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# The Evolution of the Pauline Canon

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## Abstract

*The article aims at reviewing theories of how the Pauline Corpus first came to be. A taxonomy consisting of four families of theories is established: Paul himself collected his writings; after his death Paul lived forth in the form of a collection of his writings; an intercourse between one Pauline center and another gradually led to the exchange of copies of letters; the collection of Paul's letters gave him pothumously a centrality which he lacked in his own time until about 90 C E. The article concludes with the disputed question whether all of Paul's writings in the New Testament descend or diverge from a particular, definitive edition of the Pauline Corpus.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

We are accustomed, when considering the letters ascribed to the Apostle Paul, to speaking of *justification*. But when we seek to tunnel beneath the theological ground we stand on, to deconstruct the notion of Pauline theological authority (i e, to take it apart and find out better how it works), we might better speak of *reification*, that process whereby a contrivance of human beings like ourselves has at length come to assume an aura of inviolable sacredness, an autonomous reality, a wholeness greater than the sum of its parts. The sabbath is reified when we begin to forget that the sabbath was made for men and women, not the other way around. The biblical canon is a classic case of reification. Most students and laypersons are quite surprised, and at least a bit dismayed, to discover that the Bible's contents are not self-evident, that a choice between writings was made at all, and by mere mortals like themselves, and at a particular time in history. How can such things be true of the eternal Word of God?

The canon of Holy Scripture is like the Holy Place in the Jerusalem Temple: it is shielded from prying mortal eyes by a veil of sanctity. One is curious to peer inside, yet at the same time one fears being disappointed should one dare steal a glimpse, like the profane usurper Titus who was startled to find an empty chamber. Or, worse yet, will one find a stammering man behind the curtain, at the controls in a hidden special effects booth, as in *The Wizard of Oz*?

If the biblical canon is the Holy Place, perhaps we may liken the Pauline Corpus to the Holy of Holies. For even among those for whom the outer veil has long ago been rent, this inner zone of canonicity retains its numinous inviolability. For Christian scholars, whether apologists or supposed critics, the Pauline Epistles are like the metaphysical Presence of traditional ontotheology. We are reluctant to have someone come along and play the Derridean trick of showing us where the seams and junctures are.

And yet the game is afoot already; the profane feet have trodden the sacred courts. For the better part of a century, scholars have crossed swords (at least pens, which are mightier) over the question of the collection of the Pauline Epistles: who first collected them, when, where, and why? It will be our task to sift through a pile of these speculations (and, as Walter Schmithals reminds us, that is all such reconstructions can ever be). In the process we may feel like we are sitting in the poorly-lit attic, exploring the confusing souvenirs of our ancestors as they emerge one by one from a neglected old steamer trunk. Let's get started.

## 2. FOUR APPROACHES

I believe we can distinguish four main lines of approach to the question before us. It will be useful to segregate our theories according to the distance they posit between the career of the Apostle Paul and the collection of his letters. This taxonomy, admittedly, violates the chronology of the history of scholarship in favor of a different sort of chronology. But I believe little will be lost: each major group of theories seems to have evolved pretty much autonomously. Though one may have arisen in reaction to another, the fact is seldom crucial to the logic of each theory. When it *is* important, it will be easy enough for us to note the fact. And within each family of theories, of course, we will trace historical development. Furthermore, by arranging the theories in a timeline from minimal to maximal intervals between the Apostle and the collection, we may come to see something important about the theories, their tendencies, and motives.

## 3. 'PAULINE TESTAMENT' THEORIES

The first type of collection theory with which we have to do may be called the *Pauline Testament* approach. Here there is virtually no interval at all between the Apostle and the collection of his writings, for, these scholars posit, it was *Paul himself* who collected them. The earliest exponent of this theory, so far as I know, was R L Archer ('The Epistolary Form in the New Testament', 1951-52), who reasoned that Paul had kept copies of his epistles, and that sometime after his death the Christians who had inherited them hit upon the scheme of publishing them. This notion they derived from rea-

ding Seneca, a great publisher of collected letters. While Seneca frowned upon the publication of strictly personal letters, Cicero, as is well known, found much value in publishing even personal correspondence. Paul's posthumous admirers agreed with Cicero. And thus the Pauline writings, both literary epistles and personal letters, were published.

Donald Guthrie thinks Archer did well to look to the contemporary practice of letter collection and publication as the background for the Pauline Corpus, but he remains skeptical whether early Pauline Christians would have been much interested in or influenced by the likes of Cicero and Seneca. Against Guthrie's criticism one may question whether he is too much under the influence of Deissmann's belief, based on 1 Corinthians 1:26, that the early church was a pedestrian, plebeian, and proletarian movement. Abraham Malherbe's more recent studies might persuade us differently. But Guthrie still might have noticed that, if 'not many' of the Corinthians, or of Pauline Christians generally, were to be numbered among the educated elite, the very wording of the verse in question implies that a few were. One need think only of the householders Stephanas and Chloe.

And as for early Christian interest in the literary luminaries Seneca and Cicero, let us not forget the apocryphal letters of Paul and Seneca. Someone before Archer certainly envisioned early Christians being interested in both epistolarians! And remember Jerome's famous dream in which his Christian conscience rebuked his classical inclinations. An angel like Hermas, cast this in Jerome's teeth: 'Thou art not a follower of Christ, but of Cicero!' (Just the opposite, one may say, of the vision of the Prophet Muhammad, in which the angel Gabriel insisted that he recite verses though he was illiterate.)

A much more recent theory along somewhat the same lines is that of David Trobisch (*Die Entstehung der Paulusbriefsammlung*, 1989; *Paul's Letter Collection: Tracing the Origins*, 1993). Trobisch, like Archer, deserves Guthrie's praise and ours for exploring the contemporary practices of collecting and publishing letters, having studied many hundreds of epistles and letter collections from several centuries adjacent to the Pauline period on either side (300 BCE to 400 CE). He notes that in many cases an initial collection of an author's letters was made by the author himself, with a view to publication, more of a 'selected' than a 'collected letters'. These might be arranged in chronological order. But whatever the principle of sequence, Trobisch observes, when after the author's death others undertook to publish more of his correspondence, the additional letters would simply be appended to the original set, not placed among them by the original sequence principle. The new letters would observe the same order among themselves, but they would follow the original corpus as a new block. The

author's own selection Trobisch calls the 'authorized recension'. Posthumous additional collections might be published as separate volumes or, if thematically related to the authorized recension, they might be appended to the original volume and published together as what Trobisch calls an 'expanded edition'. Finally, scribes may try to unearth and publish all known letters together in a single manuscript. This Trobisch calls a 'comprehensive edition'. And in all expanded and comprehensive editions, Trobisch says, the added material starts over, recapitulating the sequential order of the originals but not intermingling with the letters of the author's own collection, leaving the integrity of the original intact. It would be comparable to a current-day author merely adding a new preface, an introduction to a new edition, or some appendices to the original text of a reprinted early work, rather than revising and updating it: 'What I have written, I have written'.

Trobisch calls attention to the fact that, with very few exceptions, the mass of ancient manuscripts arrange Paul's letters the same way, in an almost perfect order of longer to shorter, except that Ephesians is longer than Galatians and yet follows it. Of course the descending length principle starts over once we reach the Pastorals, but no one is surprised by this since we have reached a new category of (ostensibly) personal letters to individuals. But what of Ephesians? After considering previous theories, Trobisch suggests it would make most sense if Ephesians represented the point where a new 'expanded edition' had been added. Of what did this expanded edition consist? Here Trobisch tips his hat to Goodspeed. One expects Trobisch to say (as did Schmithals 1972:266) that Ephesians led off a second, posthumous, collection of a few letters, perhaps Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon. Goodspeed, as we will see below, had suggested Ephesians had once begun the whole corpus and indeed had been written by the Colossian freedman Onesimus for that purpose. Schmithals was willing to let Goodspeed be right only about the threefold corpus of Ephesians-Colossians-Philemon, but Trobisch(1993:101) is more generous, though less consistent: 'If my analysis is correct the letter to the Ephesians functioned as an introduction to the expanded edition of the thirteen letters because it is the first letter of the appendix'. But it is difficult to see how Ephesians might serve as an introduction to the whole corpus of thirteen letters if it comes *fifth!* This, of course, is why Goodspeed posited a lead-off position for Ephesians even without any manuscript evidence to back him up.

