into maturity. Regarding general humans, the Corinthians are represented as having the potential to influence each other and outsiders toward holiness when acting in concert according to Christ's cruciform authority. But they are also represented as having all kinds of problems, namely, jealousy, competition, misconception of the leaders, sexual immorality, and mistreatment of each other, to list a few. Although it is less evident by studying 1 Corinthians alone, it is worth noting that the authoritative

leaders' power is not represented as unchallengeable or unchangeable and that none of the leaders is represented as exempt from impact from the general humans.

In conclusion, all social actors have power over others, more or less, good or bad, temporarily or eternally. Still, God the Father remains as the one who has absolute authority over other spiritual powers and all humans. This reconstruction is my interpretation of Paul's representation; thus, what we have is, at best, my understanding of Paul's perspective. Now I will turn to discuss the representation of power dynamics in 2 Corinthians.

Reconstruction of Social Power Relationships in 2 Corinthians

What is most striking about power dynamics in the Corinthian letters is the *change* of power found in the authoritative leaders represented in 2 Corinthians, as mentioned in the preamble. To repeat, when 2 Corinthians is compared with 1 Corinthians, the authoritative leaders' power to act decreases, but their power to speak increases, and at the same time, their proportion of reactions, especially emotive reactions, increases significantly.

Figure 4.7 illustrates all the agents' power to act. When Figures 4.7 and 4.6 are compared, one notes that the ratios of impact for Paul, the Pauline ministers, and the Corinthians all fall in 2 Corinthians and that the ratios for God the Father, the evil spiritual powers, and the critics rise, according to the size-change of their corresponding bubbles. It is worth noting that the power of the critics—one subtype of authoritative leaders—increases, while the authoritative leaders' power in total decreases. This means it is the Pauline ministers' power to act that is represented as decreasing. Now I will turn

to analyze specific agents. Again, when discussing individual agents, I will follow the order of relational identity, power actions, semiotic actions, and reactions.

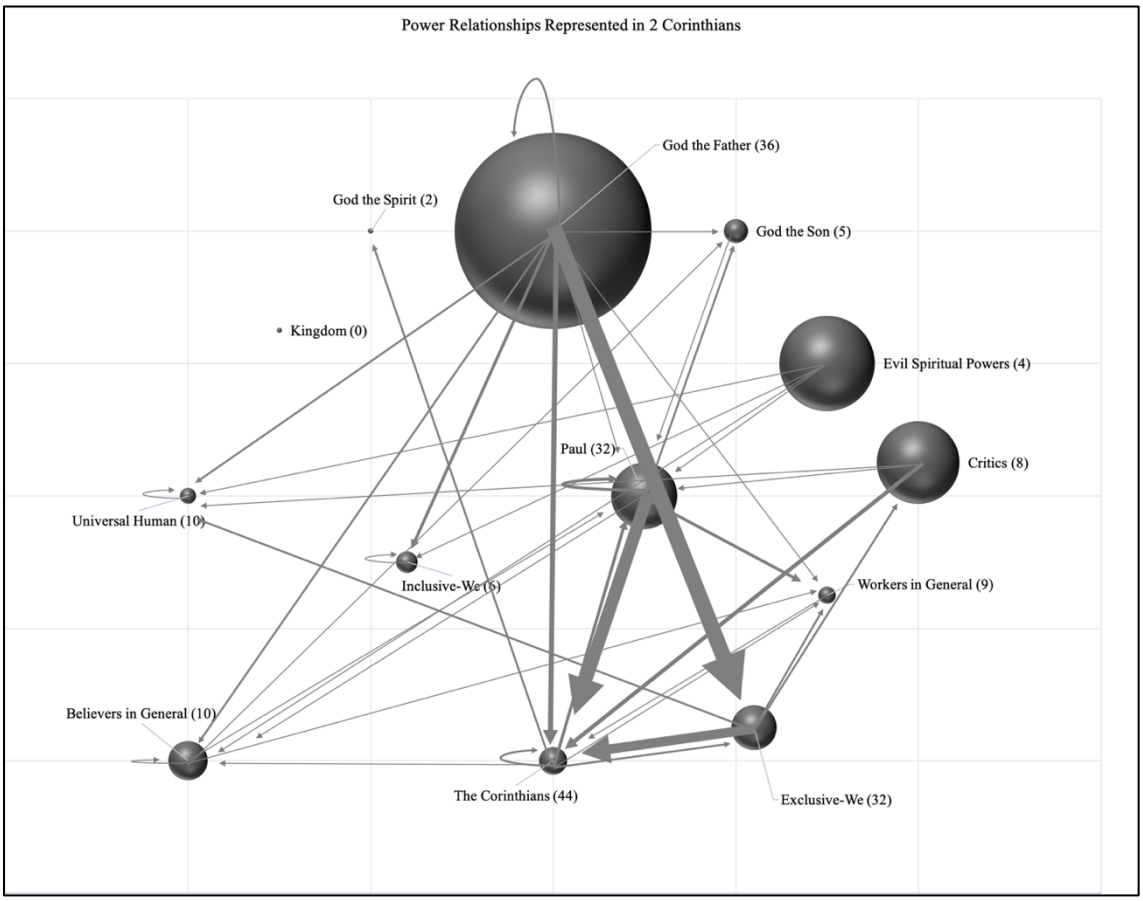

Figure 4.7 Power Relationships in 2 Corinthians

Superhuman Beings

To a certain extent, representations of the superhuman beings in 2 Corinthians are comparable with 1 Corinthians. Yet there is some difference. For instance, the discourse of 2 Corinthians has far fewer representations of the Son and the Spirit but a more concrete representation of the evil spiritual powers.

God as the Absolutely Powerful and Cruciform Lord

In keeping with the pattern implied in 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians represents God as the most powerful and faithful agent. The Father is represented as the living God of mercy, comfort, faithfulness, love, and peace (1:3, 18; 13:11). He is represented as both an authoritative father who reigns transcendently (1:9; 5:1–5) and a caring father who relates to his creatures immanently (1:2, 21–22). Although 2 Corinthians encodes fewer representations of the Son Jesus Christ, the implication deduced from Paul's representation here echoes Jesus's image depicted in 1 Corinthians—namely, that Jesus relates to God the Father as the Son (1:3, 19) and interacts with humans as the Lord (1:2). Besides, Jesus is represented as the instrument of God's promises (1:19–20), the core of the gospel (4:4), and the force behind Paul's servanthood to the Corinthians (4:5).

The representation of God's power actions further affirms that Paul regards the Father as having absolute authority and power. Generally speaking, the majority of God's power actions in 2 Corinthians have a positive impact on his creatures in general and, in particular, on his workers and congregations. Explicitly, the Pauline ministers are represented as the primary patients of God's power actions in 2 Corinthians. On God's power actions, I have three observations from my analysis.

First, the Father is represented as keeping and providing for his workers. The representation denotes Paul's belief that the Father has encouraged them (1:4; 7:6), has rescued them from harm (1:10), has enabled them for ministry by making them competent and placing words of reconciliation in their hearts (3:6; 5:19), and has assigned ministry responsibilities to them (10:13). Representing himself as trusting in God's faithfulness, Paul anticipates that the Father will rescue them again (1:10) and resurrect them even if they are persecuted to death (4:14); he also believes that the Father

promises to provide an eternal glorified body to the workers who are suffering now temporally (5:1). Since the Father is represented as the author of life and death, as in 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians stresses continuous dependence on God. In other words, implied is the idea that human leaders ought to rely on God for ministry assignments, competency, encouragement, and security because their ministry assignments are beyond human capacity and even life-threatening. Thus, God remains superordinate, but most of his actions are considered to preserve life, increase maturity, and enable humans for ministry, as represented.

Second, the Father is represented as providing graciously for his people and enabling them to do good. Although the majority of the actions related to his people indicate his absolute power over humans, the effects of these actions are considered beneficial to humanity. Quoting from the Septuagint, Paul represents God as sovereign and gracious to help his chosen people (the Israelites) and accept the people in exile as children upon their repentance (6:2, 17).[36] As regards believers in his day, Paul's representation implies that the Father has empowered the congregations in the Jesus movement to support each other. For instance, the Father supplies what the Corinthians need, multiplies what they have, and grows their giving when they share generously with the Jerusalem congregation in need (9:10), because the Father gives to the poor and remains righteous forever (9:9). Moreover, the Father has the heart to reconcile the world to himself in Christ (5:19). In short, God is not only sovereign but also good to humanity and particularly kind to his people, as depicted by Paul's representation. Once again, Paul's discourse underscores God's people's continuous dependence on God.

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[36] Han, *Swimming in the Sea of Scripture*, 65–72.

Lastly, however, among all the power actions performed by God, two appear to produce a negative impact. One impacts Paul, and the other impacts the Son. Since the action of humbling (or humiliating) Paul is encoded in the subjunctive form, it could be merely Paul's speculation (12:21).[37] Nevertheless, he imagines himself to be humbled by God if he finds out that the Corinthians continue their ungodly practices. This representation suggests two things. First, Paul attributes his own potential humiliation to an act of God. This implies that in Paul's understanding, God is the judge of his ministry. Second, God is not obligated to guarantee the success of Paul's ministry or make him feel good or look right. These implications do not necessarily mean that God should be blamed for humans' failures. Instead, they likely imply that Paul believes God has control over him and his ministry. As regards the action that impacts Jesus, the Father has made the Son the "scapegoat" (in the sense of Lev 16), so that God's righteousness can be known to humans (5:21). When discussing 1 Corinthians, I have talked about the so-called rulers of this age being represented as responsible for Jesus's crucifixion. Here the Father is represented as playing a role as well. Is the Father accountable for the violence done to the Son? Or do the Father and the Son act together to manifest God's sacrificial

[37] Scholars debate what this "humbling" means. Martin (*2 Corinthians*, 661–66) argues that Paul considers it a humiliation that he has to use his authority to "employ strict methods" (663). Barnett (*Second Epistle*, 596) interprets it as Paul's voluntary self-humbling by "mourning publicly over the unrepentant." By contrast, Harris (*Second Epistle*, 901–2) notes that Paul attributes the humbling to God's act. Harris implies that Paul trusts in God's ability to turn a painful discovery of continuing sin into spiritual benefit if Paul has to be brought low before God and enact the discipline on arrival to bring the Corinthians to repentance. Similarly, Guthrie (*2 Corinthians*, 623) renders it as "God would make Paul ashamed" but interprets this line as "Paul experiencing shame before God." My agency analysis is in keeping with Harris's and Guthrie's interpretation, which emphasizes God as the cause but does not conclude that God intends to humiliate Paul.

love for humans?[38] Regardless of how one answers, both show that God the Father is absolutely powerful.

As regards God's semiotic actions, the Father is represented as the authoritative voice, although God's semiotic actions are scarce compared with the authoritative leaders. In keeping with 1 Corinthians, God's voice in 2 Corinthians is represented in these two ways: revealing knowledge about him (2:14; 4:6) and speaking via Scripture (4:6; 6:2, 16–18). Also, God is represented as urging the world through believers to be reconciled with him (5:20–21).

As regards reactions, although the presentation is even rarer, God is represented as personal and relatable. For instance, God knows the most profound thoughts and motives of Paul (11:11, 31; 12:2–3), hears his people (6:2), and loves cheerful givers (9:7). Although the instances of God's reactions are rare, and most of them are cognitive, one can still infer that Paul testifies to a God who is caring besides being absolutely powerful.

In summary, God is represented as having absolute power over his creatures in general and, in particular, his workers and congregations. This authoritative and powerful God also manifests himself in Jesus Christ as the cruciform Lord. Additionally, God is represented as loving and caring for humanity. Through the death of Jesus, the Father seeks to reconcile the world to himself and calls humans to participate in this ministry of reconciliation. He also provides what humans need in order to know and follow him. Although God has absolute power that can dominate, Paul's discourse does not represent

[38] We must be careful not to develop a theology of "penal substitutionary atonement" based on one single verse. Furthermore, we must watch any injustice that abuses the theology of Jesus's subordination to the Father to justify domestic or child abuse. For feminist discussions on this warning, see, Moder, "Women," 85–103; Denhollander and Denhollander, "Justice," 1–20.

him as an authoritarian or cold-hearted dictator. By contrast, God is represented as a good master who empowers humans to join in his work. Alignment with the cruciform authority of this powerful and caring Lord, as I suggest, plays a crucial role in Paul's understanding of all other social relationships as well as his understanding of human leaders' responsibilities to bring God's congregations to maturity.

Evil Spiritual Powers: Powerful yet Limited

The evil spiritual powers are represented as working to lead believers astray from the truth of Jesus Christ. The representation of Satan[39] and its manifestations in humans are more significant and concrete in 2 Corinthians than in 1 Corinthians. Paul describes Satan as the god of this age (4:4) and the deceiver that disguises itself as the angel of light (11:14). According to Paul's representation, Satan and its messengers have the power to impact humans by exploiting them (2:11), making them blind to the light of the gospel (4:4), and torturing God's workers (12:7).

Although 2 Corinthians does not inform its readers, as clearly as does 1 Corinthians, what God will do with the evil spiritual powers, we still can infer that they cannot succeed in controlling humans forever, even if they temporarily do.[40] For instance, as implied, Satan's craftiness can be discerned and overcome (2:5–11). Similarly, although Satan keeps unbelievers from seeing the light of the gospel, God is represented

[39] For a study on Satan, see Wink, *Unmasking the Powers*, 9–40. He points out that Satan can be God's "servant" (e.g., 12:7) or the "Evil One" (e.g., 11:14) and that God remains in control of good and evil. For a sociological perspective, see Johnson, "Satan Talk," 145–55. Johnson argues that Paul's Satan talk does not reflect Paul's cosmology but, instead, is a defensing rhetoric generated out of social conflict over his authority in Corinth.

[40] Wink (*Engaging the Powers*, 70–71) rightly notes God's more supreme power over any evil spiritual forces. He writes that "the Powers are good, fallen, and redeemable all at once; and they were good, they fell, and they will be redeemed in God's domination-free order that is coming."

as having the power to enlighten humans to know him (4:1–6). Besides, Paul notes that God deliberately refuses to grant his request of removing the thorn in his flesh ("the messenger of Satan"), not because God is less powerful but because God can manifest his power in human weakness (12:7–10). All these representations indicate that God is in control of the evil spiritual forces. Having discussed Paul's representations of superhuman beings, now I will turn to the second agent type, authoritative leaders, of which God's workers will be discussed first, and then, the critics.

Authoritative Leaders

There is a noticeable difference between the representations related to the authoritative leaders in 2 Corinthians in comparison to 1 Corinthians. First, the use of an exclusive-we, identified as the Pauline ministers, has a significantly higher proportion in 2 Corinthians than in 1 Corinthians. Its distribution in 2 Corinthians is concentrated in chs. 4 and 5, where the Pauline ministers defend the Pauline ministry. Second, Paul explicitly represents himself as the victim of Roman political power in 2 Corinthians.

God's Leaders: Given the Authority to Build Up God's Congregations

God's workers are represented, both collectively and individually, as leaders and servants authorized and empowered by the Lord to build up his congregations.

The Pauline Ministers

Based on my analysis of the social actions and reactions of the Pauline ministers, which are concentrated in but not limited to chs. 4 and 5, I suggest that Paul's discourse represents them as God's cruciform leaders. These leaders are authorized and empowered

by God to build up his congregations, e.g., the Corinthians. It is debatable to whom these Pauline ministers refer. This "we" can refer to the authors, Paul and Timothy (1:1),[41] or can also include others.[42] Regardless of who is involved in "we," one can analyze their identity in relation to God and God's congregations, respectively.

First, as regards their identity in relation to God, the Pauline ministers are represented, paradoxically, as glorious ministers and yet simultaneously as humble servants.[43] Notably, they are instruments of God's revelation (2:14), messengers of Jesus Christ (2:15–16; 10:7), and ministers of a glorious ministry (3:7–10), as well as suffering servants (6:4–10). Indicating awareness of their identity as God's servants, the Pauline ministers represent their interest in the proclamation as proclaiming Christ but not themselves (4:5). Although the Pauline mission originates in Christ (4:1, 7), as indicated, it is controversial and offensive to some people (2:15–17).[44] On the one hand, as God's missionaries, the Pauline ministers represent themselves as having a purer motive and greater competence than others (2:17).[45] On the other hand, they represent themselves as aware that their fitness derives from God's initiative and continuous support (3:5–6; 4:7–10; 10:4).

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[41] E.g., Land, *Integrity*, 129–37.

[42] Barnet (*Second Epistle*, 237, 244) makes no effort to identify and discuss the switch between "we" and "I" but assumes that Paul is the primary voice in general. Nevertheless, he specifies the reference occasionally. For instance, he regards the "we" in 2 Cor 4:8–9 as "the apostles, i.e., Paul" (237) and the "we" in 2 Cor 4:14 and 4:16 as "believers in general" (244). Harris (*Second Epistle*, 322) implies a similar treatment and regards the "we" as "Paul (and his fellow ministers)." Guthrie (*2 Corinthians*, 32–38) attempts a discourse analysis of the "voice(s) Paul writes" and notes that the exclusive-we refers to Paul and his ministry team, including Silvanus (35).

[43] Savage (*Power through Weakness*, 103–44) rightly points out the paradoxical nature of Christian ministry, namely, the mixture of glory and shame or glory through shame.

[44] The greatness of Paul's mission is well established. See Harnack, *Mission and Expansion*, 1:73–83. The nature of the Pauline mission has become debatable in recent days. For example, Hanson (*Pioneer Ministry*, 89) sees the Pauline ministry as the continuation of the "missionary function of the Remnant." Lopez (*Apostle to the Conquered*) sees the Pauline mission as a liberation movement against Roman imperialism for the marginalized and oppressed (her definition for "gentiles").

[45] Land, *Integrity*, 120–21.

Second, as regards their identity in relation to the Corinthians, the Pauline ministers represent themselves as founders, partners, and servants. The Pauline ministers compare the Corinthians to a recommendation letter (3:2). This metaphor likely refers to the reality that the Pauline ministers have founded the Corinthian church (Acts 18:1–17). The Pauline ministers believe that the Corinthian congregation is proof of their hard work and faithfulness in Christ.[46] As their founders, the Pauline ministers believe they are given the authority and influential power over the Corinthians.[47] However, they do not represent themselves as the rulers of the Corinthians' faith but rather stress partnership (1:24).[48] More paradoxically, the Pauline ministers call themselves "slaves" of the Corinthians (δούλους ὑμῶν, 4:5).[49] Therefore, though being authoritative leaders, the Pauline ministers represent themselves not as authoritarian. Keeping in mind this self-portrayal of the Pauline ministers and their relational identities in relation to God and the Corinthians, I now turn to consider their social actions and reactions.

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[46] For a study on the metaphor of a "recommendation letter," see Kuschnerus, "Our Letter," 93–111. For a sociological-historical study on the custom of recommendation in Greco-Roman culture, see Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 91–129.

[47] Malina and Neyrey (*Portraits of Paul*, 161–62) note the significance and authority of a founder of a group in a group-oriented culture.

[48] Horrell ("From αδελφοι to οικος θεου," 293–311) argues that the use of ἀδελφοί indicates egalitarianism, as indicated above. By contrast, Clarke ("Equality or Mutuality," 151–64) argues that the ἀδελφοί language implies mutuality instead of equality.

[49] Louw and Nida (*Greek-English Lexicon*, 1:472) define δοῦλος as "pertaining to a state of being completely controlled by someone or something." To understand the discussion regarding the connotative sense of "slave" in Pauline letters, see Harris, *Slave of Christ*; Martin, *Slavery as Salvation*; Combes, *The Metaphor of Slavery*. Combes's work indicates that a positive overtone of δοῦλος was not found until later, in church fathers' theological writings; hence, any attempt to read positive connotations into the domain ENSLAVE AND SLAVE in light of later patristic usage is regarded as anachronistic. Similarly, any attempt to interpret δοῦλος Χριστος as a highly privileged title in light of the LXX's usage of δοῦλος associated with David or Moses without considering the social understanding of the institution of slavery in Greco-Roman world is also problematic. Following Combes, I do not consider δοῦλος an honorific. On the other hand, I do not think Paul believes the Corinthians are his masters either. Christ is still the Lord of the workers. So, Paul adds a preposition phrase to elaborate on δούλους ὑμῶν, i.e., δούλους ὑμῶν διὰ Ἰησοῦν (4:5). Nevertheless, the use of δοῦλος to describe his identity in relation to the Corinthians indicates a sense of self-lowering.

Regarding the Pauline ministers' power actions, my analysis shows one general pattern, namely, that the majority of these actions impact the Corinthians and are represented in negative terms. For instance, the Pauline ministers declare that they have *not* controlled (1:24), *not* restricted (6:12), *not* wronged, *not* corrupted, and *not* exploited (7:2) the Corinthians, as well as *not* caused them to suffer loss (7:9). Instead, the representation denotes their resolution of not causing anyone to stumble but seeking to serve in a manner that deserves commendation (6:3–10). This representation in negative terms has two likely implications. First, some seem to have judged the Pauline leaders in these terms, and second, the leaders seem to feel a need to defend themselves.

Furthermore, one power action merits special attention—i.e., αἰχμαλωτίζοντες πᾶν νόημα ("taking captive every thought," 10:5) because the use of language indicates impact on thoughts. The use of αἰχμαλωτίζοντες suggests that the Pauline ministers compare their mission to warfare against the critic's arguments and arrogant speech. Second Corinthians 10:3–6 reads as follows:

> Though walking in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but are God's power that can destroy fortresses. With this power, we will destroy the arguments and arrogant speech raised against the knowledge of God and take captive of every thought to make them obey Christ. We will be ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is completed. (2 Cor 10:3–6, my translation)

Admittedly, these lines are full of battle language.[50] Here, the Pauline ministers compare their mission to warfare in response to their critics, who judge them as ones living

[50] The passage encodes these semantic domains: TO ENGAGE IN BATTLE OR WARFARE (στρατεύομαι, στρατεία), WEAPON (ὅπλον), FORTRESS (ὀχύρωμα), TO RAISE UP AGAINST (ὕψωμα, ἐπαίρομαι), TO TEAR DOWN (καθαιρέω, καθαίρεσις), TO TAKE CAPTIVE (αἰχμαλωτίζω), OBEDIENCE OR DISOBEDIENCE (παρακοή, ὑπακοή), and TO PUNISH (ἐκδικέω). I am indebted to Christopher Land for sharing with me his work on the semantic domains of 2 Corinthians. Unless specified, most of the labelling and classifying of domains follows Land's work.

according to a cultural standard or judge them according to a cultural norm.[51] This war entails destroying the arguments against the knowledge about God that Paul comes to believe and turning every mind to obey Christ.[52]

My power analysis of 2 Cor 10:3–6 yields three observations. First, the metaphor of Pauline warfare is against impersonal attitudes. But Paul says that he will punish all disobedience whenever the Corinthian's obedience is complete. This hint leads me to speculate that there are people who will be punished. Since "thoughts" do not get punished, the punishment of disobedience implies actors. Even if the warfare language sounds threatening to some, however, it is a diplomatic threat. What is rather explicit is that this war deals with human attitudes, knowledge, and discourse against God; it has one single goal: aligning people with Christ.[53] Second, the Pauline ministers are

[51] Land (*Integrity*, 200–27), with a linguistic approach, has discussed the construal of "Paul's critics" without attempting a historical reconstruction. Following F. C. Baur, many words have been said about Paul's critics (or "opponents," as assumed by most scholars), e.g., Thrall, "Super-apostles," 42–57 (a historical approach); Sanders, "Paul on the Law," 75–90 (a New Perspective reading); Neyrey, "Witchcraft Accusations," 160–70 (an anthropological approach); Marshall, "Invective," 359–73 (a sociological approach); Andrews, "Politics of Fools," 80–126 (an eclectic approach).

[52] Guthrie (*2 Corinthians*, 475) rightly notes that Paul "sees the mind as a spiritual battleground." Radical scholars such as Lukes, drawing on Spinoza, note that domination is a power-over relationship with the effect of constraints, including the constraint of one's mind. Known for his skeptical attitude towards the superhuman (Baird, *History*, 1:6, 91), Spinoza overestimates human ability and freedom to reason. As regards human nature, I identify myself closer to Augustine's view, which sees human nature as captive yet responsible (Schwarz, *Human Being*, 177–266). With this presupposition, I interpret Paul's effort as liberating human minds from the control of ungodly arguments.

[53] Savage (*Power through Weakness*, 49–51) notes that people in Corinth turned to cults for "transcendent stamps of approval" to their worldly life instead of a "sacred perspective" (51). Ferguson (*Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 173–77) also notes that people in the Greco-Roman world were "more interested in the divine deeds and power than in the divine personalities" (173–74). Based on Savage's or Ferguson's observation, Paul's calling to a devotion to a personal God and moral living is counterhabitual. For a critical feminist view on the "language of obedience," see Kittredge, *Community and Authority*. Following Schüssler Fiorenza's hermeneutic of suspicion (e.g., *In Memory of Her*, 68–92), Kittredge assumes that Paul cannot escape the ideology of hierarchy embedded in the Greco-Roman symbolic universe. So, Kittredge (*Community and Authority*, 6) reconstructs the "vision of equality" (implied in the earlier Jesus movement) by reimagining what is not in the Pauline discourse. For instance, Kittredge interprets Christ's obedience and final honour in Phil 2:5–11 as Paul's rhetoric that seeks to dominate others. Of course, we must question whether Kittredge's analysis of what is or is not in the Pauline discourse does justice to Paul. But on the other hand, we also must reflect critically on our interpretations that promote "domination," knowingly or unknowingly, in the name of obedience to Christ.

represented as empowered by God to fight this war, although they are merely humans. Besides, the Pauline ministers are represented as receiving authority to punish disobedient congregants. In short, Paul's discourse implies that the Pauline leaders have *authoritative power* from God to influence others' minds. Lastly, the temporal element (ὅταν) in 2 Cor 10:6 likely means that the leaders anticipate that the Corinthians will take on the responsibility to enact congregational discipline, as discussed by Land.[54] Therefore, although the language sounds domineering, the Pauline ministers represent themselves as neither using power for personal interest nor aiming at creating in the Corinthians a long-term dependence on the founders, although it remains an open question whether or not Paul is sincere.

As regards semiotic actions, the Pauline ministers are represented as the second primary voice, ranked after Paul's voice. In 2 Corinthians, the content of the Pauline ministers' semiotic actions can be classified into four kinds. First, their proclamation is represented as having the power to influence the Corinthians and others (1:19; 5:11; 10:16; 11:4). The second kind is about the Pauline ministers' self-defense. They not only defend their proclamation (4:2, 5, 13), as I infer, but also explicitly talk about their defending (12:19). Similarly, they comment on their current act of writing (1:13; 2:17; 5:12). Third, they boast about the Corinthians (1:12; 7:14; 8:24; 10:13, 15–16). With this use of boasting language, the Pauline ministers are represented as taking pride in the Corinthians and praising about them before others. Lastly, they represent what they are doing with their words, such as making statements (8:1) and giving instructions (6:1;

[54] Land's (*Integrity*, 202–5) linguistic reading of 2 Cor 10:3–6 rightly denotes that ὑμῶν ἡ ὑπακοή in 2 Cor 10:6 makes better sense when understood as the "enactment of church discipline as proof of the Corinthians' obedience" (204).

8:10). In short, besides talking about their act of defending, the commentaries on their semiotic actions imply that the Pauline leaders are likely operating in a defensive mode.

Up to this point, I have discussed how the Pauline ministers impact others, and now, I will turn to explain how the Pauline ministers are impacted by others and what reactions they have. As illustrated in Figure 4.7, the Pauline ministers are the primary patients of God's power actions. Some of these actions benefit the Pauline ministers, but others cause them to suffer (4:8–16). The discourse implies at least three elements of the Pauline leaders' understanding of their suffering. First, suffering is temporary and not all negative. As represented, God has assigned them the ministry out of mercy (4:1), and it is a ministry of glory (3:7–11). Second, their suffering is represented as partially for the sake of the Corinthians—namely, that they can have spiritual life and that God will be glorified (4:12, 15). Third, as represented by the Pauline ministers, Christ is the final judge of what they do and what others do to them (5:10). In short, the Pauline ministers do not represent their suffering as merely negative but rather appraise it as whether or not it is beneficial for God's kingdom.

As regards reactions, the Pauline ministers are represented as both thoughtful and passionate, but their emotive reactions outnumber their cognitive reactions.[55] Both kinds are mostly distributed in 2 Cor 4–5. The autobiographical material in 2 Cor 4–5 represents God's workers as leaders who set their minds on the unseen *eschatological*

[55] Studying discourse about children on their first day to school, van Leeuwen ("Representing Social Action," 87) argues that social actors in powerful positions are usually represented as rational actors, and people in powerless positions as emotional reactors. My analysis notes that 2 Corinthians represents the leaders more as feelers than thinkers. This conclusion does not mean that the Pauline ministers cannot be dominating, for two reasons. (1) Van Leeuwen's argument is by no means universal or dogmatic. (2) Paul's critics could argue that Paul can use emotionally charged language as a strategy for manipulation. Nevertheless, if we do not assume a hermeneutic of suspicion, as I propose, we might conclude that Paul does not seek to represent the leaders as only rational all the time.

award when carrying out a life-threatening ministry of reconciliation on earth (4:18; 5:1–10).[56] On the one hand, God's workers are represented as knowing God (4:14; 5:1, 6) and trusting in his faithfulness (1:9; 4:13). Also, they reject doing shameful deeds (4:2) and dispose themselves to lead a life pleasing to God (5:9). On the other hand, God's workers are represented as merely human. Like any other humans, they feel troubled and confused, though not wholly despaired or out of mind (4:8). They rejoice at the somewhat positive report about the Corinthians (7:13; 13:9) but also would feel embarrassed (or ashamed) if the Corinthians are found failing to keep their promise about the collection (9:4).

In summary, God's workers are represented as thoughtful and passionate leaders who endeavour to provide spiritual life to and bring the Corinthians to maturity, although the representation is done more in a defending tone. But at the same time, they are represented as mere humans who have emotional reactions just like any other humans. Now I will turn to the representation of Paul.

The Apostle Paul

The distribution of "I" is concentrated in 2 Cor 11–12, where Paul contrasts himself with his critics, who are represented as negatively influencing the Corinthians. In keeping with the representation of the Pauline ministers, Paul represents himself as the servant and

[56] As indicated by Clark ("Apostleship," 50), Fridrichsen ("Apostle and His Message," 1–23) is the first scholar to set the understanding of Paul's apostleship in an eschatological framework. Based on 2 Cor 4:3, Fridrichsen argues that Paul's antagonists used his own words (e.g., "my gospel unveiled to me") against him, probably accusing Paul of wielding power to dominate the Corinthians. According to Fridrichsen, what is unique about this eschatological apostolate is the message—the task to preach the gospel (8). Moreover, he points out that Paul's message is closely associated with his own person (9), because his message is a particular message to the gentiles—how gentiles share in the Jewish covenant. When developing the *kerygma*, Paul has reinterpreted it in a new context (11).

apostolic leader who seeks to empower the Corinthians to follow Jesus Christ's cruciform authority.

Regarding his identity, Paul adds several new components in 2 Corinthians, in addition to his apostleship (1:1). Comparing himself with the "false apostles" (ψευδαπόστολοι, 11:13–15), he stresses that he is also a Hebrew, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, and, most of all, a *better* servant of Christ than his critics (11:22–23).[57] The co-text (i.e., textual context) indicates that he is likely using the vocabulary of his critics who, as he suggests, aim for self-aggrandizement. To defend that he is more of a genuine servant of the crucified Lord, Paul provides a curriculum vitae, as it were, a list of his sufferings when carrying out God's calling (11:23–33).[58] Representing himself as Christ's servant who suffers as a cruciform leader is not uncommon for Paul, as indicated in the discussion of 1 Corinthians. But the specification of his ethnic identity is new.[59] I

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[57] For interpretations of Paul's description of himself, see Malina and Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul*, 55–60, 204–5; cf. Eyl, "An Israelite," 148–68.

