SOCIAL VALUES OF HEAVENLY SOCIETY:

THE CONCEPTS OF HONOR AND IDENTITY

IN PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILIPPIANS

By

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Summary

The aim of this study is the analysis of social concepts of honor and identity in Paul's letter to the Philippians.

In the **first chapter**, the research problem is formulated and the appropriate methodology, which could address the issue under investigation, is chosen. It was observed, that in the social studies of the New Testament texts, the key analytical categories – honor, identity and (social) values, – as well as the correlation between them, were not properly defined. At the same time, the text of the letter to the Philippians demonstrates that to aspire for honor is not totally rejected within Christian community (1:20; 2:29; 3:14). The discourse analysis (discovery of social patterns embedded in the text) was taken as main methodological approach; clarifying of social concepts and text analysis were main tools used to test the hypothesis: In his letter to the Philippians, Paul does not argue to reject honor as a social value, yet he promotes a new identity and new source of honor; aspiration to honor within one's group remains the same for non-Christians and for "heavenly society."

In the **second chapter**, the main terminology is defined. So, "value" is an often non-verbalized, invisible conception, which determines one's understanding of the desirable or rationality. The same values can have different embodiments in different cultures; the same values can be shared by different groups. Identity is based on the visible manifestations of a culture; people of different identities can share the same values. Honor is a positive evaluation of one's behavior; it is very significant for every collectivistic society. The source of honor is at the same time the source of identity: the one whose opinion matters, whose approval is valuable is the one with whom a person associates/identifies him/herself.

In the **third chapter**, the language of identity in the letter to the Philippians is analyzed. Paul pays a lot of attention to his readers' new identity "in Christ." He accentuates their distance

from the non-members of the group (negative identity); he insists on their unity, mutual support, and call to leave aside any inner quarrel or competitiveness in order to concentrate on the survival and development of the "in-Christ" group. His own example of changed identity demonstrates that Christ gives Paul both a sense of belonging and a sense of worth. Strong orientation of the members of the Christian commune to their group reflects the common dependence of an individual on his/hew group in collectivist societies.

In the **fourth chapter**, the issue of honor in the text of Philippians is investigated. The Christological hymn (Phil 2:6-11) and its context presents the only appropriate way of behavior and hence, gaining honor within the "in-Christ" community: God is the only honor-bestower; one must stay loyal to the community and obedient to its leaders despite suffering and death. Paul's account of his own experience demonstrates that he is anxious about honor, yet he seeks it exclusively in terms of the "in-Christ" group: God is the only source of honor; hence honor must be achieved strictly via loyal service to God and his group. Any attempt to gain honor in competition with other members of the "in-Christ" group is interpreted as treason, as it denies the status of God as the only honor-bestower.

In the **fifth chapter**, the findings of the research are summarized. It is concluded that social values of "heavenly society" are very much the same as those of a non-Christian society. Belonging to a group and positive evaluation of such a group (honor) – relational values common for Mediterranean cultures – are still most significant for the "in-Christ" group members. The only thing which is changed is identity (and hence, the source of honor): for Christians, God and Christ are an exclusive source of identity and an exclusive source of honor. Hence, the "in-Christ" group and the outer world both share the value of honor; the only difference between them is the source of that honor (i.e. identity). Values remain the same, identity is different.

Key words

Social values

Philippians

Identity

Honor

Paul

Christological hymn

Opponents

Group

Unity

Abstract

This study investigates the social values concepts of honor and identity in Paul's letter to the Philippians. The definitions of the main analytical concepts – social values, identity and honor – are given; the correlation between them is also explained. It is demonstrated that belonging to one's group (identity) and seeking for approval within one's group (positive evaluation or honor) are two closely connected, most important social values. The significance of these values and their interconnection are reflected in the text of the letter to the Philippians. Paul's promoting of positive identity (explicit and implicit ones), negative identity (statements against opposition), and the example of his own identity being changed (Phil 3.4-11) is scrutinized. The concept of honor is analyzed mainly on the material of the Christological hymn (Phil 2.6-11) and its context, as well as against Paul's utterances about his personal experience in Phil 1.15-21 and 3.4-21. The study proves that in the letter to the Philippians, Paul does not promote new values nor rejects honor; he canvasses his readers that their new identity in Christ implies the new source of honor – God himself. Gaining honor from God alone, within an "in-Christ" community, can result in dishonor from outsiders; readiness to be disgraced by those who do not belong to the "in-Christ" group is the sign that honor works only within a group, which is the source of it. Within an "in-Christ" community, honor is still valued, yet it is gained exclusively through loyal work for God and his community.