And this is not the only problem with Trobisch's reconstruction. Far from it. For one thing, while there is nothing *prima facie* unreasonable in Trobisch's suggestion that the initial four letters (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians) were Paul's own choice for a selected letters volume, with Ephesians beginning a posthumous appendix, Trobisch seems merely to have shown that such a scenario, *if true, would* fit the analogy of

a widespread practice of an author publishing his own letters. This is a viable form-critical argument, it seems to me. But Trobisch leaves it unclear whether the initial letter collections to which expansions were appended were *always or usually collections by the author himself*. We have in the case of H P Lovecraft's letters something that at first seems to parallel the ancient practice as Trobisch describes it. Shortly following Lovecraft's death, two of his correspondents, August Derleth and Donald Wandrei, decided to collect and publish their late friend's letters. Lovecraft wrote innumerable epistles of fantastic length, so Derleth and Wandrei knew they must make a selection. At first they planned on a single volume of *Selected Letters*, but as the years went by and the sifting process continued, the project expanded to three, then four volumes. Following the deaths of Derleth and Wandrei, James Turner took up the task and compiled the fifth volume. All letters, edited and condensed for publication, were presented in chronological order, and all from Arkham House Publishers.

But many Lovecraft aficionados were not satisfied, their appetites having been merely whetted. So a couple of them, S T Joshi and David C Schultz, scoured the archives of Brown University and contacted various obscure Lovecraft correspondents, seeking ever more letters. Their labors have produced several more volumes, *Lovecraft's Letters to Robert E Howard*, *Lovecraft's Letters to Henry Kuttner*, to Richard Searight, to Robert Bloch, et cetera. And chronological order is observed within each such volume of Tosefta. Finally, these editors hope one day to compile a definitive *Collected Letters of H P Lovecraft*.

It all sounds very much like Trobisch on Paul — except that Lovecraft was dead when it all began. Do we know that first collections were always the work of the epistolarian himself? Trobisch does not tell us, and yet his reconstruction is considerably weakened if it is not so.

One suspects that the underlying motive of the Pauline Testament theories is an apologetical one: it would seem to secure a set of texts with both authenticity and integrity guaranteed. After all, Paul himself edited them as well as wrote them. And here one is reminded of the fundamentalist apologetic for the New Testament canon list as a whole. John Warwick Montgomery and others assert that in John 16:12-14 Jesus authorized in advance the entire New Testament canon just as in John 10:35 he had put his imprimatur on the Old Testament canon. Or think of Vincent Taylor's argument that the Synoptic tradition must be basically sound since the apostles must still have been around carefully overseeing the progress of oral tradition. Are not Archer and, even more, Trobisch trying to have Paul himself collect the Pauline Corpus (at least the *Hauptbriefe*) and rescue us from text-critical anxieties?

Such a purpose would not seem alien to Trobisch (1993:97-98) who explicitly wants to return to a harmonizing reading not only of Paul but of the whole New Testament. This would appear to be a move to neo-conservative hermeneutics, à la Brevard Childs. But Trobisch surprises us, for what he gains in authenticity he squanders in textual integrity. We are surprised to discover that he takes a leaf from Schmithals's codex and subdivides the Corinthian correspondence into no less than seven mini-letters, the seams between which Trobisch discerns, much as Schmithals does, by excavating fossils of vestigial letter openings and closings as well as mapping out digressive passages, labeling them as Pauline redactional notes. Why on earth Paul would have done this, especially since Trobisch has him leave the basic letter-forms of Galatians and Romans intact, is a puzzle. 'Behold, I show you a mystery', but not, alas, a solution. Schmithals's controversial surgery on the various epistles is at least supplied with a motive: the redactor needed to conflate his fragmentary sources into the form of a catholicizing seven-fold form. Whether this be judged persuasive is one thing. Whether it is better than no reason at all, as with Trobisch, is another.

What is strikingly ironic is that Trobisch offers as his theory's chief merit that it makes possible a harmonizing reading of the Pauline Corpus (at least, again, the *Hauptbriefe*, though he seems to want to go farther). Is this purpose served by *breaking up* the Corinthian letters? Or does he mean that Paul wanted the letters to be re-read as if they formed one or two longer texts? It seems Trobisch does not intend this, but in any case, he has undermined his own goal.

To borrow another analogy from Lovecraft, Trobisch's reconstruction reminds us of the editing of Lovecraft's serial narrative 'Herbert West — Reanimator'. Lovecraft wrote the episodic story in six installments for sequential issues of a magazine. Thus each installment began with a capsule resume of the previous one(s). When the story finally appeared in book form, these capsule summaries seemed redundant. Eventually when Jeffery Combs prepared a text for an audiotape version of the story, he decided to trim away the summaries, reasoning that, once the six episodes were read continuously, the summaries became counterproductive: first intended to reinforce continuity of reading, they now tended to interrupt it. But why would Paul trim away the openings and closings of most of the Corinthian mini-letters? This would make sense only if what Paul pared away was a set of 'Now where were we's?' and 'More next time's'. But that is not the character of most of the Pauline greetings and closings we have. According to Schmithals and Knox, openings and closings may have been *added* to make a heap of random fragments into letters, but it is difficult to understand the procedure proposed by Trobisch.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of Trobisch's version of the Pauline Testament approach is his connection of the two Pauline collections, that is, Paul's own collection of alms for the Jerusalem saints and the collection of Paul's epistles. Typically, though, Trobisch casts this potent seed on rocky ground and continues on his way. He notes that 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans, and Galatians all mention the alms collection and that the thread of continuity seems to be that Paul agreed to the chore in the first place to conciliate the Pillar saints of Jerusalem, who have since, like Cephas in Antioch, betrayed their accord. As a result he fears the fruits of his harvest on their behalf may be rejected, may become a bone of contention rather than an olive branch of peace. One purpose of Paul's collecting these particular letters and sending them to Ephesus would be to put his side of the story on file in view of the conflict anticipated in Jerusalem. I view this as a brilliant suggestion, though not compelling. Why should Paul not have simply written it straight out in a single new letter, using the same kind of plain talk he had used in Galatians? It is significant that, at the close of *Paul's Letter Collection*, Trobisch supplies a 'fictive cover letter' in which Paul does explain his object in compiling the corpus. Trobisch thus admits some such word of explanation is necessary if his theory is to carry conviction — and that Paul did not supply one!

Also, if one did find the collection-connection persuasive (and it certainly merits further thought), one need not count it as evidence of Paul himself having collected the *Hauptbriefe*. Paul's motive in collecting the money remained an issue between the Pauline communities and Jewish Jesus-sectarians who cast Paul in the role of Simon Magus crassly trying to purchase an apostolate with filthy lucre, as F. C. Baur argued. One can easily imagine (and, granted, that is all one may do) Pauline advocates collecting these letters as a defense against Ebionite detractors, much as later Catholics would fabricate the Pastorals to distance Paul from the blasphemies of the encratites (see Dennis Ronald MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon*, 1983).

#### 4. 'PAPER APOSTLE' THEORIES

Our second group of theories calls to mind Bultmann's dictum that Jesus 'rose into the *kerygma*', the gospel preaching of the early church. These theories, to some of which Guthrie applied the rubric 'theories of immediate value', in effect have Paul die and immediately rise in the form of a collection of his writings, which replace the irreplaceable Apostle. Thus I dub this the *Paper Apostle* approach. The scenario envisioned here is much like that described in Islamic tradition following the death of the Prophet Muhammad. The voice of prophecy had forever fallen silent. Just the opposite of the Deuteronomic Moses, Muhammad was the definitive Seal of the Prophets: no 'prophet

like unto me' could be expected to succeed him. Thus the Muslim faithful began to cherish and trade remembered Surahs of revelation, recording these on whatever materials came to hand, scraps of leather, papyrus leaves, parchments, potsherds, even shoulder blades of sheep. At length the first Caliph, Abu-bekr, decreed that the Surahs should be collected, and the corpus of the Koran (Qur'an) was the eventual result. Thus the Book of the Prophet was the only successor to the Prophet.

Harnack (*Die Briefsammlung des Apostels Paulus*, 1926) reasoned that Paul's letters were treasured by enthusiastic readers upon delivery. 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he opened the scriptures unto us'? Not content to wait for the Apostle to post another missive to their own church, Pauline Christians would check through the whole Pauline network and copy each other's epistles till each church had a complete set, much like avid fans of an author today. The keen longing by his fans for ever more of Paul did not arise only after his death. His absence during his life, when working elsewhere far away, had already led his fans to make up collections of his letters to serve as poor substitutes for his presence, like a treasured photograph of an absent lover. Thus the groundwork for the Pauline canon was already in place when Paul himself passed away. One might say that the Pauline Corpus was already warming up even as the Pauline corpse was cooling off. Indeed, his death was a mere formality; as Barthes and Derrida tell us, the author is dead as soon as he or she produces his or her text, which (as a 'dangerous supplement') takes on a prodigal life of its own.

Harnack was persuaded of the immediate impact of the letters by four factors. First, Paul's letters are perceived by us as being rhetorically and theologically powerful, and Harnack assumed ancient readers must have been as astute as we are. And yet, one may reply, we should not be too hasty in identifying our tastes with ancient predilections. For instance, someone, somewhere, must have thought the Upanishads or the Saddharma Pundarika sounded good. Max Müller certainly didn't. Mormon missionaries grow teary-eyed about the heart-warming experience of reading *The Book of Mormon*, but Mark Twayne found it 'chloroform in print'. Wasn't Harnack reading the text through a haze of eighteen centuries of Christian piety? One thinks of the scene in Cecil B DeMille's *King of Kings* when thousands assemble to hear Jesus, as if they realize here is their chance to hear the soon-to-be-famous Sermon on the Mount. (This anachronistic incongruity produces a sense of anticlimax: one hears it and perhaps wonders what all the fuss was about.)