[58] Scholars debate the function and implications of Paul's self-revealing suffering and weakness. Barnett ("Apostle," 49–50) argues that Paul defends his apostleship in 2 Corinthians along two lines: (1) his calling and (2) his understanding of his weakness. Similarly, Black ("Apostle of Weakness," 84–111) argues that weakness is not only "a sign of Paul's humanity" (110) but also a "valid expression of the apostolic office" (85). By contrast, Wanamaker ("By the Power of God," 194–221) argues that Paul applies rhetoric to establish power and authority over the Corinthians. Assuming that "Paul has no power and therefore no authority unless it is recognized and acknowledges by the Corinthians" (209), Wanamaker sees all Paul's discursive strategies as persuading the Corinthians to recognize his power. Despite working within different hermeneutical paradigms, both Barnett and Wanamaker see Paul's defence as the end. By contrast, Ehrensperger (*Dynamics of Power*, 98–116) offers a more balanced interpretation. Ehrensperger argues that Paul claims the authority as an apostle but not for personal gain. Restating his suffering and weakness, Paul views his function as an apostle through the lens of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. So, according to Ehrensperger, Paul promotes a different kind of leadership in opposition to the "Roman elite value system" (112). Similarly, Wan (*Power in Weakness*) also rightly notes that Paul attempts to reconcile with the Corinthians because Paul wants to win them over for future instruction. According to Wan, Paul seeks to establish authority for teaching but is afraid that he will be misunderstood as basing that authority on his credentials. So, identifying himself with Christ's death, Paul indicates that the credentials belong to God. I concur with Ehrensperger and Wan. Regardless of how one evaluates Paul's weakness discourse or how Paul justifies his authority, we must investigate what Paul's elaborations and instructions do beyond his self-defence.

[59] The specification of the Jewish identity here provides a piece of evidence that Paul considers himself to remain Jewish in terms of ethnic identity. The interpretation of Paul's ethnic identity has been one of the crucial factors that result in different readings of the Pauline discourse. Ehrensperger has captured the complexity involved in discussing Paul's identity. She (*Crossroads of Cultures*, 17–35) rightly

suggest that his critics might have used these labels of honour for self-advancement among the Corinthians.[60] If my hypothesis is reasonable, Paul is likely using the critics' language to strike back: "Whatever you are, I am also." However, the honourable Jewish identity is not Paul's focus here; instead, his point seems that what matters is one's hard work.[61] To counterattack these opportunists who seek to claim the fruit of the Pauline mission (11:12), Paul's list of sufferings indicates that ministry takes hard work and is costly.

In addition to his self-portrayal, Paul also represents his critics' negative view of him. From Paul's perspective, some consider him to be an indecisive and weak leader (1:17–23). The embedded speech of his critics, whether outsiders or insiders to the Corinthian community, indicates their assessment of Paul—namely, that he has a humble and vulnerable appearance and contemptible speech in person but writes bold and harsh words in his absence (10:1, 10).[62] When responding to the critics' negative evaluation of

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points out that neither the old Hellenism/Judaism paradigm nor the new hybridity (i.e., cultural syncretism or infusion) paradigm is adequate to account for the problems arising in the congregations in the Eastern regions of the Roman empire. The inadequacy of both models lies in a shared assumption that the co-existence of linguistic, cultural, and social diversity is impossible. By contrast, she (*Crossroads of Cultures*, 3) attributes the problems to the difficulties involved in a "cultural translation process" in which Paul needed to translate a message derived first from a Jewish theological and cultural framework into different cultures. The cultural and social aspects Ehrensperger discusses is what previous scholars who stress the history of ideas have missed. Since the paradigm shift made by New Perspective scholars, probably no one today ignores Paul's Jewishness, but scholars continue to debate how to interpret it. For a radical New Perspective, see Eisenbaum, *Paul Was Not a Christian*. For a historical study on Roman influence on Paul, see Harrill, *Paul the Apostle*. For a postcolonial study on hybridity, see Lopez, "Colonized Apostle," 74–94. For a sociological study on the diaspora, see Charles, *Paul and the Politics of Diaspora*.

[60] The text does not indicate that Paul regards it as problematic to hold to Jewish tradition; what is problematic is wielding power by appealing to tradition or self-labelling for self-aggrandizement. Sanders ("Paul on the Law," 85) writes, "The study of Paul's opponents tells us nothing about his relationship with or attitude towards his kinsmen by race nor towards his native religion as such."

[61] Clarke (*Serve the Community*, 148) points out that "pride of place was accorded on the basis of honour and wealth" when discussing the social phenomenon of leadership in the first-century Greco-Roman world. If Clarke's study is accurate, we can see that Paul's defence indicates continuity, but even more discontinuity, with his surrounding culture.

[62] For a discussion on the nature of this weakness of physical appearance and speech, see Savage, *Power through Weakness*, 64–80. Cf. Malina and Neyrey (*Portraits of Paul*, 207–8); Clarke, *Serve the Community*, 187–89; Schellenberg, *Rethinking Paul's Rhetorical Education*, 320–23; Ballard, "Tongue-tied

his leadership, Paul points out the shallowness of their assessment. He asserts that he is knowledgeable even if he might be unskilled in speech (11:6) and that he will do what he says (10:11). In other words, he represents himself as able to discipline the wrongdoers in person. This is the very reason, as indicated, why he has deliberately postponed his visit—namely, to *spare* them (1:23; 12:20; 13:2). Paul's response implies strength and authoritative power over the Corinthians and, at the same time, softness and consideration.[63] Moreover, he addresses the Corinthians as beloved (7:1; 12:19) and compares his relationship with the Corinthians to that of parents and children (12:14).[64] Without a doubt, representing himself as their parent-like leader, Paul is exercising influence over them via his discourse. But does he desire to control them for personal gain and seek to maintain a systemic power-over relationship with the Corinthians? Again, I will postpone tackling this question until Chapter 6. Now I must investigate Paul's representation of his own social actions and reactions in light of my understanding of his self-representation of identity.

First, in keeping with the Pauline ministers, Paul's representation of his actions indicates a defensive tone. Several of the instances are encoded in negative terms. In the

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and Taunted," 50–70. Regardless of the different approaches to reconstructing the social and cultural context, these scholars conclude that Paul's presentation of his physical weakness was not in accordance with the cultural norms of strong leadership in his day.

[63] Land (*Integrity*, 91) rightly pointes out the paradoxical nature of Paul's leadership, which is both authoritative and loving.

[64] Scholars debate about how to interpret parental metaphors. For instance, Guthrie (*2 Corinthians*, 610–11) notes that in Greco-Roman culture, parents are regarded as benefactors of their children. So, he argues that Paul rejects the financial support from the Corinthians because he refuses to let the Corinthians become his patron; instead, he wants to be their benefactor, so that they become obligated to him. From a political perspective, Lassen ("Use of the Father Image," 127–36) argues that Paul offers a different image of a father against the background of the imperial father image popular in the Claudian Principate. Understanding Paul against Jewish culture, Myrick ("'Father' Imagery," 163–71) argues that Paul's pastoral practice as a father reflects "a Jewish paternal tradition of care" (171). On the other hand, as indicated in the previous chapter, Paul also uses a maternal image to describe his parental responsibility for the Corinthians. See Gaventa, *Our Mother Saint Paul.*

co-text surrounding these instances, Paul explains the reason why he does not demand financial support from the Corinthians—namely, because he does not want to burden them or take advantage of them (11:7–9; 12:13, 16–18).[65] Although he is their principal founder, Paul does not think that he owns the Corinthians. Instead, he sees himself as a father who betroths his virgin daughter (i.e., the Corinthians) to Christ (11:2). This metaphor indicates that in Paul's opinion, the Corinthians belong to Christ and should remain faithful to Christ. Still, Paul sees it as his responsibility to help keep their virginal fidelity until the wedding day.[66] This interpretation raises the question: does the use of this metaphor not imply that Paul has parental authority over the Corinthians for a long time because the wedding day will not come until the second coming of Jesus? Admittedly, the metaphor indeed implies Paul's long-term responsibility for his spiritual children. However, it is debatable whether Paul seeks long-term control over the Corinthians or even wants their long-term dependence on him. Paul notes that Christ gives him authoritative power over the Corinthians and also that such authority must be used for bringing the Corinthians to maturity (13:10). So, probably, Paul is indicating that even if his power-over relationship with the Corinthians will last a while, he has the best interests of the Corinthians in mind, like a responsible and wise parent who raises their children so that they can be independent. Thus, Paul argues that if he causes them to grieve by pointing out their wrong, it is to produce godly repentance in them (7:8–11). He also maintains that he never means to frighten them via his writing (10:9). Overall,

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[65] Land, *Integrity*, 222; Schellenberg, "Offer of Support," 312–36. Cf. Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 233–58.

[66] Guthrie (*2 Corinthians*, 507–8) points out that Paul's use of a marriage metaphor is grounded in the Old Testament, where marriage imagery is often appropriated by Israel's prophets to challenge the lack of covenantal faithfulness of God's people. In Jewish culture, the father has the responsibility of guarding the daughter's virginal fidelity before the marriage. See also Harris, *Second Epistle*, 734–38; Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 460–62; Barnett, *Second Epistle*, 498–500.

although Paul indicates his continuing responsibility to guard the Corinthians' purity, he represents himself as seeking to bring God's congregations to maturity. By presenting Paul's representation, I do not preclude evaluation, so whether Paul's representation is sincere or accurate will be discussed more in Chapter 6.

Second, as regards semiotic actions, Paul represents himself as the primary voice, as he does in 1 Corinthians. Moreover, as indicated in the preamble, Paul's power to speak increases in 2 Corinthians; particularly, Paul talks even more about his talking more explicitly. His semiotic actions can be summarized into four groups. First, the majority are his commentaries on his act of writing to the Corinthians (2:4; 6:13; 7:3; 8:8; 11:16–18, 21, 30–31; 12:1). The second group is about his ministry of proclamation (11:6–7) and his boasting about his weakness (12:5–9). The third group includes his witness to the Macedonians' generosity (8:3) and his boasting about the Corinthians' enthusiasm related to the collection (9:1–5). Lastly, Paul also specifies what he is doing via his current writing, such as making statements (1:23; 2:3; 13:2) and giving instructions (2:8; 10:1). Although both letters include Paul's commentaries on his writing, 2 Corinthians has a higher proportion. Regardless of how one interprets his motivation, I conclude that Paul elaborates more on his own speech in 2 Corinthians, which might also be an indicator of defensiveness or self-awareness of possible misunderstandings.

As regards reactions, Paul represents himself as both rational and compassionate. On the one hand, Paul represents himself a discerning and thoughtful leader. For instance, he decides to postpone his visit to Corinth for the sake of the Corinthians, which is not a sign of indecisiveness but a sign of thoughtful decision (2:1; 12:20–21), as discussed

above. Besides, Paul represents his discernment of his critics' true colours (11:3–5, 14–15). Most of all, he represents himself as aware of his emotions (11:23). On the other hand, Paul represents more of his emotive reactions. For instance, he represents his emotional distress when writing to the Corinthians (2:4) and his affection for the Corinthians (2:4; 11:2–3, 11; 12:14–15). Similarly, he grieves for the sexual immorality among them (12:21) but rejoices when receiving Titus's positive report about the Corinthians (7:6–9).

In summary, God's workers in 2 Corinthians are represented as given the authority to serve God's congregations. Explicitly, the Pauline ministers are represented as the founding workers of the Corinthian congregation. They are represented as the Corinthians' spiritual parents who are taking it as their responsibility to correct the misunderstandings and misbehaviour of their spiritual children. However, as indicated, the Pauline ministers and their instructions are not always well accepted, so they are represented as defending their ministry and responding to their critics. Nevertheless, the workers' power actions are represented as having the effect of providing spiritual life to Christ's followers and fostering growth in them—in Paul's own words, *for building up and not for tearing down*. Again, it remains an open question whether or not Paul is sincere and accurate in his representation. I will wait until Chapter 6 to tackle it.

The Critics: Influential yet Dangerous

Second Corinthians mentions another group of influential leaders at Corinth—labelled as "false apostles"—which is not mentioned explicitly in 1 Corinthians. This label suggests that they are viewed as apostles, at least to some Corinthians, but Paul judges them as false. As already discussed above, Satan's power is represented as manifested in

impacting humans and leading God's people astray (11:4–5).[67] Appraising his critics negatively, Paul calls them "Satan's servants" who disguise themselves as "servants of righteousness" (11:14–15). According to Paul's representation, his critics have the power to enslave, devour, and exploit the Corinthians, as well as slap their face (11:20). Since these critics are abstractly represented as manipulative dominators and since the Corinthians are represented as patiently bearing with their schemes, Paul represents his purpose of exposing their true colours as protecting the Corinthians' understanding from corruption (11:3–4). For this very reason, Paul represents himself as having the responsibility to fight against their ungodly influence (11:21—12:10). Again, I will wait until Chapter 6 to discuss whether we can take Paul at face value and how we can interpret his apparent competition with the critics for influence among the Corinthians.

Besides his critics inside the Jesus movement, there is a passing note about a political authority, King Aretas's officer in Damascus, who is represented as the ruling class who has persecuted Paul (11:32–33; cf. Acts 9:23–25). This note not only indicates the danger involved in the Pauline mission but also provides a hint that Paul is a victim of Roman political power. It is worth noting that Paul's strategy to resist this political power is to run away. Now I will turn to the representation of the last agent type: the general humans.

General Humans

According to the analysis of the social actions and reactions of God's congregations in general and the Corinthians in particular, Christ's followers are represented as having a

[67] Historical investigation is not my attempt here. For a sample of historical reconstruction of the identity of the servants of Satan, see Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership*, 115–25.

spiritual and moral influence on each other and outsiders, when acting in concert according to Christ's cruciform authority. Here I will focus on discussing the Corinthians.

God's Congregations: Potential When Acting in Concert

Regarding their collective identity, the Corinthians are represented as the congregation of God (1:1) and his temple (6:16).[68] This representation resonates with what has been observed concerning 1 Corinthians. Besides, Paul represents them as the virgin bride of Christ (11:2). Moreover, Paul addresses them as "sisters and brothers" (1:8; 8:1; 13:11) and "beloved" (7:1; 12:19).[69] They are represented as having shared difficulties and comfort with the Pauline ministers (1:3–7; 7:3). All these representations indicate a close (or once-close) relationship and an established partnership between the Corinthians and the Pauline ministers, at least from Paul's perspective.[70] Furthermore, the Corinthians are collectively compared to a recommendation letter for the Pauline ministers to the world (3:2) and a letter of Christ written by or for Christ (3:3). This letter metaphor probably means that the Corinthians are the witness to Christ's working through the human leaders

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[68] For a study on the Christian identity of the Corinthians, see Nguyen, *Christian Identity in Corinth*.

[69] For a sociological-anthropological understanding of communities of Christ's followers in general, see Malina and Neyrey's discussion of "fictive family" (*Portraits of Paul*, 160–61). MacDonald (*Pauline Churches*, 31–84) appropriates a sociological method to reconstruct the Pauline ministry and congregations. For a study on Paul's understanding of siblingship, see Aasgaard, *Brothers and Sisters*.

[70] Many works have discussed Paul's relationship with the Corinthians. For instance, Bieringer ("Paul's Divine Jealousy," 223–53) notes that Paul's relationship with his addressees in 2 Corinthians is unique because Paul indicates a deep love for them but the relationship is not mutual. Among many, Gaventa ("Apostles and Church," 182–99) argues that Paul's relationship with the Corinthians is God-bonded via the gospel. By contrast, Polaski ("Inside Jokes," 233–42) argues that Paul's emphasis on his relationship with the Corinthians is part of his rhetoric of persuading the Corinthians to adopt his perspective because he is competing with "other models of authority for the Corinthians' allegiance" (241). I regard both readings as valuable. Gaventa probably represents those who work within a modern paradigm, assuming that language (in use) reflects reality, and Polaski represents those who work within a postmodern paradigm, assuming that language in use constructs reality.

such as Paul, Timothy, and Silas. In short, the Pauline ministers have founded the Corinthian congregation and established a partnership with them.

As regards power actions, God's congregations in general and the Corinthians, in particular, are not powerless, though encoded as patient and receiver most frequently. For instance, in keeping with the analysis about them in 1 Corinthians, when one individual member sins, her or his transgression impacts the entire congregation (2:5). What is more worth noting in 2 Corinthians is that the power produced in their actions when *acting in concert* can influence God's workers, other assemblies of Christ, and the broader Jesus movement. Paul represents both the negative and positive impact generated by God's congregations' power actions. Having studied the effects of the Corinthians' and the Macedonians' actions, I have three observations.

First, God's congregations are represented as having the potential to impact their leaders. The Corinthians' tolerance of Paul's critics has compelled Paul to defend himself as a boasting fool (12:11). But also, their communal mourning has brought relief to Titus (7:7) and thus encouraged the workers (7:13).

Second, God's congregations are represented as having the potential to impact each other. The testimonies about both the Macedonians and the Corinthians indicate that Christ's followers can impact God's kingdom work positively when acting in concert according to God's will. The believers in Macedonia are praised in two contexts. The first context concerns supporting the Jerusalem believers in need; the Macedonians give sacrificially to the Jerusalem collection, according to God's will (8:1–6). The second context concerns supporting Paul. Owing to the support of the Macedonians, Paul can do ministry among the Corinthians without demanding payment (11:9b). As regards the

Corinthians, Paul's boasting about their generosity is said to provoke the believers in Macedonia, regardless of what this provoking means and whatever effect it produces (9:2). Besides the moral influence on each other, God's congregations are represented as having the power to authorize individuals for broader ecclesial service.[71] For instance, a brother is represented as appointed by the church to travel with the Pauline ministers to send the collection to Jerusalem (8:19).

Lastly, God's congregations are represented as having the potential to impact the world. Paul indicates that the Corinthians, together with the Pauline ministers, serve as ambassadors on behalf of Christ to reconcile the world to the Father (5:20).[72]

In summary, from Paul's perspective, immoral acts of individual members can bring harm to the congregation. But God's congregations have the potential to empower each other when acting in concert according to God's will. Perhaps this is the reason why Paul endeavours to move God's congregations toward maturity by correcting their wrongs and training them in righteousness (which will be discussed in the next chapter).

As regards semiotic actions, the Corinthians have a low percentage of speaking (six percent) but account for the highest percentage of receiving speech (fifty-six

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[71] Concerning a Pauline theology of ministry, Hanson (*Pioneer Ministry*) argues that the apostolic authority lies in the church, not in any individual. He is partially correct by pointing out that the apostles are given authority only because they are the spearhead of the church. His understanding is partial because Paul's discourse often indicates that his apostleship is assigned by Christ directly through God's will. So, regarding whether the apostolic authority lies in the church or in some individuals, it seems that in the emerging of the Jesus movement, we have evidence of both.

[72] It is debatable whether the subject "we" implied in πρεσβεύομεν should be interpreted as exclusive or inclusive. Some commentators bypass "we" and discuss only Paul, such as Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 295–300, and others understand it as absolutely exclusive, such as Barnett, *Second Epistle*, 311 and Guthrie, *2 Corinthians*, 311–12. Both assert that Paul (together with apostles) is urging the Corinthians to be reconciled with God. There are also some arguing for the possibility of an exclusive we. For instance, Harris (*Second Epistle*, 447) notes that "we" could involve all proclaimers of the gospel, albeit instead in a passing note. Land (*Integrity*, 133–37) argues at length for the inclusive we. I have found his reading convincing because I do not see any evidence that the Corinthians need to be reconciled with God as Barnett and Guthrie note.

percent). In other words, the Corinthians are represented as the primary receiver of the authoritative leaders' semiotic actions.

As regards reactions, the Corinthians' emotive reactions significantly outnumber their cognitive reactions in 2 Corinthians by forty percent. Whereas Paul's proportions of emotive reactions relative to all his reactions remain comparable in both letters, there is a significant increase observed in the representation of emotive reactions for the Corinthians.[73] The entire congregation's lamentation is reported by Titus to Paul (7:7). In the same context, the Corinthians are also represented as having received Titus with fear and trembling (7:15). The same report also denotes that the Corinthians have affection for Paul (7:6–7, 12) and have shown obedience (7:15). Based on these representations on the Corinthians' emotions, one might infer that Paul's letter and Titus's presence have had a psychological impact on the Corinthians. What this means in relation to Paul's use of power will be discussed in Chapter 6. As regards emotive reactions toward others besides the Pauline ministers, the Corinthians are positively represented as once having the eagerness to support the Jerusalem believers in need (8:10–11; 9:2). But the Corinthians are also represented as unwisely putting up with the critics (11:4, 19–20). Furthermore, echoing with the report of Chloe's associates in 1 Corinthians, Paul represents his concern that the same kind of negative emotions toward each other—e.g., jealousy and lust—might still linger among the Corinthians (12:20).

But the Corinthians are not entirely emotional. The discourse represents the Corinthians as knowledgeable; they know God's grace (8:9) and should have known how

[73] Paul's ratio of emotive reactions to cognitive reactions in 1 Corinthians is 1.3, and that in 2 Corinthians is 1.5. But the Corinthians' ratio of emotive reactions to cognitive reactions in 1 Corinthians is 0.4, and that in 2 Corinthians is 2.3.

the workers conduct themselves, although their knowledge is incomplete (1:13–14). They are also represented as the masters of their minds. Concerning the Jerusalem offering, each of them is invited to formulate their conviction for how much she or he will contribute (9:7). Concerning offenders among them, the Corinthians are invited to decide whether they will forgive, and Paul will act in keeping with their decision (2:10). These representations imply that from Paul's perspective, the Corinthians are more or less independent thinkers, or at least have the potential to think independently. However, the representation concerning their judgement indicates that Paul regards them as lacking discernment and maturity. For instance, they have tolerated Paul's critics and misjudged the Pauline mission; such tolerance and misjudgment have caused Paul's concern (11:1–15, 19–20). So, although Paul seeks to influence their thoughts, he represents himself as incapable of having control over the Corinthians' minds; he instead indicates a fear that other influences might more strongly affect the Corinthians.

In summary, Christ's followers have the potential to generate impact inside and outside the congregation. When Christ's followers act in concert according to the cruciform authority of Christ, they have the potential to generate positive effects, such as supporting believers in need and reconciling the world to God. In keeping with 1 Corinthians, however, 2 Corinthians represents the Corinthians as immature. Regarding cognitive reactions, as independent thinkers, they have evaluated Paul or other workers, but in both cases, they are appraised as misjudging. Therefore, they are represented as immature and in need of continuing edification. Regarding emotive reactions, Paul's discourse also represents them as emotional. Their emotions can be impacted by the

authoritative leaders, and in return, their actions also have a psychological impact on the leaders.

Conclusion of Representations in 2 Corinthians

In this second half of my chapter, I have discussed the representations of social actions and reactions in 2 Corinthians. Among the complexity of power relationships, as represented, God remains the most powerful agent who has absolute authority; the other spiritual powers are also powerful, but their power is limited; God's workers are authoritative and suffering servants who are given by God the authority and responsibility to build up his congregations; the critics are influential, but their influence on believers are appraised negatively; God's congregations, such as the Macedonians and the Corinthians, are least powerful compared with superhuman beings and authoritative leaders but yet have potential to benefit each other and outsiders when acting in concert according to Christ's authority. It is worth repeating that what is summarized here is Paul's representation, so the conclusion is, at best, his understanding of the power relationships. In addition to this general pattern, a change of power dynamics is observed when 2 Corinthians is compared with 1 Corinthians. For instance, whereas the evil spiritual powers and the critics are represented as increasingly powerful, the Pauline ministers and Paul are represented as losing power. Particularly, although the Pauline ministers and Paul are represented as more vocal, the majority of their semiotic actions are associated with their action of defending; besides, the Pauline workers are represented as more reactive in 2 Corinthians, which is often an indicator of lacking or losing power, according to van Leeuwen. In summary, while the Pauline workers are still powerful, their representation in 2 Corinthians indicates a loss of power. It is most striking that in

the midst of this change of power, God the Father is represented not only as remaining superordinate and most powerful but also as gracious and merciful.

Conclusion

In this chapter on power in words, I have studied the representations of social actions and reactions and hence reconstructed the webs of power relationships embedded in 1 and 2 Corinthians. First of all, I must stress two important axes that make up the skeleton of Paul's representation of power structure—and that are not necessarily common convictions today. The first concerns his belief in superhuman powers in general and, in particular, his reverence for Yahweh and commitment to follow Jesus Christ; the second concerns his convictions regarding eschatology. Although I have analyzed God and the evil spiritual powers as social actors, we must keep it in mind that they are represented in Paul's discourse as *real* superhuman beings. Paul's belief in spiritual powers—including God's absolute authority and evil powers' harming potential—and his conviction of God's eternal reign play an essential role in his conceptualization and exercise of power. In other words, in Paul's ideology (or theology), material and spiritual powers are not treated as different in kind, nor are the spiritual and social domains. In addition, Paul's discourse also indicates an imminent end day. As indicated above, the invitation to serve and lead is costly to Paul, and his belief in God's judgement and eschatological reward plays a vital role in his interpretation of suffering for carrying out God's assignments. Having these overarching observations in mind, I now will present Paul's representation of power structures and relationships in both Corinthian letters.

In Paul's representation, God the Father is the most potent agent of material actions, although God is not the most vocal speaker. By contrast, among the primary

agents, the Corinthians are represented as the least powerful; they remain similarly less powerful in actions in both letters and become even more powerless in speech and more emotional in 2 Corinthians. As regards the Pauline ministers, including Paul, the discourse represents them as cruciform leaders who have been given the authority to build up the Corinthians. The Corinthians have a special relationship with the Pauline ministers, and particularly with Paul. The most striking changes of power relationships are observed in the representations for the Pauline ministers, the evil spiritual powers, and the critics. From 1 Corinthians to 2 Corinthians, the Pauline ministers become increasingly emotional and yet less powerful in action, and at the same time, the explicit representation of their semiotic actions increases. These two observations—the reverse patterns of their actions and reactions and the need to talk about their act of talking—lead me to hypothesize that the Pauline ministers' authority is likely being challenged by (at least some of) the Corinthians. By contrast, although the representations for evil spiritual powers and the critics remain in a small percentage, their power to act increases in 2 Corinthians. Their increasing influence on the Corinthians, I suggest, is perceived as a threat to the Pauline ministries. Such power dynamics can be interpreted differently according to different theological assumptions. One way to understand it is that the authoritative leaders suffer a loss of influence under the threat of other authorized leaders and thus feel a need to defend themselves. This interpretation is invoked by Paul. In other words, Paul himself construes this situation in his letters, even though his perception of the reality could be biased, if not distorted. More critical evaluations will be given in Chapter 6. In summary, what I have reconstructed in this chapter reflects the structure, situatedness, and dynamics of social power relationships embedded in Paul's use of

language—i.e., power in words. This reconstruction tells us the narrative world related to power relationships construed in his discourse. Representation itself is also a use of power. One must decide to adopt or reject Paul's vision projected by his representation or take a position somewhere in between. To a certain extent, one's adoption or rejection of Paul's vision of power structures will inevitably influence how Paul's power via words impacts her or him. In the next chapter, I will analyze the second part of Paul's use of power, namely, how he negotiates with his audience about making changes—i.e., power via words.

CHAPTER 5: POWER VIA WORDS: NEGOTIATING KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICES, IDENTITY, AND REACTION

Discourse (language in use) not only represents power dynamics but also exerts formative power over social actors since a discourse can influence its audience. The representation itself is a subtler way of using power because it projects a new vision of reality by forming a new discourse (knowledge) about it. Thus, my analysis of representation in the previous chapter has indeed tackled a secret face of power. By contrast, the analysis I am going to discuss in this chapter concerns a relatively public face of power via discourse, which is often called rhetoric or the art of persuasion. Many studies have sought to interpret how Pauline discourse persuades, even though power and authority are not their subject matter.[1] Most of these works appropriate rhetorical criticism, and some use speech-act theories derived from pragmatics.[2] My study approaches the subject of how Paul's discourse negotiates to induce changes in his audience—i.e., power via words. I prefer to discuss Paul's power via words in terms of negotiation instead of persuasion, because the word negotiation conveys a sense of dynamic interaction, i.e., including *giving and receiving*, between participants and thus accords with what I believe about the

[1] E.g., Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*; Anderson, *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul*; Sampley and Lampe, eds., *Paul and Rhetoric*; Porter and Dyer, eds., *Paul and Ancient Rhetoric*.

[2] E.g., Thiselton, *First Epistle*.

complexity and dynamics of power.[3] In particular, I seek to analyze and synthesize the themes of the *moves* (i.e., what sentences enact) as well as to investigate the strategies used to legitimate these moves. My specific research questions in this chapter are: What kind of changes does Paul seek to induce in his audience, and how does he enact and justify his instructions? Before delving into details, I am going to provide a preamble to summarize the general patterns of Paul's negotiations in 1 and 2 Corinthians.

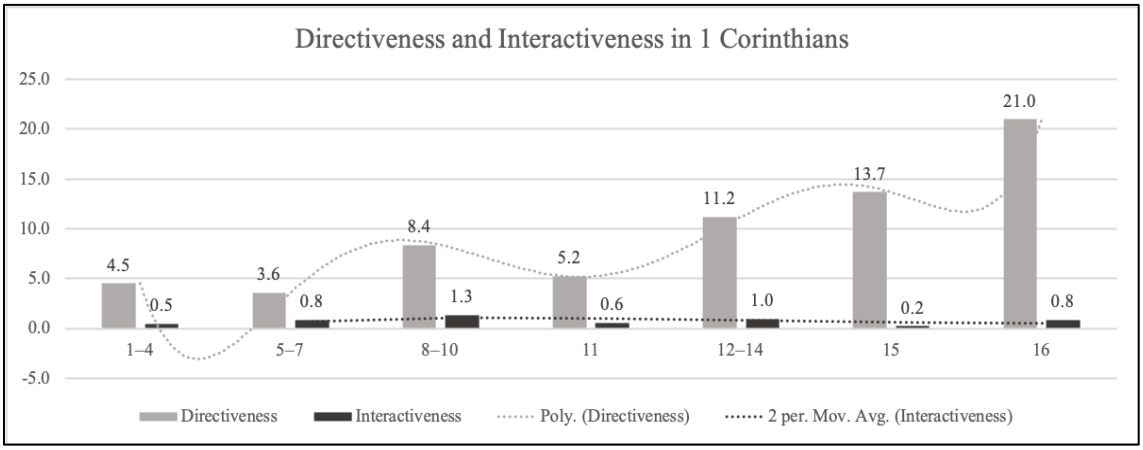

Figure 5.1 The Ratios of Directness and Interactiveness in 1 Corinthians[4]

[3] I borrow the phrase "power negotiation" from Polaski (*Discourse of Power*, 73–103). The notion *negotiation* is often used in politics and communication science. It is also often associated with rhetorical approaches in New Testament power studies, e.g., Robbins, *Tapestry*, 99–100. I am not appropriating Robbins' socio-rhetorical approach. Instead, my approach aligns more with Joel Green's discussion on discourse ("Discourse Analysis," 175–96). Green notes that human discourse is a meaning-making process in which social actors negotiate meaning and exchange opinions.