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List of Abbreviations

Books of the Bible

1. New Testament

John	John	2 Cor	2 Corinthians
Mk	Mark	Gal	Galatians
Mt	Mathew	Phil	Philippians
Lk	Luke	Heb	Hebrews
Rom	Romans	1 Pet	1 Peter
1 Cor	1 Corinthians	2 Tim	2 Timothy

2. Old Testament and Deutorocanonical books

Gen	Genesis	Is	Isaiah
Ex	Exodus	Jer	Jeremiah
Lev	Leviticus	Tob	Tobit
Num	Numbers	Hos	Hosea
1 Sam	1 Samuel	1 Macc	1 Maccabees
2 Ch	2 Chronicles	2 Macc	2 Maccabees

Ancient Sources

CB NTS   Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series

CGPEP   *Theodore of Mopusuestia. Catena Craecorum Patrum in Epistulas Pauli*. Edited by J.A. Cramer. Oxford: Clarendon, 1842-1854.

CPE   *Theolodoret. Commentarius in omnes* B. Pauli Epistolas. Edited by C. Maririott. Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1852-.

CSEL   *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*. Vienna Tempsky, 1866.

PL   Migne, J P, ed. *Patrologia Latina*. 221 vols. Paris: Migne, 1844-1864.

Dic.   Epictetus. *The Discourses of Epictetus*, with the Encheridion and Fragments. Translated by George Long. London: George Bell and Sons, 1980.

Ancient Authors

Aelius Aristides, *Or.*   *Orationes*

Josephus, *Ant.*   *Jewish Antiquities*

Epictetus, *Dis.*   *Discourses*

Aristotle, *Rhet.*   *Rhetorica*

     Eth.Nic.   *Ethica Nicomaecha*

Homer, *Od.*   *Odyssea*

Xenophon, *Mem.*   *Memorabilia*

Euripides, *Cyc.*   *Cyclops*

Church Fathers

Tertullian, *de Resurr. Carn.*   *De Resurrectione Carnis*

     adv. Prax.   *Adversus Praxeam*

     adv. Marc.   *Adversus Marcionem*

St. Ambrose, *de Fid.*   *De fide ad Gratianum Augustum*

Eusebius, *H.E.*   *Historica ecclesiastica*

     Ecl.Proph.   *Eclogae propheticae*

     Eccles.Theol.   *De ecclesiastica theologia*

Origen, *Comm. Jo.*   *Commentarii in evangelium Joannis*

     Comm. Rom.   *Commentarii in Romanos*

Pseudo-Athanasius, *Hom. de sem.*   *Homilia de semente*

Cyril of Alexandria, *c.Jul.*   *Contra Julianum*

Journal Titles, Series Titles, Bible Translations and Dictionaries

AAA   American Anthropological Association

BIS   Biblical Interpretation Series

BZNW   Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche

CB NTS   Connectanea Biblica New Testament Series

FRANT   Forschungen zur Relition und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments

HTR	Harvard Theological Review
ExpT	Expository Times
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JSNT	Journal for the Study of New Testament
JSNT SS	Journal for the Study of New Testament Supplement Series
JSOT SS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NTS	New Testament Studies
SBL AB	Society of Biblical Literature Academia Biblica
SBL ECL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Christianity and its Literature
SBL WGRWSS	Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series
SNT	Supplememts to Novum Testamentum
SNTG	Studies in New Testament Greek
SNTS MS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SPAAA	A Special Publication of the American Anthropological Association
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
RSV	Revised Standard Version

BDF   Blass, F., A. Debrunner, R.W. Funk. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

BDAG   Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W.Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Third edition. Chicago, 1999.

DNTB   *The Dictionary of New Testament Background*. A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship. Edited by CA Evans, SE Porter. Downer Grove / Leicester: InterVarsity Press.

TDNT   *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by G. Kittel. English translation by G W Bromiley. Grand Rapids, Mi: Eerdmans, 1964-1968.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul persuades his readers to be humble, obedient, to reject honor-competition, and he cites Christ as an example of such behavior (2:5). At the same time we can see that Paul himself is not that uninterested in gaining honor: he knows that he will not be ashamed (1:20), he aspires to reward with glory from God (1:20-21; 2:16; 3:14). He wants to repeat Christ's way not only in humbling himself, yet also in God's appraisal of him (2:9-11; 3:21). If one humiliates oneself in order to get honor and praise, is this a genuine humiliation? If one rejects oneself in order to get much more from the other source, is that a true authentic self-denial or is it just a way to get what one wants to get? This study aims to clarify this contradiction and to find out what is "honor" and what is the difference between honor from people (which Christians are to reject) and honor from God (which they are to aspire to receive).