Harnack took 2 Corinthians 10:10 ('His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, his speech of no account') as denoting that even Paul's opponents had to admit his letters were powerful. But isn't the point rather pretty much that Paul merely *talks* a good fight and can't back it up? As Paul himself says elsewhere: 'The Kingdom of God is not talk, but power'.



1 Corinthians 7:17 ('And so I ordain in all the churches') meant to Harnack that what Paul had *written* here he had similarly *written* in epistles to all his churches, implying a large volume of letters. Not only is this an arbitrary reading of the verse which might simply refer to oral instructions in person, but it had not occurred to Harnack that such a verse is very likely a post-Pauline catholicizing gloss, added in order to facilitate the use of 1 Corinthians itself as an encyclical. 'What I say to you, I say to all'.

Finally, Harnack inferred from 2 Thessalonians 2:2 and 3:17 that already in Paul's day his letters were both numerous and authoritative enough to have called forth cheap imitations. In both his third and fourth arguments, Harnack gets himself into trouble. He seemed to realize that if Paul had written as large a volume of letters as his arguments implied, we must be missing most of them. So, Harnack reasoned, a selection was made, and our Pauline Corpus represents the cream of the crop. But doesn't this notion undercut Harnack's whole reconstruction? For the true fan, there is no such thing as an embarrassment of riches. Rather, one seeks to preserve every scrap, just as P N Harrison pictured a redactor of Pauline fragments in 2 Timothy doing.

And as F C Baur pointed out long ago (as he felled another tree in a forest empty of anyone to listen), the references to pseudepigraphy in 2 Thessalonians, like the request to have 1 Thessalonians read in church (1 Thessalonians 5:27), is simply a case of my four fingers pointing back at me when I point one at you. 1 and 2 Thessalonians presuppose an earlier 'Paper Apostle' collection. As is well known, Harnack was a foe of Baur and Tübingen, and his apologetical *Tendenz* is no more difficult to spot here than in his early dating of Acts.

Donald Guthrie also wanted to close the gap between Paul and the collection of his letters, so to ensure the authenticity and integrity of the corpus. (And again, it is no surprise to see him favoring the Vincent Taylor/F F Bruce theory of reliable oral transmission and early written gospels to shorten a similar dark and frightening tunnel period.) Guthrie (1970:655-657) imagines that just after Paul's death, one of his associates, probably Timothy, saw to the collection of his master's literary remains. After all, Timothy would have been present to hear Galatians read in his home church of Lystra. And years later he himself had brought Paul his suitcase full of parchments and scrolls, which might well have been a file of copies of his own epistles a la Archer! It is clear that for Guthrie, the Timothy character continues to play the apologetical guarantor role assigned him by the Pastor (2 Timothy 2:2). Of course Guthrie's theory requires Acts to be historically accurate and the Pastorals to be genuinely Paul's.

We find ourselves in familiar territory with C F D Moule's version of the Paper Apostle. For Moule (1962:204), it was Luke who both wrote the Pastorals (serving as Paul's amanuensis with a very long leash) and collected the genuine Paulines after he penned his gospel and Acts. (A few subsequent scholars have also affirmed common authorship for Luke-Acts and the Pastorals, for example, Stephen G Wilson, Jerome D Quinn, but unlike them Moule pictured this author as being Luke the beloved physician and companion of Paul.)

Developing suggestions of Hans Conzelmann ('Paulus und die Weisheit', NTS 12 [1965] 321-44) and Eduard Lohse (*Die Briefe an die Kolosser und an Philemon*, Meyer Kommentar IX. 2:14, 1968), Hans-Martin Schenke ('Das Weiterwirken des Paulus und die Pflege seines Erbes durch die Paulus-schule', 1975) allows the pendulum to settle down in the middle of the Paper Apostle options. Eschewing both Harnack's faceless 'creative Volk community' approach, and Moule's and Guthrie's nomination of a single Pauline disciple, Schenke ascribes both the collection of the corpus and the writing of some deuterio-Pauline epistles to a Pauline School, disciples of Paul rather like the anonymous conventicles of the Sons of the Prophets who passed on the traditions of Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah. These true sons of the Apostle took on themselves both the task of continuing Paul's work and the mantle of his authority as they made his voice sound forth again to meet new challenges and answer new questions. Harry Gamble (1985:39) approves this notion since it avoids 'the dubious idea of one particular collector'. Yet we may ask, what is so dubious about the notion of a single collector? Perhaps Gamble (who shows himself elsewhere to be shy of all but the most cautious speculation, willing, for example, in his *Textual History of the Letter to the Romans* to take but a carefully circumscribed sabbath day's journey from the data) disdains the 'scandal of particularity' involved in picking a single name like Luke, Timothy, or Onesimus. Or, more likely, he finds theologically distasteful the lurking idea of a Marcion-like 'second founder of Paulinism' (see below).

The image of Paul resurrected in his letters is especially apt for Schenke's (1975:511) theory: 'Sie hatten es zu tun mit dem lebendigen Paulus, mit seinem gegenwärtigen Wirken und Wort, mit der Erinnerung daran und dem Fortwirken in ihnen, mit dem Wirken und Wort der reisenden bevollmächtigten Stellvertreter des Paulus, mit dem Wirken und Wort derer in der Gemeinde, die als der verlangerte Arm des Paulus gelten konnten, und mit alledem, was man sich von Paulus erzählte'.

And, though Schenke himself does not invoke the analogy of the schools of the Old Testament prophets, I believe the comparison is a very helpful one, inviting us to understand the Pauline Corpus (as Marcion did) as the private canon, the sectarian scripture, of a particular Christian body, the Pauline School, much like the composite

book of Isaiah which contains not only the oracles of the original Isaiah of Jerusalem, but also the deutero- and trito-Isaianic supplements of his latter-day heirs. And just as in the case of the Isaiah canon where (à la Paul Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*) we find intra-canonical collisions (cf Käsemann, 'The Canon of the New Testament and the Unity of the Church'), so do we find Pauline versus deutero-Pauline clashes here and there.

The living Paul who continues, as it were, to write through the pens of the Pauline School is obviously the twin of the Risen Christ to whose self-appointed prophets Bultmann (and many others on down to Wayne Boring) had ascribed many of the inauthentic sayings of Jesus. But at least Schenke's 'Risen Paul' who thus lives on in *Geschichte* had lived a previous life in *Historie*. ('If once we knew [Paul] after the flesh we know him so no longer'.) But next we come to a much older theory of a Pauline School which surely fulfills the name 'Paper Apostle' to the letter. W C van Manen was the greatest of the Dutch Radical critics who sought to carry to their logical conclusion (some would say their '*reductio ad absurdum*', but not me) the critical insights of Baur and the Tübingen School. Van Manen, along with Allard Pierson, S A Naber, A D Loman, and their predecessor Bruno Bauer (all of whom F C Baur swatted away much as Luther had dismissed Schwenkfeld and the Schwärmerei) denied the authenticity of every single Pauline letter. Space forbids the rehearsal of the striking and often powerful arguments put forth by Van Manen. Suffice it to say the only 'refutation' they were ever accorded was that of the cold shoulder. (For more details, see Van Manen's English writings in the References; also Dettering's 1991 dissertation, *Paulus-briefe ohne Paulus?*)

Van Manen saw no reason to doubt the existence of Paul as an early Christian preacher (whose genuine itinerary, he thought, had been preserved in Acts), but he judged the so-called Pauline Epistles to have as little direct connection to this early apostle as the so-called Johannine and Petrine writings have with their historically obscure namesakes. The epistles, Van Manen argued, display a universalizing and philosophizing tenor unthinkable for the apocalyptic Jesus-sect pictured in Acts or the Gospels. Their greatest affinity is with emerging Syrian Gnosticism. Nor do they represent the thinking of one theologian (contra the single 'Paulus Episkopus' of Pierson and Naber). Rather, in the Pauline Epistles we are overhearing intra-scholastic debates between different wings of Paulinism. Has God finally cast off the Jewish people or not? Does grace imply libertinism, as some hold? Do some preach circumcision in Paul's name? Can women prophesy or not?

Van Manen locates the home of Paulinism at Antioch, or perhaps Asia Minor, beginning at the end of the first century or the start of the second, thriving by 150 CE ('Paul', 3634). Fragments of the writings of this gnostic Pauline circle were later compiled into the familiar epistles, each and all of which are in their present form redactional compositions, finally receiving a catholicizing overlay. 'We do not know by whom the collection was made, nor yet what influence his work had upon the traditional text. Perhaps we may suppose that it led to some changes. Probably the collection was not wholly the work of one person, but arose gradually through additions' ('Old-Christian Literature', 3482). Just like the epistles themselves.