[4] To repeat my methodology, moves are classified into three primary categories: statement, question, and instruction. Each category is further classified into two types: direct and indirect. A move becomes indirect when its actual content is downranked and become an embedded clause. For instance, "I am a student" is a direct statement, and "I say that I am a student" is an indirect statement; "Is he nice?" is a direct question, and "Do you know that he is nice?" is an indirect question; "Do it" is a direct instruction, and "I command you to do it" is an indirect instruction. I use the ratio of directness (RD) to quantify directness in discourse. In my definition, RD is calculated by the formula RD=Direct Moves/Indirect Moves. *The higher the RD*, *the more direct the discourse is*. As regards interactiveness, statements and indirect questions are classified as "giving," and direct questions and instructions are classified as "demanding." I use the ratio of interactiveness (RI) to quantify interactiveness in discourse. In my definition, RI is calculated by the formula RI=Demanding/Giving. *The higher the RI*, *the more interactive the discourse is*. Regarding the figure, the horizontal axis represents the section numbers, and the vertical axis (y-value) represents the ratios. The numbers above each bar is the y-value. The dotted lines are the polynomial trendlines for directness. Admittedly, for division of sections, see Fee, *First Corinthians*; Thiselton, *First Epistle*; Garland, *1 Corinthians*; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians.*

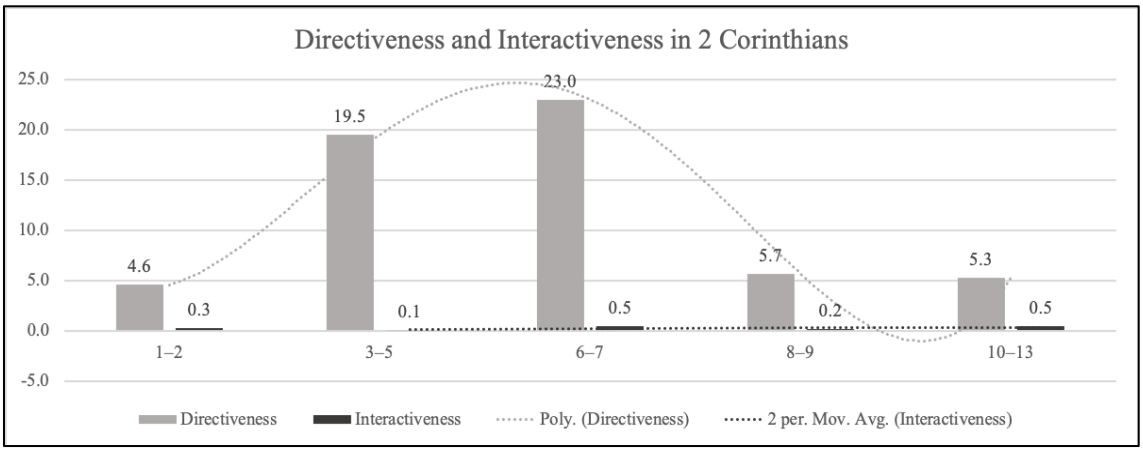

Figure 5.2 The Ratios of Directness and Interactiveness in 2 Corinthians

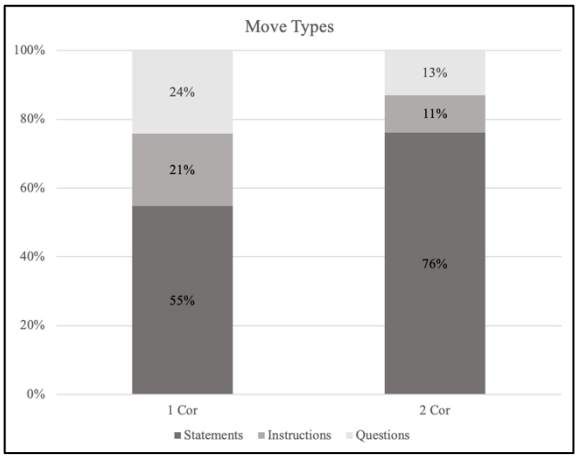

Figure 5.3 Comparing the Proportions of Move Types in 1 & 2 Corinthians

Preamble

Simply put, Paul's language in use moves, either directly or indirectly, his audience to produce changes; in other words, it is meant to exercise formative power. Here I will discuss the general patterns of three areas: (1) general tone, (2) change types, and (3) legitimation types. First, concerning the general tone,[5] I will compare the trends of the

[5] I am not using tone as a technical term (i.e., intonation) as Halliday and Matthiessen do (*Halliday's Introduction*, 14–18). In my study, tone is used loosely and metaphorically to refer to the general characteristic of interpersonal meanings (i.e., how language in use can be interpreted as interaction and negotiation).

directness and *interactiveness*, as well as move types, in 1 and 2 Corinthians (see Figures 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3).

Regarding directness, the two letters share similar overall ratios but differ in their trends.[6] According to Figure 5.1, 1 Corinthians' directness shows a general trend of increase as the discourse unfolds, although there is fluctuation in the middle. Differently, as indicated in Figure 5.2, the directness trend in 2 Corinthians is high in the middle and low at the ends. It is worth noting that the beginning and the end of 2 Corinthians encode mostly Paul's personal matters.

Regarding interactiveness, according to Figures 5.1 and 5.2, none of the sections in both letters are below the zero-line, which means that both discourses are not merely giving information. Instead, both are demanding something from the audience, either "information" or "goods and services."[7] However, 1 Corinthians is more interactive than 2 Corinthians since the overall ratio of interactiveness in 1 Corinthians is twice the ratio in 2 Corinthians.[8] Also, when studying the statements' content, I have identified more reported speech[9] in 1 Corinthians than 2 Corinthians; besides, 1 Corinthians has a higher proportion of direct questions. As implied by all these observations, 1 Corinthians leaves the impression that Paul is responding to the information he receives from his audience and, at the same time, seeking to provoke responses from them. By comparison, 2 Corinthians leaves the impression that Paul is doing most of the telling.

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[6] The overall ratios of directness for 1 and 2 Corinthians are 6.8 and 6.9, respectively.

[7] Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar*, 79–80.

[8] The ratios of interactiveness for 1 and 2 Corinthians are 0.7 and 0.3 respectively.

[9] For instance, ἐδηλώθη γάρ μοι περὶ ὑμῶν (1 Cor 1:11), and Ὅλως ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία (1 Cor 5:1).

After comparing directness and interactiveness, my next task is to examine the proportions of specific move types. According to Figure 5.3, 1 Corinthians encodes higher proportions of questions and instructions, and 2 Corinthians encodes higher percentages of statements. Notably, 1 Corinthians has a twice higher proportion of instructions than 2 Corinthians. When direct and indirect instructions are studied separately, different patterns are observed. First Corinthians has a twice higher proportion of *direct* instructions than 2 Corinthians; by contrast, 2 Corinthians has a slightly higher proportion of *indirect* instructions than 1 Corinthians. This observation implies that 1 Corinthians is not only more instructive than 2 Corinthians but also more direct when giving instructions.

The previous chapter already concluded that 2 Corinthians is more defensive. One piece of evidence for this is that 2 Corinthians includes a higher percentage of commentaries on Paul's semiotic actions, e.g., why he writes what he writes or talks in the way he is talking. Also, 2 Corinthians not only has a higher representation of Paul's emotion but also encodes more negation when representing the Pauline ministers' power actions, namely, what they have not done. The contrasting of their tone here seems to add another piece of evidence. As indicated above, 2 Corinthians seems less interactive and instructive. Thus, the analyses of representation and negotiation together suggest that 2 Corinthians is more defensive and less instructive when compared with 1 Corinthians.

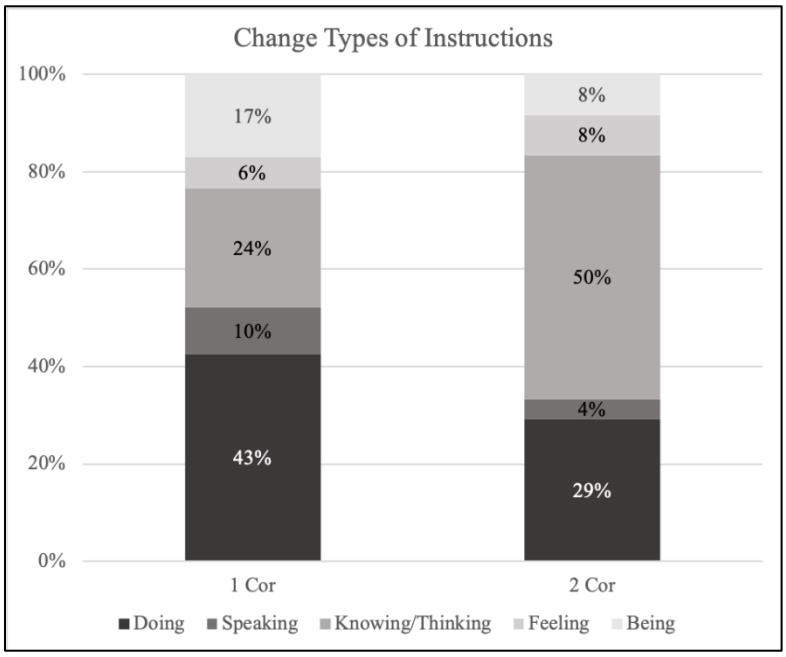

Figure 5.4 Comparing the Change Types in 1 & 2 Corinthians[10]

Second, having discussed the tone, I will now turn to discuss the change types. Figure 5.4 graphs the general patterns of the changes that Paul seeks to induce. As indicated in Figure 5.4, in 1 Corinthians, the top three areas Paul seeks to deal with are how the Corinthians should *do*, *know/think*, and *be(come)*, but in 2 Corinthians, they change to how the Corinthians should *know/think*, *do*, and, tied for the third place, *feel* and *be(come)*. So, while 1 Corinthians negotiates primarily social practices, knowledge, and identity, 2 Corinthians negotiates mainly knowledge, social practices, and, tied for the third place, reaction and identity.

[10] A change type refers to the area in which an instruction seeks to produce change. For instance, the number 40 percent means that forty percent of the instructions identified in 1 Corinthians are interpreted as changing the Corinthians' doings (i.e., material actions), and so on. For more details, see my methodology chapter.

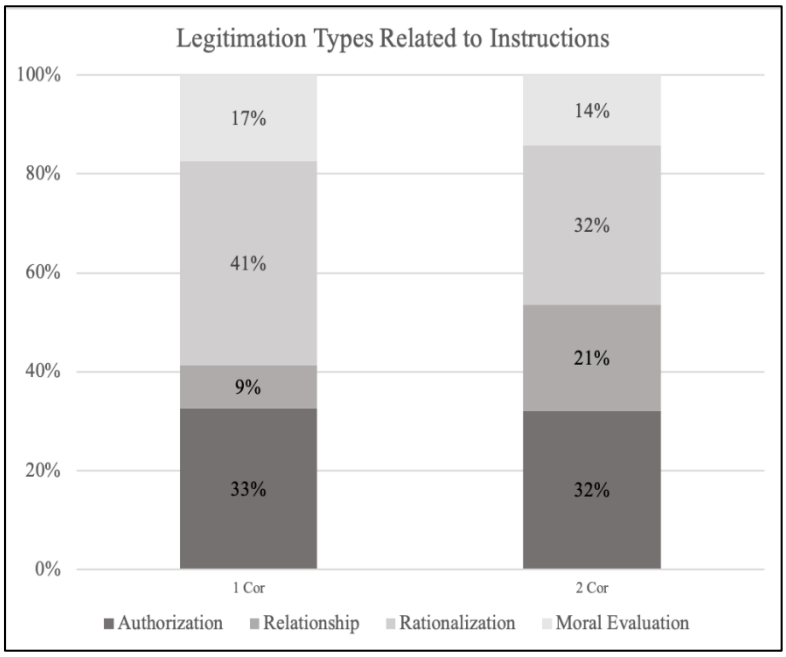

Figure 5.5 Comparing the Legitimation Types in 1 & 2 Corinthians[11]

Lastly, Figure 5.5 traces the general patterns of the legitimation strategies Paul uses to justify his directives. When compared, the similarity between the two letters is that authorization and rationalization combined account for more than half of all legitimation types. But what is more worth noting is the contrast between the two letters. Regarding the number-three strategy, 1 Corinthians uses moral evaluation, and 2 Corinthians uses relationship. This observation implies that 2 Corinthians draws its force more from relationship than 1 Corinthians.

[11] A legitimation type refers to the strategy that is used to legitimate an instruction. For instance, the number 35 percent means that thirty-five percent of instructions identified in 1 Corinthians are legitimated by the strategy of authorization (e.g., citing the name of Jesus and citing Scripture, etc.). For more details, see my methodology chapter. In addition to van Leeuwen's categories of legitimation, I use one more type: relationship. I define it as a strategy to legitimate one's instructions by reference to relationships. Different ways are identified to realize this type in Pauline discourse, such as using vocatives that indicate intimate relationships (e.g., "my beloved brothers and sisters"), specifying his relationship with those at stake (e.g., writing to you as my beloved children), and providing personal information.

The general patterns discussed in this preamble are meant to provide a general contour for my following discussions. In what follows, I will elaborate on the content and strategies of Paul's negotiations in 1 and 2 Corinthians, respectively.

Negotiating Social Practices, Knowledge, and Identity in 1 Corinthians

As discussed in the previous chapter, 1 Corinthians represents God as the absolutely powerful agent, Jesus as the cruciform Lord, and the Spirit as empowering humans to know God and gifting believers to serve his congregations. Also, it represents Paul himself as a responsible parent-like founding leader who is given authority by God to bring the Corinthians to maturity. By contrast, the Corinthians are represented as immature but not wholly powerless and as having the potential to produce a positive influence on both insiders and outsiders when acting in concert according to Christ's cruciform authority. Additionally, both God's leaders and congregations are represented as being surrounded by evil spiritual powers and other authoritative leaders, who could cause them to suffer for following Christ or walk away from the truth of the gospel. It is within this web of power relationships that Paul's power via words is interpreted as negotiations meant to (re)align the Corinthians' social practices, knowledge, and identity with the cruciform authority of Jesus Christ.[12]

As discussed by other studies, 1 Corinthians is ideologically loaded, since it is evident that Paul seeks to move the Corinthians to adopt his perspective on a variety of issues.[13] There is tension implied in his discourse between what Paul seeks to accomplish

[12] Cf. Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 33–34.

[13] E.g., Castelli, "Interpretations of Power," 197–222; Polaski, "Inside Jokes," 233–42; Wanamaker, "A Rhetoric of Power," 115–38; Jodamus, "Gendered Ideology," 29–58.

and their habitual doing and thinking. However, the use of a variety of legitimation strategies identified by my analysis, indicates that Paul in 1 Corinthians, at least in the majority of it, intends to avoid exerting influence harshly and that he is instead negotiating with his audience. In what follows, I will discuss what Paul's instructions seek to produce in the Corinthians and how he legitimates his moves, and I will organize my discussion by topics, which are themes that emerged out of my quantitatively-informed qualitative analysis.[14] These themes mainly concern leadership, community building, rights and love, and the resurrection.

Negotiating a Different Conception of Leadership

The first negotiation I will discuss addresses leadership, a theme that emerged from the analysis of the instructions embedded in 1 Cor 1–4 (1:10, 26; 3:10, 18, 21; 4:1, 5, 16).[15] One's conception of leadership, in general, is often the basis on which she or he perceives and assesses their leaders. Paul's representation of the Corinthians' conception of leadership reflects more or less the Greco-Roman ethos of self-sufficiency and self-promotion that results in competition among leaders, and such an understanding is regarded as not aligning with the message of the cross.[16]

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[14] I follow a basic five-step procedure that includes listing, grouping, labeling, regrouping, and synthesizing, when I analyze the direct and indirect instructions. My goal is to categorize what Paul's instructions seek to produce. It is worth noting that instructions are not the only move type that is meant to induce changes. Other moves can also strategically influence the audience to do something. For instance, questions can be used to deal with one's ignorance and produce self-awareness or provoke new thinking. But I will limit my focus to the instructions here and interpret the questions as auxiliary ways (or strategies) to introduce or reinforce the primary changes meant to accomplish via the instructions.

[15] Some might see leadership as anachronism because the New Testament texts do not explicitly talk about leaders or leadership. It is true that the New Testament does not include explicit discussions on institutional leadership in the Greco-Roman or modern sense. But it definitely has discussions on the functions and requirements of leaders (e.g., 1 Cor 3:5–9; 1 Tim 3:1–13) and on their authority and power (e.g., Mark 10:35–45; 1 Cor 9:1–14), regardless of how leaders should be conceived. For a discussion on leadership models in Paul's culture, see Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership*.

[16] See Savage, *Power through Weakness*, 19–53; Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, 31–43.

Paul's instructions revolve around the report of Chloe's associates that "divided thoughts" due to siding loyalties with leaders are taking place among the Corinthians (1:11–12).[17] It is worth noting that two indirect instructions encoded with the same process παρακαλῶ sandwich the discussion on the conception of leadership (1:10; 4:16).[18] These two indirect instructions explicitly encode Paul's subjectivity and denote what Paul does with his language. Between these two indirect instructions are six direct instructions, through which Paul instructs his audience to reconsider the so-called criteria of God's selection (1:26), be mindful of the foundation he has laid for them (3:10), avoid being deceived by cultural standards (3:18), avoid boasting in human leaders (3:21), and perceive the leaders as servants of Christ (4:1), as well as avoid judging the leaders too quickly (4:5). Notably, all these instructions deal with the Corinthians' conception of leadership and elaborate on the first indirect instruction realized by παρακαλῶ.

According to Paul's interpretation, the "divided thoughts" (σχίσματα) of the Corinthians are problematic; thus, he urges them to improve the situation, which is his

[17] The traditional partition view interprets σχίσματα as an indication that the Corinthians were divided into groups, e.g., Barrett, *First Epistle*, 43–46; Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 119. Recent scholarship challenges this traditional partition view. For instance, Fee (*First Corinthians*, 53–54) and Garland (*1 Corinthians*, 42) suggest that σχίσματα should be rendered merely as "division" (in the sense of "divided opinions") because it does not necessarily refer to the existing parties in the Corinthian church. Fee also points out that Paul's language should not be taken as a promotion of uniformity of speech. According to Fee, Paul's argument probably indicates that the Corinthians should agree on some theological basis related to their faith. To some extent, I agree with Fee's argument. Although the report of Chloe's associates indicates some sort of contention among the Corinthians, it is only an undue speculation that the congregation was in reality divided into parties. However, the mishandling of divided opinions by immature people often leads to actual schism, so there are no good reasons to disregard completely the possibility of the traditional view.

[18] For how to understand παρακαλῶ in light of Hellenistic culture, see Bjerkelund, *Parakalô.* Bejerkelund notes that the use of this word by a Hellenistic ruler implies politeness and an intention to avoid direct commanding (59–63). For how to understand it in light of modern linguistics (speech acts theory), see Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 111–14. For how to understand its use in 1 Cor 1:10 in light of rhetorical criticism, see Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 1. For how to understand it (especially its use in 2 Corinthians) in light of Hebrew Scripture, see Bieringer, "Comforted Comforter," 1–7.

first use of παρακαλῶ (1:10). Paul might have anticipated some reaction against his construal from the Corinthians—e.g., "What makes you consider our practice to be problematic?" I imagine this scenario because 1 Cor 1:12 seems to be a perfect response to the above-imagined question—i.e., "I say this because each of you says: I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas, I am of Christ." Depending on one's rendering of the auxiliary ὅτι (that or because), Paul is either elaborating on or justifying his interpretation of the situation implied in 1 Cor 1:12. According to van Leeuwen's theory, Paul legitimates his move enacted in παρακαλῶ by using the strategy of authorization, which is realized in the prepositional adjunct identified as circumcision of manner, namely, via the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (1:10).

On the surface, the Corinthians are arguing over the apostolic leaders by claiming alignment with one or another. Still, the underlying problems are probably more severe, e.g., overconfidence in their knowledge or wisdom in general and, in particular, their judgement of leaders (3:3–9, 18–21; 4:1–6). As discussed in the previous chapter, Paul represents human leaders to be mere vessels called and empowered by God to join in his work. In Paul's explanation, God assigns different tasks to ministers—namely, one plants, and the other waters—and enables them to collaborate as God's co-workers (3:6). Still, Jesus Christ remains the one who judges human workers. If my interpretation of Paul's representation of the power dynamics is accurate, Paul is projecting a new vision of Christ's leaders. This vision differs from the cultural models of leadership, which qualify leaders based on wealth and social status,[19] and also differs from the ethos among

[19] Clarke, *Serve the Community*, 145–48, 174–85. Discussing 1 Cor 1–4, Clarke (*Serve the Community*, 176–78) argues that the siding loyalties with leading figures reflect the patronage system, in which "allegiance was offered by clients in secular society to their patrons or to other political figures" (177). Cf. Chow, *Patronage and Power*, 87–95;

philosophical teachers, which is characterized by competition and self-promotion.[20] By elaborating on the identity of human leaders in general and his own in particular, Paul seeks to correct the Corinthians' misconception of church leadership and move them to think about the workers' lives as an embodiment of the message of the cross (4:1–13). Admittedly, it remains an open question how one should critically assess Paul's "standard" for judging right or wrong leadership.

Nevertheless, it is against this backdrop that Paul's second παρακαλῶ (4:16) enacts the instruction of urging the Corinthians to become his imitators (4:16). (Post-)critical scholars such as Elizabeth Castelli and Johnathan Jodamus interpret Paul's use of the "imitation language" as evidence of promoting domination.[21] To dialogue with them, I must investigate whether or not the use of μιμηταί indicates Paul's self-promotion and subjugation. Instead of jumping to conclusions based on one word, we must first ask:

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[20] Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 31–43) places the interpretation of 1 Cor 1–4 against the backdrop of the teacher-disciple relationship and the competitive spirit among philosophical teachers in Greco-Roman culture.

[21] The μιμηταί language is one of the hot spots in Pauline power studies. For a survey on mimesis and authority in 1 Corinthians, see Hwang, *Mimesis and Apostolic Parousia*, 3–19. In Pauline power studies, Castelli's *Imitating Paul* is regarded as a classic example of interpreting Paul as a dominator according to his use of μιμηταί. Drawing on Michel Foucault's power theory and adopting his critical view toward Christianity, Castelli (*Imitating Paul*, 15–16) argues that Paul, influenced by Greco-Roman culture, uses the μιμηταί language as "a strategy of power" to promote domination. Concurring with Castelli, Jodamus ("Gendered Ideology," 39–58) argues that Paul uses his rhetorical skills to establish authority over the Corinthians in 1 Cor 1–4 and that Paul uses the μιμηταί language to advocate the ideology of male-domination and call the congregation to imitate his masculinity. Both Castelli and Jodamus assume that Paul adopts the "ideology of imitation" of the Greco-Roman culture. However, the use of one word does not warrant the adoption of the entire ideology. Setting a model seems common in a group-oriented culture, and we need to understand the imitation language in its immediate context to decide whether or not Paul is promoting domination. As an Asian person, I feel perfectly comfortable with having moral models, and I expect our leaders to be a model of what they say. There are other less-critical works on the μιμηταί language, e.g., Hwang, *Mimesis and Apostolic Parousia*, 24–29. Hwang sees μιμηταί as an *apologetic* device used by Paul to reestablish his lost apostolic authority among the Corinthians. As far as hermeneutic is concerned, Hwang presupposes Paul's authoritative voice and thus interprets Paul's discourse as a challenge to the Greco-Roman ideology. His methodology is sounder, because he studies both the content and rhetorical function of the μιμηταί language against the backdrop of the "apostolic parousia" implied in 1 Cor 5.

In what context does Paul call for imitation? What does Paul urge the Corinthians to imitate?

Therefore, before discussing the second παρακαλῶ clause (4:16), I must consider first Paul's stated purpose of writing in 1 Cor 4:14 (Οὐκ ἐντρέπων ὑμᾶς γράφω ταῦτα ἀλλ᾽ ὡς τέκνα μου ἀγαπητὰ νουθετῶ[ν]) and the discussion leading up to it. This discussion provides the immediate context for interpreting Paul's imitation language. Responding to the misjudgement (overestimation or underestimation) of leaders, the prohibition against boasting in leaders is enacted first by 1 Cor 3:21. Then in 1 Cor 4:1, the discourse gives a general instruction that one must regard human leaders as servants. It follows that Paul prohibits the Corinthians from either judging human leaders too quickly or pitting one of them against another (4:5–6). Next, Paul continues to contrast the Corinthians with the Pauline ministers (4:8–13). By the contrast between "you" and "we" in these verses, Paul's discourse implies a sense of asymmetry between Paul and the Corinthians. The question now remains: Is Paul placing himself absolutely above the Corinthians? As a founding parent and apostolic leader, Paul is above the Corinthians; he regards the calling into apostleship as a particular calling from God to some individuals (4:9). The language here indicates that the apostles are set apart from others. They are, however, set apart not for personal fame or gain but as ones sentenced to death (4:9). The representation of the apostles' humbling situation is contrasted with the Corinthians' position that is represented as honourable. The Corinthians are described as "satiated," "enriched," "reigning," "wise," "strong," and "honoured" (4:8–10).[22]

[22] Scholars debate how to interpret Paul's irony and contrast here, as well as his source (e.g., Stoicism) and use of specific words (e.g., changed tenses). The debate revolves around what might have promoted Paul's contrast here. Thiselton (*First Epistle*, 357–9) argues that the Corinthians' behaviour is rooted in mistaken "realized eschatology." Differently, Garland (*1 Corinthians*, 137–39) argues that Paul is

Ironically, the action of "reigning" is the only one in 1 Cor 1–4 that explicitly means "exercising power over," and yet, it is used to represent the Corinthians. The power dynamics now seem to change, at least in Paul's representation. The Corinthians are shifted to the powerful and privileged side. By contrast, Paul and other apostles are represented as being in the powerless and suppressed positions. The leaders are "foolish," "weak," and "dishonoured" (4:10). They also regularly suffer. For instance, they are represented as suffering "hunger" and "thirst," being "poorly clothed" and "buffeted," and "wandering homeless" as well as "labouring" (4:11–12). In Paul's summary, the apostles have become the "scum" and "refuse" of the world (4:13), that is, the lowest of the low.

Admittedly, this contrast between the Pauline ministers and the Corinthians could be taken in two opposite directions. On the one hand, Paul could be viewed as an authentic leader who transparently reveals his vulnerability to the people under his care. On the other hand, Paul could be considered to be a manipulator who is guilt-tripping the Corinthians. Paul likely anticipates the latter because, in 1 Cor 4:14, he comments on the purpose of his writing, namely, not to shame but to nourish his spiritual children. It is in this co-text that Paul *urges* the Corinthians, who are represented as his beloved children, to be his imitators (4:16).

Therefore, I suggest that it is the cruciform lifestyle, instead of something else such as masculinity, that Paul calls the Corinthians to imitate.[23] In my opinion, it is too hasty, based on an interpretation of a word group, to conclude that Paul subjugates the

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tackling not their eschatology but stance with ethics and that the Corinthians are not paying sufficient attention to God's judgement at all.

[23] Talbott (*Jesus*, 99) rightly points out that Paul expects Christ's communities to imitate Christ's crucified servant-lord model of power, which is Paul's "Christological version of kyriarchy."

Corinthians, as Castelli and Jodamus do. Instead, it is more likely that Paul is negotiating with the Corinthians a new conception of human leadership, regardless of how one evaluates this new vision or Paul's real interest behind it. In Paul's reasoning, the apostolic leaders are represented as having paid the cost involved in following Christ's calling, and thus, judging them according to cultural standards is inappropriate. Furthermore, the Corinthians should emulate the humble living demonstrated by the leaders. At the end of this section, Paul uses two questions to leave the decision of whether to take his advice or not in the Corinthians' hands (4:21). But at the same time, Paul explicitly explains to them the consequence of neglecting his advice and indicates his authority to discipline them. That said, Paul is warning, if not interpreted as threatening, the Corinthians that their choice has consequences; hence Paul *is* exercising power over them. But is his use of power good or bad? I will leave my evaluation of Paul's use of power in Chapter 6.

The end of 1 Corinthians mentions the leaders by name again. At this time, Paul represents his good relationships with both local leaders from Corinth such as Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus and visiting leaders such as Apollos and Timothy. Paul not only speaks highly of these leaders but also speak on behalf of them to urge the Corinthians to respect them. He instructs the Corinthians to treat Timothy in a way that Timothy will not feel intimidated (16:10–11) and to submit to and acknowledge workers like Stephanas (16:15–18). Paul's representation of having good relationships with these leaders in 1 Corinthians undermines the Corinthians' practice of pitting one leader against another.

Conclusion

In this section, I have discussed Paul's instructions that tackle the Corinthians' misperception of leaders and misconception of leadership, when evaluated against a cruciform standard. The Corinthians pit leaders against each other, but Paul stresses leaders' humble identity grounded in servanthood. Without a doubt, Paul represents himself as having power above the Corinthians, at least, *functionally* as their parent-like leader. But Paul does not represent or promote himself only as powerful and honourable; instead, his discourse indicates his suffering and humble situation. The discussion on leadership at the beginning of the letter paves the way for more practical and concrete instructions woven throughout the rest of the letter, which primarily concerns the Corinthians' habitual social practices.

Negotiating Social Practices that Build Up the Community

Scholars have reached a consensus that the Corinthian congregation is experiencing multiple problems but have produced various hypotheses of what might be the causes of these problems.[24] My focus here is not historical investigation or reconstruction of the situation but what Paul's moves seek to produce against the background of the narrative world projected by his discourse. As these scholars have pointed out, Paul's discourse is addressing issues, answering questions raised by the Corinthians, and correcting

[24] Biblical scholars who are informed by modern social sciences interpret the problems of the Corinthians as primarily social or political, e.g., Theissen, Winter, and Malcolm. Among them, Theissen (*Social Setting*, 69–119) argues that the primary cause of the Corinthians' problems is social stratification; Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 27–28) notes that the root cause is social changes after Paul left Corinth and the Corinthians' alignment with these social changes; and Malcolm (*Rhetoric of Reversal*, 157, 161, 268) maintains that the nature of the Corinthian factions is more political than doctrinal and that the Corinthian problems reflect the Greco-Roman ethos such as "political squabbles over leadership" and "proud human autonomy" (268).

misbehaviour or misconceptions. Also, I wish to propose that Paul's discourse is also training the Corinthians to take up their responsibility as a community to deal with the problems concerning both their private and public lives. The first of these problems is purity, and the second, the use of spiritual gifts.

Negotiating the Ethics of Collective Purity

Purity is considered to be one of the primary themes in postexilic Judaism.[25] The surrounding Greco-Roman cultures also have their purity codes and pollution taboos. Still, theirs differ from the notion of purity in Judaism in two primary areas—namely, the Greco-Roman society, in general, is characterized by *religious pluralism* and *moral permissiveness*.[26] Gentile followers of Christ, when learning about Jewish monotheism and ethics, may have felt disoriented.[27] Paul's discourse indicates his concern about the collective purity of Christ's congregations in general and, in particular, the collective purity of those planted by his mission team. The majority of instructions identified in 1 Cor 5 and 6 are associated with sexual immorality or purity. Although in 1 Cor 5, Paul deals with an individual case of sexual immorality, the representation implies a concern with the *collective identity* of the congregation.[28] The only two direct instructions in 1 Cor 5 are meant to urge the Corinthians to remove the sexually immoral man from the

[25] Harrington, "Holiness and Purity," 98–116.

[26] DeSilva, *Honor*, 241–77.

[27] Fredriksen ("Judaizing the Nations," 232–52 rightly notes that it is misleading to judge Paul's mission as a "law-free" mission based on his resistance to circumcising the gentle believers and that Paul, in many ways, "requires his pagans not to worship their native gods" (232). Similarly, DeSilva (*Honor*, 241–42) notes that the discourse that Jewish ritual law was passé for early Christians is misleading and hinders interpreters from understanding the significance of the purity issue in Pauline letters. Westfall (*Paul and Gender*, 177) also argues that Paul "did not adopt the Greco-Roman view of the body, but rather brought Jewish sexual ethics to the Greco-Roman culture."

[28] Cen, "Metaphor," 1–26.

community (5:7, 13);[29] in Paul's opinion, the Corinthians are supposed to judge insiders and hold each other accountable (5:9–13; 6:1–11). Following this, 1 Cor 6:12–19 deals with the general issue of sexual immorality, in which the Corinthians are commanded to flee from sexual immorality (6:18) and to glorify God in their body, which is the Spirit's temple (6:20). It is worth noting that "body" is used in a singular form twice in 1 Cor 6:19–20 as a reference to the collective identity of the Corinthians.

After developing the purity theme more broadly at the beginning of 1 Cor 7—e.g., married couples ought to appreciate and fulfill sexual obligations within marriage—Paul uses a variety of negotiation strategies in this chapter to move the Corinthians to walk according to Jesus Christ's authority in their private lives.[30] There are several observations about Paul's negotiation in 1 Cor 7 that give us more ideas about how his instructions are enacted.

The first observation is related to Paul's use of commentaries on his writing identified in 1 Cor 7. Interwoven with Paul's instructions, these commentaries indicate his self-awareness and sensitivity to the audience in four ways. First, he discloses to his audience the source of his instructions. For instance, some guidelines are commanded by the Lord (7:10–11), and others are his personal opinions or preferences (7:12, 25). Second, he comments on the nature of his instructions. For instance, some instructions are concessions instead of commands (7:6), and others are general instructions he gives to

[29] Cen, "What the Church Should Do," 233–50.