1.2 Hypothesis

Our hypothesis is that in his letter to Philippians, Paul speaks not about rejecting honor, yet about rejecting certain sources of honor: the apostle looks for

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appreciation, for positive merit rating from God alone, and he wants his readers to do the same. One's source of honor (i.e. "significant other") is at the same time one's source of identity: it is a person or a group with whom one associates oneself and who's evaluation is significant to one. Because of their correlation and interdependence, identity and honor are two major analytical concepts of our study.

1.2 Methodology

As both honor and identity are sociological categories, social analysis of the text is the main methodology of this research. Yet a social-scientific approach to the New Testament texts contains some methodological issues, which have to be addressed prior to any application of it. Firstly, is the usage of contemporary social theories and terminology with regard to biblical texts justifiable? And secondly, may one expect to find in the biblical texts the social patterns, which existence was proposed by scientists only in the 20th century? The answer to these questions can be given in two ways.

Firstly, the ability and necessity to build, maintain and develop social relations, as well as to analyze these relations, are biological characteristics of *homo sapiens*. And as the ancient and contemporary people belong to one biological species, it is reasonable to suppose that "both our and their minds create culture with the same basic cognitive capacities."[1] Hence, one may make an assumption that

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[1]   R. Riotto, *Behaving as a Christ-believer: A Cognitive Perspective on Identity and Behavior Norms in Ephesians* (CB NTS 46; Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisengrauns, 2011) 10.

people of the past also verbalized their understanding of their social interactions, though they could use different vocabulary (both linguistically and conceptually).[2] The cognitive discourse analysis might help to understand both ancients' and contemporary researchers' ways of conceptualizing and its articulation.[3] After all, analogy is the way one cannot escape studying ancient times.[4]

Secondly, the contemporary social and psychological theories can be applied to the Bible texts as an heuristic method,[5] and then careful exegesis, as well as analysis of other sources,[6] is needed to prove or disprove the adequacy of such application.[7]

Another methodological (theoretical) aspect, closely connected to the aforesaid "careful exegesis," is how one can expect a text to reflect social understandings of the author(s) and original readers of this text? To comprehend this essential epistemological and hermeneutic issue, one must start with the premise that

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[2] B. Malina speaks about "the interplay of similarities and differences within human communities" (*The New Testament world: Insights from cultural anthropology* (Great Britain: SCM Press, 1993) 8-9). Luomanen, Pyysiäinen and Uro claim that these "similarities" to be "sought in the cognitive basis of human cultures and behavior (and "differences" in the cultural concepts and rationalizations" (P. Luomanen, I. Pyysiäinen, and R. Uro, "Introduction: Social and Cognitive Perspectives in the Study of Christian Origins and Early Judaism," in *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism: Contributions from Cognitive and Social Science* (ed. P. Luomanen, I. Pyysiänen and R. Uro; Brill, 2007) 1-36, on p. 17-18).

[3] See Luomanen, Pyysiäinen and Uro, "Introduction," 19-20; Riotto, *Behaving as a Christ-believer*, 11.

[4] D. Watson, *Honor among Christians: The Cultural Key to the Messianic Secret* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 13.

[5] See Luomanen, Pyysiäinen and Uro, "Introduction," 20.

[6] By "other sources" we mean extra-biblical texts and data, which can help in reconstructing the cultural context of the text under investigation.

[7] P.P. Esler, "Introduction: Models, Context and Kerygma in New Testament Interpretation," in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social-Scientific Studies of the New Testament in its Context* (ed. P.F. Esler; London, New York: Routledge, 1995) 1-20, on p. 7; *idem*., "God's Honour and Rome's Triumph: Responses to the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE in three Jewish Apocalypses," in *Modelling Early Christianity*, 239-268, on p. 256. "The work of the social historian... like all other kinds of historians, is never done, but remains within an ongoing process of verification, reevaluation, and refinement" (Watson, *Honor Among Christians*, 14).