Van Manen's theory belongs with the others we have lumped together under the Paper Apostle approach even in the sense that, like them, it tends to minimize the time interval between the writing of the letters and their collection. But in this case both the writing and the collecting fell early in the second century.

## 5. 'SNOWBALL' THEORIES

We find muchless diversity among the theories some of which Guthrie groups under the heading 'theories of partial collections'. I, however, prefer Moule's nomenclature: 'the slow, anonymous process of accretion', the snowball theory. We have to suppose, that is, that the intercourse between one Pauline centre and another gradually led to the exchange of copies of letters, until, at any given centre, there came to be not only the letter or letters originally sent to it, but also copies of certain others collected from other Pauline Churches. Thus in each centre there would come to be little nests of letters, and gradually these would move into wider circulation and would be augmented, until the full number, as we know it, was reached. Then all that remained to be done was the making of a careful "edition" of the whole *corpus*' (Moule 1962:203).

Kirsopp Lake had said the same in 1911 (*The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*): 'Small and partial collections came into existence in various centers, before the Corpus in its completed form fully replaced them' (in Mitton 1955:16). Similarly Zuntz (*The Text of the Epistles*, 1953) suggests that 'smaller collections may have been made in and around Ephesus' (Guthrie's [1970:646] summary).

P N Harrison observed that the Corinthian correspondence was itself something of a 'Pauline collection', of fragments. To this first Pauline anthology was then added Romans, then later a Macedonian collection of Philippians and Thessalonians. Together these formed a 'European Corpus'. There had also been forming an Asia Minor collection of Galatians, Colossians, the Letter for Phoebe (Romans 16), and Philemon. [May I take this opportunity to propose that Romans 16, when considered a separate document, henceforth be referred to as 'Phoebe', or 'Paul's Letter for Phoebe'?] Once these had been added on to the European Corpus, some Asian Christian penned Ephesians on the basis of all the others (Harrison 1936:239-240).

Lucetta Mowry sees it the same way: 'We can distinguish three such regions each with its own body of material, the Asian hinterland, with Galatians, Colossians and Philemon; Macedonia, with 1 Thessalonians and Philippians; and Achaea with 1 Corinthians and Romans' ('The Early Circulation of Paul's Letters', 1944). Though I will return to him later in another connection, I probably ought to include Walter Schmithals here ('On the Composition and Earliest Collection of the Major Epistles of Paul' (1960, rev 1965), since he understands Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon to have begun as a separate Asian collection, joined only subsequently to a seven-letter collection (1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Romans).

What is the difference between a Paper Apostle theory like Harnack's and the Snowball theory? Simply one of time intervals. Snowball theories cannot credit so early a collection as Harnack posits, nor such a later collection *ex nihilo* as Goodspeed posits (see below). The collection came to fruition fairly late, says the Snowball theory, but we can supply the missing evolutionary link by positing partial collections in the meantime like small multicellular creatures joining to form a more complex jellyfish. But, come to think of it, how did we get the multicellular creatures? How did they evolve from unicellular beasts? A development of the Snowball theory supplies an answer.

Mowry, Nils Dahl ('The Particularity of the Pauline Epistles as a Problem for the Ancient Church', 1962) and others have gathered evidence that various of the Pauline Epistles must have circulated among the churches between the time of their initial reception and that of the formation of local collections, made from both such encyclicals and local, hitherto-uncirculated letters. There are copies of Romans with no addressee and manuscripts lacking the last two chapters. Lightfoot, Dahl reports, had already sought to account for this textual data by suggesting Paul had sent out other copies, omitting personal and merely local concerns, to various of his churches. Lake put the shoe on the other foot and proposed that Paul had added the specifics to an earlier encyclical letter, making it into our Romans (Dahl 1962:269).

The famous catholicizing gloss of 1 Corinthians 1:2b ('... together with all who in every place invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord as well as ours.') has been claimed by Schmithals, following Johannes Weiss, as evidence that 1 Corinthians once led off the Pauline Corpus. But Dahl reasoned that it might be more naturally understood (along with other glosses like 7:17; 11:16; 14:33) as a gloss facilitating the use of 1 Corinthians by itself as an encyclical letter. (I would go further in the same direction pursued by those who view the letter as a set of fragments and compare 1 Corinthians and its many 'now concerning'-transitions with the Didache, where such

phrases are clearly mechanical introductions [like Mark's redactional 'immediately's] to new topics in a generic church manual, which is just what I consider 1 Corinthians to be.)

The grand epilogue to Romans (16:25-27), too, might make better sense as a way of refitting Romans for a wider audience. Schmithals, like Weiss, takes this as evidence that Romans closed the sevenfold corpus, and perhaps it did, but his seems an unnecessary hypothesis, much like the popular exegesis of Revelation 22:18-19 as a warning meant to apply to the entire Bible.

Mowry notes that the address of Galatians, to 'the churches of Galatia', even if original, already made that epistle more than a local possession. She sees 2 Thessalonians as a later pseudonymous encyclical aimed at dampening the premature apocalyptic fervor ignited by 1 Thessalonians. In fact, the fabrication of 2 Thessalonians would be symptomatic of the whole situation as Mowry sees it: as the living voice of charismatic prophecy fell more and more silent, the written word was desired to fill the gap.

Ephesians, also without an addressee in the earliest manuscripts, is obviously another ideal candidate for an encyclical, a universalizing redaction of Colossians.

Walter Bauer (*Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, German 1934, English 1971) had long ago contended that the only Pauline epistle we have definite allusions to among the Apostolic Fathers is 1 Corinthians: 'Whenever we come from the marshy ground of "reminiscences" and "allusions" to firmer territory, again and again we confront 1 Corinthians' (Bauer 1971:219). Why? Because, as 1 Clement makes plain, the epistle was useful to combat heretics and schismatics, foes of emerging Roman orthodoxy. The encyclical use of 1 Corinthians for which Dahl and Mowry argue fits Bauer's thesis perfectly.

Whence 2 Corinthians? Mowry sees it as a second collection of scraps intended to supplement its predecessor. 'II Corinthians owes its composite character to the desire to produce something analogous in scope to I Corinthians. If any weight attaches to this suggestion, the inference would seem to be that I Corinthians, at least, had already circulated locally before the collector began his work' (Mowry 1944:81). Mowry seems to assume that the fragments used to compile 2 Corinthians came from the archives of the Corinthian church. But it need not be so. '2 Corinthians' might simply denote 'a sequel to 1 Corinthians', just as 2 Thessalonians, on her theory, is simply a pseudonymous sequel of sorts.

And depending on what sort of Gnosticism, proto-Gnosticism, or gnosticizing Paulinism one sniffs out in 1 Corinthians (and I for one still think Schmithals's case a pretty good one), one might even want to reconsider one of Simone Petrement's fascinating guesses (*A Separate God*): that there is some connection between 'Corinthians' and 'Cerinthus'. She thinks that 'Cerinthus' was like 'Ebion', an unhistorical eponymous founder, posited by heresiologists, in this case, of a gnosis originally associated

with the Corinthians. I would turn it around, rehabilitate Cerinthus, and ask if the antiheretical 'Corinthian' epistles are punningly referring to Cerinthian Jewish Gnostics. Since that the historical Paul lived before Cerinthus's activity, he could not be made to address him directly, but some readers would take the hint, just as they did the winking reference to Marcion's *Antitheses* and heretical gnosis in 1 Timothy 6:20.

We can use Mowry's thinking on 1 and 2 Corinthians also to shed light on the origin of the apocryphal 3 Corinthians. The writer of the Acts of Paul obligingly constructed a fictive *Sitz-im-Leben* for the letter when he elected to include it in his narrative, but in its previous circulation, how had it justified its name? What was its connection with Corinth? Most likely none. But it was an attempt at a third antiheretical, and thus 'Corinthian', letter. In fact, as the Acts of Paul is singularly bereft of definite allusions to any canonical Pauline Epistles at all (even the Iconium Beatitudes are an independent redaction of the paraenetic material shared with 1 Corinthians, as I attempt to show in my 'The Acts and Apocalypses of Paul: Do They Know the Pauline Epistles?', forthcoming), I suspect that 3 Corinthians was the only 'Pauline' letter available to the author of the Acts of Paul. And this was no accident. 3 Corinthians, which reads much like the short apocryphal Laodiceans, is a cento of phrases filched from canonical Pauline texts. My guess is that 3 Corinthians was a local attempt to supplant and replace the Pauline collection which had, as Walter Bauer and Goodspeed suggest, become guilty by association with the heretics who so loved it.