[30] Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 216–25) argues that a famine happened in the East during the fifties and caused social distress among the Corinthians and that this famine might have resulted in sexual abstinence in marriage. Similarly, Bushnell (*God's Word to Women*, 249) argues that Paul had a tribulation in mind when writing and regards the advice given in this chapter as "advice for emergency." More thoroughly, Westfall ("Mapping the Text," 177–204) shows how Greek philosophy (e.g., "Platonic dualism and the Pythagorean rejection of sex," 204) has controlled the understanding of body and sexuality of Pauline interpreters, especially male interpreters, and their promotions of celibacy.

all congregations (7:17). Third, Paul explains the purpose of his instructions. For example, some instructions are given as they are because of the distress of the present age (7:29), and others are meant to encourage single-hearted devotion to God (7:35). Fourth, his discourse specifies to whom the instruction applies (7:8). Notably, Paul is aware that his audience includes people in different social positions or life stages, so his instructions target different groups specifically. This specification implies that Paul is sensitive to the diversity of his audience. According to my pastoral experience, giving ethical instructions on mundane issues is one of the most challenging tasks because there is always a distance between general instructions and the complexity of one's life situation. These commentaries imply that Paul is aware of life complexity and yet that he takes the responsibility to respond to the Corinthians' concerns and give instructions. Regardless of how one evaluates Paul's instructions or his action of giving instructions *per se*, his understanding of the complexity of life and sensitivity to his audience must be acknowledged and appreciated.

The second observation about Paul's use of strategies in 1 Cor 7 concerns the content of Paul's instructions. Since his discourse has not overgeneralized or oversimplified life, his instructions cover a variety of possibilities of situations. Approximately seventy percent of the direct instructions identified in 1 Cor 7 are accompanied by a conditional clause, either encoded with an εἰ-clause (7:9, 12–13, 15, 21, 36) or with a participle interpreted as circumstance of condition (7:18, 21, 27). This pattern indicates that these instructions are meant to be situational. It is essential to lead an honourable life glorifying the Lord in a pagan culture that might not fit Jewish purity. Still, an honourable life can be manifested in many ways according to one's

circumstance. For married people, marriage is beautiful, and a pure and peaceful married life is pleasing to God (7:9–16). But for single people, singleness is also a blessing, and a chaste single life with single-hearted devotion to the Lord is even more preferred by Paul (7:26–35).[31] Both marriage and singleness are appropriate, and freedom of choice is given (7:36–38). Similarly, those who are circumcised are not holier than those who are uncircumcised, and both practices are acceptable (7:18–20). Although Paul does not hide his position or preference (7:7–8, 26, 32, 40), he does not impose his opinions on the Corinthians either. Instead, his ways of introducing the instructions imply that he takes human limitations and different possibilities into consideration, and thus, his advice in 1 Cor 7 provides more or less a countercultural view of gender relationships against Greco-Roman culture that promotes male domination.[32]

The third observation is that Paul's instructions also suggest a tension between personal freedom and social constraints, as well as between an ideal of mutuality (or equality) and the reality of social hierarchy.[33] The society and culture in which each person lives, as well as the religion to which one commits herself or himself, inevitably constrain personal freedom. For instance, Paul understands that some slaves will necessarily remain as slaves (7:21); similarly, married people do not have authority over their bodies (7:4). Moreover, although 1 Cor 7 is one of the examples of the Pauline texts that best represent mutuality and equality in marriage, we still find evidence of unequal representation.[34] For instance, women are represented as the patients (i.e., those

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[31] Westfall, "Mapping the Text," 197–98.

[32] Westfall, *Paul and Gender*, 243–50.

[33] Cf. Horrell (*Social Ethos*, 158–61). According to Horrell, Paul's point in 1 Cor 7 is that one does not need to abandon her or his "racial and social status" in order to follow Christ (160), even though Paul's language can be understood as an effort to naturalize the existing social order.

[34] Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 227–28) points out that in the Greco-Roman law system husbands have authority over the wives' bodies and that Paul's advice for the wives to submit to their

impacted) in divorce (γυναῖκα ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς μὴ χωρισθῆναι, 7:10), and men are represented as the agents (i.e., those impact others) in divorce (ἄνδρα γυναῖκα μὴ ἀφιέναι, 7:11). Arguably, Paul's representation could merely reflect the cultural conventions of marriage, and Paul should not be immediately interpreted as promoting male domination. Still, we cannot eliminate the probability that Paul is being influenced by or is following cultural conventions, more or less. This will be discussed more in Chapter 6.

Thus far, I have discussed how the instructions related to communal purity are enacted. Among all the sections that move his audience to maintain communal purity, Paul uses a variety of legitimation strategies, such as moral evaluation (5:1; 7:2), authorization (6:16; 7:10), and most of all, rationalization (6:1–9), some of which were mentioned when I discussed Paul's moves above. Here I will elaborate on two ideological (or theological) assumptions identified from Paul's legitimation of instructions. These are the lenses through which Paul understands the situation and gives the instructions, as represented. The first concerns the identity of Christ's followers, and the second concerns eschatology.

First, Paul's rationalization to legitimate his instructions in 1 Cor 7 is based on his understanding of God's authority over his people. He reminds the Corinthians twice that they are bought with a price (6:20; 7:23), meaning that they belong to Jesus Christ or are owned by him. In other words, instead of being bound by cultural standards, they should be held accountable to the holy God who owns them. This new identity gives a theological basis for negotiating between living a life in a pagan culture and

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husbands is a common understanding and practice in that culture. However, what runs counter to the social convention is Paul's advice to the husbands that they do not have control over their bodies, but their wives do.

simultaneously walking with a holy God. Life situations might remain the same for people after they become followers of Christ, but they are now encouraged to perceive their lives from the perspective of Jesus Christ and live them accordingly. Does this general instruction justify existing systemic oppression? Does it discourage those in suppressed positions from fighting against social injustice or from seeking liberation because they are supposed to be content with where they are? I will wait until Chapter 6 to discuss how scholars with different hermeneutical assumptions can interpret controversial verses like these. What I am suggesting here is that Paul's representations manifest the influence of both the surrounding culture and his theology, as well as the tension and, in turn, the constant negotiation between one's new experience and one's theological convictions.

Second, it is evident in Paul's representation that great difficulties in life are perceived and that he is anticipating an imminent end time (7:29–31).[35] Because of this eschatological urgency, nothing seems more significant than a single-hearted devotion to God. For this reason, Paul represents singleness as his preference. This preference, however, does not mean undivided devotion to God is the *only* focus in Christian living. Individuals, e.g., those who have married, are urged to continue to fulfill what their life roles require of them. So, the wisdom of interpreting situations and discerning God's will in specific situations is crucial. Nevertheless, eschatology seems an essential theological conviction that guides Paul's instructions for practical living in 1 Cor 7. Therefore,

[35] Some Pauline commentators place the interpretation of 1 Cor 7:29–31 in an eschatological framework, e.g., Fee, *First Corinthians*, 335; Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 580–83; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 327–32; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 316–17.

besides the tension between the heavenly vision and the *earthly* life, Paul's discourse also implies the tension between the future vision and the *present* reality.[36]

Furthermore, the theme of communal purity is carried into the following chapters, namely, 1 Cor 8–10. In these chapters, the purity theme is associated with the topic of food sacrificed to idols and interwoven with the idea of self-limitation of one's right (which will be discussed in the next section). The focus is then shifted from private to public lives, e.g., whether one should eat idol food at social gatherings. When purity is addressed in this section, adultery (10:8) and idolatry (10:14) are represented as interrelated, which is in keeping with the discussion in 1 Cor 5—namely, that religious purity and moral purity are closely associated. In a religiously plural culture that does not promote sexual purity and morality, moving a congregation to purity and morality inevitably encounters challenges. What Paul seeks to do, therefore, could run against habitual thoughts and practices. Thus, his instructions related to purity likely makes him more unpopular, in addition to the challenge that not all Corinthians are ready to lend their ears to Paul. In what follows, I will discuss in more detail Paul's advice concerning their public life.

Negotiating the Use of (Spiritual) Gifts

First Corinthians 12–14 negotiates how and for what purpose one should use spiritual gifts.[37] While 1 Cor 12 encodes only two instructions, one at the beginning and the other

[36] This is reminiscent of Jewish apocalyptic discourse. E.g., Humphrey, "Ambivalent Apocalypse," 113–35; Loubser, "Politics of Apocalyptic Mysticism," 191–206; Joubert, "Paul's Apocalyptic Eschatology in 2 Corinthians," 225–38.

[37] For how to render πνευματικῶν and χαρισμάτων, see Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 909–10; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 561–64. Scholars debate between rendering πνευματικῶν as "spiritual people" or "spiritual things or gifts." It seems more reasonable to go with "spiritual gifts" in order to make the rendition of τῶν πνευματικῶν in 12:1 (neut. or masc. genitive) in keeping with the rendition of τὰ πνευματικά in 14:1 (neut.

at the end, 1 Cor 13 has none, and 1 Cor 14 contains the second highest distribution of instructions, thirteen in total.

Here is the list of foregrounded direct instructions (realized in second-person imperatives):

(1) Strive for the greater gifts (12:31)
(2) Pursue (practicing) love; strive for spiritual gifts, especially prophesizing (14:1)
(3) Strive for building up the congregation (14:21)
(4) Be mature in mindful thinking (14:20)
(5) Strive for prophesizing, but do not forbid speaking in tongues (14:39)

Based on my interpretation of the repeated use of ζηλοῦτε, διώκετε, ζητεῖτε, all of which convey a sense of seeking or pursuing, I suggest that Paul is negotiating appropriate attitudes and aims in using spiritual gifts to serve the community. I will discuss two implications—manner and aim of using gifts—derived from my analysis of the moves and legitimation strategies in 1 Cor 12–14, implications that are particularly relevant to community building.

The first implication concerns the *manner* of using gifts. In Paul's representation, love must be practiced with earnestness, even though tension exists between diversity and unity. First Corinthians 12 begins with an indirect instruction that moves the Corinthians to accept the knowledge concerning their new collective spiritual identity as Christ's body (12:1). In God's design, both unity and diversity must be celebrated and maintained, because they characterize the nature of the community (12:12–26) and its Spirit-assigned gifts and ministries (12:4–11, 27–30). If diversity should be celebrated in a community, love seems necessary for the sake of maintaining unity. First Corinthians 12 ends with the

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accusative). However, it is worth noting that Paul is not discussing the gifts in themselves, but people's manners and attitudes in using the gifts.

other instruction identified in this chapter, a direct instruction by which Paul urges the Corinthians to practice the kind of love described in the so-called love discourse, a kind of love that is characteristic of seeking others' interest (13:5).[38]

Closely associated with the manner of using spiritual gifts, the second implication concerns the *aim* of using gifts—namely, that gifts must be used for building up their community. As an overarching guideline pointed out by Paul in 1 Cor 12, gifts are given by the Spirit for common advantage (12:7).[39] This guideline is concretized in 1 Cor 14. According to 1 Cor 14:1 and 14:29, the "greater gift" in 1 Cor 12:31 refers to prophesizing because it builds up the community.[40] The rest of 1 Cor 14 revolves around the discussion about this purpose. For instance, Paul's discourse uses direct questions (14:6–9, 16, 23), which I interpret as having the effect of "elenchic interrogation,"[41] to

[38] DeSilva (*Honor*, 95–119) points out that reciprocity is inherent to a patronage culture such as the Greco-Roman culture and that grace in that culture is not conceived of completely free but often comes with an expectation of the return of grace. If DeSilva's observation is correct, Paul's love discourse describes a love that surpasses the grace embodied in patron's giving (13:3).

[39] According to Garland's (*1 Corinthians*, 578) interpretation of πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον, the gifts are given for the "well-being of the whole body," and so, they must not be used for promoting "an individual's personal status."

[40] Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 602–3. Cf. Castelli ("Interpretations of Power," 197–222). She points out that Paul is inconsistent because he claims that God's kingdom does not rely on words and at the same time promotes prophesizing over speaking in tongues. Instead, Castelli argues in favour of a close link between words and power. According to Castelli, while the Corinthians celebrate "overabundance and multiplicity of spiritual lives," Paul promotes sameness and domination (217). I agree with Castelli, more or less, that Paul is reestablishing his authority; however, Paul's action does not necessarily mean that he desires to dominate. I have two reasons. First, when Paul writes that God's kingdom does not rely on words but power, the context is that Paul seeks to tackle a misperception of human leaders—namely, that they have thought too highly of the human leaders. Second, Paul does not constrain speaking in tongues only because it cannot build up others; when there are interpreters, it is allowed.

[41] Wartenberg (*Forms of Power*, 204–9) argues that Socrates' appropriation of elenchic interrogation is an example of empowerment (204). Wartenberg points out, "The aim of an elenchic interrogation is primarily negative in that it seeks to show that a certain claim to knowledge cannot be sustained in the face of persistent questions" (204). To Socrates, as Wartenberg indicates, the creation of self-awareness of ignorance is the first step of an extensive process of personal growth. Since no real growth can be forced, one's willingness to change from habitual thinking and living to embrace something new is the beginning of that personal transformation.

provoke the Corinthians into thinking about the usefulness of gifts from a practical perspective.

Similarly, by juxtaposing prophesizing and speaking in tongues, Paul stresses that only understandable teachings can build up their recipients (14:12–19). Although Paul does not discount the speaking in tongues (14:39), the purpose of building up the listeners within the community must guide the use of gifts (14:12, 26). Furthermore, the same guideline, namely, community building, is also applied by Paul to instruct about the organization of liturgical services, in which *orderliness* is placed above the individual's right to speak in liturgical gatherings (14:29–35, 40). For maintaining proper and orderly services, Paul gives three scenarios in which someone should keep quiet (σιγάτω): one speaking in tongues without interpreters (12:28), one prophesizing when another member receives revelation (12:29–30), and wives attempting to learn by asking questions (12:33b–35).[42] In summary, by placing orderliness above individual rights, Paul emphasizes that the collective benefit is the purpose of using gifts.

Conclusion

In this section, I have discussed Paul's instructions regarding social practices that build up their community. As a founding leader, Paul not only responds to the questions from

[42] For a review of the interpretation history related to 1 Cor 14:33b–35 up to the modern age, see Thompson, "Wasn't Adam Deceived," 161–84. Since the first wave of feminism, Christian feminists continue to challenge traditional positions that women cannot preach or teach in the church by revisiting and reinterpreting this passage in its context. For instance, the first ordained American Congregationalist women pastor Blackwell-Brown ("Exegesis," 358–73) argues that Paul's warning was given to the ignorant women who disturbed the worship by asking questions. More recently, France (*Women in the Church's Ministry*, 51–72) and Bailey ("Women in the New Testament," 7–24) also come to the same conclusion. Schüssler Fiorenza (*In Memory of Her*, 232) also notes that Paul's major concern is "not the behaviour of the women but the protection of the Christian community." In addition, fundamentalist (or traditionalist) scholars also revisit this passage. For example, Grudem (*Evangelical Feminism*, 232–46) argues that Paul here specifically prohibits women from "judging" prophecy, against previous readings that argues in favour of silencing women in all situations.

the Corinthians and tackles the problems reported to him but also makes it notable that his interest is in moving the Corinthians to become mature and able to deal with their problems. In Paul's opinion, they should learn to judge wrongs and discipline wrongdoers independently and, at the same time, should understand the significance of collective purity and holding each other accountable. About maintaining community purity, they must also learn to use their gifts assigned by the Spirit to build up the community in a loving manner. When strengthening the community, the more honourable members must pay attention to the less honourable ones, which will be elaborated on in what follows.

Negotiating a New Attitude towards the Less Privileged

It is worth noting that Paul's discourse does not indicate any attempt to subvert the existing social order or to reform social structure when navigating in a hierarchical culture that promotes self-advancement.[43] According to my analysis, Paul is by no means a New Left Marxist or radical social activist in the modern sense. However, it is noticeable that the message of the cross does challenge the so-called "elitist ethic" inside the congregation and that Paul commits himself to this message, as indicated above.[44] Although Paul's discourse does not even remotely move the Corinthians to bring about a reformation of social hierarchy, much less a revolution, Paul's representations indicate an interest in speaking for the less powerful and privileged members. It is worth noting that this interest is aligned with God's plan for a community—namely, special honour is

[43] Judge, "Cultural Conformity and Innovation," 23; Chow, *Patronage and Power*, 19. For studies on social and cultural contexts of Pauline letters in general or the Corinthian letters in particular, see Theissen, "Social Stratification," 69–119; Meeks, *Urban Christians*, 9–50; Chow, *Patronage and Power*, 83–112; Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership*, 23–40; Savage, *Power through Weakness*, 19–102; Malina and Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul*, 153–201; Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, 1–30; Ehrensperger, *Crossroads of Cultures*, 63–104.

[44] Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, 77–80.

given to those members deemed less honourable by the community (12:22–24).[45] According to Paul's understanding, members within a community are inevitably different, or even seemingly unequal, as some are weaker and less presentable, and others are stronger and more presentable. But the difference does not necessarily mean injustice, even if the less privileged members might feel inferior and dispensable (12:14–16), and the more privileged members might feel superior and self-sufficient (12:21). Despite the existence of difference, interdependence and mutuality are represented as part of God's design for a community. In this section, my focus will be on Paul's negotiation between surrounding cultures and identity formation for Christ's followers as well as his attention to those in less powerful and privileged positions. First of all, I will talk about his discourse about "the weak" (τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν, 8:9).

Protecting the Weak in Conscience

As already discussed above, the kind of love advocated in 1 Cor 12–14 is not self-seeking but other-seeking. First Corinthians 8–10 also promotes the same kind of attitude toward "the weak." The promotion is woven with Paul's discourse on idolatry in general and, in particular, on eating food sacrificed to idols. My focus in discussing this section is that Paul speaks for "the weak." Regardless of how one renders "the weak,"[46] it is evident that

[45] Horrell (*Social Ethos*, 176–84) argues that 1 Cor 12–14 shows how God has reversed the pattern of values in status and honour in the body of Christ.

[46] It is debatable to whom "the weak" refers. Some scholars argue that "the weak" refers to Christ's followers, e.g., Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 644–45. Others argue differently, e.g., Land ("We Put No Stumbling Block," 229–84) argues that "the weak" refers to nonbelievers. Before interpreting the identity of "the weak," I want to point out three things that the text does not say. (1) There is no indication in the text that the Corinthians are divided into two groups of people, "the strong" and "the weak." The phrase "the strong" is not even used in the text. (2) No evidence in 1 Cor 8–10 indicates that "the weak" explicitly refers to those of low social status. So, "the weak" is not associated with social positions. (3) Paul does not judge their faith but only conscience (σθνείδησις). Admittedly, Thiselton (*First Epistle*, 640–44) notes that the meaning of συνείδησις is also debatable. He renders it into English as "conscience or self-awareness."

discourse about the legitimacy of eating idol food is taking place among the Corinthians and that Paul is speaking to those who have initiated this discourse and insisted on their right to eat idol food.[47] According to my analysis, he approaches the issue of eating idol food with a two-stage argument. In the first stage of concession, he affirms the rationale of those who argue for eating idol food but urges them to consider seeking others' benefit (1 Cor 8–9); in the second stage, he questions these people's actual ability to resist the negative impact from participating idol meals (1 Cor 10).

I will first consider his concession. Although Paul affirms those who have sound knowledge, he asserts that love that builds others up triumphs over knowledge (8:1, 4–6). As indicated by Paul's discourse, what is appropriate to those who have sound theology might become *inappropriate* for "the weak," who lack the knowledge or sound judgement; as a result, "the weak" could be harmed by thoughtlessly following those who have the knowledge to eat food sacrificed to idols (8:10–11). Based on the strategy of rationalization and moral evaluation, Paul's discourse urges those who are confident in their knowledge to give up their right to eat idol food when their practices will cause others to stumble (8:9–13).

According to my analysis, 1 Cor 8:7 implies that the weakness in conscience is caused by lack of knowledge or judgment as well as by habitual practice of participating in idolatry. After talking about what "the weak" is not, now I turn to discuss what "the weak" can be. It is challenging to draw a conclusion, because I find conflicting evidence related to the identity of "the weak." On the one hand, "the weak" people in 1 Cor 8:11–12 are represented as "sisters and brothers," a phrase oft-used by Paul to refer to believers (Horrell, "From αδελφοι to οικος θεου," 301–2). On the other hand, 1 Cor 10:27 seems to compare these weak people with non-believers. Taking all these hints into considerations, I suggest "the weak" likely refer to gentile seekers, or new converts, who are used to pagan worship.

[47] According to Garland (*1 Corinthians*, 386), if ἐξουσία (8:9) is seen as comparable to ἐλεύθερος (9:1) and ἐλευθερία (10:29), it is possibly "another Corinthian catchword." Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 280–81) renders ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὕτη (8:9) as "'*this* right of yours'" (80) instead of "this liberty of yours" and connects the "dinner rights" of the confident Christians to the "entertainment at the Isthmian Games."

In the following chapter, 1 Cor 9, Paul uses his choice related to payment to illustrate the tension between love and rights[48] in order to legitimate his exhortation discussed above. First Corinthians 9 includes the highest distribution of questions. These questions, I suggest, are meant to move the Corinthians to acknowledge Paul's right to receive payments as an apostle, although he does not demand payment in general (9:1–14). While having this right, Paul refuses to insist on it so that all people can hear the gospel without payment (9:15–18); whereas having freedom, he willingly becomes a slave to others (9:19–23). Concerning his apostolic authority and other-seeking ministry strategy, Paul seeks to legitimatize his exhortation that urges those in privileged positions of knowledge to give up their rights in order to protect "the weak."

Now I turn to the second stage of his discourse on idol food. First Corinthians 10 questions the knowledgeable people's confidence in their ability to resist the negative impact of idolatry. Alluding to the Israelites' failure recorded in the Exodus story, Paul warns his audience of having too much confidence in their ability to resist evil (10:11–12). Like his advice concerning adultery (6:18), Paul instructs the Corinthians to flee idolatry (10:14). In other words, those who regard themselves as able to resist the pagan influence and use their theology as a legitimation strategy to go back to the habitual practice of participating in pagan feasts must not feel too confident, because their confidence might endanger and cause them to fall (10:12).[49]

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[48] The word ἐξουσία has the highest distribution in 1 Cor 9 (sixty percent of its total instances in 1 Corinthians).

[49] The traditional view states that Paul is writing to settle the conflict between two factions inside the Corinthian congregation, e.g., Kugelman, "The First Letter to the Corinthians," 266. Arguing against the traditional view, Fee (*First Corinthians*, 357–63) proposes that Paul is writing to settle the conflict between himself and the entire Corinth congregation. Similarly, Garland (*1 Corinthians*, 347–63) also argues against the traditional view but maintains that Paul's relationship with the Corinthians had not deteriorated until later (21). Land ("Sacrificing Sacrifices," 135–39) rightly notes that 1 Cor 8:1—9:27 is Paul's attempt to answer the Corinthians' question concerning idol food and that 1 Cor 10:1–22 is Paul's

In dealing with the *arrogant attitude* that is common to those having the privilege of knowledge (8:1–2), Paul's discourse points out not only these people's lack of sensitivity to "the weak" but also their irresistible tendency to fall back into a social practice that is not in keeping with the gospel message. However, Paul's discourse also indicates his awareness of the social and cultural context in which the Corinthians live. In a group-oriented culture, one's alignment or de-alignment with the surrounding people's conventional practices might have a direct impact on her or his social relationships.[50] Paul's discourse indicates that he takes into consideration the reality of living within a pagan culture when urging the Corinthians to reject participation in idol feasts. For instance, he lays out practical advice about in which situations they can eat idol sacrifices without hesitation, and in which circumstances they should have second thoughts (10:25–28).

At the end of this section, Paul urges his audience to do all for God's glory and others' benefits (10:31–33). It is along this line that Paul further urges them to become his imitators (11:1). As indicated in the discussion on the first imitation language in 1 Cor 4:16, it is better to interpret what Paul is moving the Corinthians to imitate in context before judging whether or not Paul uses the imitation language to promote domination. As discussed above, sandwiched between 1 Cor 8 and 10, 1 Cor 9 serves as a personal illustration of balancing between affirming one's right and laying down the right for others' benefits. Whereas knowledge or right often gives power to people and places

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attempt to dig into a deeper issue implied by the Corinthians' question, i.e., they are trying to justify "their former way of life" (136). Taking the latter as the starting point, Land concludes that Paul "prohibits his churches from eating idol food" (139) and urges them to remove themselves from habitual participation of eating food sacrificed to idols in light of the cross. Cf. Ehrensperger, *Crossroads of Cultures*, 175–213.

[50] DeSilva, *Honor*, 23–42.

them in privileged positions, love restrains the exercise of that power, or, in positive terms, love sanctifies that power and uses it for building up others. It is this kind of love that Paul sees in Jesus Christ and imitates himself, as represented in his discourse. Now he is urging the Corinthians to do the same (11:1). In summary, Paul is moving those claiming to have sound theology to self-restrain their so-called rights, when at the same time warning them of participating in idolatry, since they might, after all, overestimate their power to resist evil influence.

Protecting the Women and the Poor in the Community

Here I will talk about Paul's instructions related to veiling and eating communion. In a nutshell, Paul moves the Corinthians to protect the women and the poor within the community. The interpretation of 1 Cor 11:2–16 has been one of the thorny issues for gender-critical studies.[51] It is not easy to settle the controversy about Paul's attitude toward patriarchy.[52] On the one hand, there is more or less clear evidence of

[51] It is impossible to provide a detailed interpretation history of 1 Cor 11:2–16, but I will try to provide some examples of different views here. For a review of its premodern interpretation, see Thompson, "Silent Prophetesses? Unraveling Theory and Practice in 1 Corinthians 11," 113–35. Among modern interpretations, the traditional view, which assumes that the women were the problem, argues that Paul urges the women to cover their head because it is *a sign* of submission to authority, see Waltke, "1 Corinthians 11:2–16," 46–57; Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 538; Knight, *Role Relationship*, 20–24. Both egalitarian scholars and critical feminists have challenged this traditionalist view, see Bushnell, *God's Word to Women*, 89–109; Bruce, "Women in the Church," 7–14; Fiddes, "Woman's Head," 370–83; France, *Women in the Church's Ministry*, 29–50; Belleville, "Thorny Issue," 215–231; Schüssler Fiorenza, *Power of the Word*, 69–110; Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles*, 102–9; Lakey, *Image*; Peppiatt, *Women and Worship*. Although non-traditionalist views argue in favour of women, they represent a wide range of interpretations. For instance, both Bushnell and Westfall conclude that men are the problem and that Paul is speaking for the women, but they vary in answering the question of what Paul is doing. Bushnell (*God's Word to Women*, 91) argues that Paul prohibits the men from veiling, and Westfall (*Paul and Gender*, 24–43) argues that Paul urges the men to let the women keep veiling for protection. Similarly, both Peppiatt and Schüssler Fiorenza believe the text denotes the gender hierarchy that is unacceptable by modern or postmodern readers but use different reading strategies to resolve this problem. Peppiatt argues that the problematic wordings, e.g., 11:4–10, are taken verbatim from Paul's opponents, and Schüssler Fiorenza asserts that these are Paul's own words and that Paul must be deauthorized.

[52] For sample discussions on patriarchy, see Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 251–59; Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy," 68–78.

egalitarianism[53] (e.g., 7:3–5, 12–13, 18–19; 11:11–12), and on the other, there are passages that possibly reflect hierarchy (e.g., 1 Cor 11:3, 8–9).

Similarly, the debate on what 1 Cor 11:2–16 means will continue because the passage represents both egalitarianism and patriarchy. Even egalitarian feminists cannot reach a consensus on how to interpret the structure of the relationships in 1 Cor 11:3 and 11:8–9.[54] If the relation between women and men in v. 3 is interpreted as an ontological hierarchy, does it mean Jesus is also structurally subordinate to the Father? That question was, in fact, one of the challenges Chrysostom faced in his time.[55] Besides, although traces of hierarchy exist in such verses as 11:3 and 11:8–9, evidence of equality is also found in 11:11–12. Therefore, no interpretation can explain away all the tensions. Here my focus is not on providing a novel interpretation but on analyzing what Paul's instructions seek to produce.

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[53] In gender-critical studies, Christian egalitarianism generally refers to evangelical feminism, which argues that men and women are equal not only in value but also in roles. Some examples of evangelical egalitarianism are Jewett, *Man as Male and Female*; France, *Women in the Church's Ministry*; Westfall, *Paul and Gender*; Ehrensperger, *Mutually Encouraged*; Polaski, *Feminist Introduction*.

[54] Admittedly, "the structure of the relationships" in itself is an interpretation, because it depends on how one understands the meaning of κεφαλή. One of the critical issues related to this passage is how κεφαλή should be rendered into English. The debate on its meaning spans a few decades, see Bedale, "κεφαλή," 211–15; Grudem, "'Authority Over'," 38–59; Cervin, "Source," 85–112; Grudem, "Response," 3–72; Grudem, "Meaning of Κεφαλή," 25–66; Johnson, "Meaning of 'Head'," 35–57. While complementarian scholars usually render it as "authority over," egalitarian scholars render it as "source." The modified and middle position renders it as "pre-eminence" (Cervin, "Source," 85–112). Besides the meaning of κεφαλή, such issues as what veiling (or head-covering) refers to and how the practice itself should be assessed are critical and have generated a lot of debate. For instance, regarding the function of veiling, Bruce ("Women in the Church," 7–14) argues that it is the new authority given to Christian women, Belleville ("Thorny Issue," 226) argues that it guarantees that praise is offered to God alone in a liturgical context, and Westfall (*Paul and Gender*, 30–31) argues that it protects women's beauty and honour in the context of Mediterranean culture. The list of interpretations runs on. In summary, the debate related to "head" and "veiling" will probably continue.

[55] Chrysostom, *Homilies*, 150–51. To defend Trinitarianism and yet avoid claiming gender equality explicitly, Chrysostom argues that these two structures must be interpreted differently and that the hierarchy in gender does not apply to the Father-Son structure. Clearly, Chrysostom's interpretation is controlled by his Christology and presupposition of gender.

Whereas most of the discussions on Paul's discourse related to women are done by grouping related Pauline passages together, e.g., 1 Cor 11:2–16, 1 Cor 14:35–36, 1 Tim 2:12–15, and Eph 5:21–33, I attempt to interpret 1 Cor 11:2–16 together with 1 Cor 11:17–34 in its immediate co-text. There are several hints for the connection between these two parts. The first hint is the parallel statements using ἐπαινῶ (11:2) and οὐκ ἐπαινῶ (11:17). Also, both sections use shame-honour language (11:4–7, 14–15 and 11:22)[56] and language that implies group difference (11:3–9 and 11:18–19, 22).[57] The first issue concerns the difference between genders,[58] and the second, difference between social, economic status (11:22). By reading these sections as a parallel, I seek to uncover the shared interest that underlies both sections.

In the first part, 1 Cor 11:2–16, all the direct instructions are associated with the veiling of women (11:6, 10, 13). Paul begins the section by praising the Corinthians for maintaining the traditions handed to them. He then uses an indirect instruction, "I want you to know," to negotiate understanding of gender particularity, which also serves as legitimation for the following instruction of veiling (11:6, 10). It follows that he uses a direct instruction (second-person plural imperative), "judge yourselves among you," to

[56] The domains concerning honour and shame are TO HONOUR OR SHAME (καταισχύνω, δοξάζω), HONOUR OR SHAME (δόξα, ἀτιμία, αἰσχρός). To understand relation between female sexuality and modesty in the Mediterranean world, see Abu-Lughod, *Veiled Sentiments*; Moxnes, "Honor and Shame," 167–76.

[57] For the first half of 1 Cor 11, these two groups are women and men. No matter how much effort egalitarian scholars make to explain away the problem implied in 1 Cor 11:3, the text does indicate some sort of structural difference by listing these three pairs side by side: Christ and men, women and men, and Christ and God. Furthermore, the following verses contrast women and men in terms of physical appearance and creation order. For the second part, these two groups are the poor and the relatively wealthier. The use of the domain WHOLE AND DIVIDE (αἵρεσις, σχίσμα) implies that division exists within the congregation. Furthermore, Paul's question in 1 Cor 11:22 implies a group of people who have nothing. So, I infer that the implied receivers here are those who have enough or even abundance.