"every text has an "ideational" function through its representation of experience and representation of the world."[8] Hence, every text has dialectical relations with the society and culture it has arisen in:[9] it shapes and at the same time is constituted by society and culture.[10] That is why it is possible to analyze a text in order to reconstruct the embodied social patterns. As the letter-genre, which the letter to Philippians belongs to, is a discourse rather than a narrative,[11] "new rhetoric" will be applied in order to follow Paul's argumentation[12] and critical discourse-analysis[13] will be used to reconstruct social structures reflected in the text. This reconstruction though, will be limited by the scope of our study: understanding of identity and honor in the letter to Philippians is the topic of our research.

In his "Social-scientific reading of the letter to Philippians," Nebreda admits that there is a methodological shift in his interpretation of the Christological hymn in the letter (2:6-11), when he moves from sociological approach to an ideological one;

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[8] S. Titscher, M. Meyer, R. Wodak and E. Vetter, *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000) 146. Cf. R. Wodak, *Disorders of Discourse* (London: Longman 1996) 17-20; M. Holliday, *Language and Social Semiotic* (London: Arnold, 1978), and also his *Introduction to Functional Grammar* (London: Arnold, 1994).

[9] Though one must be aware of the fact that the text influences and (its interpretation) is influenced by the society and culture it is interpreted in (if these society and culture are different from those the text originated from). It is especially significant for Biblical texts, which by their sacral status have incomparable impact on society and culture all over Christian world.

[10] Titscher *at al.*, *Methods of Text,* 148-149. Cf. Tellbe speaking of the New testament texts: "The text should be regarded as a vehicle, which not only constructs the self-understanding of the reader(s) (individual and social identity), but which may also reflect the existing realities (both relating to the author and to the community of the addressees)... Text *both* potentially construct the "imaginative" or cognitive world of the reader *and* reflect in some way the social, political and religious world of the authors (and to some extent also of its readers)" (M. Tellbe, *Christ Believers in Ephesus: Textual Analysis of Early Church* (WUNT 242; Berlin: Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 51, italic original).

[11] New Testament letters have *instructive* character: their aim was to change the readers' attitude, to instruct them what to do. Cf. Porter "Is Critical Discourse Analysis Critical? An Evaluation Using Philemon as a Text Case," in *Discourse Analysis of the New Testament: Approaches and Results* (JSNTS 170, SNTG 4; Scheffield: Scheffield Academic Press, 1999) 47-70, on p. 57.

[12] On the New Rhetoric see Donaldson, "New Rhetoric," in *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism and Interpretation* (ed. S.E. Porter. London, New-York: Routledge, 2009) 245-247.

[13] Critical discourse analysis focuses on social relationship, see Wodak, *Disorders of Discourse*, 17-20; Titscher *at al. Methods of Text*, 144-148.

he argues however that "any discussion on Christ's identity needs to commence from God's action towards humanity, from his radical identity with it in Christ."[14] In this study, we will try not to mix ideology and sociology; all the fragments of the text will be analyzed from the one (sociological) perspective. Relations within Christian commune, as well as relations between God and Christ and between God and humans will be analyzed from the same social perspective, including sense of identity and power game.

1.3 The research history and the research problem

The Christian movement originated from within the Jewish community and was thoroughly Jewish in the beginning. Yet quite soon it moved beyond its Jewish ethnic and religious borders and by the middle of the century the amount of Gentiles among the followers of Jesus was so big that the Jerusalem Council was held to formulate a set of certain boundaries which would separate Christian communities from a polytheist world without making the converted Gentiles to become Jewish (Acts 15:1-29). The difficulties of finding this new identity of a new religious community are reflected in the New Testament texts, especially in the letters of Paul, who believed his specific mission was to invite Gentiles into the Christian commune (Gal 1:16).

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[14] S.R. Nebreda, *Christ Identity: A Social Scientific Reading of Philippians 2.5-11* (FRLANT 240. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011) 64.

In recent years, the issue of Early Christian identity has been widely discussed.[15] The question of the concept itself, referring to the early Christian groups, the differences between Christian communities' self-identity and ethnic, national and religious identity of Greeks, Romans and Jews of the first and second centuries CE were addressed. The fact that in the first century of CE Christian communities were struggling to find their own identity, i.e. their place among social structures of the Roman Empire, became a common place.