## 6. 'SECOND COMING' THEORIES

As just mentioned, E J Goodspeed and Walter Bauer (together with Hans von Campenhausen and others) have maintained that throughout the second century we meet a crashing silence as regards the Pauline Epistles. Justin Martyr, in his voluminous writings, never mentions Paul. When he is mentioned by various writers, Paul has nothing distinctive to say, is a pale shadow and obedient lackey of the Twelve, as in Acts. When Ignatius, Polycarp, and 1 Clement (all much too blithely taken for genuine early second-century writings, in my opinion) make reference to Pauline letters, as Bauer noted, they sound almost like an ill-prepared student trying to fake his way through a discussion of a book he neglected to read. 1 Clement (47:1) appears to have thought there was but a single Pauline letter to Corinth. Ignatius (Ephesians 12:2) somehow imagined that Paul had eulogized the Ephesians in every one of his epistles. Polycarp thought there were several letters to Philippi (Philippians 3:2) and that all Paul's letters mentioned the excellent Philippians (11:3). The special pleading of Andreas Lindemann (e.g., 'Paul in the Writings of the Apostolic Fathers', in Babcock [ed] *Paul and the Legacies of Paul*, 1990, 25-43) attempting to reinterpret these peculiar references as well as to supply some citations of Paul for these writings, only serves to underline the embarrassment of his position.

Goodspeed also saw a period of neglect of the Pauline literature, only he placed it earlier, between Paul's death and the collection of the corpus about 90. Bauer saw the church in the role of Peter, denying his Lord when the latter's popularity waned, or, perhaps better, like the haughty scribes who shunned Jesus because they didn't like the riffraff he associated with. Goodspeed, on the other hand, might have likened the church who neglected Paul to that 'wicked lazy servant' who buried the valuable talent in the ground. Bauer would not disagree with this. Implicit in his theory, too, as John Knox puts it, is that Paul had never had the centrality in his own lifetime that the publication of his letters gave him posthumously. But in any case, that influence was a long time coming, according to Bauer, Goodspeed, Knox and C Leslie Mitton. And then, through the labors of a single individual, the first collector of the Pauline Epistles, 'Paul becomes a literary influence' (in the words of A E Barnett, like Knox, a disciple of Goodspeed). We may call this the *Second Coming* approach.

The essentials of Goodspeed's widely discussed theory are easily stated. Taking up an idea put forth earlier by Johannes Weiss (*Der erste Korintherbrief, Meyer Kommentar* V 1910; *Das Urchristentum* 1917, 534) and Adolf Jülicher, that Ephesians had been written by the first editor of the Pauline collection, Goodspeed argued that Paul's influence had sputtered out until the publication of Luke's Acts reawakened interest in the great Apostle. This would have happened about 90 C E. Someone in the Ephesian church (Goodspeed nominated Onesimus) read Acts and thrilled to the gospel exploits of the man to whom he owed so much. If the reader were Onesimus, as John Knox would subsequently argue with some ingenuity (*Philemon Among the Letters of Paul*, 1935), he had Paul to thank both for his freedom and his Christian faith. But in any case, Goodspeed pictured a man who cherished his church's copies of Colossians and Philemon. Reading Acts set him to wondering whether there might be more such epistolary gems in the various churches whose apostolic founding he had read of in the Acts. So he set out to retrace Paul's steps, and his hunch bore out.

The church clerks at Rome, Corinth, Thessalonika, Galatia, and Philippi did manage to retrieve copies that had languished beneath old church ledgers, membership rolls, and Sunday School lessons. They blew the dust off and handed them over. Like the new owner of the treasure hidden in the field, Onesimus (or whoever) went on his way rejoicing. Back in his study, as he thought over the matter, he was both determined to share his discovery with the wider Christian world and uncertain as to the best way to do it. At length he hit upon the idea of publishing a collection of the letters and writing a kind of digest of Pauline sentiments, a new Colossians but beefed up with gems from the Septuagint and Paul's other letters, to serve as an introduction to the whole. This new epistle bore no title. But seeing it was published in Ephesus and



began circulating outward from there, people eventually took it for a genuine epistle and simply assumed it had been mailed by Paul to the city whence it had emerged. Thus it came to be known as the Epistle to the Ephesians.

Goodspeed had essentially cast Onesimus in Goodspeed's own role of reviving and noising abroad the neglected work of a noble predecessor (in Goodspeed's case, Johannes Weiss and his theory about Ephesians and the Pauline Corpus). What evidence led him to draw this conclusion? Goodspeed observed that Christian writings dating before circa 90 C E betray no evidence of familiarity with Paul's letters or influence by him. Here Goodspeed is thinking mainly of the Synoptic Gospels. But after 90 Paul's shadow is long and falls across the whole literary landscape. His ideas echo in the pages of Hebrews, 1 Clement, 1 Peter, and the Gospel of John. The sudden flood of epistles and particularly of sevenfold epistle collections (Revelation 1-3; Ignatius, Dionysius of Corinth) all attest the great impact of Paul's letters organized as to seven churches, with the Corinthian letters being conflated or at least counted together, likewise the Thessalonians, and even Philemon riding the coattails of Colossians.

What happened in or around 90 C E that could account for such an overnight change? One thing, said Goodspeed: the publication of the Acts of the Apostles. It was the catalyst for the publication of the Pauline Corpus. These are the main lines of Goodspeed's argument. Several problems became evident at once, and critics were not slow in pointing them out. For one thing, the degree of Pauline influence on this or that document is largely in the eye of the beholder. Ralph Martin makes Mark, not unreasonably, a Paulinist gospel. And whence the talk of 'justifying' oneself and of being 'justified' in Luke? And is not Paul in view in Matthew 5:17-19? On the other hand, is John's Gospel so very Pauline?

The same problem arises with respect to Goodspeed's dates. Guthrie thinks Goodspeed dated everything too late. I would have the opposite objection. Why not place the gospels in the early to mid-second century? And for Acts itself, even Goodspeed's own disciple Knox places it just before 150 C E. (Though otherwise he follows Goodspeed as loyally as Onesimus followed Paul, Knox does not think Onesimus would have needed to read Acts to be moved to collect the epistles.)

And the sevenfold collections: one has to cheat (as Schmithals points out) to squeeze Philemon together with Colossians. And need John of Patmos have derived the idea of seven letters from Paul? The Apocalypse is fairly crawling with sevens (as Guthrie noted against Goodspeed), and not even Goodspeed dared claim John got *all* of them from Paul.

Mowry thinks Goodspeed made Onesimus into a first-century Tischendorf, traveling to exotic locales hot on the trail of rare manuscript finds. Apparently Tyrrell's quip about the nineteenth-century questers for the historical Jesus applied no less to questers

for the origins of the Pauline collection: they looked down a deep well and saw only their own faces reflected. And no doubt F F Bruce is correct when he dismisses the whole thing as 'a romantic embellishment' (in Patzia 1993:88). Specifically, it is cut from the same bolt as the patristic fictions of Mark the evangelist being Peter's major domo or Luke playing Bones to Paul's Kirk ('Damn it, Paul, I'm a doctor, not an ecclesiastical historian!').

Goodspeed, Knox, and Mitton are happy to be able to point to Walter Bauer's thesis to strengthen their contention for a period of Pauline neglect, but Bauer had a rather different candidate in mind for the herald of Paul's second coming: Marcion of Pontus, the second founder of Pauline Christianity. 'I would regard him as the first systematic collector of the Pauline heritage' (Bauer [1934] 1971:221). This opinion, like Goodspeed's, was hardly unprecedented. F C Burkitt had hazarded the same educated guess.

When ... we consider Marcion's special interest in S Paul, he being, according to Marcion, the only one who understood the doctrine that Jesus came to deliver to mankind; and when, further, we remember that Marcion was perhaps more of a traveller than any other Christian in the second century, and therefore had opportunities for collection above most of his contemporaries; when we consider these things, we may be permitted to wonder whether Marcion may not have been the first to make a regular collection of the Pauline Epistles'.

(Burkitt 1925:318-319)

Both Bauer and Burkitt, by the way, recognized that at least 1 Corinthians must already have circulated widely before Marcion's collection. Knox, an advocate of Goodspeed's Onesimus as the first collector, seems to realize he really should follow Bauer's lead instead. After all, in Knox's neglected *Marcion and the New Testament* (1942) he demonstrates the soundness of the view defended by F C Baur, Ritschl, Volkmar, and Hilgenfeld that Marcion's gospel was not an abridgement of canonical Luke but rather a more modest abridgement of a shorter *Ur-Lukas* subsequently used also by the writer/redactor of canonical Luke-Acts in the second century (Knox 1942, chapter IV). Among other arguments Knox shows how distinctively (canonical-) Lukan themes and favorite vocabulary are thickly concentrated in special Lukan material *not* shared with Marcion's text (according to patristic citation) but are largely absent from material common to Marcion's text and canonical Luke. Sometimes mundane non-Lukan syno-

nyms appear where canonical Luke has favorite Lukan words, and none of these have any conceivable theological-polemical relevance (i e, Marcion wouldn't have switched them, whereas they are just the sort of stylistic changes Luke regularly makes in his Markan *Vorlage*).