[58] Ehrensperger ("Question(s) of Gender," 245–76) notes that Paul's view of gender follows the Jewish tradition of promoting particularity and difference instead of superiority and that the Jewish tradition values both equality and difference.

move them to come to their conclusion that it is appropriate for women to veil (11:13). It is debatable who is Paul's implied recipient in 11:13, the men, the women, or all of the Corinthians in general. What is similarly debatable is who is the problem at stake, the men or the women. What is the situation, that the men are keeping the women from veiling or that the women are fighting for the liberty of unveiling? Both hypotheses seem possible. As one example of the former, Westfall argues that Paul is protecting the women by preventing the men from forcing the women to unveil.[59] If Westfall's interpretation is taken, both the instructions and justification can be regarded as addressed to men and urge them to respect and protect their sisters' dignity by allowing them to veil.

The second part, 1 Cor 11:17–34, begins with a reported speech, namely, "I hear that divisions exist among you" (11:18). This reported speech indicates that Paul is responding to a particular situation reported to him, a situation where the Corinthians are found of wrongdoing. That is why Paul writes, "I do not praise you" (11:17). It follows that a series of questions likely meant to move those who have sufficient wealth to realize that their manner of eating communion has caused shame to those in less privileged positions (11:22). Following these questions, Paul's instructions urge those who have more to wait for those who have less when eating communion meals (11:28, 33–34).

It is easier to understand that Paul does not praise the discrimination against the poor. Still, it is rather difficult to understand why Paul praises the Corinthians before his instructions related to veiling. If the ἐπαινῶ (11:2) has logical relation with what follows it, and the contrast of "praise" and "not praise" is meaningful, I ask: Which aspect in the

[59] Westfall, *Paul and Gender*, 34–43.

discourse on veiling is deserving Paul's praise and why does Paul juxtapose these two social practices, veiling and eating communion? If Westfall's hypothesis is granted—namely, Paul is protecting the women and keeping the men from forcing them to unveil—it is easier to answer my questions. In 1 Cor 11:1–16, it is evident that women are participating in public ministries, such as praying and prophesizing in liturgical settings. Although it is hasty to conclude that these women are taking congregational leadership, they are likely taking important roles in service.[60] In a culture that promotes masculinity as one significant qualification for leadership, 1 Cor 11:1–16 seems to manifest an exceptional practice against surrounding cultures but is in keeping with Jesus's message.[61] This could be what deserves Paul's praise. In light of Westfall's interpretation, however, one can imagine that liberty might be overstressed, and women might be urged to do something which they themselves find embarrassing or even shameful.[62] So, by asking the men to let the women veil when performing ministry, Paul's interest is in keeping the men from humiliating the women. In the second section, however, Paul points out that the Corinthians have followed the culture too closely in this case by distinguishing Christian sisters and brothers according to economic status and have thus violated Jesus's message in communion (11:17–22).[63] So, Paul's interest here is to keep the wealthy members from humiliating their poorer sisters and brothers. In both

[60] Cf. Wire, *Corinthian Women Prophets.*

[61] For studies related to masculinity in the New Testament, see Clines, "Invisible Man," 181–92; Larson, "Paul's Masculinity," 85–97; Stewart, "Masculinity in the New Testament," 91–102.

[62] It is worth noting that γυναικὶ is a dative instead of an accusative. The use of a dative γυναικὶ can be rendered as "from her perspective." So, it can read, *to cut off her hair is shameful from a woman's perspective*, which means that women judge the action of cutting off her hair as shameful. Instead, if an accusative were used as the agent of the action "cutting off," the verse might read, *it is shameful that a woman cuts off her hair*, which means the action that a woman cuts off her hair is judged as shameful.

[63] Coutsoumpos, *Community*, *Conflict*, *and the Eucharist*, 1–3.

cases, Paul speaks to the more privileged members for the less privileged ones so that justice might be pursued in the less privileged people's terms, not vice versa.

Admittedly, this interpretation is a hypothesis of the situation. But if such a hypothesis is probable, the implied interest of 1 Cor 11 is Paul's negotiation with the culture and his desire to protect less privileged people. Either following culture too closely (like in the case of communion) or countering culture too radically (like in the case of veiling) can be problematic and harm those in less powerful positions. Cultural particularity and diversity are inevitable in human society. There is some difference worth of keeping, like veiling for women and unveiling for men, in their context. In contrast, some difference must be eliminated, like receiving different treatments due to economic status within the same community. When negotiating boundaries with surrounding cultures, therefore, the interest in protecting the less privileged *on their terms* (instead of ours) must be stressed. Now I am turning to the last group of less privileged people represented in 1 Corinthians and Paul's attitude toward them, namely, the Jerusalem congregation that is in need.

Supporting the Jerusalem Congregation

The ministry of collecting for the Jerusalem congregation is mentioned in a passing note at the end of the letter (16:1–4). Regarding the collection, Paul represents the ministry as a collective effort to support the saints in Jerusalem and indicates his apostolic authority in instructing it (16:1). He has commanded the congregations in Galatia to do the collection (16:1); now, he is urging the Corinthians to do the same and giving practical guidance on how to guarantee its success (16:2). His mention of the Galatian congregations implies that the project of the collection has a wider range of influence.

This is likely one of Paul's strategies to motivate the Corinthians by indicating the alignment of the Galatians with Paul.

Furthermore, the language surrounding the instructions related to the collection implies Paul's sensitivity to individual situations. For instance, Paul is not forcing any of the Corinthians to give beyond their capacity; instead, he instructs each of them to put aside what is in proportion to what she or he has earned (16:2).[64] This implies that Paul is considering the different economic statuses within the congregation and that he is allowing the Corinthians to decide for themselves how much to give. Similarly, Paul notes that the Corinthians, as a collective body, should appoint the messengers to take the gift to Jerusalem (16:3). He also indicates his willingness to be part of the delivery team, but only if it fits from the Corinthians' perspective (16:4).

In summary, Paul has authority over the congregations, especially those planted by the Pauline mission. But it is worth noting that he is using his apostolic authority to move them to support the Jerusalem congregation, one outside of the Pauline circle. When exercising his authority, Paul also gives the Corinthians space to make their own decisions regarding how much to give and who should be the deliverers of the gift. Lastly, if the Galatians and the Corinthians mostly consist of gentile believers, Paul's effort to move the gentile groups to help with a predominantly Jewish group in need provides a glimpse that Paul is interested in promoting collaboration between believers of different ethnicities. And, he is advocating for an ethnicity that is economically disadvantaged or at least under severe economic stress due to a crisis.

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[64] Louw and Nida (*Greek-English Lexicon*, 1:565) renders εὐοδόμαι as "in proportion to what he has earned." Thiselton (*First Epistle*, 1323–24) render it as "in accordance with how you may fair." Regardless of what this rare word exactly means, it conveys a sense of in keeping with something.

Conclusion

In this section, I have discussed Paul's instructions regarding an appropriate attitude toward those in less powerful and privileged positions. In short, although Paul does not aim at changing the social system, he is moving the Corinthians to form a new culture within a community of Christ's followers, a culture different from the surrounding ethics that is characterized by self-sufficiency and self-promotion. In this new culture, those in powerful and privileged positions are encouraged to use their power to build up those in less powerful and privileged positions. More particularly, the powerful and privileged are warned against harming or humiliating the less powerful and privileged, and instead, must make an effort to protect and support the less powerful and privileged. But as Paul's discourse indicates, the act of building others involves sacrifice. Up to this point, I have touched the main themes of Paul's negotiations—namely, the conception of leadership, community building, an attitude toward the less powerful and privileged people—now I am turning to a brief discussion on the last identified negotiation that touches the tension between a theology of resurrection and life on earth.

Negotiating a Theology of Believers' Resurrection

In 1 Cor 15, Paul negotiates a theology of future resurrection. He urges the Corinthians to lead a life on earth with this eschatological vision according to the cruciform authority of Jesus Christ. First Corinthians 15 has the highest proportion of statements in 1 Corinthians, but its ratio of interactiveness is still above the zero-axis, which indicates that it is not merely telling. My analysis indicates that these statements center on two questions, whether there is a bodily resurrection for the dead and what kind of body form believers will receive on the resurrection. Paul's discourse on believers' resurrection

implies that doubts about the resurrection of the dead are perceived. Regardless of what has caused the doubts, his interest is to change their previous thoughts on the resurrection.

Paul begins his discourse by reminding them of the gospel tradition he has passed to them (15:3–8). Then, using a series of direct questions, he moves the Corinthians to realize their ignorance of the resurrection and the resulting consequences (15:12, 29–30, 32–33). Since Paul urges them to come to their senses in 1 Cor 15:32–34, I infer that the lack of a sound understanding of the resurrection has likely caused immoral living among the Corinthians. It is worth noting that after this appeal, Paul comments on his speech to show the severity of the problem, "I speak to shame you" (15:34).[65] In the following verses, Paul talks about the form of the resurrected body. Then at the end of this section, Paul urges the Corinthians to stand firm in service because their labour in the Lord is not in vain (15:58). Here Paul not only forms a knowledge about the future but also gives a vision for the present. The knowledge of resurrection is associated with Jesus's victory over sin and death (15:54–57). Therefore, besides urging the Corinthians to live an ethical life, it also gives courage to those who are losing heart due to the present distress.

Summary of Paul's Negotiations in 1 Corinthians

I have identified four themes of Paul's power negotiations in 1 Corinthians based on my analysis of what his instructions seek to produce: conceptions of leadership and

[65] This is the second time in 1 Corinthians that Paul intentionally speaks to shame his audience (see also 6:5). By contrast, in 1 Cor 4:14, Paul asserts that he is not writing to shame his audience. Why does Paul aim at *nourishing* the Corinthians in 1 Cor 4:14 but *shaming* them in 1 Cor 6:5 and 1 Cor 15:34? Does this difference indicate that the problem tackled in the latter cases is more serious than the issue addressed earlier? At least, these commentaries on his own speech indicate that Paul is more or less aware of his use of language and the impact of his discourse.

perception of leaders, social practices concerning building up the community, attitudes toward the less powerful privileged people, and understandings of present living in relation to future resurrection. In short, Paul is negotiating new social practices, knowledge, and collective identity with the Corinthians. His *effort* in his negotiations indicates that the changes he hopes to induce likely challenges their habits and meets resistance. Notably, Paul's interest is in realigning the Corinthians with Christ's cruciform authority, as represented in his discourse. Furthermore, Paul's negotiations denote sensitivity to individual situations and surrounding cultures. One can interpret his sensitivity as a compromise between cultures and Christian practices or as wisdom in balancing theories and praxis. Regardless of whether or not his sensitivity is recognized and how it is appraised, it is clear that he is exerting influence via his words and that his interest is represented as moving the Corinthians to do and think according to Christ's cruciform authority when responding to what has been reported to him by local leaders or what been requested of him by the congregation.

Negotiating Knowledge, Social Practices, Reactions, and Identity in 2 Corinthians

As discussed in the previous chapter, there are changes in power dynamics represented in 2 Corinthians, when it is compared with 1 Corinthians. These changes include the decrease of the Pauline ministers' power and the increase of both the evil spirits' power and of the critics' power. Despite changes identified in the authoritative leaders' power, however, God the Father remains the superordinate and most powerful agent. The analysis in the previous chapter also indicates that the relationship between the Pauline ministers, particularly Paul, and the Corinthians is, or at least has been, at stake, due to multiple factors; hence, I hypothesize that the Corinthians' trust in the Pauline ministers

or respect for Paul's authority has likely met challenges. Regardless of its cause and nature, the tension or conflict between the congregation and its founders plays a role in Paul's power via words. Besides, the representations of the Pauline's ministers' semiotic actions and emotive reactions increase; in other words, 2 Corinthians not only talks more about the Pauline ministers but also represents them as more talkative and emotional.

It is within these power dynamics that Paul's power via words is interpreted as meant to (re)align the Corinthians with the cruciform authority of Jesus Christ. As pointed out by the preamble, 2 Corinthians is less interactive and more defensive. However, this does not mean that 2 Corinthians is merely venting frustration. It still includes significant instructions that seek to shape the Corinthian community. As indicated in the preamble, 2 Corinthians primarily negotiates knowledge, social practices, reactions, and identity; also, the use of relationship as a legitimation strategy increases significantly. In what follows, I will further elaborate on Paul's self-defence and instructions.

Negotiating a Different Conception of Leadership

Continuing what he has begun concerning leadership in 1 Corinthians, Paul seeks to urge the Corinthians to change their conception of leadership from how dominant cultures view leadership to what Jesus Christ demonstrates as cruciform authority.[66] Two sections, 2 Cor 4–5 and 10–12, are about the authoritative leaders and encode the majority of Paul's commentaries on his writing. Regarding why Paul needs to constantly comment on his speech, I suggest that he likely anticipates possible misunderstandings and thus feels a

[66] For leadership studies in Pauline discourse, see Clarke, *Serve the Community*; Clarke, *Church Leadership*; Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership*.

need to add a note of clarification here and there in order to aid his readers in understanding what he is doing and not doing with his language.

The analysis concerning power actions in my previous chapter provides a glimpse into Paul's narrative world and implies two possible reasons why the Corinthians call the Pauline leadership into question.[67] One is internal, and the other is external. First, the Corinthians are already upset with Paul's postponement of the visit. According to Land's interpretation, the Corinthians might have supposed that Paul would come to deal with the offenders himself so that they would not need to discipline their sisters and brothers.[68] Even if there are other possible reasons to explain their hope for Paul's coming—e.g., they might consider themselves to be unqualified to deal with congregational matters—it is evident that the Corinthians grumble about Paul's absence and likely attribute it to his weakness and indecisiveness. Second, at the same time, some outsiders as well as members of the Corinthian church slander the founders by assessing their competence to lead based on a cultural standard, possibly as a springboard to promote themselves to a leadership position.[69] It is most likely that some Corinthians have been misled and have begun to call their founders' leadership into question, worsening the existing discontentment. With this implied narrative world in mind, I now turn to discuss Paul's interests in addressing the Corinthians' misconception of leadership. Regarding leadership, two primary contrasts have emerged during my analysis of the moves. The

[67] Attempts have been made at historical and sociological reconstructions of the problems. Some attribute them to social disparity within the congregation, so these problems reflect competing of social ethos, e.g., Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 203–30; Clarke, *Serve the Community*, 185–89. Still, some interpret them as produced in the social identification process of the Corinthians, and Paul was competing with his critics for "identity management," e.g., Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership*, 112–40.

[68] Land, *Integrity*, 114.

[69] Land, *Integrity*, 115–16.

first contrast concerns promoting oneself versus promoting Christ, and the second contrast concerns discerning "false apostles" (versus "true apostles").

Promoting Oneself or Promoting Christ: 2 Cor 2:14—5:21

The Pauline leaders' interest in proclamation is represented as promoting Jesus Christ instead of human leaders. It is worth noting that no instruction is identified in this section. As indicated by Land, two meta-commentaries sandwich the section 2 Cor 2:14—5:21.[70] Both meta-commentaries stress what the discourse is *not* doing—namely, that it is not a piece of self-promotion. I will not repeat here what Land has done regarding these two meta-commentaries but will add three remarks pertinent to my power analysis.

First, the questions found in 2 Cor 3:1–3, as I interpret, likely have the effect of elenchic interrogations. Instead of pointing out the Corinthians' ignorance or misconceptions directly and assertively, Paul's discourse often uses questions to challenge their habitual thinking and provoke them into thinking differently. Notably, these questions indicate that, in the Pauline ministers' mind, the existence of the Corinthian congregation is proof of their effort and success in ministry and that it would be ridiculous if the Pauline ministers needed to promote themselves to the Corinthians. Therefore, Paul's use of questions likely seeks to help the Corinthians recognize their congregation as the fruit of the Pauline mission.

Second, Paul twice comments on proclamation, one of the most significant discursive practices of Christian ministers (4:5, 13–15). In response to Paul's critics who speak highly of themselves and degrade the Pauline mission, the first commentary claims

[70] Land, *Integrity*, 121–24, 133–37. According to Land (*Integrity*, 67–68), if the function of certain moves in a discourse is to construe the context of situation, it is meta-commentary.

that the Pauline ministers "proclaim not themselves but Jesus Christ the Lord" (4:5), and the second commentary asserts it is faith in God that motivates their proclamation (4:13–15). Paul's discourse represents the Pauline ministers as seeking not to win public favour via personal charm or powerful rhetoric but proclaiming a rather unpopular message concerning a crucified Lord, which is already stated in 1 Cor 1:20–25.[71]

Third, the meta-commentary identified in 2 Cor 5:11–12 denotes Paul's expectation for the Corinthians. He expects them to discern the wrong accusation in his critics' discourse and be able to defend the Pauline ministers. Paul expects the Corinthians to understand the Pauline ministers' attitude toward leadership—namely, the Pauline ministers serve with fear of the Lord (5:11; cf. 1 Cor 2:3). Paul hopes that their reverence for the Lord is made plain not only to God but also to the Corinthians. In summary, differing from the ethos of self-promotion valued by Greco-Roman culture, Paul represents his interest in the proclamation as seeking to promote Jesus Christ instead of the Pauline leaders or himself.[72]

True or False Apostles: 2 Cor 10:1—13:10

The analysis of section 2 Cor 10:1—13:10 indicates that in Paul's understanding, true apostleship or leadership entails devotion to the crucified Lord, grace for those in powerless positions, and right use of power. I will elaborate on each as follows. In this

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[71] Although Paul, probably quoting the Corinthians, acknowledges that he is not eloquent (2 Cor 11:6), we do not know whether it is a truth, or he is just making concessions. My analysis indicates that Paul is indeed skillful in legitimation (or persuasion). But admittedly, I assess his language use through my methodological lens. Cf. Clarke (*Church Leadership*, 159–72). Clarke sees "rhetoric and personal examples" as the "principal tools of leaders" (159).

[72] Savage (*Power through Weakness*, 164–86) notes that 2 Cor 4:7–18 indicates Paul's underlying conviction that "it is only in human weakness that the power of God *can* be manifested" (164; italics original).

section, a new group of social actors are brought onto the scene, i.e., the so-called super-apostles or false apostles. The Corinthians are represented as tolerating these critics. As indicated in the previous chapter, the increase of power in the critics makes Paul react more in 2 Corinthians and, hence, switch to a defence mode, compared with 1 Corinthians. The majority of the instructions identified in chs. 10–12 tackle the Corinthians' perception of the Pauline ministers and Paul himself (10:1, 7, 11; 11:16; 12:13, 16). Paul's accusation of the Corinthians suggests that he has expected them to defend him (12:11), and this expectation resonates with 2 Cor 2:14—5:21, as discussed above. Similar to discussion related to 2 Cor 2:14—5:21, Paul's moves here have two implications. First, the Corinthians should have known their founders' life and ministry well enough to reject unjust criticism of them and defend their ministry (cf. 5:12). Second, Paul is disappointed to know about the Corinthians' tolerance of the critics, and since the Corinthians are considered as failing to resist the critics, Paul has to defend himself. Regardless of whether Paul's understanding of his critics or the situation of the Corinthians is accurate or not, what his message about leadership entails is telling. I have summarized three implications from my analysis of his contrast between true and false apostleship.

First, the conventional qualification for leaders is not necessarily right, and cruciform leaders do not necessarily lack competence or strength. As indicated above, Christ's cruciform authority challenges the popular ideology of self-promotion and self-sufficiency. The contrast between cruciformity and the cultural idea about leadership is a recurrent theme in both letters to the Corinthians. In this section, Paul challenges both

Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures when pointing out the fallacy of judging leaders of God's congregations according to cultural standards (10:3).[73]

Against the background of Jewish culture, Paul advocates faithful living and hard work instead of allegiance to a religious tradition. Based on Paul's self-defence (11:22–23), I wish to propose that Paul is using some of his critics' language to undermine their stress on religious inheritance. After claiming that he is no less Jewish than his critics, Paul quickly moves away from boasting about his Jewish identity to argue that what truly matters is one's faithful living and hard work as Christ's servant (11:23–33). In other words, leaders must earn respect from those under their care by demonstrating hard work and godly living. This section of personal testimony indicates that Paul is caught in a web of challenges or demands that come from different directions. Regardless of how Paul responds and acts in life, he will inevitably upset some or others. If Paul seeks to please humans, he risks being sucked into a black hole of helplessness and hopelessness. Instead, Paul represents himself as fully devoted to preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Against the background of Greco-Roman culture, Paul promotes cruciformity, according to the recurrent collocation of the domains TO BE WEAK OR WEAKNESS (ἀσθένεια) and POWER (δύναμις) (11:30; cf. 12:9–10; 13:4). Against glorification in strength, Paul boasts about his weakness (11:30). As Savage indicates, Paul's boasting language stresses the contrast between Jesus Christ's strength and humans' weakness.[74] Christian leaders must not rely on personal strength or competence but divine assistance. However, seeking to rely on the cruciform Lord does not mean that the leaders should

[73] For a study that compares the leadership style promoted in the Pauline corpus with Greco-Roman and Jewish leadership models, see Clarke, *Serve the Community*.

[74] Savage, *Power through Weakness*, 62–64. Cf. Clarke, *Serve the Community*, 186–87.

lack competence or strength (10:3–4; 13:4) or neglect issues such as credential and reputation (10:18). My previous chapter concludes that the Pauline leaders are represented as powerful and strong leaders in both letters, whose strengths are manifested in keeping focused and persevering during suffering (11:23–33).

Second, free service is not necessarily cheap, and payment is not necessarily a guarantee of responsible leadership. Land points out that Paul discusses financial support again here because his critics might have used his reluctance to demand financial support as evidence of weak leadership to confuse the Corinthians.[75] Paul represents himself as never wanting to take advantage of them and asserts that his free service to them is represented as a gift out of grateful responsibility as a parent would do for her or his children (11:7–11; 12:11–18). When stressing his sacrificial giving to the Corinthians, Paul also emphasizes that his free service to them is done at the expense of others, e.g., the Macedonians (11:9); hence, his service to the Corinthians is not cheap since someone else has paid the price. By contrast, Paul hints that his critics are opportunists and power abusers who promote themselves (10:12–18), distort the gospel message (11:3–6), and mistreat the Corinthians (11:20). In short, Paul ruthlessly represents his critics as irresponsible workers, if they can be considered ministers at all. By this contrast, Paul's discourse is meant to move the Corinthians to understand that they have not lacked good

[75] Land, *Integrity*, 222. Besides, since the 1970s, scholars have drawn on social studies to interpret Paul's dealings with financial support, among which Hock (*Working Apostle*) stood out as a prominent one. More works drawing on social science arose since his attempt. For instance, Marshall (*Enmity in Corinth*, 165–258) interprets the Corinthian's financial offer as an "offer of friendship," and Paul's refusal of the gift is a refusal of the Corinthians' friendship and thus causes enmity. Elliot ("Hidden Transcripts," 97–122) argues that Paul seeks to replace the predominant ideology of "patronage" in the Greco-Roman culture with the notion of "mutuality" (101–2). Walton ("Paul, Patronage and Pay," 220–33) maintains that the patronage culture and its terminology are transformed through a Christological lens; the "partnership" has become the "watchword of the new community" (232). Schellenberg ("Offer of Support," 312–36) argues that Paul does not refuse any offer of support from the Corinthians but only does not demand financial support from them.

and strong leaders, although whether or not his evaluation of the critics is accurate remains questionable.

Third, authoritative leadership is not necessarily authoritarian, and leniency does not necessarily mean a good use of power. Although Paul does not discuss leadership in a treatise format, he interweaves many passing comments into the discourse about his dealing with the issue concerning the Corinthians' tolerance of his critics. Paul represents his authority as given by God to *empower* God's congregations for their maturity, according to the analysis of the instances of commentaries on speech that use the domain TO BUILD UP (οἰκοδομή). For instance, in 2 Cor 10:8–11, Paul assures the Corinthians that he will not be shy about using the authority given by the Lord to *build them up*, even if that means enacting discipline (περὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας ἡμῶν ἧς ἔδωκεν ὁ κύριος εἰς οἰκοδομὴν καὶ οὐκ εἰς καθαίρεσιν ὑμῶν, 10:8). In other words, Paul will *push them up* if it is necessary. Similarly, in 2 Cor 12:19–21, Paul asserts that as Christ's servant, he is concerned about the growth of the Corinthians (ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑμῶν οἰκοδομῆς, v.19b), even though he is also concerned about his humiliation (12:20–21). Moreover, at the end of the letter, Paul repeats for the third time that his authority to discipline given to him by the Lord is meant to be constructive but not destructive (κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἣν ὁ κύριος ἔδωκέν μοι εἰς οἰκοδομὴν καὶ οὐκ εἰς καθαίρεσιν, 13:9b–10). If Paul is given the position and responsibility to build up a community, failing to use his power at all is also problematic. In my opinion, leaders who fail to make decisions and implement plans are not much better than leaders who abuse their power. In fact, the Corinthians might have misunderstood Paul as the former kind, as already mentioned in the previous chapter when Paul's relational identity is discussed. His critics' misperception of him might be

the reason why Paul stresses that he will enact discipline when present if he sees more immoral acts. Admittedly, whether or not Paul's perspective can be accepted remains questionable. But it is worth noting that he represents himself as understanding the divine initiative in his authority and power; in other words, he is *authorized* and *empowered* by his Lord. Besides, he understands that authority entails accountability. In 2 Cor 10:17–18, Paul comments that what matters is the Lord's approval and endorsement of a servant instead of her or his self-recommendation.

In summary, I have discussed the conception of leadership Paul negotiates by enacting his discourse in 10:1—13:13. According to my analysis, his conception implies three points. First, a convention is not necessarily right, and cruciformity does not necessarily mean lacking power; second, grace is not necessarily cheap, and payment is not necessarily a guarantee of responsible leadership; and third, authority is not necessarily authoritarian, and leniency is not necessarily a good use of power. In doing so, I have uncovered Paul's interests represented in the discourse—namely, to prioritize evangelism, to bring the Corinthians to maturity, and, most of all, to seek Christ's approval.

Conclusion

In this section, I have interpreted two large sections related to the conception of leadership, 2:14—5:21 and 10:1—13:10, giving attention to Paul's implied interests (i.e., what Paul's moves seek to produce) and Paul's implied negotiation strategies (i.e., how Paul makes and legitimates the moves). To conclude, Paul seeks to correct the Corinthians' misconception of leadership that is based on the cultural standards so that the continuing partnership in the Pauline mission can be truly grounded in their trust in

the Pauline leaders. Now I will turn to discuss Paul's interest in negotiating congregational responsibilities with the Corinthians.

Negotiating Congregational Responsibilities

In 2 Corinthians, Paul continues to tackle the issue of congregational discipline concerning sexual immorality and further negotiate social practices related to purity. By doing so, he indicates an interest in training the Corinthians to become independent and take responsibility for building their community; in other words, God's people must grow to hold each other accountable as they live as a community according to Christ's cruciform authority.

Delegating Discipline to the Corinthian Congregation

Paul delegates the responsibility to discipline offensive members back to the congregation. His delegation affirms the potential of the Corinthians as a community and urges them to act in concert to produce godly influence. Based on the analysis of the moves related to church discipline, I draw two implications about what they seek to produce here. His discourse affirms what the Corinthians have done well and suggests terminating the discipline. In what follows, I will discuss each of these implications, respectively.

First, Paul's discourse affirms the obedience of the Corinthian congregation that has been demonstrated in their congregational repentance to a certain extent (2:5–11; 7:2–16). Both Paul and Titus are represented as feeling joyful and encouraged by the lamentation of the Corinthians in response to Paul's previous letter, although the issue concerning the sexual offences seems to linger (11:11; 12:20–21; 13:2). The statements

in 7:3–4 assure the Corinthians that Paul takes pride in them. A little further, Paul's letter affirms that their dealing with the matter demonstrates holiness (7:11). Admittedly, Paul's language sounds forceful sometimes, and he is not shy about rebuking wrong behaviours and attitudes. However, the analysis of Paul's reactions above has indicated that Paul does not represent himself as a cold-hearted or harsh dictator. Repeatedly, he represents not only his anxiety and distress as a human but also his love and care as a parent-like mentor.

Second, Paul's discourse advises the Corinthian congregation to terminate the discipline of the offenders (2:8–10). Here discipline is represented as having interest in training for holiness instead of bringing condemnation. Therefore, congregation discipline—or any discipline executed by people in powerful positions—must be restrained. Regardless of how holy the purpose is, unrestricted discipline will quickly result in abuse of power. The Corinthians are given the responsibility to discipline the offender(s) among them, and Paul will follow their decisions.[76] For anyone who holds a superwoman or superman model of leadership, Paul's advice is a head-on blow. Some might have a different interpretation, e.g., that Paul is shirking responsibility or being too hands-off out of laziness. Regardless of how Paul's motive is interpreted, I suggest that good leadership includes training for independent thinking and acting.

In summary, regarding discipline within the congregation, Paul's discourse affirms what the Corinthians have done well and advises them to consider limiting the discipline. By delegating the responsibility of discipline back to the Corinthians, Paul indicates an interest in training the Corinthians toward independence from their founders.

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[76] Land, *Integrity*, 105–9.

Training for Purity: 2 Cor 6:3–7:1

Ethical living, according to Christ's cruciform authority, is represented as a marker of maturity in Christian walk. As mentioned above, the primary concern for Paul as regards congregational discipline is the recurrent theme related to collective purity.[77] Although the Corinthians have demonstrated signs of their attitude change toward sexual sins—namely, from arrogant to mournful—sexual immorality is represented as a severe issue that lingers among them. Scholars have noted the religious pluralism[78] and moral laxity in Corinth.[79] It is crucial for the Pauline leaders and congregations to avoid doing something offensive that might cause outsiders to speak badly of the ministry in order to guarantee the success of the Pauline mission. So, Christ's followers must imitate the walk of God's servants and put no obstacle in anyone's way (6:3).

Second Corinthians 6:14 introduces the prohibition concerning purity, i.e., "Don't become wrongly matched with non-believers" (6:14).[80] Following this prohibition are five consecutive questions and a temple metaphor introduced by a string of scriptural

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[77] Adewuya (*Holiness and Community*, 165–92) also voices the significance of "corporate holiness" or "communal holiness" implied in Paul's thought.

[78] E.g., Winter, "Responses to Religious Pluralism," 209–26; Winter, "Imperial Cult," 169–78.

[79] E.g., Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 76–120) regards gluttony, drunkenness, and sexual indulgence as the three primary characteristics of the "elitist ethics." If Winter's conclusion is accurate, Paul's moves concerning the training for purity are directed more to the people in privileged positions.

[80] For studies on holiness or purity in 2 Cor 6:14–7:1, see Adewuya, *Holiness and Community*; Hogeterp, "Community as Temple," 281–83; Liu, *Temple Purity*, 196–233. Concerning the hapax legomenon ἑτεροζυγοῦντες in the opening verse, the majority of commentators render it as "unequally yoked" or "mismatched" against the backdrop of LXX Lev 19:19. But Land (*Integrity*, 156) groups ἑτεροζυγοῦντες, μετοχὴ, and κοινωνία into the same domain TO BE PARTNERS OR TO COLLABORATE. So, I render it in the sense of "collaboration" to echo with the previous discussion on collaboration and partnership. As regards whether 2 Cor 6:14 is a general or particular command, two general streams of interpretation are identified. (1) Some scholars interpret it as a general command, e.g., Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 32:372; Harris, *Second Epistle*, 501; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 362. (2) Others interpret it as a particular command in the context of Christian marriage, e.g., Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 195–96, or table fellowship in cultic meals, e.g., Fee, "Food Offered to Idols," 140–61.

citations. In what follows, I will elaborate on the questions and the metaphor, respectively.

First, the questions are constructed with dualistic pairs. The use of dualistic pairs indicates that no mixture is allowed between righteousness and lawlessness, light and darkness, Jesus and Belial, belief and disbelief, and, lastly, between the temple of God and the temple of idols (6:14–16).[81] Identified as having the effect of elenchic interrogations, these questions together convey a *force* that compels the readers to conclude that no compromise is allowed concerning the issue of purity.