To make a long story short, Knox argues persuasively, along many lines, that Luke-Acts was a second-century Catholic response to Marcion's Sputnik, the *Apostolicon*. Canonical Luke was a catholicizing expansion of the same Ur-Lukas Marcion had slightly abbreviated, while Acts was a sanitized substitute for Marcion's Pauline Corpus. Thus it presents a Paul who, though glorified, is co-opted, made the merest Narcissus-reflection of the Twelve — and who writes no epistles, but only delivers an epistle from the Jerusalem apostles! Knox sees the restoration of the Pauline letters (domesticated by the 'dangerous supplement' of the Pastorals) and the addition of three other gospels and several non-Pauline epistles, in short the whole formation of the New Testament canon, as a response to the challenge of Marcion and the Marcionite church.

In light of all this, why does not Knox abandon Goodspeed, as Andrew and his friends did John the Baptist, and attach himself to Bauer instead?

There are four reasons. First, he believes the Catholic Pauline collection reflects a different text than Marcion's, so it must be based on another version of the Corpus already available before Marcion. But, on the one hand, Knox himself admits we cannot know for sure how Marcion's text read since we read it through the thick lenses of the Catholic apologists. And they, in turn, may have read an already-evolved post-Marcion text from the Marcionite church or the sect of Apelles. On the other hand, why not assume that Marcion's opponents simply reacted to Marcion's collection by making their own collection of Pauline letters from different sources? As we have already seen, it is likely enough that, if one looked hard enough, one could find one's own texts of 1 Corinthians, Romans, and perhaps any of the others. Even Bauer does not ask us to believe that no one had access to the Pauline Epistles before Marcion, as if he had discovered them in a cave at Qumran. If the Catholic Pauline Corpus was a counter-collection (not just the same collection of texts, with Marcion's omissions restored) then the question of a variant textual tradition need not worry us overmuch. Knox imagines Bauer's theory to require, so to speak, a Catholic edition of the RSV, when it could just as easily have entailed a fresh Catholic corpus like the Jerusalem Bible.

Knox's second reason for rejecting Marcion as the first collector is that he believes, contra Bauer, that the Apostolic Fathers do show familiarity with various Pauline letters. The only way to settle this is to compare each supposed allusion with the corresponding Pauline text and to ask whether we are dealing rather with a similar turn of phrase or a piece of common ecclesiastical jargon. Admittedly, we do still find Polycarp to be filled with Paulinisms, but in this case the allusions suggest too much. Polycarp reveals itself upon close inspection to be little more than a clumsy and point-

less pastiche composed of Pauline and Pastoral formulas. Anyone might have written it, and one would certainly have expected the great Polycarp to have had a bit more of his own to say. It is only sleepy acquiescence to church tradition that causes 'critical' scholars, weary with debates over Pauline authenticity, to accept Polycarp to the Philipians at face value. (And think of '1 Clement', as anonymous as Hebrews!) So Knox ought to have thought twice before banishing Bauer by invoking Polycarp.

Knox cannot imagine the collection taking place so late as Marcion, since Ephesians already presupposes the other nine letters. But R Joseph Hoffmann (*Marcion: On the Restitution of Christianity*, 1984) argues quite cogently that 'Laodiceans' was not merely Marcion's name for our familiar Ephesians; instead it was an earlier Marcionite version. Just as canonical Luke is a catholicized, anti-Marcionite version of Ur-Lukas, so, according to Hoffmann (a latter-day admirer of Knox's book on Marcion), canonical Ephesians is a catholicized reworking of an original Marcionite Laodiceans. And this Laodiceans was the work of Marcion himself (Hoffmann 1984:274-280). (As with Knox's argument on Luke, Marcion's gospel, and the Ur-Lukas, one must engage Hoffmann's extensive exegesis before reaching a judgment. It is impossible to present it adequately here.)

It is interesting to note that Van Manen had made almost exactly the same diagnosis of Galatians (in which we read of an encounter between Paul and the Jerusalem Pillars strikingly reminiscent of Marcion's clash with the Roman church hierarchy!): it was at first a Marcionite text, later catholicized by his opponents who then covered their tracks by accusing Marcion of abbreviating it (Van Manen, 'Paul', 3627).

The identification of Marcion as possibly being the first collector is now generally considered to be dead in the water, though, ironically, for almost the opposite reason to one of Knox's. He felt the difference between Marcion's text and that of the Catholic edition of Paul implied Marcion had chosen one of perhaps several editions of the Corpus already available. But scholars including Nils Dahl ('The Origin of the Earliest Prologues to the Pauline Letters', 1978) and John J Clabeaux (*A Lost Edition of the Letters of Paul*, 1989) think they have found evidence of a widespread textual tradition to which Marcion's text appears to have belonged. In other words, now it is Marcion's textual *similarity* to non-Marcionite texts of Paul that eliminates him as the first collector. How have things turned about? It is no longer solely a question of textual relatedness or difference. We have already suggested that the availability of several copies of various individual Pauline letters would have allowed different collections of the same documents to reflect different streams of textual transmission. (And by far most of Clabeaux's valuable study simply reinforces this conclusion: not surprisingly, other editions of Paul had drawn on some of the same textual streams as Marcion's did.)

The new factor is the possibility that Marcion's collection was simply an edited version of a Pauline Corpus already arranged in the same distinctive order, an order that had been considered Marcion's innovation: Galatians first (no surprise if he himself wrote it!), then 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Romans, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, Laodiceans/Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon. This order, or something like it, is attested in only two other places: in the so-called Marcionite Prologues, and in the Old Syriac canon as attested in Ephraim and in a canon list from the late third century. If these instances could be shown not to derive from Marcion's *Apostolicon*, we would see them instead as evidence of a more widely current edition of the Corpus with this arrangement. Dahl, building upon the argument of Hermann Josef Frede (*Altlateinische Paulus-Handschriften*, 1964), tries to disassociate both sources from Marcion. His argument centers on the theological slant of the Prologues.

Dahl's two major arguments, it seems to me, are, first, that the 'false apostles' everywhere denounced in the Prologues as Paul's opponents need not be the Judaizing Twelve of Marcionite polemic and, second, that Paul is not pictured as the sole authentic apostle in the Prologues. I think he is wrong, at least wholly unpersuasive, on both counts.

First, the pseudo-apostles of Corinth are said to represent 'the sect of the Jewish Law' (*secta [-am] legis Judaicae*). This by itself could mean many things, but the Prologue to Romans speaks of the unwary being lured by the false apostles 'in to the Law and the Prophets' as opposed to 'the true Evangelical faith'. Dahl's (1978:260) attempt to evade the force of the 'Law and Prophets versus Gospel' opposition is blatant special pleading. If the author of the Prologue was not a Marcionite, he had a funny way of showing it.

Dahl also thinks that the Corinthian Prologue depicts Paul fighting on two different fronts, against two different groups of false apostles, one specializing in 'the Jewish Law', to be sure, while the other dealt in 'the wordy eloquence of philosophy'. But this simply reflects the contents of the Corinthian letters themselves (to borrow Dahl's own observation on the Galatian Prologue) and in no way means the Prologuist did not view the Corinthian opponents of Paul as the Jerusalem Pillars. After all, F C Baur thought the same thing.

And as for the possibility that the Prologue to Corinthians speaks favorably of other apostles besides Paul, there is some textual confusion here. Where Dahl reads that the Corinthians 'heard the word of truth from the apostles', plural, *ab apostolis*, Knox's transcription of the same text has the singular *ab apostolo*, and accordingly he translates 'from the Apostle'. The only plural apostles in Knox's text are the false ones. Has Dahl misread his text in the manner of an ancient scribe? Has his eye fallen

to the phrase 'falsis apostolis' instead? If so, so much for Dahl's (1978:259) catholicizing attempt to read the Prologues as endorsing Cephas and Apollos alongside Paul.

If the Prologues remain tilting to the Marcionite side, their order must be assumed to derive from the *Apostolicon* of Marcion. What about the Old Syriac? Of this Dahl (1978:254) says, 'The arrangement of the letters in the Old Syriac version seems to be due to an amalgamation of an order like that of Marcion and the Prologues for the first four letters and an order more like that of our Greek manuscripts for the others. Textual affinities are not so striking that they suggest Marcionite influence upon the Old Syriac version of Paul'. In other words, the textual evidence is inconclusive. And in that case, why simply assume it was 'an order *like* that of Marcion' and not Marcion's *own*?