Second, following the questions, Paul makes a statement concerning the Corinthians' collective identity: "you are the temple of the living God" (6:16b).[82] The implications of this metaphor are embedded in the combination of citations. All the cited Scriptures are more or less associated with the promises to and the responsibilities of the postexilic Israelites (e.g., Ezek 37:27; Isa 52:11; Ezek 20:34, 41). The interplay between the divine promises and commands in these Scriptural citations leads to the only first-person plural subjunctive in 2 Corinthians: "Let's purify ourselves from all defiled flesh and spirit" (7:1). This plural hortatory subjunctive urges the Corinthians to participate in the action of self-cleansing with the Pauline leaders.[83] The use of the plural hortatory subjunctive is crucial here because it implies that Paul applies the same demand for purity to leaders. At least, Paul is not employing a double standard here.

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[81] Concerning the use of dualism, scholars have produced different interpretations. Fitzmyer ("Qumran," 271–80) compares the theology of 2 Cor 6:14—7:1 to the Qumranite thought and regards this segment as Paul's pleading to separation. Disagreeing with Fitzmyer, Hogeterp ("Community as Temple," 281–98) denotes that the dualism "may serve to protect the Corinthian community against the threat of corrupting influences from outside" (287).

[82] The temple metaphor is used in 1 Corinthians twice 1 Cor 3:16–17 and 1 Cor 6:19. The latter is used in the context of discussing sexual immorality. For studies on the temple metaphor, Liu, *Temple Purity*.

[83] Porter, *Idioms*, 58.

In summary, the prohibition in 6:14 and the exhortation in 7:1 sandwich the negotiation strategies of elenchic interrogations and authorization (citing Scripture) and give general instruction on ethical living. This instruction, however, does not apply to the Corinthians only but includes the leaders.

Conclusion

In this section, I have discussed Paul's moves that seek to urge the Corinthians to live according to their collective identity as God's holy temple and take the congregational responsibility of discipline seriously when some members fail to live accordingly. By delegating discipline to the Corinthians and moving them to live with purity according to Christ's cruciform authority, Paul has negotiated with the Corinthians what congregational responsivity entails in their context. In what follows, I will discuss the last negotiation, which is about the Jerusalem collection.

Negotiating the Jerusalem Collection

Second Corinthians begins with Paul's interest in promoting collaboration by representing his expectation for the Corinthians to continue their partnership in the Pauline mission (1:3–11). Still, Paul's biggest effort to secure the Corinthians' collaboration is manifested in the Jerusalem collection. Second Corinthians 8 and 9 together focus on moving the Corinthians to act in concert to support the believers in Jerusalem who are in need.[84] According to my analysis of power dynamics in the

[84] Many words have been said about the collection in Pauline discourse. The interpretation of the Jerusalem collection in 2 Corinthians involves other issues, e.g., how it relates to other collection materials in the New Testament (e.g., Romans or Acts), or whether 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 together are part of a whole letter or belong to two different letters. From a historical-critical perspective, Nickle (*Collection*) interprets Paul's collection as an expression of Paul's theology of the unity of the Church, and Goergi (*Remembering*

previous chapter, other Christians, such as the Macedonians, are represented as *aligned* to Paul's plan for the Jerusalem collection. Thus, the collection is not represented as only a spiritual discipline but also as a social practice related to social responsibility. That being the case, the success or failure of the Corinthians in following the leaders' advice now is no longer merely a private matter between the leaders and the Corinthians but a public matter watched by many spectators. Besides the practical help for those in need, how the Corinthians treat the collection will generate a much broader moral influence.[85]

I have identified three direct instructions in 2 Cor 8. All instructions are used to move the Corinthians toward generosity. Two of them are found in irregular forms. The first irregular one is a subjunctive positioned in a purpose clause (8:7). Since this sentence lacks a primary clause, I interpret 2 Cor 8:7 as an exhortation urging the Corinthians to abound in generosity. The second one uses an independent nominative participle, which I interpret as a "commanding participle" that urges the Corinthians to demonstrate their love to other congregations through giving (8:24).[86] The regular one of these three, ἐπιτελέσατε, is a regular imperative that urges the Corinthians to complete what they have planned (8:11).

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the Poor) interprets Paul's collection as the embodiment of Paul's theology of justification. Later works indicate a variety of approaches. For instance, Betz (*2 Corinthians 8 and 9*) attempts a rhetorical-critical reading, and Chang (*Fund-Raising*) attempts a socio-economic reading. To my knowledge, these two chapters have not been the focus of power studies. Here, building on Land's linguistic analysis, I attempt to study the collection from a different angle.

[85] This conclusion concerning "moral influence" is based on the frequent use of the material or semiotic processes related to one's attitude or emotion, e.g., TO HONOUR OR SHAME (καταισχύνω, δοξάζω), TO SPEAK BADLY (μωμάομαι), TO BOAST (καυχάομαι), TO PROVOKE (ἐρεθίζω), TO GIVE THANKS (εὐχαριστέω), and domains related to testing or proof, e.g., EVIDENCE (δοκιμή), TO MAKE KNOWN OR REVEAL (γνωρίζω, ἔνδειξις, ἐνδεικνύμενοι), TO TEST OR PROVE (δοκιμάζω).

[86] Porter, *Idioms*, 185–86.

Notably, Paul is not forcing what the Corinthians do not desire or demanding what exceeds their capacity.[87] Instead, he encourages them to keep their promise and give proportionally to what they have. This is important to any interpretation of Paul's use of power. On the one hand, even if the collection is a noble act, no one should be forced to give; on the other, it is one thing to force an act, but it is another thing to train someone to follow something through. No personal growth or social responsibility can be forced. In other words, one can be forced to act, but cannot be forced to mature or become socially responsible, because maturity comes from within. Regardless of how Paul's use of power is assessed, at least his discourse indicates an effort to negotiate and create an interest in social responsibility in the matter of Jerusalem collection. I will wait until the next chapter to assess his use of power and here will only focus on Paul's legitimation strategies and investigate how they aid the Corinthians in *internalizing and following through* the social practice of Jerusalem collection.

These legitimation strategies include setting models and moral evaluation, rationalizing, invoking relationship, and referring to authority. In what follows, I will elaborate on each of these strategies, respectively. First, regarding the use of moral models, 2 Cor 8 starts with the testimony of the Macedonians' sacrificial giving as an obeying act of God's will (8:1–5). Furthermore, the Corinthians are reminded of the self-lowering model of their Lord Jesus Christ, who has become poor to make them rich (8:9). Stories and testimonies are powerful to evoke emotion and project a narrative world in

[87] Bruehler ("Proverbs," 214–15) argues that Paul's instruction for the collection meets challenges among the Corinthians because quite a few members were facing economic pressure and felt unhappy with the demand to give. Admittedly, the economic pressure exists, since 1 Corinthians indicates that some members are poor (1 Cor 11:22). But based on my critical discourse analysis, the falling-out between Paul and the Corinthians seems to be the primary reason that impacts the original plan of the collection, instead of economic pressure.

which ethical instructions are embodied. As regards the use of moral evaluation, I examine the appraisal related to the actions or their effects. For instance, the Corinthians' collection is appraised positively as generous (9:11, 13), good work (9:8), and product of righteousness (9:10). Similarly, as discussed above, the impact of the collection is not only to support the saints but also to generate thanksgiving to God (9:12). The use of moral evaluation shows Paul's attitude toward the collection as well as his hope to move the Corinthians to act on the collection, represented as a noble and honourable act.

Second, regarding the use of rationalization, Paul's discourse is meant to aid the Corinthians in understanding the collection from the perspective of mutuality (8:13–15).[88] The idea implied here is that believing communities need each other in the course of life. This emphasis on equality in terms of mutuality is significant for interpreting Paul's conception of power relationships between God's people (8:14). On the one hand, Paul is likely assuring the Corinthians that he is not taking advantage of their wealth or showing favouritism to others (8:13). Instead, Paul reminds them of their *initial* desire to give (8:10–12). On the other hand, the act of giving itself often places one on the privileged and powerful side, even for a short time, because charity work potentially places one in patronage positions in the Mediterranean culture.[89] By giving, believers in privileged positions could become arrogant and condescend those in less privileged positions, knowingly or unknowingly. When Paul reminds the Corinthians of mutuality, he likely attempts to discourage them from feeling taken advantage or seeing themselves

[88] I use "mutuality" instead of "reciprocity" intentionally. Anthropologists and sociologists (such as DeSilva, *Honor*, 95–120) inform us that ancient patronage system is also reciprocal. The patrons provide for the clients, and in turn, the clients have the obligations to praise and promote the patrons in social or political activities. Cf. Elliott ("Hidden Transcripts," 97–122) argues that "mutuality" is Paul's financial strategy to fight against the predominant ideology of "patronage" in Greco-Roman world when explaining Paul's message related to the collection.

[89] Walton, "Paul, Patronage and Pay," 221.

as a patron of their Jerusalem sisters and brothers and to move them to see themselves as the channel of God's care to his congregations. In other words, only God is the powerful provider, and the Corinthians are merely the channel of God's grace *at the present time* (8:14). In summary, believers need each other mutually; when the Corinthians act in concert to support the Jerusalem congregation, they must not consider themselves to be taken advantage or to be the powerful patron for their Jerusalem sisters and brothers.

Third, regarding the strategy of relationship, the section stresses that the leaders' moves are made according to a close relationship with the Corinthians. The section uses the vocative ἀδελφοί at the beginning, calling for attention and drawing on the personal relationship (8:1). The Pauline ministers also call the advance messengers "brothers." The frequent use of ἀδελφός (fifty percent of its total usage in 2 Corinthians) in this section might soften the force of the matter in question. Moreover, the meta-commentary in 9:1–5 implies that Paul, as a proud parent, has bragged about the Corinthians to the Macedonians. Admittedly, the interpretation that Paul's boasting is a parental kind of pride is my inference based on Paul's representation of his relationship with the Corinthians in other parts of the Corinthian letter (1 Cor 4:14–15; 2 Cor 6:13; 12:14). If this is a reasonable inference, the use of the domain TO HONOUR AND SHAME (καταισχύνω) also indicates a parental kind of embarrassment when the children fail to live up to the parent's expectation in front of outsiders (9:4). As regards the relationship between Titus and the Corinthians, the domain EAGERNESS AND INTENSE CARE (σπουδή, σπουδαῖος) are used repeatedly to describe his intense care for the Corinthians. This representation likely seeks to pave the way for the Corinthians to receive Titus and his companions warmly. Regardless of how Paul describes the relationship between the

Pauline leaders and the Corinthians, as siblings or as parents, Paul bases his instructions on the assumption that he has a close relationship with the Corinthians.

Lastly, regarding the use of authorization, the discourse appeals to both ecclesial and divine authority. The universal church is represented as authorizing a brother to travel with Titus to Corinth and later with Paul to Jerusalem (8:19). Thus, the universal church is drawn on as a supporter of the social alignment concerning the Jerusalem collection. The Corinthians are expected to demonstrate their faithfulness before the universal church (8:24). Besides, both the involvement of the universal church and the details concerning how the gift should be handled indicate Paul's caution in avoiding any scandal related to money and blame from outsiders (8:18–21). More significant than aligning with the authority of the universal church is that the Corinthians must understand the grace and power of God as the source of their action (9:6–15).[90] Giving the wealth to the Corinthians, God makes them the channel of his grace to those in need (9:10). Therefore, the right response—aligning themselves with God's purpose of giving the wealth—is to demonstrate their obedience to Christ and fellowship with other Christ's followers (9:13). In short, appealing to both the authority of the universal church and the lordship of Christ, Paul legitimates his exhortation for the Corinthians to complete the Jerusalem collection.

Up to this point, I have analyzed the legitimation strategies implied in 2 Cor 8–9 and discussed how they support the instructions concerning the Jerusalem collection.

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[90] For a detailed exegetical study, see Bruehler, "Proverbs," 209–24. Bruehler investigates 2 Cor 9:6–15 from a rhetoric and socio-economic perspective. He concludes that the allusions to the sapient materials and agricultural imageries are meant to move the Corinthians, especially those who face economic pressure, to give generously and willingly. Cf. For a linguistic analysis, see Land, *Integrity*, 188–93.

From Paul's perspective, this act of collection is legitimated as alignment with God's will and with social expectations among Christians. It is also represented as morally right and beneficial for the Corinthians to carry it out as they have planned since it will meet a practical need of their sisters and brothers, demonstrate the Corinthians' obedience, encourage other Christians to give thanks to God, and bring honour to their founders and most importantly, glory to God. It is worth noting that Paul uses honour and shame language in his effort to realign the Corinthians. Even though shaming someone is undesirable in modern Western culture, it is not unusual in Paul's culture. Malina notes that in a group-oriented culture like the ancient Mediterranean world, honour is the positive value in both the individual's eyes and the eyes of the individual's social group.[91] DaSilva also notes that honour and dishonour can play a significant part in moral instruction and development.[92] In that regard, it is important not only for Paul but also for the Corinthians to receive a social acknowledgement by the broader Jesus movement.

Conclusion

In this section, I have discussed the Jerusalem collection. Particularly, I have analyzed the instructions and legitimation strategies. These analyses combined suggest the social alignment concerning the Jerusalem collection and Paul's negotiation to *(re)align* the Corinthians by urging them to give generously. Regardless of whether Paul is manipulating or empowering, the act of collection itself is meant to support those in the less powerful and privileged positions and also to generate moral influence in a broader circle. Paul's discourse indicates that he is not forcing the collection but rather labouring

[91] Malina, "Honor and Shame," 25–26; Moxnes, "Honor and Shame," 167–76.
[92] DeSilva, *Honor*, 23–27.

to aid the Corinthians in internalizing the practice. However, whether or not helping the Corinthians internalize the Jerusalem collection is manipulative remains an issue.

Summary of Power Negotiations in 2 Corinthians

In many ways, the book of 2 Corinthians continues to negotiate what 1 Corinthians has already negotiated, such as social practices related to perceptions of leaders and conceptions of leadership, congregational purity and responsibilities to maintain their collective identity, and Paul's collection for Jerusalem believers. But 2 Corinthians has its uniqueness, namely, that it not only represents but also negotiates the Corinthians' reactions more than 1 Corinthians. Furthermore, according to my analysis, the focus is shifted from instructing his audience and forming their collective identity in 1 Corinthians to defending the Pauline leaders and mission in 2 Corinthians. This change in focus likely accounts for the tone change from instructive and interactive in 1 Corinthians to defensive in 2 Corinthians. Regardless of how to interpret the defensiveness, it is clear that Paul is exerting influence via his words and that his interest is represented as moving the Corinthians to think and do according to Christ's cruciform authority.

Conclusion

This chapter is about power negotiation, i.e., influence enacted to induce changes via words. In 1 Corinthians, Paul's discourse is more interactive and instructive; it responds to questions and issues reported to him by spelling out specific instructions about the Corinthians' situation. These instructions concern matters such as perceptions of leaders and conceptions of leadership, social practices related to community building, attitudes toward people in less privileged and powerful positions, and theology related to

believers' resurrection. Paul's primary interest is to move the Corinthians to (re)align with the message of the crucifixion and resurrection. Interwoven with these negotiations is Paul's negotiation of the Corinthians' collective identity. Most of all, the Corinthians are brought by a price and now belong to Jesus Christ and are owned by him. Paul's identity discourse often serves as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the Corinthians could be encouraged by the implication that they are empowered by Christ to lead a different life. On the other hand, the Corinthians could be shamed by the implication that they are still leading a life that shows not much difference from their surrounding cultures.

In many ways, 2 Corinthians continues what 1 Corinthians began. It is worth remembering that the power relationships are represented as changing in 2 Corinthians. Particularly, on the one hand, the evil spiritual powers are represented as more active and influential, so are the critics. On the other hand, the Pauline leaders' and Paul's authoritative leadership meet challenges, and their power and influence are represented as declining. In Paul's discourse, the critics are represented as servants of the evil spiritual powers. By tolerating the leadership of the critics, the Corinthians are represented as putting themselves in a dangerous situation. So, part of Paul's discourse seeks to produce the right kind of reaction—right from Paul's perspective—in the Corinthians toward these critics, by encoding more the Pauline leaders' emotive reactions. This is the reason why 2 Corinthians could feel more emotional, although it is indeed as rational in terms of legitimation strategies as 1 Corinthians. It is also worth noting that the appraisal of the Corinthians is not all negative in 2 Corinthians. For instance, they are praised for their collective repentance and expected to continue their partnership in the Pauline mission,

especially completing the Jerusalem collection. Furthermore, although 2 Corinthians is more defensive, it is not merely a piece of venting one's frustration. The defence is indeed a piece of negotiating a new conception of leadership. While defending, the discourse still tackles the issues of community building, such as their collective purity, and issues of supporting the Jerusalem congregation.

Paul uses mostly rationalization and authorization to legitimate his instructions in both Corinthian letters. But there is also a difference. In 1 Corinthians, Paul enacts more morality instructions and, thus, uses more moral evaluation. In 2 Corinthians, Paul encodes more the Pauline leaders' emotive reactions and correspondingly, draws on his relationship with the Corinthians. Perhaps what is intriguing is not the similarity but the contrast between the two letters. The change of the power dynamics seems to affect not only the tone but also the legitimation strategies.

To conclude, both letters seek to (re)align the Corinthians with the cruciform authority of Jesus Christ, when representing the Pauline leaders as servants empowered and given authority by Jesus Christ to build up the Corinthians. In what follows, I am going to assess whether or not Paul's effort of realignment can be seen as a transformative use of power.

CHAPTER 6: DOMINATION OR EMPOWERMENT? TO ASK THIS QUESTION IS TO ANSWER IT

When I first proposed this dissertation, my attention was drawn to the #MeToo movement. Six months into my writing process, the Hong Kong Anti-Extradition Bill movement broke out. When I was still holding my breath for Hongkongers, an unofficial word of warning about a SARS-like virus leaked out of Wu Han, China on Dec 30, 2019; within several weeks, countless lives were lost without being medically treated or officially counted and remembered.[1] The World Health Organization *finally* declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020, and Canadians were suddenly under a "stay-at-home" mandate. Quickly, social distancing and Zoom meetings became a "new normal." The virtual world became the reality of life: online work, online studies, online worship, online shopping, and so on. Following social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, we witnessed the "soft-wars" between political parties, national and international leaders, and ordinary citizens. By inspecting online information and watching live reports of "we media" (or citizen journalism),[2] those of us who sought understanding tried to find out what was happening in China and elsewhere in the world. Knowledge of reality suddenly became an urgent issue of life and death, because

[1] This is the date when the whistle blower Dr. Li Wenliang sent out a message to his doctor friends via WeChat.

[2] Bowman and Willis, "We Media," 7–8. For a personal account of what happened in Wu Han, see Fang, *Wuhan Diary*.

authorities sought to hide information, silence any dissidents, and spin discourse. Knowingly or unknowingly, we were involved in critical discourse analysis, learning to fact-check the so-called news or to uncover the ideological interests hidden in news reports or political discourse. At the same time, we hoped all citizens in the US and Canada would be sensible enough to submit to medical experts' advice and stay home to avoid the spread of COVID-19. During the pandemic, I learned through experience that the need to use power and to restrict freedoms can coexist with the need to resist abuses of power and to fight for freedom. During these months of turmoil, one of my regular tasks was scrutinizing information and telling my parents (still living in China) alternative narratives and discourses. Finally, I woke up to recognize what Mas'ud Zavarzadeh had already talked about in 1975. He wrote,

> A fabulous reality which engulfs and overwhelms contemporary consciousness is manifesting itself daily not only in public events and statements but also in the very visual and auditory milieu which envelops us. We seem to be swallowed by a technetronic reality which defies human moral understanding and obeys machine-generated guidelines for action. Computers now conduct our wars and project our future ecological and demographic environment.[3]

I have had some ideas about how chaotic the world could be, but I am surprised lately by how logically absurd and realistically abnormal I have come to feel about the so-called world. On the one hand, I am feeling helpless to keep absurdity from becoming a new logic and to keep lies from forming a new reality inside me and among my relatives and friends in China. On the other hand, I am resisting, or hoping to resist, adopting Alain Robbe-Grillet's attitude, as quoted by Zavarzadeh:

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[3] Zavarzadeh, "Apocalyptic Fact," 70. In this article, Zavarzadeh coins the word "meta-modernism," referring to what is usually called "post-modernism." His notion of meta-modernism is derived from a discussion concerning the tension between the creation of novel and the increasingly absurd reality, owing to the epistemological crisis in their day. According to Zavarzadeh, the new sub-genre "nonfiction novel" indicates despair of creating a structure to understand the world.

> In the post-absurd world, daily experience eludes simple meaningful/meaningless reality testing; it is, in Robbe-Grillet's words, "neither significant nor absurd. It *is*, quite simply."[4]

I reject Robbe-Grillet's conclusion because I do not want to get so used to the absurd reality as it *is* and begin to accept it as it *is* without feeling odd about it or angry at it. I might still be naïve, but I continue to pursue understanding of reality (or *truth*), regardless of how the notion of truth is defined among philosophers.[5] I need a sense of meaning and stability while living in a chaotic world.[6] I am realistic about how little my agency can produce. But I am not ready to give up on actively using my agency to understand reality and to have a positive influence. This is the reason I attempt a meta-modernist position (here "meta-" means *between*),[7] even if my attempt at negotiating between modernism and postmodernism could cause logical incoherence or cognitive indecisiveness.[8] Admittedly, I am *oscillating between* modernism and postmodernism, as

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[4] Robbe-Grillet, *For a New Novel*, 19, cited by Zavarzadeh, "Apocalyptic Fact," 69.

[5] Truth in postmodernism has become controversial and in turn a political notion. Foucault ("Truth and Power," 133) links truth with régime by writing, "'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. A 'régime' of truth." By contrast, Snyder (*On Tyranny*, 65–71) urges people to believe in truth (in the sense of facts about reality). He writes, "To abandon facts is to abandon freedom. If nothing is true, then no one can criticize power, because there is no basis upon which to do so. If nothing is true, then all is spectacle. The biggest wallet pays for the most blinding light" (65). At the end, he also writes, "Post-truth is pre-fascism." Moltmann (*Spirit of Hope*, 65) maintains the readability of the world; he writes, "However initial and fragmentary our knowledge may be, there is correspondence between our reason and the reasonableness of the world."

[6] Angrist and Gorge (*Order and Chaos*, 200) call this urge an "entropy reduction."

[7] Zavarzadeh, "Apocalyptic Fact," 69–83; Clasquin-Johnson, "Metamodern Academic Study," 1–11; Abramson, S. "Metamodernism."

[8] Thiselton, *Interpreting God*, 111–17, 127–35. Thiselton rightly captures the essential characteristics of the modern and postmodern selves—namely, an autonomous self versus a reduced, decentered self, although his juxtaposition is oversimplified. Moreover, he has a rather negative attitude toward postmodern approaches in general (117). Thiselton's argument, albeit thorough and logical, is considered biased for at least three reasons. First, all theologians and philosophers by whom he is informed are white males. Second, his major post-modern dialogue partner is Don Cupitt and his Sea of Faith Network, who evolved into a radical postmodernist. Third, Thiselton interprets the postmodernist agenda as striving for power-interests, but never discusses what has driven them to talk about power-interests in the first place. That said, although I agree with Thiselton's conclusion that a postmodern self needs a theology of hope, I think he lacks empathy for or analysis of postmodern outcries, especially outcries from those in less privileged and powerful positions.

suggested by the recent definition of "meta-modernism," a notion still in the process of being defined.[9] It is with an interest to land this meta-modernist position that I will evaluate Paul's use of power and attempt to discuss an ethic of using power by assuming that evaluation and discussion are possible and meaningful.

Evaluating Paul's Use of Power

To understand Paul's use of power embodied in his discourse, I have analyzed two interrelated aspects of his use of power: power in words and power via words. The former reconstructed the power dynamics represented in his discourse, and the latter reconstructed what he seeks to influence the Corinthians to do and how he does it. In other words, the first analysis studies Paul's representation of uses of agency (which could be understood as his covert use of power), and the second studies Paul's overt use of his own agency. Although I tried to give Paul a fair hearing, I was listening to him with and through other interpreters, particularly those who have dedicated themselves to study the larger social and cultural contexts of Paul's day and those who challenge traditional readings. Simultaneously, I was also listening to Paul as who I am with my own concerns. On the one hand, my listening was neither disinterested nor isolated. On the other, although my interpretation was inevitably biased, I have tried not to subordinate the notion of understanding to that of interest. Having done the listening, I now turn to assess Paul's use of power.

[9] Clasquin-Johnson, "Metamodern Academic Study," 1–11. Overall, as Clasquin-Johnson notes, metamodernism is a "negotiation between modernism and postmodernism" (3).

Paul's Social and Cultural Context

Before assessing Paul's use of power, I will present an eclectic and rather sketchy picture of social power relationships in Greco-Roman culture. Since many studies have been done on reconstructing Paul's social and cultural world and since my focus is not on historical reconstruction, I do not consider it worthwhile to reinvent the wheel here. Instead, I draw on some major players for a general view. This picture includes at least five aspects. First, anthropological studies point out that in ancient group-oriented cultures, community interest precedes any individual rights.[10] In general, social recognition and alignment with group interests and values control one's relationship with her or his community.[11] Second, Halvor Moxnes notes that Greco-Roman social structures revolve around kinship, patronage, and slavery.[12] The patronage system organizes the relationship between the more powerful and privileged and those in less powerful and privileged positions.[13] In the patron-client relationship, while patrons supply food and protection, their clients return praise and promote the patrons. In addition, the friendship-enmity system organizes those who are of equal rank.[14] There is some overlapping in these two systems. For instance, both systems operate primarily on reciprocity. Third, the Greco-Roman and Jewish cultures are primarily patriarchal.[15] This

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[10] Malina and Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul*, 11.

[11] Malina, "Honor and Shame," 25–26. From an anthropological-historical perspective, "social recognition" is essential for group-orientated cultures in which "a person receives status from the group" (Moxnes, "Honor and Shame," 168). DeSilva (*Honor*, 40) also notes that to secure the allegiance, group members must be clear about the "body of significant others" whose opinion matters. I use the modern notion of social alignment to study power here only as a heuristic tool to understand the first-century phenomenon of social power embedded in the Pauline discourse.

[12] Moxnes, "Honor and Shame," 168.

[13] DeSilva, *Honor*, 95–120; Elliott, "Patronage and Clientism," 39–48; Chow, *Patronage and Power*.

[14] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 1–69.

[15] Bartchy, "Undermining Ancient Patriarchy," 68–78; Larson, "Paul's Masculinity," 85–97; Stewart, "Masculinity in the New Testament," 91–102.

remains significant, even if we follow those New Perspective scholars who argue that the Jewish notion of parenting focuses more on the responsibility of protection and provision in comparison with the Greco-Roman culture.[16] Fourth, in general, those who have social status and wealth gain leadership in society and community.[17] As a result, self-promotion and competition characterize individuals who want to move up the social ladder.[18] Besides, Greco-Roman criminal and civil litigation favours those in more powerful and privileged positions.[19] Lastly, there are no clear lines between religious, political, and social domains in the ancient world. By and large, whereas Jewish monotheism is exclusive, Greco-Roman paganism is more inclusive.[20]

As indicated in previous chapters, no socio-historical reconstruction is unbiased, owing to the researcher's assumptions regarding history-writing and her or his selection and interpretation of sources, although Hannah Arendt asserts that historians do not need to apologize for their subjectivity.[21] Nevertheless, these studies are helpful to understand more or less the continuity and discontinuity between Paul's representation and the broader culture. Although these socio-historical studies approach social power in the Greco-Roman world from different perspectives and with different interpretive models, the majority would agree that hierarchy and injustice characterize Greco-Roman society.[22] Where power studies depart in interpretation is their answers to the question of whether Paul promotes or denounces the Greco-Roman hierarchy. Admittedly, any

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[16] Ehrensperger, *Crossroads of Cultures*, 119–20, 126–27.
[17] Clarke, *Serve the Community*, 146–48.
[18] Savage, *Power through Weakness*, 19–53.
[19] Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*, 44–45, 58–60.
[20] Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 176–77.
[21] Arendt, "History," 576–77; Curtis and Petras, "Community Power," 204–18; Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 5.
[22] For an exception, see Harrill, *Paul the Apostle*.

either-or question oversimplifies life's complexity, and such polarizations tend to crystallize difference. So, although I am also asking either-or questions for the sake of discussion, I understand the risks and limitations.

Is Paul Dominating or Empowering?

In my previous chapters, I have used Theo van Leeuwen's representation theory to reconstruct "a structure *used* in the text" and an SFL-informed speech-act theory to reconstruct "the structure *of* the text."[23] Now I will use Thomas Wartenberg's field theory of social power to evaluate Paul's use of power.

First of all, allow me to provide a summary according to my analyses of 1 and 2 Corinthians. Three points are essential to Paul's representation of both power relationships and negotiations.[24] First, in Paul's representation, only God the Father has absolute power; God the Son, Jesus Christ, has modeled the cruciform kind of authority; God the Spirit is working among humans to empower them to know God and serve their community. Although social power is dynamic, God's authority remains unchangeable. Paul submits himself to Jesus Christ's lordship, as represented in the Corinthian letters. He also anticipates an imminent end time when Jesus will come back to judge God's servants along with the world. But God is not the only powerful superhuman being; other evil spiritual powers are represented as powerful enemies working to blind humans from seeing God and to lead them astray from Christ.

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[23] van Leeuwen, "Genre and Field," 203.

[24] I am not attempting to conduct a Pauline theology of power and authority. Canonical scholars might consider my work biased because I only read two of the Pauline letters. From a canonical perspective, I also selectively choose data and have neglected other evidence—e.g., those that reflect Paul's charismatic power, as Schütz and Holmberg have argued. I hear and accept this critique. But as indicated in my methodology section, I approach the topic from a particular perspective, a language-critical one. In my dissertation, my focus is primarily how Paul uses his power through his discourse.

Second, from Paul's perspective, God has called and empowered some humans, such as the Pauline ministers and, in particular, Paul, to be authoritative apostolic leaders of God's congregations. Although Paul's authority is represented as given by God, it is also represented as entailing cost and responsibility to build up God's people. At the same time, Paul's authority is represented as meeting challenges or resistance. He is pitted against other authoritative leaders by the Corinthians, as represented in 1 Corinthians, and is competing with other authoritative leaders for the Corinthians' respect, as indicated in 2 Corinthians.[25] Despite challenges, Paul's discourse aims at the spiritual and social formation of its audience.

Third, God's congregations have the potential to produce positive influence when acting in concert according to Christ's authority, although they are represented as least powerful. The culture and society in Corinth are usually represented as out of step with the message of the cross. This divergence means both dangers and opportunities for the Corinthian congregation. On the one hand, both the surrounding culture and evil spirits have the potential to lead the Corinthians astray, and individual members' acts have the potential to defile the community's collective purity when they follow the culture too closely. On the other hand, being gifted with diverse spiritual gifts and blessed with material wealth, the Corinthians are also represented as having the potential to edify each other, support other congregations in need, and witness God's grace to a broader circle associated with the Jesus movement or even to the non-believing world.

The reconstruction, as abbreviated above, reflects the four aspects of Wartenberg's conception of social power, namely, structural, situated, dynamic, and

[25] Cf. Barnett, "Apostle," 49–50.

formative.[26] In what follows, I will discuss four big questions, each of which corresponds to one of these four aspects. (1) Is the representation of power structure a witness to or distortion of reality? (2) Does the representation of situatedness reflect endorsement of existing social injustice or practical wisdom of following Christ when engaging with cultures? (3) Is reclaiming authority during conflict the end or a means to a better end? (4) Must social formation be viewed negatively as domination, or can it be a transformative use of power?

Structural: Witness or Distortion?

First, regarding the structural aspect, both letters represent *asymmetric* power relationships among superhuman beings, authorized leaders, and general humans. The Corinthians are urged to receive Pauline representatives sent to them, to submit to their local leaders praised by Paul, and to resist the critics discounted by him. All these instructions in turn imply that the Corinthians are expected to respect Paul's authority. However, in Paul's representation, it is also consistent that God remains the most powerful and has absolute authority over humans including Paul. In other words, the authorized leaders' power and authority are represented as merely given, relative, and they will be judged in due time. So, both authorized leaders and general humans are regarded as being held accountable to Jesus Christ, who is the final judge. If there is a God out there who is powerful and loving, just and merciful, albeit distant and sometimes silent, and if there are leaders on earth who are strong and honest, wise and loving, albeit

[26] Wartenberg (*Forms of Power*, 8) writes, "By combining structural, situated, dynamic, and transformative aspects, my field theory of power recognizes and incorporates the complexities of power relationships. It shows that power can be both a detrimental and a beneficial aspect of social relationships." Throughout his book, "transformative" is always used positively, so in order to keep the notion of power consistently neutral, I replace "transformative" with formative.

limited and subject to mistakes, most ordinary people will feel more hopeful when enduring difficulties in life. Are these real? As an atheist looking for meaning and hope, I *was moved and chose to believe* when I first heard about Jesus Christ from a Western missionary.

From a critical perspective, however, I now must ask: Is Paul's representation of God and his self-claimed subjugation to Jesus Christ an honest confession (out of conviction) or a manipulative invention?[27] Is Paul's interpretation of his critics accurate or inaccurate, out of love for his spiritual children or out of fear of losing his influence on them?[28] To those who assume that history must be imagined in ways it was *not* written, as Antoinette Wire does, Paul is domineering with the Corinthians and thus must be de-authorized.[29] I suggest it is not likely that Paul lies, for two reasons. First, I imagine Paul

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[27] Scholars with different hermeneutical assumptions fall on a spectrum. On the one side, such critical feminists as Castelli (*Imitating Paul*) and Wire (*Pauline Theology as an Understanding of God*) criticize Paul's theology and theological anthropology (e.g., sinners) as manipulative strategies for power. On the other side, Thiselton (*First Epistle*, 157–58) points out that Paul's theology and practice undercut Castelli's and Wire's postmodern criticisms. In my opinion, Thiselton's conclusion stands, only if he can prove Paul's representation of theology and practice can be trusted. Castelli or Wire would probably answer negatively without hesitation. In another work responding to radical postmodernism, Thiselton (*Interpreting God*, 81–117) has a detailed analysis of the postmodern interpretations of God. There he notes that self-involvement hermeneutics does not necessarily entail a "non-realist" or "non-objective" view of God (104). I agree with Thiselton's deconstruction of non-realist theism because it is inherently self-contradictory. But I think he has not given a fair hearing to such critical feminists as Wire, who have a completely different starting point. Critical feminists' concern is what *is not* represented rather than what *is* written. In other words, they prioritize the deletion (in van Leeuwen's terminology) "traced" in the recontextualization of social practices. Although I also find it challenging to assess their findings of what is not, I do not consider it logically incoherent. If one can start with their assumptions, she or he can land their position.

[28] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*; Marshall, "Invective," 359–73. Cf. Wire, *Corinthian Women Prophets*.

[29] Wire (*Corinthian Women Prophets*, 9–11, 188, 195) argues that in 1 Corinthians Paul, in conflict with the women prophets, seeks to dominate the Corinthians because the women prophets' social status is rising in the community while his social status is declining. There are other critical assessments of the Corinthian letters. For instance, Castelli ("Interpretations of Power," 197–222) argues that Paul's claim that "the kingdom of God does not rely on words but power" is insincere and that, by contrast, the kingdom of God does rely on a discourse of power. To a certain degree, Castelli's research question—i.e., "what is the nature of power as it is constructed within this conversation" (205)—resonates with mine, and her assumption (204) that power is necessary for the existence of social relationships avoids the utopia ideal of some critical feminists. However, following Foucault, Castelli assumes an only negative notion of social power and naturally comes to the conclusion that Paul is a dominator because he is the privileged speaker

could have been better off if he had stayed where he was, as a Pharisaic Jew. It seems convenient for us today to imagine and judge Paul against the background of Christendom, the reign of the church in Western medieval history. But in a time when the Jesus movement was attracting mostly the marginalized and did not promise much security or prosperity,[30] probably not many who wanted to move up in social ranking would have wanted Paul's job, which was characterized by suffering.[31] Besides, at the emergence of the movement, there was not yet an institutionalized structure in place to secure and centralize Paul's authority even within the movement.[32] By contrast, conflict, resistance, and criticism associated with Paul were not unusual, as represented in his letters and the book of Acts. In (post-)critical scholars' imagination, an invented narrative is not impossible because it has repeatedly happened. For instance, in Chinese history, marginalized people became dominators and rewrote history once they overthrew the previous dominating power. It is unfortunate that humans are inclined to corruption when

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who seeks to influence through his discourse. Building on Castelli, Wanamaker's two articles, "A Rhetoric of Power," 115–38 and "By the Power of God," 194–221, argue that Paul's theological language serves as a rhetorical strategy to establish domination over the Corinthians. In addition to Foucault's conception of social power, Wanamaker ("A Rhetoric of Power," 117) adds John Thompson's critical conception of ideology—namely, ways of creating meanings that serve "*to establish and sustain relations of domination*" (italics original). Again, critical theories will naturally lead to an only critical judgement.

[30] Lopez, *Apostle to the Conquered*, xii; Horsley, "Rhetoric and Empire," 78. At the same time, we cannot assume that Paul's churches are composed of only marginalized or poor people. Martin ("Justin J. Meggitt," 51–64) notes that after the leading of Meeks and Theissen, formed is a "New Consensus" that "the early Pauline churches incorporated people from different social levels and economic backgrounds" (51). But Meggitt (*Paul*, *Poverty*, *and Survival*) argues against this "New Consensus" and contends that Paul's churches and Paul himself belong to a lower social class. In spite of his heart for the poor, Meggitt's over-simplified categories of the population of Greco-Roman empire (one percent belonged to the elite class and ninety-nine percent belonged to the poor class) are unconvincing. His reading seems to be overly controlled by his interest in advocating "mutualism" in Paul's letters.

[31] Barentsen ("Social Construction," 4) notes that Paul's suffering discourse is meant to demonstrate that faithful leadership must embody Jesus Christ' sufferings and earn respect instead of "relying on status, patronage and privilege." By contrast, Kelhoffer (*Persecution*, *Persuasion and Power*, 11) argues that talking about suffering was a way of gaining social standing and even leadership within the church.

[32] Holmberg, *Paul and Power*.

they are placed in powerful positions.[33] But 1 and 2 Corinthians are occasional documents, written amidst struggle when Paul's credibility is already under scrutiny; hence, outright lies would hardly help Paul at such a point in the struggle. This leads to the other reason why I think it is not likely that Paul lies.

Second, as Anthony Thiselton rightly notes, neither Jesus nor Paul lived in a vacuum, and their messages had the personal backing of their deeds, which could provide credibility to their words.[34] In other words, their social practices were seen or heard in the public domain and thus were subject to public judgement. Paul is judged by the Corinthians, as indicated in the letters. But as represented, Paul alludes to his (or the Pauline ministers') lives and experiences as the embodiment of his message. The implication of this allusion is that his audience is invited to (re)examine his deeds and to judge whether or not his deeds confirm his words. Although itinerant missionary leaders might have more chances to hide their true colours, one can only pretend for a while. Besides, Paul seems to be transparent about what he wants (e.g., change) and what he does not want (e.g., payment for himself) from the Corinthians. To say the least, the biblical texts do not hide the controversies around Paul. Representations of Paul in the New Testament indicates that Paul is considered to be controversial during his lifetime

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[33] Power studies entail assumptions of human nature. A classic work on this is Jaggar's *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*. The majority of critical theories assume negative human nature. Arendt (*Human Condition*), Allen (*Power of Feminist Theory*) and Wartenberg (*Forms of Power*) are some exceptions. Thiselton (*Interpreting God*, 77–78, 117) notes that the postmodern view of human nature has greater realism than the modern view. In general, according to Thiselton, the modern self is characteristic of the autonomous and postmodern self, more passive and de-centered. I think he captures the essence of the modern and postmodern self, but his dichotomy is oversimplified. I argue that the postmodern self has more continuity with the modern self than Thiselton considers it to be. For instance, the postmodern self is also autonomous and centered, but its autonomy is controlled more by interest rather than reason. Higher criticism and reader-oriented criticism indicate the same level of confidence in self. As said above, I align more with Augustine's conception of human nature as captive yet responsible (Schwarz, *Human Being*, 177–266).

[34] Thiselton, *Interpreting God*, 33–39.

and that his contemporaries are working hard to understand him or examine his credibility.

From a critical linguistic perspective, Paul's representation of the situation was by no means unbiased. But a bias is not necessarily propaganda, as an ideologically loaded or persuasive discourse is not necessarily manipulative or abusive, if we choose to conceptualize power or ideology (or theology) with a more balanced hermeneutical framework.[35] At the same time, since we do not have much evidence that backs his words (cf. 2 Peter 3:14–16), we cannot eliminate the possibility of distortion. As a Protestant, I suggest we do not have to de-authorize Paul's voice. Instead, we must avoid idolizing him. As he de-centralizes the apostles, including himself, in 1 Cor 1–4, we must de-centralize his voice, by balancing his voice with other New Testament writers, contextualizing his theologies and ethics, and listening to his critics.[36] This decentralization is particularly important for traditions influenced by Martin Luther, which hold Paul as "a canon within the canon."[37] At the end of the day, although we might not fully understand how we know, or maybe we can never be sure whether our belief is imposed on us or something we choose to believe, it is still worth pursuing *truth*.[38] Perhaps, like all of us, Paul was also pursuing a coherent understanding of his situations related to the Corinthians amidst struggle.

In summary, returning to my first big question whether Paul's representation of power structures is an honest confession (out of conviction) or a manipulative invention, I

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[35] Thurén ("Was Paul Sincere," 95–108) rightly notes that if one assumes Paul must have written "as a dogmatician" (106), more likely she or he will find Paul insincere.

[36] Gray, *Paul as a Problem*, 210.

[37] Martin, "Authority," 78.

[38] Heal ("Pragmatism," 101–14) notes that although we might not have perfect theories to answer, it is still worth pursuing the question, "Is there a Truth about Nature?"

argue that Paul does not likely distort the reality of power structures purposely. Even if Paul is exercising authority over the Corinthians by informing them of his understanding of reality, he is likely not seeking to use his authority for personal advantage in a marginalized movement in which leadership means more responsibility and suffering than honour and prosperity.

Situated: Endorsing Injustices or Practical Wisdom?

The second aspect of Wartenberg's field theory of social power is situatedness, which concerns social alignment and realignment. My reconstruction clearly indicates that Paul's power relationship with the Corinthians is represented not as dyadic but as situated. It is interwoven with multiple kinds of relationships, such as relationships between God and humans, between individual congregations and the Jesus movement, between local leaders and the Pauline missionaries, between insiders and outsiders, and so on.[39] What Paul's discourse does, I suggest, is to *realign* the Corinthian's thoughts, acts, speech, emotion, and eventually identity according to Christ's cruciform authority. But as discussed in previous chapters, Paul is not seeking to change the social structure or prohibit all conventional practices; instead, he is negotiating with surrounding cultures. Paul's negotiations could be interpreted either as an endorsement of existing hierarchy or as practical wisdom. As represented in his discourse, his effort of realignment meets challenges and resistance, and his engaging culture also causes criticism.

[39] Applying a Foucauldian reading to the book of Philemon, Polaski (*Discourse of Power*, 59–60) draws the conclusion that Paul did not *operate* on a simple institutionalized authority but often navigated through a rather complex web of power relations.

From a critical perspective, I first ask: When realigning the Corinthians with Christ's authority, is Paul using Christ's name to foster their loyalty to him in order to control them? Similar to the first big question, this question concerns whether or not we can take Paul at face value when he claims to lead people to Christ instead of the human leaders including himself. On the one hand, the Pauline leaders stress that they do not intend to dominate the Corinthians' faith (2 Cor 1:24). On the other hand, Paul often calls for obedience, including obeying human leaders (1 Cor 16:16; 2 Cor 2:9). As indicated in my literature review chapter, Rudolf Bultmann and Victor Furnish seek to interpret obedience or submission in terms of faith or love.[40] By contrast, Cynthia Kittredge argues that Paul's use of obedience language is meant to reinforce domination over his audience.[41] I agree with Kittredge that the use of obedience language denotes power structure, as discussed above. But since I do not assume that power-over relationships must be selfish or that the use of power must be domineering, I do not come to Kittredge's conclusion that the use of obedience language is a sign of domination. However, as pointed out in my previous chapter, 2 Corinthians uses relationship as a legitimation strategy in Paul's negotiation with the aim to win his spiritual children's loyalty back and rebuild the trust relationship with them. At the same time, we must remember that Paul directly addresses the issue of siding with one leader or the other in 1 Cor 1–4. Is 2 Corinthians doing what Paul condemns in 1 Cor 1–4? Admittedly, Paul's "inconsistency" sometimes strains his interpreters' brains. A convenient way to explain

[40] E.g., Bultmann, *Theology*; Furnish, *Theology and Ethics*.

[41] Kittredge (*Community and Authority*, 5, 100) writes, "The language of obedience is part of the language of social relations. Theological language about Christ obeying God or about obedience as a spiritual attitude of a Christian derives from the world of social relationships." Later when interpreting the book of Philippians, Kittredge asserts that Paul used rhetorical techniques such as manipulating tradition (e.g., the Christ hymn), juxtaposing positive and negative models, and reminding the Philippians of their past relationship with himself in order to establish domination over them (100).

his "inconsistency" is to contextualize his discourse. In terms of effective communication, when the situation changes, the audience's need changes, and what should be addressed changes accordingly. In 2 Corinthians, Paul represents his critics explicitly as "false apostles." Although one might still suspect Paul's evaluation, Paul clearly indicates that he does not regard them as fellow servants since their true colours have been revealed. According to his own representation, he is still considered to be coherent. Leadership entails on-going negotiation with ever-changing situations. Of course, it is possible that Paul might misinterpret a situation or overreact to a misperception of reality. But even if Paul seeks to secure the Corinthians' loyalty in 2 Corinthians, their loyalty is likely not his true objective but merely a means to an end, which is building up the Corinthians according to the understanding of reality represented in his letters. This point will be developed more later.

Having discussed Paul's attempt to realign the Corinthians with Christ, now I must also ask: When permitting them to continue their alignment with culture, is Paul endorsing the "unjust" social hierarchy (meaning, unjust according to our evaluation) such as slavery and patriarchy? To discuss this second question, Wartenberg's metaphor of "superposition" is useful.[42] According to Wartenberg, even the transformative use of power is not free from the accusation of endorsing existing social hierarchy because of the social nature of power. In other words, even if Paul's purpose is purely Christ-centred and other-seeking, as long as he is mentoring the Corinthians to become responsible and acceptable *social members*, he must implicitly endorse some aspects of the culture. I have mentioned in my previous chapter that none of the two Corinthian letters remotely

[42] Wartenberg, *Forms of Power*, 214–21.

encourages acts of undermining the social power structure—such as patriarchy, slavery, patronage, or imperial order.[43] He rather urges the Corinthians to remain in whichever social position she or he is called to be and legitimates his exhortation by reference to God's authority (1 Cor 7:17). For social activists, Paul's advice in 1 Cor 7 seems too pessimistic, just as his comment on the rulers who have crucified Jesus sounds too lenient (1 Cor 2:8). However, he is not a social conformist either, because his discourse clearly indicates some counter-conventional alternatives. For instance, as he suggests, it is better for a slave to seek freedom when possible (1 Cor 7:21); similarly, women are not

[43] Regarding social and political order, scholars have debated whether Paul seeks to subvert or promote Roman imperial ideology. On the one hand, some empire-critical scholars argue that Paul is a social reformist and that his liberation message must be liberated from previous interpretations preoccupied with apolitical interests. For instance, Georgi (*Theocracy in Paul's Praxis and Theology*, 33–78) sees Paul as a radical political theologian who sought to turn the unjust social order upside down. Taking a less extreme position, Elliott (*Liberating Paul*, 9) notes that "the usefulness of the Pauline letters to systems of domination and oppression is nevertheless clear and palpable" and that "this observation must be our starting point." In order to rescue Paul from "social conservatism" interpretation, Elliott uses different interpretive strategies, such as assuming 1 Timothy, Titus, and Ephesian as pseudo-Paul and 1 Cor 14:34–35 as interpolation. Taking a different path from these empire-critical scholars, Lopez (*Apostle to the Conquered*, xiii) redefines the notion of "gentiles" in Pauline letters and posits an opposition between the Roman empire and all other nations ("Gentiles"). By doing so, Lopez reimagines Paul as a social reformist subverting the Roman imperialism (xi). Even more moderately, Horsley (*Hidden Transcripts*, 13) argues that since Jesus and Paul were in the subjugated position (under the Empire and also the high priests), they implied their revolution and resistance through what became the New Testament books today. According to Horsley, authentic Pauline letters should be studied as a "'well-cooked' hidden transcript" of resistance, a term used in James C. Scott's theory of domination and resistance. On the other hand, other empire-critical scholars argue that Paul endorses the social imperial order and that the Western Pauline scholars keep reinforcing the inscription of imperialism. Postcolonial scholars are one group of representatives of this criticism, e.g., Sugirtharajah, *Still at the Margins*; Stanley, ed., *Colonized Apostle*. Along the same line, gender-critical scholars such as Schüssler Fiorenza and Marchal are concerned about intersectionality and thus, develop feminist, postcolonial studies. With the strategy of "reading against the grain," they seek to deconstruct any hierarchic signs in Paul. Schüssler Fiorenza (*Power of the Word*, 6) notes that "attempts by scholars to rescue early Christian scriptures as anti- or counter-imperial literature tend to overlook that the language of empire and its violence, which are encoded in them, have shaped Christian religious and cultural self-understanding and ethos throughout the centuries and still do so today." Marchal (*Politics of Heaven*, 96) writes, "Paul's role in the Roman Empire is complicated by his gender, status, ethnicity, and inconsistent sympathies with others under imperial rule. Yet, eventually his letters were collected and used as an authoritative source by those exercising power in the Roman Empire (and later, other empires) for norms about the duties of slaves, women's communal roles, sexual behavior, and appropriate attitudes toward imperial figures." I do not share most of their assumptions or conclusions about Scripture or church history but I think they sharply point out one of the problems in biblical interpretation in relation to the abuse of power. As a Protestant biblical scholar and a Chinese Canadian female pastor, I realize that the more apologetic (or defensive) I am, the easier I will fall into the peril described in their words. Nevertheless, the debate goes on.

absolutely inferior to men (1 Cor 7:4).[44] In addition, Paul mentions Christ's final subjugation of the political leaders (1 Cor 15:24–25). Perhaps we can put ourselves in Paul's shoes and ask: In a society where slavery was legally instituted and conventionally acceptable, what alternatives could Paul, himself being a victim of political authority, have offered besides providing pragmatic advice like 1 Cor 7:21–24? Similarly, in a patriarchal society where men had absolute authority over their wives' bodies, was Paul's discourse about marriage in 1 Cor 7 not already countercultural? Or, in a time conceived of as full of distress, what alternative advice for practical living could Paul possibly give?[45]

One might object: Did Paul not know about the injustice of the ancient social order? Did he know that his silence could be interpreted as endorsing it?[46] These questions are, from the Western democratic perspective, worth asking today in specific contexts. But I conjecture they would be foreign or unrealistic to Paul and his audience. Here I can use what I know about Christian ministers in Mainland China to illustrate my speculation. The West has heard of Pastor Wang Yi's sentence due to his public criticism of state Chairman Xi's regime.[47] Without a doubt, Pastor Wang was courageous. But I

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[44] Juxtaposing 1 Cor 7, 11:2–16, 14:33b–36, and 2 Cor 10–13, Polaski (*Feminist Introduction*, 47–63) interprets Paul's inconsistency about gender as a progressive understanding.

[45] Bushnell (*God's Word to Women*, para 708–14) titled her interpretation of 1 Cor 7 "advice for emergency."

[46] Arendt (*Eichmann*, 287–88) questioned the evil of *thoughtlessness*. I disagree with Arendt that Eichmann was "*merely thoughtless*"; her own report indicates that Eichmann was interested in the promotion of the military ranking. However, I agree with her on the danger of the evil of banality; sometimes, for some of us, thoughtfulness and silence can "wreak more havoc than all the evil instincts taken together which, perhaps, are inherent in man [human]." Cf. Young-Bruehl, *Hannah Arendt*, 328–78.

[47] In a sermon to his congregation (Sep 9, 2018), Pastor Wang preached, "We believe we have the responsibility to tell Xi Jinping that he is a sinner. This government that he is leading has sinned greatly against God. For it is persecuting the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if he does not repent, he will perish. We declare that there is still a way of escape for an evil man like him. But there is only one way out, and that is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . We say this because we truly believe that this is for his good. We truly believe that this is for the good of all authorities in power and for every government worker." The entire sermon is spiritual-oriented rather than politic-oriented.

know many pastors just as courageous as Pastor Wang, who were persecuted or prepared for persecution, but who chose to avoid publicly talking about political matters. Were these leaders endorsing social injustice? I do not believe so, even though they avoided being outspoken due to strategic and pragmatic considerations when serving Christ's church under the communist regime. When I became a Christian twenty years ago, part of my discipleship was "safety training," in which we prepared ourselves for the cost of discipleship and yet learned to avoid making radical choices that would unnecessarily endanger the community.

Furthermore, I have come to a conclusion in my previous chapter that Paul is occupied by evangelism and eschatology, as represented in the Corinthian letters.[48] In other words, he likely operates in a different timeframe and in turn has different priorities than most of us today. Moreover, I have also discussed that Paul urges those Corinthians in more powerful and privileged positions to protect those in less powerful and privileged positions, such as women, the poor, and those who might not have yet internalized Jewish monotheism; he also seeks to establish cooperation between ethnic groups. Paul's discourse indeed shows a heart for the less powerful and privileged, as I suggest.[49]

Arguments will not be settled easily, and we need to admit that Paul's *individual use* of power and his cultural and social *power structures* are both superposed on Pauline discourse. Owing to this superposition, Paul can be taken in opposite directions according to one's choice of zooming in on one layer or the other. According to my analysis of the Corinthian letters, he is not advocating a social reformation, much less a political

[48] Cf. Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 55–57.
[49] Cf. Peppiatt, *Women and Worship at Corinth*, 1.

revolution, although he does mention the destiny of political powers and rulers.[50] In my opinion, he rather chooses to embrace and work with "reality." On the one hand, he aims at bringing the Corinthians to maturity in their present social context. On the other hand, he himself negotiates with the surrounding cultures and social structures when navigating through cultural complexity and social dynamics.[51] His responsibility as a leader and his sensitivity to situation and culture are also simultaneously superposed. To understand Paul's use of power, we must consider this push and pull between the Christian way of life that entails a particular vision to follow Christ instead of culture and the Christian mission of engaging and reconciling the world to God. Most likely, Paul is working with culture and, at the same time, working on improving it, at least within the Christian community.

In summary, Paul's discourse does reflect social hierarchy but, at the same time, could be taken as moving toward a new vision of life that in some ways *departs from* or, at least, *challenges* the fundamental assumptions of the social order of injustice.[52] In this regard, Paul is likely not using his authority to endorse social hierarchy or promote hierarchy in the Corinthian community but rather empowering the Corinthians to foster a better culture that embodies God's righteousness.

Dynamic: The End or a Means to a Better End?

The third aspect of Wartenberg's field theory of social power is dynamics. My comparison of 1 and 2 Corinthians clearly denotes this dynamic aspect in Paul's

[50] Cf. Judge, "Cultural Conformity and Innovation," 3–24.
[51] Ehrensperger, *Paul at the Crossroads*.
[52] Cf. Bennema, "Early Christian Identity," 44.

representation of social power relationships. Through my comparison, I have perceived an increase of power in the evil spiritual powers and Paul's critics and a decrease of power in the Pauline leaders, including Paul. At the same time, I have also observed that Paul's tone shifts from instructiveness in 1 Corinthians to defensiveness in 2 Corinthians. These two observations combined suggest that Paul is likely encountering conflict and suffering a loss of influence and that he is making an effort to regain his influence, regardless of what might have caused the conflict and how one might interpret his effort to reclaim authority.[53]

Scholars have produced multiple proposals to interpret conflicts in and around the Pauline mission. The sociological trend that emerged in the 1970s has recognized the so-called fallacy of idealism. Bengt Holmberg warns scholars against assuming that the conflicts perceived in the Pauline texts must have been conflicts of ideas.[54] He is right that ideas are not the only "determining factors of the historical process."[55] But social concerns cannot eliminate the role of religious ideas in social formation because ideas and practices are inseparable and because religious, political, and social domains were inseparable in the ancient world, as pointed out above and stressed by Walter Wink's power series as well.[56] Moxnes asserts that Paul's theology in the book of Romans is contextualized in the conflicts between Jews and non-Jews, so it is conflict-ridden.[57] Kathy Ehrensperger notes that difficulties which revolved around Paul's mission were

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[53] Marshall ("Invective," 373) also notes that Paul is losing the fight against his enemies in Corinth.

[54] Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 205–6.

[55] Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 205.

[56] Wink, *Naming the Powers*; *Unmasking the Powers*; *Engaging the Powers*.

[57] In dialogue with Rudolf Bultmann's religious anthropology, Moxnes (*Theology in Conflict*) seeks to recover Paul's contextualized theology in the book of Romans and the continuity with the Jewish theology of Yahweh.

derived from his effort to translate a gospel message "from within a Jewish symbolic and social universe into the world of the nations."[58] Both Moxnes and Ehrensperger locate Paul in his social relationships, taking both Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures into consideration, in order to understand his theology in context.

Having addressed scholarly debate about the nature of the implied conflict, now I ask: How does Paul deal with the conflict, as represented in and enacted via his discourse?[59] As inferred by his responses, Paul has conflict with other authoritative leaders, as well as with the Corinthians, at least some of them. Regarding his critics, the issues primarily concern their criticism of Paul and their "usurpation" of power among the Corinthians. Paul seems ruthless when confronting these critics. He calls them "false apostles" and "servants of Satan," describes them as opportunists who usurp the fruit of others' labour, and points out their domination and mistreatment among the Corinthians.[60] Paul regards his critics' critique of the Pauline ministers and mission as unjust and misleading, but is Paul's own critique of his critics fair? As I mentioned above, we are likely unable to come to a definite conclusion of whether or not Paul's perception of this conflict is accurate. But Cornelis Bennema asserts that when the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, conflicts are *definite* owing to its "radical and transformative nature."[61] According to Bennema, Paul's strong personality here cannot be viewed as the most plausible source of the conflicts. Conflict is attested by almost every single New

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[58] Ehrensperger, *Crossroads of Cultures*, 3. Cf. Bennema, "Early Christian Identity," 26–48.

[59] Some scholars focus on the conflicts inside the church and interpret Paul as the mediator, e.g., Winter, "Paul and the Corinthians," 140–55. Some are interested in Paul's conflicts with the church, e.g., Barentsen ("Social Construction," 1–13). Still, others address both conflicts within the church related to socio-theological issues and conflicts between Paul and the community due to his ways of dealing with the conflicts, e.g., Coutsoumpos, *Community*, *Conflict*, *and the Eucharist*.

[60] Thiselton, *Interpreting God*, 21.

[61] Bennema, "Early Christian Identity," 45.

Testament book and subsequent history, such as the conflicts between Jesus and his contemporary Jewish elites in the Gospels and the conflicts between Peter or other pillars and their contemporary Jewish leaders in Acts, even if these conflicts might be merely *intra-family* theological disputes. That is to say, the teachings and practices of the Jesus movement were so interruptive that conflict emerged naturally, even if there were no power-hungry leaders involved.

Regarding the Corinthians, the issues concern their perception of leaders and habitual practices that hurt the community. It is worth noting that these issues are reported to Paul, as represented. In order to respond to their "misperception" and "misbehaviour" (from Paul's perspective), Paul seeks to negotiate a different understanding of leadership and social practices and urges them to deal with their own issues. According to my analysis of 2 Corinthians, although Paul's effort of guiding the Corinthians from a distance meets challenges, he refuses to back down. Instead, he changes negotiation strategies by commenting more on his writing to avoid misunderstanding, by drawing more on his relationship with the Corinthians, and by articulating more of his own emotion and vulnerability.

Regardless of how one interprets the nature or cause of Paul's conflicts, it is evident that Paul is dealing with conflicts and seeking to regain influence through his discourse. From a critical perspective, I must also ask: What could have motivated the effort to regain his influence? Or, is it ok for leaders to defend themselves? One line of the argument asserts that claiming power is Paul's end. For instance, Charles Wanamaker applies a socio-rhetorical reading to 2 Cor 10–13 and argues that in competition with his rivals, Paul uses rhetoric with embedded ideology (i.e., "meaning in the service of

power") to gain recognition of authority because he has none until his authority is recognized.[62] By ending his reading here, Wanamaker's work—built on Elizabeth Castelli's—implies that winning the competition or reestablishing pastoral power is Paul's goal. Another line suggests that reestablishing authority is merely Paul's means to a better end. For instance, Jack Barentsen argues that Paul's authority is socially constructed by aligning himself with the majority of the Corinthians when competing with the Jewish-Christian leaders.[63] According to him, what motivates Paul to engage in negotiation is the necessity to construct a "socially and culturally viable model of leadership that would do justice to his vision of Christian identity."[64] Similarly, according to Sze-kar Wan, Paul rhetorically seeks to consolidate his relationship with the Corinthians and re-establish authority for the purpose of teaching because he is concerned about protecting the church from the "deleterious effect" of the itinerant preachers.[65] Furthermore, Ehrensperger argues that what concerns Paul is not the challenges directed to him but the threat to the gospel, although he also values his apostolic authority. According to her, Paul is likely concerned about the influence of the dominant Roman elite culture under which the Corinthians could have mistaken "authority in the vein of domination and control."[66]

Having immersed myself in power studies, I am more convinced of the need for hermeneutical awareness. If we assume a theology, we are likely going to find that

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[62] Wanamaker, "By the Power of God," 194–221.

[63] Barentsen, "Social Construction," 3. In an early work, Barentsen (*Emerging Leadership*, 112-40) reconstructs the conflict between Paul and his opponents implied in 2 Corinthians. According to Barentsen, Paul's opponents gained the chance to influence the Corinthians during a time when the Corinthians were going through an unstable social identification process (120–21).

[64] Barentsen, "Social Construction," 1.

[65] Wan, *Power in Weakness*, 12.

[66] Ehrensperger, *Dynamics of Power*, 114.

theology in Paul's letters. Similarly, if we assume an ideology (in a critical sense), we are also likely going to find that ideology there. Wanamaker praises the socio-rhetorical method as "power in the service of meaning."[67] By contrast, I believe that what is so powerful in interpretation is probably not so much any method but our interpretive agenda. Thus, we must be willing to examine our own interests when analyzing and evaluating Paul's use of power and must not pretend to be able to produce any disinterested interpretations. Once we seek to understand our interests, however, we do not have to let them control our desire for understanding and transformation. In the vein of Ehrensperger's discussion, I also conclude that regaining his influence by defending his ministry and himself as a servant of Christ is likely not Paul's end because his interest is not represented as pastoring any local church. In addition to theological concerns, my analysis suggests that Paul seeks to influence the Corinthians to continue their collaboration in the Pauline mission work, including the Jerusalem collection, and to push them to deal with their sexual immorality issues. In his representation, these are considered noble practices in *the Corinthians'* best interest, as discussed in my previous chapter. But again, can we take Paul at face value and believe that he has no selfish interests? Alternative questions may be: Do we want to *trust* Paul? Why or why not? Or, theologically, can we *trust* that God has power over Paul? Why or why not? Our conclusions will ultimately be based on our own theological presuppositions and interests.

In summary, one's use of power or one's evaluation of another one's use of power is conditioned by one's social power dynamics. Paul is dynamically navigating a dynamic

[67] Wanamaker, "By the Power of God," 221.

situation, but as his interpreters, we ourselves are also dynamically navigating our own dynamic situations. Thus, we should hardly be surprised that our evaluations of Paul's use of power might deviate from his own evaluation. The history of interpretation manifests changing perspective and evaluation of Paul. Such perspective change often accords with social changes in interpreters' situations, as indicated in my literature review chapter. Perhaps in the 1970s North America, the need was to open up space to critique the assumed "truthfulness" of the New Testament or the assumed "objectiveness" of modern New Testament scholarship.[68] These critiques served as resistance to the denominational domination or the "disciplinary power."[69] But then perhaps now, we are in need of strong and inspiring leaders who are convicted of the transformative power of God through his Word and Spirit amidst all the cynicism of age, without surrendering the lesson that nothing is "perfectly" true and no leader is perfect.