Mowry (1944:80) accepts most of Goodspeed's reconstruction, save that she fills in the tunnel period as we have seen, with the circulation of individual epistles. As for Marcion, Mowry hypothesizes that he obtained a copy of Goodspeed's/Onesimus's ten-letter (or seven-church) Corpus but, having learned of earlier versions of individual letters, he obtained them and undertook his own critical edition on that basis. This would explain Marcion's use of the short ending of Romans, the encyclical version. But if there is good reason to accept Marcion as the first collector (and, with Burkitt and Bauer, we may ask who could be a more obvious choice?), why not simply turn Mowry's reconstruction on its head and suggest, as we have above, that it was the Catholic opposition who scrambled to assemble their own counter-collection from different textual sources? The one seems as likely as the other. Obviously all such speculations remain educated guesses, unverifiable at present, as Burkitt admitted. But why is the identification of Marcion as the first collector so unthinkable even to someone like Knox who comes so close? We may, again, only speculate that Guthrie (1980:644) speaks for many: 'It is highly improbable that a heretic should have been the first to appreciate the value of the Pauline corpus'. The hands are the hands of historical criticism, but the voice is the voice of Eusebian apologetics.

## 7. THE ARCHETYPE DEBATE

Having reviewed several distinct theories of how the Pauline Corpus first came to be, we must now give some attention to the disputed question whether all of our texts of the Pauline Epistles descend and diverge from a particular, definitive edition of the Pauline Corpus. This is not to ask whether there had ever been different Pauline collections or different ancient editions. Almost everyone agrees that there would have been. But did one of these supersede all the others to form the basis of all extant manuscripts? Or do our manuscripts still reflect, because they descend from, several,

albeit quite similar, Pauline Corpus editions? Let us survey a handful of proposals of a definitive archetype.

Zuntz decided that the best way to account for a Pauline textual tradition that differs so much in minor respects, but hardly at all in major ones, was to posit the compilation of a definitive variorum edition about a half-century after the original writings. In the meantime there would have been extensive copying of various individual letters, giving rise to the variants catalogued in the archetype. The only tradition of ancient scholarship capable of producing such a critical text was the Alexandrian, and there seemed to Zuntz no particular reason to prevent our locating the operation in Alexandria itself. Zuntz also believed he could identify several glosses introduced into the text by the Alexandrian scholars. Later scribes who made copies on the basis of the resultant master-text would not be so careful (pedantic?) as to bother noting variant readings but, like some modern Bible translators, would simply choose one of the alternatives in each case and go on. Thus the definitive edition carried the seeds of its own undoing. In broad outline F F Bruce accepts Zuntz's reconstruction. As we will see, others think quite differently.

Walter Schmithals, notorious for his division of most of the Pauline Epistles into hypothetical earlier fragmentary letters, adopted the older theory of Johannes Weiss that the earliest collection of Paul's letters must have begun with 1 Corinthians (the catholicizing gloss in 1:2 introducing the whole Corpus to a wider readership) and ended with Romans (the grand doxology of 16:25-27 ringing down the curtain on a broader ecumenical stage). Schmithals pictured an original seven-letter collection excluding Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, as well as, of course, the later Pastorals. (These may have been, *à la* Trobisch, two independent three-letter collections later appended to the original.) The number seven was important to the compiler/collector, just as it was to John of Patmos, to Ignatius, and to Eusebius the collector of the letters of Dionysius of Corinth because it 'expressed original and perfect unity' (Schmithals 1972:261). The Corpus was meant to stand for the truth of Catholic orthodoxy against Gnostic heresy.

And it was this symbolic constraint (again, felt by various other letter collectors as well) that provides the motive for the compiler stitching together the various Pauline fragments as he did. He could not leave any of the precious text on the cutting room floor so, by hook or by crook, he got it all in. This scenerio would also account for the anti-Gnostic polemic Schmithals finds in every letter. It is not so much that Schmithals thinks Paul was a first-century Joe McCarthy looking for a Gnostic under every bush. Rather, it was the concern of the redactor to include some of Paul's anti-Gnostic polemic in each of the seven letters.

Schmithals feels that Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon do not show signs of the distinctive hand of the redactor and so cannot have belonged to the original collection. He knows that Goodspeed and Knox, who also invoke the analogy of other early Christian seven-letter collections, try to squeeze in these three by combining the pairs of Corinthian and Thessalonian letters, but Schmithals says that to go on and make Philemon and Colossians count as one letter is to force a square peg into a round hole. Schmithals points out that the key thing is not *letters to seven churches* (neither the Ignatian nor the Dionysian collection fit that pattern, some letters being to individuals, others to more than one congregation), but rather *seven letters to churches*. Thus Schmithals anticipated the criticism of Gamble ('The Redaction of the Pauline Letters and the Formation of the Pauline Corpus', 1975) that it had to be seven letters to seven churches for the symbolism to make any sense. Perhaps so, but don't tell Schmithals, tell the compilers of the letters of Dionysius and Ignatius.

As to place and time, Schmithals approves Harnack's location of the compilation at Corinth, and he thinks it happened already by the 80s. The first collector was the redactor, and he bequeathed us our archetype.

Winsome Munro (*Authority in Paul and Peter*, 1983) argued with great ingenuity and attention both to general criteria and to specific detail that all our copies of Paul's epistles descend from a particular archetype which, unlike Zuntz and Schmithals, she does not identify with the original collection. She demonstrates the existence of a comprehensive and systematic set of textual interpolations across the whole Pauline Corpus as well as 1 Peter (long recognized as something of a Paulinist adjunct anyway). These interpolations stand out because of their great affinity with the socio-political stance and pious quietism of the Pastorals and for their clash with the many elements of apocalyptic egalitarianism and sectarian radicalism in the other Pauline letters. Munro reviews a raft of previous critical treatments of these jarring 'subjection texts' and notes that not infrequently scholars would peg this or that individual text (e.g., Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Corinthians 11:1-16; 14:34-38) as a possible interpolation. Munro draws all these suggestions together, isolates criteria for identifying what she calls a 'Pastoral stratum', and uncovers several more passages of the same type. This stratum 'does not come from the original collector and redactor of a Pauline letter corpus, but from different circles at a more advanced stage of Christian history. The later stratum, together with the Pastoral epistles, will therefore be characterized as "Pastoral" or trito-Pauline ... its milieu is the Roman hellenism of the first half of the second century, when the Christian movement was prey to sporadic persecution, but was nevertheless hopeful that it might gain recognition and tolerance from the Roman authorities under the Antonine emperors' (Munro 1983:2).



But the Pastoral redactor couldn't have been either the first collector or one who reissued the Corpus in a new edition after a period of neglect. In either of these cases, Munro feels sure, the Pastoral reviser would have been much freer to excise remaining elements of Pauline radicalism distasteful to him. 'The inescapable conclusion is that the ten-letter collection was in circulation at the time of the Pastoral revision. That means it must have been taken over from an opposition group and revised in order to counteract its influence' (Munro 1983:141-142). Dennis R MacDonald makes much the same case, though in brief outline, in *The Legend and the Apostle* (1983:85-89). He, too, sees the hand of the Pastor in the editing of what became our textual archetype, though in my opinion his profile of the opponents in view is more convincing than Munro's. He makes them a motley collection of encratite Christian radicals, whereas Munro speaks more narrowly of Jewish-Christian ascetics.

Let us remind ourselves briefly of Trobisch: his theory certainly entails an archetype Corpus, since his method depends significantly on the study of the order of the Pauline letters *in extant manuscripts*. He notes that various canon lists have atypical orders but that virtually no extant manuscripts do. And he ascribes the order, at least of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians to Paul. Paul himself edited this collection and provided the archetype. Trobisch leaves unanswered (even unasked) the question as to whether there were other collections made after Paul's death by Christians ignorant of the sheaf of copies he had sent to Ephesus. If so, they must have utilized copies of the unedited versions of Paul's letters. Which edition would have been considered more authoritative?

If Zuntz, Bruce, Schmithals, Munro, MacDonald, and Trobisch believe a single archetype edition lies behind all extant manuscripts, their agreement is impressive but by no means unanimous. Significant voices taking the opposite view include Kurt Aland and Harry Gamble. Aland pronounces thusly on the matter: '... the opinion that a uniform "Ur-Corpus" of seven Pauline Epistles had been collected by the close of the first century, from which all later witnesses have descended, is nothing but a "phantasy of wishful thinking" .... by about A D 90 several "Ur-Corpora" of Pauline Epistles began to be made available at various places, and ... these collections, of differing extent, could have included some or all of the following: 1 and 2 Corinthians, Hebrews, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians. Eventually other traditional Pauline Epistles were added to the several collections and a more or less stabilized collection finally emerged' (in Patzia 1993:89).

In several publications Gamble voices essentially the same sentiments. And yet one should not imagine that Aland and Gamble envision a radically diverse textual tradition: just the opposite. In general, they believe, the stream of textual transmission

flowed pure and without deviation. It was like that disciple of Rabbi Johannon ben Zakkai, a plastered cistern that lost not a drop. No archetypal *Ur-Corpus* was needed to ensure faithful transmission of the text, and so none is needed to account theoretically for textual near-unanimity. Gamble says (1975:418), 'If, then, the Pauline textual tradition goes back to multiple sources, it remains a matter of note in relation to redactional hypotheses [like Schmithals'] that the forms of the Pauline letters remain fundamentally the same in all known witnesses. Except in the case of Romans [with its longer and shorter endings], the tradition preserves no textual evidence that any of the letters ever had basically different forms than the forms in which we know them. The case of Romans offers the exception that proves the rule: when textual revisions have taken place they have left their marks in the evidence'. In other words, there is just enough textual variation to show that there was not a uniform and universal arche-type (in which case all texts would agree completely), but there is by no means enough textual variation to indicate the existence of significantly different text-forms.

But it seems entirely possible, even most probable, to other scholars that earlier, shorter (non-interpolated) versions of Pauline letters might once have existed and yet without managing to leave any traces in the manuscript tradition. There are two factors, distinct but compatible, that Aland, Gamble, Zahn and their congeners ignore. First, during the process of early, informal circulation, as well as in the course of making local letter collections, or of Aland's 'several *Ur-Corpora*', it seems likely that scribes comparing longer with shorter versions of the same epistle would harmonize the two, always following the longer reading. Mowry (1944:86) understood this: 'The new collection came into immediate demand, and soon supplanted every other edition still in circulation. But copies of letters, in the form they had had when circulating individually and locally, survived here and there and left their mark either directly or indirectly in [the] manuscript tradition .... Their textual additions survived; their omissions tended to disappear'.

Similarly Knox (1942:131): '... once a book came to be officially adopted in a particular form, older forms which lacked any such ecclesiastical approval tended to disappear. Manuscripts would gradually, and fairly rapidly, be conformed to the 'correct' text. The process would never have become complete, and thus we have the various local texts, which emerge clearly enough in the early third century. These, however, differ relatively little from one another; and that is true not because the autographs were so faithfully followed in the late first and early second centuries but rather, on the contrary, because official editions and publications so completely drove the autographs (if there were any surviving) and their descendants from the field'.

William O Walker ('The Burden of Proof in Identifying Interpolations in the Pauline Letters', 1987) is not surprised that there should be no surviving manuscript evidence for interpolations which critics identify on literary grounds: 'Indeed, if a

collector-editor's real goal was to include *all* available Pauline writings, as seems at least plausible, the tendency almost inevitably would have been to err on the side of *in*-clusion, not of *ex*clusion. In addition, deliberate or inadvertent interpolations may well have been introduced prior to the final editing of the letters. Also to be noted in this context, of course, is the well-documented practice of copying glosses into the texts of later manuscripts' (Walker 1987:612).

In his *The Recovery of Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (1972), J C O'Neill anticipates 'The objection ... that we might well expect that more texts than Marcion and D would exhibit consequential texts [i e, without the verses O'Neill proposes to excise as a gloss]. My answer is that scribes would on the whole prefer to transcribe the longest text, being unwilling to lose anything precious. Every addition would tend to be recorded, even if the addition depended for its sense on an omission that the scribe was unwilling to adopt [cf, those copies of Mark containing *both* the longer and shorter endings]. That means that [e g,] Vaticanus in fact bears traces of the whole history of the text. That history cannot, however, be read from Vaticanus, without evidence from other manuscripts which have gone a different way' (O'Neill 1972:36).

The other consideration neglected by Aland and Gamble is the possibility of official ecclesiastical suppression of earlier shorter or otherwise 'deviant' text forms. Winsome Munro thinks of it in terms of more or less voluntary conformity within the orthodox plausibility structure: '... Though episcopacy was probably not yet firmly established in the Aegean region [at the time of the Pastoral revision], it would have been possible to maintain a standard text within orthodox circles. Acceptance of this ecclesiastical authority would have involved adherence to the scriptures and revisions of scripture it authorized, and rejection or deviation therefore would have spelt expulsion' (Munro 1983:143). Think of the revulsion with which fundamentalists greeted the debut of the RSV. Certainly none would be caught dead with anything but King James in church.

Likewise sectarian 'heretics' would not be eager to share their cherished scripture versions with their religious opponents, so neither side probably had much to fear in the way of textual infection. And when these sects expired their scriptures were buried with them: witness, e g, the dearth of Bogomil or Catharist scriptures.

Walker envisions a slightly later situation in which internalized authority might prove insufficient: 'We only know that the surviving text of the Pauline letters is the text promoted by the historical winners in the theological and ecclesiastical struggles of the second and third centuries. Marcion's text disappeared — another example, no doubt, of the well-documented practice of suppressing and even destroying what some Christians regarded as deficient, defective, deviant, or dangerous texts. In short, it appears likely that the emerging Catholic leadership in the churches "standardized" the text of the Pauline corpus in the light of "orthodox" views and practices, suppressing

and even destroying all deviant texts and manuscripts. Thus it is that we have no manuscripts dating from earlier than the third century; thus it is that all of the extant manuscripts are remarkably similar in most of their significant features' (Walker 1987:614).

One cannot help but wonder if text-critical theories like those of Gamble and Aland, Zahn and Harnack, Metzger and Fee, are simply contemporary attempts to safeguard that official sanitized textual tradition in the interests of the same ecclesiastical establishment that produced the text they so jealously guard.

## 8. CONCLUSION

In composing a survey like this one, it is scarcely possible to avoid reaching some tentative conclusions of one's own. I will take the liberty of sharing them here. Most of them will by now come as no surprise.

Some use of Romans and 1 Corinthians, followed later by the sequel 2 Corinthians, as encyclicals seems quite likely, as does local exchange and circulation of other letters. And the question of authorship would have little bearing here one way or the other. In this process, interpolations were made and then gradually permeated the text tradition of each letter until final canonization of the Pastoral edition (and concurrent burning of its rivals) put a stop to all that.

But the first collector of the Pauline Epistles had been Marcion. No one else we know of would be a good candidate, certainly not the essentially fictive Luke, Timothy, and Onesimus. And Marcion, as Burkitt and Bauer show, fills the bill perfectly. Of the epistles themselves, he is probably the original author of Laodiceans, the *Vorlage* of Ephesians, and perhaps of Galatians, too. Like Muhammad in the Koran, he would have read his own struggles back into the careers of his biblical predecessors.

Marcion adapted the now-lost Ur-Lukas and combined it with his ten-letter Pauline Corpus to form the *Apostolicon*. As Knox perceived clearly, our canonical Luke tried to supplant Marcion's gospel, augmenting the pre-Marcionite Ur-Lukas with new, catholicizing and anti-Marcionite material of various sorts. Canonical Luke succeeded in this effort (again, the longer displaces the shorter). And a la Knox, the Acts of the Apostles (with its Peter-clone Paul who writes no letters but only delivers them for the Twelve) was intended to replace the dangerous Corpus of 'the apostle of the heretics'. But, like Jacob, it only managed to usurp priority over Esau (even today subtly governing the way historical critics read the Pauline Epistles). The Pauline Corpus survived alongside it.

One modification I would make in Knox's reconstruction is to factor in Jerome D Quinn's proposal that the author of Luke-Acts was the author of the Pastoral Epistles and that he intended a tripartite work, on the pattern of contemporary collections of documents about or by a famous figure and concluding with a letter or collection of letters by the great man. Luke-Acts-Pastorals would then be a 'tripartite tractate' to counter Marcion's scripture, the Pastorals meaning to supplant the earlier letters. I suspect the redacted Ephesians and 3 Corinthians were originally similar Pauline 'diatesarons' aiming but failing to replace Marcion's Pauline Corpus. (I should note that Knox did, of course, regard the Pastoral Epistles as post-Marcion and anti-Marcion; he just didn't group them with Luke-Acts.)

Since the Corpus could not be eliminated, Plan B was to reissue them in a sanitized edition, domesticated by means of the Pastoral stratum. From there on in, it became easier to destroy rival versions of the Pauline letters. The Gospels of Mark and Matthew were added, and so was John once it had undergone 'ecclesiastical redaction' (Bultmann), just like Laodiceans and Ur-Lukas. How interesting that, just as Acts has Paul chained to a Roman guard on either side, so are the most 'heretical' of New Testament writings escorted by watchful catholic sentinels on both sides: John is bracketed between Luke and Acts, Paul's letters between Acts and the Pastorals. They shouldn't offer any trouble.

Eventually, nondescript Catholic Epistles were spuriously ascribed to the Pillar Apostles so as to dilute Paul's voice yet further. There was even an attempt to fabricate an innocuous replacement for the Marcionite Laodiceans. It didn't catch on, though it did manage to fool Harnack.

Finally, I observe that the idea of the Pauline collection serves as something of an allegory of reading (Paul de Man), or rather perhaps an allegory of writing, for the present paper. For one finds oneself in the role of Onesimus or Marcion, rounding up all the various theories on the origin of the corpus, collecting both the well-known and the obscure. One puts them together and finally writes one's own Laodiceans/Ephesians, this paper, to introduce one's collection to a wider audience.

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