Formative: Domination or Transformative Use of Power?

Up to this point, I have discussed three aspects of the complexity of social power represented in Paul's discourse: structural, situated, and dynamic. When a represented structure is reconstructed, I ask: Is it a witness to or a distortion of reality? When the situatedness is teased out, I ask: Is the realignment with Christ meant to produce loyalty to Paul? And, is the continuous alignment with culture an endorsement of existing social hierarchy or a manifestation of practical wisdom? When the dynamics are perceived, I

[68] I believe that the Bible is Scripture and that one's view of the Bible's nature influences how she or he interprets the Bible. My intention here is not to discount the Bible's sacredness, even though I struggle to understand or articulate what that exactly means to Chinese who have grown up learning that the Christian Bible is the spiritual opium. Instead, my goal is to critically reflect on these questions: what caused or motivated the skepticism? What responsibility does the church (or New Testament scholars) take in the rise of all these critiques?

[69] Foucault, "Two Lectures," 105.

ask: How are conflicts dealt with? And, what might have motivated Paul's effort to regain his influence? Almost without exception, we can find arguments in either camp, in favour of or against Paul. Now I turn to the most crucial question, the core of my dissertation: Is Paul's use of influence dominating or transformative?

This last big question is about the formative aspect of social power relationships. The analysis of Paul's representation clearly indicates that social agency impacts others, for better or for worse; using power can benefit or harm, but not using power can also benefit or harm. For instance, in terms of using power, the evil spirits are represented as harming the Corinthians, and the Holy Spirit is represented as gifting the Corinthians to serve the community. As regards not using power, Paul represents his postponement of a planned visit as an attempt to spare the Corinthians, which is represented as a good restricted use of power. But the Corinthians have tolerated Paul's critics, which is represented negatively as not using power to resist manipulative influence.[70]

I have discussed above whether Paul's represented structure of the Father's absolute power or Christ's cruciform authority can be seen as an honest witness to reality or a manipulative fabulation. If we choose to believe this is Paul's conviction, albeit incomplete, and choose to conceive power-over relationships as potentially negative or positive, we can assess whether Paul's instructions promote domination or transformative use of power according to Wartenberg's theory. It is under these assumptions that I assert Paul is unlikely promoting domination. As demonstrated in my previous chapter, Paul's power negotiations aim at moving the Corinthians to make changes primarily in the areas of knowing/thinking, doing, feeling and being (or becoming). So, without any doubt,

[70] Thiselton (*Interpreting God*, 21) notes that the "false" apostles are precisely the domination type. But Thiselton presumes the accuracy of Paul's perceptions.

Paul's discourse is meant to be formative. Particularly, his primary interests embedded in his negotiations include three as follows: (1) undermining cultural conceptions of leadership, (2) tackling private and public practices that impact the community purity and orderliness, and (3) cultivating a culture of protecting and supporting those in less powerful and privileged positions, in terms of self-giving love instead of patronage. Interwoven with these negotiations is Paul's negotiation of the Corinthians' collective identity; most of all, the Corinthians are bought at a price and are now owned by Jesus Christ. It is rather the Corinthians' or his critics' practices that have reflected the Greco-Roman ethos, as represented in his discourse. I have suggested Paul is using his agency to realign the Corinthians with Christ's cruciform authority. Although Paul's discourse inevitably reflects social hierarchy, as discussed above, he provides glimpses into alternative practices and attitudes that challenge the fundamental assumptions of the Greco-Roman elite ethos reconstructed by the majority of socio-historical or anthropological studies. Thus, his interests reflect a "feminist conception of power,"[71] in which power is used to foster growth and train for social responsibility.[72]

It is one thing to give instructions that are meant to be transformative, but how one does it is another thing, because even if Paul is not promoting domination, he, as any human, could preach a good message in a domineering way. Sandra Polaski argues that Paul uses an approach of appeal rather than of command to negotiate with his Galatian readers regarding a gospel message that "overturns the religious hierarchy of Jew and Gentile."[73] According to her, "[Paul] uses every persuasive tool at his disposal: he

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[71] Kuykendall, "Ethic of Nurturance," 263–74; Wartenberg, "Concept of Power," 301–16; Miller, "Women and Power," 240–48.

[72] Ehrensperger, *Dynamics of Power*, 135–36.

[73] Polaski, *Discourse of Power*, 103.

cajoles, he chides, he praises, he reasons, he uses sarcasm."[74] Taking a more radical approach than Polaski, Kittredge assumes that Paul's writing does not reflect the historical situation and that he is rather recreating a rhetorical situation in which he could manipulate his audience to obey him. According to Kittredge, Paul uses rhetorical techniques—such as manipulating traditions, juxtaposing positive and negative examples, and reminding his readers of their past relationship—to establish domination over the Philippians.[75] Again, interpreters' interests and assumptions inevitably influence how they evaluate Paul's doing with his words and lead to opposite interpretations.

As suggested by my analysis, Paul uses mostly rationalization and authorization to legitimate his instructions in both Corinthian letters. Regarding the difference, 1 Corinthians enacts more instructions on morality and encodes more moral evaluation, and by comparison, 2 Corinthians represents more the Pauline leaders' emotive reactions and correspondingly, appeals more to their past relationship with the Corinthians.[76] As concluded in my previous chapter, both Paul's Corinthian letters indicate an effort towards communication. But perhaps what is more intriguing is the contrast between the two letters. The change of the power dynamics affects not only the representation of emotion and the tone of the discourse (e.g., becoming more defensive) but also legitimation strategy (e.g., using more relationship language).

From a critical perspective, one might ask: Are Paul's emotionally charged words manipulative or transformative?[77] Again, the answer to this question is rather a

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[74] Polaski, "Inside Jokes," 101.

[75] Kittredge, *Community and Authority*, 100.

[76] Polaski (*Discourse of Power*, 70) also notes that Paul draws on his relationship with Philemon in the letter to Philemon as a strategy to invite Philemon to enter a different power relation with Onesimus, one reflecting Christ's grace and love.

[77] For rhetorical studies on Paul's use of pathos, see Sumney, "πάθος," 147–60.

speculation according to one's assumption. But from a different perspective, is it praiseworthy for parents to stay indifferent when watching their children being misled, or is it praiseworthy for mentors to remain disinterested when watching their students failing, even if they may be (mis)judging the situation? In my opinion, scholars, being influenced by modernism, tend to have a prejudice against human emotion. Perhaps we can listen to two non-religious writings that see the expression of emotion as useful in moral formation. As a scientist and educator, Albert Einstein recognizes the link between morals and emotions. He writes,

> The real difficulty, the difficulty which has baffled the sage of all times, is rather this: how can we make our teaching so potent in the emotional life of man [humans], that its influence should withstand the pressure of the elemental psychic force in the individual?[78]

As a political philosopher on violence and totalitarianism, Arendt asserts that the ability to "be moved" is crucial for a reasonable response to injustice. She writes,

> Absence of emotions neither causes nor promotes rationality. . . . In order to respond reasonably one must first of all be 'moved,' and the opposite of emotional is not 'rational,' whatever that may mean, but either the inability to be moved, usually a pathological phenomenon, or sentimentality, which is a perversion of feeling.[79]

So, if we suspect Paul's emotionally charged language is manipulative from a critical perspective, we should also remember that Christian moral formation is meant to provoke emotive reactions if we attempt a whole-person transformation.[80]

I now turn to the last question: Does Paul's discourse indicate any hint that he is planning to sustain long-term and systemic control over the Corinthians? On the one hand, if he is seeking long-term and systemic control, Paul probably would not, after

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[78] Einstein, *Out of My Later Years*, 237.
[79] Arendt, *On Violence*, 64.
[80] Wynn, "Emotions and Christian Ethics," 35–55.

planting the congregation, leave Corinth in the first place (Acts 18), he would want to discipline the offenders himself (2 Cor 1:23–24; 10:6), he would not urge Apollos to go back to Corinth (1 Cor 16:12), he would not keep affirming the importance of collaboration (2 Cor 1:11), he would not plan any checks and balances to make sure his handling of the collection is blameless (1 Cor 16:3–4; 2 Cor 8:19–21), and so on. As mentioned above, Paul does not seem to have any interest in pastoring a local congregation, so it is difficult for me to imagine he would want the job of micro-management in the modern sense. In fact, what the Corinthians have complained about is likely Paul's lack of attention to them or lack of hands-on supervision.

On the other hand, we have seen many leaders today, who, being too hands-off, want no dirty or hard work but merely recognition as *the* leader. Could Paul be that kind of leader who enjoys long-distance control? He represents himself as the father who must keep the virtual fidelity of his daughter, the Corinthian community, who is betrothed to Christ, until the wedding day. Does this not indicate that Paul sees his power-over relationship with the Corinthians as lifelong? In addition, could the discourse about the Corinthians' immaturity be rhetoric to create legitimacy for longer supervision? Our list of reasons for suspicion can run on just as long as our list of objections to suspicion. Again, if we choose to accept Paul's representation as his understanding of the situation, we will conclude that Paul is seeking to train the Corinthians to depend on God independently rather than create a long-term reliance on Paul himself, as suggested in my analysis. So, whatever we might think of Paul, Paul himself likely sees caring for the congregations he planted as his *long-term responsibility*, without necessarily seeking *permanent control* over them. In essence, he would be happiest as their leader if they

required nothing of him as their leader and he gained nothing materially from his leadership, as implied in his letters to the Corinthians. Can such a leader be deemed dominating?

In summary, the same discourse could be interpreted in either way, positively or negatively, as Ehrensperger rightly notes.[81] The question each of us must ask is this: Can we trust Paul's representation, especially his representation of the situation of the Corinthians, his own actions and speech, or even his purposes and interests? Taking his representation as an honest understanding, albeit perspectival or even biased, I conclude that Paul, as represented in the Corinthian letters, is using his power in a transformative way to urge the Corinthians to think and act according to Christ's cruciform authority. However, does this mean that Paul is (or was) not a dominator? Still, I cannot answer this question. Only those who have observed his life closely for a period of time have a say. And as he writes, the one who judges him is Jesus Christ, and in due time the Lord will shed light on what is hidden in darkness. Does that mean what I have done thus far is meaningless? I hope not. My evaluation of Paul's use of power is indeed my own reflective process because every question I ask about Paul, I am asking also about myself. At the end of the day, what really matters to me is, how am I using my power?

Critically Reflecting on My (or Our) Use of Power

Admittedly, there is no fine line between empowerment and domination in real-life practice. Sometimes I felt anxious to write this dissertation because I was afraid of

[81] Ehrensperger (*Dynamics of Power*, 35–62) points out the same data can be interpreted so radically differently depending on different hermeneutic frameworks. Some view Paul's letters as interpersonal communication or conversation, but others view them as rhetoric.

becoming a hypocrite. Einstein's essay on "morals and emotions" has eased my anxiety. In his essay, Einstein raises questions concerning ethical and moral issues he had observed in the US as the "other" (a German immigrant). At the end of his essay, he honestly admits that he does not have any answers to any of his questions. So, he writes, "To ask these questions is to answer them!"[82] I concur with Einstein in this regard. It is not that we can become more ethical or moral by providing correct answers to ethical issues. But hopefully in the process of searching for God (or *truth*) and reflecting on Scripture, traditions, and experience, we will gain more self-awareness, humility, and openness to dialogue, and be transformed. Even if the process is disorienting, it is worth the effort. After all, what could be worse than becoming a power abuser due to thoughtlessness or an inability to be moved, as informed by Arendt?

Therefore, at least we can critically reflect on our interests as leaders of God's people and on our use of power, especially when dealing with conflict and crises. Being a young female minister volunteering in a Chinese Baptist church early in my church-planting ministry in Calgary, I rarely saw myself as one in the powerful and privileged position. So, I never imagined that I would be in a position to subjugate others. My power problem, however, was a subtle one. There was a time when I was irritated by conservative senior male pastors at pastoral gatherings and transferred my bitterness to the young people under my care when I *felt* disrespected. When I experienced suppression, I turned on those in less powerful positions. Although power is not inherently harmful, humans in powerful positions often have a dangerous tendency towards self-protection that could lead to severe harm, even without any intention to do

[82] Einstein, *Out of My Later Years*, Loc 278.

so. So, the democratic ideal tells us that power must have checks and balances, and Christian theology tells us we must fear God and hold each other accountable. Both of these warnings stress the negative side of power and the need for accountability. I would like to offer another perspective, a positive one—namely, we can perhaps use power in a transformative way to produce positive changes in others and in the church and society at large. Even if we do not agree on interpreting Paul, we can still start a journey of reflecting on our use of power. Here I offer two initial reflections, focusing the structural and formative aspects of power.

My first reflection, which is more general, concerns the structural aspect of social power. Different positions appraise the institution of structure differently. Radical socialists and critical (or post-critical) feminists tend to discount structure at all levels and provide "radical democratic" visions.[83] But both theologians and social critics remind us of the danger of utopian visions.[84] As I have pointed out in Chapter 2, social power is a paradoxical phenomenon because the necessity of power for social formation and the resistance of power always coexist. Being a fan of understanding social phenomena in terms of physics, I believe that orderliness requires consuming power (according to the second law of thermodynamics) and, at the same time, that more control will only result in more resistance (according to the third law of motion).[85] Admittedly, human society is

[83] Schüssler Fiorenza's (*Power of the Word*, 81–82) notion of "ekklesia of wo/men" articulates not only a vision for hermeneutical space but also one of the "Christian community as one radical democratic assembly."

[84] Schwarz (*Human Being*, 100) writes, "The failure of modern utopia results from a wrong understanding of human possibilities. It erroneously assumed that humanity can be developed in any direction needed and once developed it will remain that way. Against this fallacy American theologian and social critic Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971) cautioned: 'The utopian illusions and sentimental aberrations of modern liberal culture are really all derived from the basic error of negating the fact of original sin' [Niebuhr, *Human Nature*, 273]." Cf. Ambrose, "Utopian Visions," 52–60.

[85] Angrist and Hepler, *Order and Chaos*, 193–214.

much more complex than the physical world. Still, we can learn something from physical laws. What I want to stress here is that discussions about social power should not revolve around wanting structure or no structure, as if we could live without structure.[86] Instead, we must focus our discussion on negotiating between an "excess of authority" and a "vacuum of authority" on the leading side[87] as well as on negotiating between indulging in freedom and yielding "inward freedom" to authoritarianism on the being-led side.[88]

The discourse of the leading side often stresses maintaining a society's (or a community's) stability and collective wellness. For those in leading positions, on the one hand, we must ask: Are we really serving the people or just securing our own interests in the name of social security, stability, and commonwealth? Who really benefits the most? If a leader benefits from leading and then refuses to listen to dissent, how can she or he claim to work *for* the people? Jürgen Moltmann notes that "social justice creates social peace."[89] But in many places, such as Hong Kong or Xin Jiang, China, social justice has been sacrificed in the name of peace; hence, the Western engagement policy might merely benefit the elite classes of both the West and the East but indeed has endorsed the domination of totalitarian governments over their ordinary people in places like China.[90] On the other hand, our society and church are in need of leaders who do not merely *talk*

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[86] Cf. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female*, 130–31.

[87] Avis, *Authority*, 1–15.

[88] Einstein (*Out of My Later Years*, Loc 199) writes, "It is this freedom of the spirit which consists in the independence of thought from the restrictions of authoritarian and social prejudices as well as from unphilosophical routinizing and habit in general." Similarly, Snyder (*On Tyranny*, 17–21) writes, "Most of the power of authoritarianism is freely given. In times like these, individuals think ahead about what a more repressive government will want, and then offer themselves without being asked. A citizen who adapts in this way is teaching power what it can do" (17).

[89] Moltmann, *Spirit of Hope*, 17.

[90] For examples of advocating an engagement policy in US-China relationships, see Vogel, ed., *Living with China*. For examples of its critiques, see Spalding, *Stealth War* and Pillsbury, *Hundred-year Marathon*.

about visions but courageously *act* to initiate changes. For those who have the potential to lead, we must also ask: Are we doing our job to protect and build up the community?[91] Leaders should be courageous enough to make difficult decisions and implement visions. In many situations, when gifted individuals refuse to step up and take the responsibility of leadership, church and society will suffer a vacuum of power, which provides opportunities for those who crave for domination. So, both abusing power and not using power are problematic, and both can harm communities. Furthermore, leaders must learn to discern when is the time for protecting the community and resisting evil penetration and when is the time for engaging and embracing the other and giving themselves away sacrificially.

By contrast, the discourse of the led side often emphasizes fighting for individual rights and protection of private property, as the classic libertarians believe, or fighting for social justice, as the social liberal activists advocate. For those in being-led positions, on the one hand, we must ask: Am I protecting my own interests in the name of justice? Why do I prioritize some but ignore others? Do I secure my own freedom and my human rights at others' expense?[92] Or, do I merely fight for those rights from which we benefit? For instance, during the pandemic, if I do not restrict my freedom to follow social distancing, I am not only risking my health but also the health of others. Similarly, we all want to pay less for more, but we might neglect the high cost for others that undergirds the low price we seek for ourselves. For instance, while we enjoy the benefit of globalization—namely, the low price—we must not forget that many local people in the

[91] Moltmann (*Spirit of Hope*, 17) writes, "The gap between the poor and the rich widens, but the alternative to poverty is not property. The alternative to poverty and property is community."

[92] Moltmann (*Spirit of Hope*, 13) also notes that: "democracy is grounded not only in the freedom of citizens but also in their quality."

West have lost their jobs since many manufacturing factories have moved to places where human rights are not protected.[93] So, when we claim to fight for human rights or social justice, it is good to reflect on our real motives. On the other hand, we must also ask: Am I silent about injustice merely because I am afraid of losing my security and comfort? It is one thing to rebel because leaders' interests do not match mine, but it is another thing to resist power because power is abused to harm others. If we see the abuse of power and choose to be silent, we must reflect on what motivates our silence. If our compromise is motivated by a purely pragmatic calculation, then we must also reflect on whether our silence now will lead to greater loss of security and comfort in the future. We must not endorse leaders who sacrifice us (members of the community) for their own interests by yielding our inward freedom.

Admittedly, I am asking many questions here and offering no answers. But oscillating between alternatives and hesitating to fix a position is not necessarily a weak failing. Honest struggle is better than thoughtlessness or recklessness. Also, honest struggle is better than hypocrisy—namely, saying what is politically correct without doing what we say. All of us need to understand ourselves and our situations and make our own decisions in life practice. Hopefully, we will have the humility and sensibility to ponder our own subjectivity and to weigh our own responsibility.

For Christians, particularly, our theology (or perhaps theologies) of God and the end time should serve as a double-edged sword, which must make us fear and tremble[94]

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[93] Sandel, *Tyranny of Merit*, 197–222. Sandel writes, "Although the age of globalization brought rich rewards to the well-credentialed, it did nothing for most ordinary workers" (197).

[94] Christopher Land—under whom I worked as a graduate assistant—has titled his leadership class as "With Fear and Trembling." Many of my thoughts about hermeneutics and leadership in this chapter are inspired by him.

and at the same time provide us hope. For people who care about knowing *truth*, the modern self needs a theology of humility, and the postmodern self needs a "theology of promise"[95] or a "spirit of hope."[96] Perhaps, we are also in need of a theology of power that is both critical and hopeful.

My second reflection concerns our agency to empower others regardless of whether or not we are in an institutionalized leading position. First of all, we can learn to recognize our privilege and power. As Paul acknowledges his apostleship and the right and responsibility associated with it, we may keep reflecting on who we are and what we have instead of who we are not and what we do not have. To live in a relatively safe and free country is a privilege; to be educated with knowledge and skills is a privilege; to have a position to instruct and influence others is a privilege; the list runs on. Recognizing our *potential* and *responsibility* to influence, we can shift our focus from feeling disillusioned or blaming others to focusing on what we can or must do in our situation.

First, if we (scholars and professors) are in a position to influence a broader audience, we have great potential; thus, we must remember that our writing, teaching, and preaching are providing an interpretation of reality and at the same time a vision of the future for our listeners and readers, regardless of how one argues about such notions as knowledge and power. Both Francis Bacon and Michel Foucault address the relation between knowledge and power.[97] When asserting that "knowledge is power," Bacon had

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[95] Thiselton, *Interpreting God*, 145–52.

[96] Moltmann, *Spirit of Hope*, 7. He notes that: "Christian hope draws the promised future of God into the present day, and prepares the present day for this future."

[97] Stehr and Adolf, "Knowledge/Power/Resistance," 193–98.

the autonomous modern-scientific self in mind, as noted by Moltmann.[98] But when discussing "their *relation*" instead of simply identifying knowledge and power, Foucault had the subject-to-subjugation postmodern self in mind.[99] Perhaps, both the modern and postmodern understandings of human subjectivity are accurate to some extent yet also biased and incomplete in themselves.[100] A subject is simultaneously a power agent and a subject of power. Thus, if we are furious at our political leaders who create a narrative or discourse to manipulate us, we must be careful how we present our message behind the pulpit, in our writing, or inside the classroom. We must not be too confident that we are preaching the truth, because we might be doing what we condemn. As an Asian female newbie joining the Western Christian academy, I see the demand for and the pretense of objectivity and disinterestedness in scholarship as more an academic game. None of us can be unbiased or disinterested, so it is better to be honest about our limitations and prejudices to make space for engaging in dialogue.[101] Engaging dialogue with others is not to cease pursuing truth or yield to moral relativism but to become realistic and humble about what humans can do. On the one hand, we can still feel passionate about our message and concerned about those who, as we judge, do not know or follow Jesus. On the other hand, we must not give up on valuing reasoned discussion[102] and yet at the same time must watch our tendency to rationalize all our actions and emotions.[103] Christian scholarship is not only about advancing knowledge or promoting new ideas; it is a way of Christian living and a way of using power to shape future generation. In short,

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[98] Moltmann, *Spirit of Hope*, 24. Cf. Henry, *Knowledge is Power*.

[99] Kritzman, ed., *Politics*, *Philosophy*, *Culture*, 43 (Foucault's words; italic original). Cf. Foucault, "Two Lectures," 78–108.

[100] Thiselton, *Interpreting God*, 121–64.

[101] Cf. Kahneman, *Thinking.*

[102] Thiselton, *Interpreting God*, 134–35.

[103] Arendt, *On Violence*, 59–87.

being aware that we are the academic elite class, we must humbly acknowledge our limitations and intentionally seek to learn from the other.

Second, our privilege as academic elites comes with responsibility. It is relatively easier these days to deconstruct theological constructions and relativize all practices but rather risky to promote countercultural ethics and move Christians to follow Christ's cruciform authority. When discussing ethics of sexuality, Paul Avis notes this: "the Church is called to that hardest of intellectual tasks—discrimination."[104] When speaking against religious consumerism, Moltmann maintains this: "a religion that makes no demands can offer no comfort."[105] Similarly, Einstein asserts that: "knowledge of what *is* does not open the door directly to what *should be*."[106] Both Moltmann and Einstein were concerned about the social and ethical problems of their day when reflecting on what religion can and must offer to society. That being said, theological or ethical reflection requires courage because it should serve as a prophetic voice, one able to critique and comfort. Thus, our message can be offensive, and we will encounter conflict. As indicated in Paul's discourse, popularity and celebrity should not be our goal if we want to impact culture. At the same time, we must avoid making radical choices to cause unnecessary disturbances. It is wise to discern and to wait on the Spirit's guidance; it is also wise to use our brain to understand ourselves and our circumstances. In short, being aware of our responsibility as the academic elite class, we must be faithful to use our gifts and influence to build up the church and to witness Jesus Christ to the world.

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[104] Avis, *Authority*, 15.
[105] Moltmann, *Spirit of Hope*, 45.
[106] Einstein, *Out of My Later Years*, Loc 291.

Since biblical scholars and theologians have both potential and responsibility to influence, I suggest, *responsible interpreters* are not those who seek to observe and analyze textual evidence objectively (as if it were possible) and do minimal theological reflection to play it safe. Instead, responsible interpreters are those who humbly and honestly recognize their limitations and make their interests as explicit as possible and, at the same time, diligently read the biblical texts for understanding and courageously speak into their current situations with the wisdom gained via the process of listening and responding to the Lord.

In particular, as Paul suggests, those in powerful and privileged positions must aim at using power to empower those in less privileged and powerful positions but at the same time beware of the peril of expecting a reciprocal patron-client relationship. In other words, we must not care for someone with the hope for praise and loyalty or need others to need us. By contrast, empowerment aims at fostering maturity and social responsibility. However, no growth can be manipulated because transformation can only happen from within, so a trust relationship is the catalyst of the empowering process. People should feel welcome yet free when being invited into an empowering process, which is meant to build a close relationship only to let go. In order to do so, we can perhaps gather some insights from meditating on whose will Paul seeks to follow and whose power he relies on. After all, although we do belong to the so-called academic elites, we are merely servants empowered by God to participate in his work, so we are not the owner of our gifts or the patrons of the people under our care. We are never permitted to use God's gift to dominate others for selfish gain. As Paul's discourse represents, we

should learn to surrender ourselves to the only provider. God is to judge how we use our influence on earth, but also is faithful in keeping his own.

Admittedly, it is always easier to talk about empowerment than to do it. It is relatively easy to put a sign with the slogan “black lives matter” on my front window when I need not take any risk of decision-making or action-taking. Similarly, it is relatively easy to preach about Jesus’s caring for the poor and marginalized when nothing will interrupt my comfortable lifestyle. When we are judging others’ use of power, we know what proper use of power is, but it is challenging to remain sensitive and sensible when we are in powerful and privileged positions. Leading positions, on the one hand, always entail the temptation to become a dominator or manipulator, but on the other hand, even good leaders will confront resistance and criticism. So, less ambitious people tend to turn down leadership opportunities, even if they do have the ability and character. That is why I have endeavoured to provide a different conceptualization of power in my dissertation. Power is not necessarily negative; leadership also involves opportunities to empower the less privileged and to lead our communities and societies to form a better life environment. But let us keep in mind that the transformative use of power entails intentionality, accountability, and no small price and that it requires a trust relationship as the catalyst.

Am I seeking to understand reality or manipulate it? Do I need others to need me or am I helping others to follow Jesus Christ? Am I using my power to protect and build up the community or to protect my personal interests and build a name for myself? Am I engaging in dialogue with others or imposing my ideas on them? Am I serving the less privileged and powerful on their terms or causing harm in the name of fighting for them?

Am I reacting impulsively to criticism or responding with grace and wisdom? Am I dominating or empowering? . . . To ask these questions is to answer them!

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

In this study, I have inquired whether or not Paul is a power abuser who uses language to dominate the Corinthians. As anyone who has studied Paul's discourse is well aware, its interpretive problems are not amenable to a linear approach. Paul is paradoxical, if not incoherent, because he deals with complex social and cultural situations and complex human issues. Power dynamics, by all means, add another layer of complexity. Any reading that does not recognize this complexity will inevitably oversimplify Paul and make him into either an abuser or a liberator, especially when the analyst has set out either to condemn or to sanctify Paul. Throughout my dissertation, I have laboured to show that our interpretations and evaluations of Paul's use of power are conditioned by our own social locations and our own understanding of power structures (including [a]theology). Both hagiographical and (post-)critical evaluations of Paul do this, often without realizing or admitting it. The solution is not to cease evaluating Paul (which is impossible) but is to draw attention to the processes involved by making the relevant facts as explicit as possible. In other words, as the academic elites, we must not dress up our own representations and uses of power as facts.

After analyzing Paul's representation of and use of power in 1 and 2 Corinthians, I have refuted the overly simplistic view that Paul seeks to dominate the Corinthians. When enacting his leadership in relation to his beloved converts in Corinth, Paul, together with his co-workers, takes responsibility for responding to the Corinthians'

requests and problems and uses his authority to empower the Corinthians to think and act according to Jesus Christ's cruciform authority.

First, Paul reveals a thoughtful theology of power dynamics that informs his own behaviour as a leader. In both letters, Paul interprets God the Father as having absolute authority and power and God the Son as having cruciform lordship over his followers. But God is not the only powerful superhuman being; other spiritual powers are working to keep humans from knowing God and to lead believers astray. Power differentials exist not only between superhuman beings and humans but also among humans. Whether they are political leaders and/or social elites or leaders serving in the Jesus movement, authoritative leaders have power over those under their authority, but their power and authority are limited and temporary and they will be judged and subjugated by Jesus Christ at the end. Paul represents himself paradoxically as one of Christ's apostolic leaders, and as one of his suffering servants, whose authority is given by God to build up God's congregations. At the same time, Paul also represents himself paradoxically as the Corinthians' leader and slave. Besides, his authority is not unchallenged. So, on the one hand, Paul seeks collaboration with other leaders, including local leaders, other Pauline ministers, and other leaders such as Apollos; on the other hand, he ruthlessly rebukes abusive leaders whom he regards as harming the Pauline mission in general and, in particular, the Corinthians. In Paul's understanding, the Corinthians are not powerless but are impacting believers and non-believers, positively or negatively. Though immature, they can produce a positive impact on both insiders and outsiders when acting in concert. Having perceived the increasing threat that ungodly influences, from within and without, have posed to the community, Paul writes to empower his spiritual children to resist

ungodly influences, to discipline wrongdoers, and to learn to do life together according to Christ's authority.

Second, via his discourse, Paul seeks to bring the Corinthian community to maturity and to train the Corinthians to become socially responsible. He tackles their misconception of leadership that is influenced by cultural standards; he urges them to work on their ritual and moral purity; he delegates the responsibility to discipline offenders back to the community; he trains them to discern and to resist ungodly influences; he mentors them to use their spirit-given gifts to build up their community; he moves them to respect and protect those in less powerful and privileged positions; lastly, he encourages them to give generously to their Jerusalem sisters and brothers in need. In short, Paul wants to help the Corinthians become what they are called to be, namely, God's *holy community*. Furthermore, he does not enact his exhortations by invoking only his own power and authority but, instead, communicates his instructions with the Corinthians through various legitimation strategies. For instance, he reasons; he elaborates on the purposes of his instructions; he cites Scripture; he directs them back to God; he shares personal experience; he critically appraises; he juxtaposes good and bad examples; and, he draws on his relationship with them. Paul is not modeling what modern Christians would expect from an entrenched local pastor but, instead, acts more like what Westerners would expect from a hired mentor or a coach. When maintaining a long-distance relationship, he is mentoring or coaching the community, which he has planted and still feels responsible for, to walk according to Christ's authority when navigating challenging non-Christian cultures.

My socio-linguistic analytical model seeks to take the complexity of power dynamics and language use into consideration. The power discourse analysis in Chapters 4–5 seeks to understand Paul as the other with an awareness of my interests. In this process, four choices are made deliberately. First, the choice of reading 1 and 2 Corinthians is strategic for understanding the power dynamics through comparative studies. Second, the choice of a discourse analysis approach forces the interpreter to suspend interpretation regarding specific details and focus more on large-scale patterns of linguistic behaviours. Third, the choice of separating representation and negotiation forces the interpreter to study *power in words* and *power via words* both thoroughly, because one's interpretation of her or his power relationships has a direct impact on her or his use of influence—and this is true both for Paul and for modern interpreters, who often have different interpretations of power relationships. Lastly, the choice of separating linguistic analysis and critical evaluation forces the interpreter to suspend hasty pre-judgement before giving Paul a fair hearing. Of course, any Pauline power study must proceed from a relatively objective analysis of Paul's power representations and negotiations to a rather subjective assessment of Paul's use of power. Besides, any interpreter with the plan to do theology or address ethical issues must proceed from evaluating Paul's use of power to speaking into power issues pertinent to her or his context. Therefore, in Chapter 6 of this study, I have first wrestled with different perspectives that interpret Paul's use of power and sought to move toward constructing an ethic of using power.

Since power studies are not amenable to any modernist approach, I have used a postmodern hermeneutical paradigm, starting with introducing *my* social location and

interest in Chapter 1 and ending with *my* theological reflection in Chapter 6. This recognition of subjectivity is meant to put my study into perspective and to create space for dialogue with others. What is most important, however, is that my critical discourse analysis has offered a reading of how Paul seeks to empower the Corinthians to think and act according to Christ's cruciform authority. For people who are prepared to see this as a positive end, it is possible to evaluate Paul's use of power positively and to condone his passionate attempts to influence his readers, even if we must stop short of hagiography—lest we lose the ability to critically assess our own uses of power.

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