While identity formation and terminology referring to it have been analyzed from different perspectives,[16] the idea of interdependency between identity and practice of social values has been stated by some scholars.[17] Yet the term "social value" itself remains rather unclear. Most of the time in historical-anthropological studies of the New Testament texts, the term "(social) values" is used referring to (articulated) ideology or certain types of practice, as models of behavior or moral/physical qualities, considered as "good" or "preferable" and encouraged by society. In this sense, the term "value" can describe categories of different levels:

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[15] Riotto, *Behaving as a Christ-believer*; S.R. Nebreda, *Christ Identity*; the collection of essays *Identity Formation in the New Testament* (ed. B. Holmberg and M. Winninge; WUNT 227; Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); the collection of essays *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism*; the collection of essays *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos in the New Testament* (ed. J.G. van der Watt; BZNW 141; Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006); the collection of essays *Reading Paul in Context: Explorations in Identity Formation. Essays in Honor of William S. Campbell* (ed. K. Ehrensperger; T&T Clark International, 2010); W.S. Campbell, *Creation of Christian Identity* (Library of New Testament Studies; London, New York: T&T Clark, 2006); J.M. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2004), and numerous articles. For the analysis of the history of the topic see Campbell, *Creation*, 15-32.

[16] See B. Holmberg, "Understanding the First Hundred Years of Christian Identity," in *Exploring Early Christian Identity* (ed. B. Holmberg; WUNT 226; Tübungen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008) 1-32; *Idem*, "Early Christian Identity – Some Conclusions," *ibid.*, 173-178; D. Patte, "Three Types of Identity Formation for Paul as Servant of Christ Jesus in Romans," in *Reading Paul in Context*, 209-228; M. Zetterholm, "Jews, Christians, and Gentiles: Rethinking the Categorization within the Early Jesus Movement," ibid., 242-253.

[17] For example, see J.G. van der Watt, "Radical Social Redefinition and Radical Love: Ethics and Ethos in the Gospel of John" in *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos*, 107-133; du Toit, "Shaping Christian Lifestyle in the Roman Capital" in *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos*, 167-197; Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 54-59; Riotto, *Behaving as a Christ-believer*, 58-106.

like "honor"[18] and "maleness," "wealth" and "courage," "beauty" and "power," "chastity" and "piety,"[19] "prohibition of murder" and distinctive Jewish value like "the Sabbath" and so on.[20] Such an approach, though helpful for historical and anthropological studies, fails for sociological analysis. To understand the nature and dynamic of social processes, one must distinguish between value-orientation systems (or basic values), which lie underneath the culture, and secondary expressions/practices of these values, which actually represent the culture of a certain social group.

The absence of this distinction, so common for Biblical social studies, leads to misinterpretation of the conflict between cultural groups. The causes and the consequences of certain behavior and evaluation of it are also mixed up. In the result of this, the social/cultural phenomena of different levels are lumped together, general concepts are not been separated from particular cases, and finally, the nature of the conflict between ethnic and religious groups becomes even more mysterious than ever. Though all the qualities and states listed above can be valued by a certain social

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[18] Malina refers to honor as to "a pro-vital value" of the whole Mediterranean area (B.J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Great Britain: SCM Press. 1993) 28-62). Hellerman calls honor "a central social value of Roman world" (J.H. Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi: Carmen Christi as cursus pudorum* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 62); Riotto speaks about "honor seeking" as a value (Riotto, *Behaving as a Christ-believer*, 63).

[19] De Silva lists the values of Hellenistic culture as piety, civic harmony, youth, physical beauty and strength (D. de Silva, *The Hope of Glory: Honor Discourse and New Testament Interpretation* (Minnesota: A Michael Glazier Book, The Liturgical Press, 1999) 4-5); see also N.R.E. Fisher, *Social Values in Classical Athens* (London, Toronto: Dent, Hakkert, 1976): though mentioned above books and articles claim to speak about "social values," they all rather describe cultural features of certain societies.

[20] Van der Watt, "Radical Social Redefinition," 111-112. Van der Watt does not only distinguish "common Mediterranean values" shared by all Mediterranean societies (like certain family system, already mentioned prohibition of murder and false witness), and Jewish value system, which includes additional values of Sabbath, honoring the only one God, food laws etc. (idem.). Van der Watt argues that Jesus and his followers kept Jewish values, yet reinterpreted them "in the light of the presence of Jesus" (ibid. p.129). Although this view goes along with the hypothesis of this study, the terminology should be clarified: what Van der Watt calls "Jewish value system" should be rather called identity markers, while values themselves and value system are much more profound concept, the underlying structure of society (see chapter 2 of this study).

group, they cannot be seen (analyzed) as being homogeneous. They refer to different sides of the life of an individual and society; they also have a certain ranging: some of them are central, others are secondary and are esteemed only because of their connection to the central ones. The difference between basic and secondary values can also be seen as the difference between goals and means: for example, wealth and physical strength are valuable only because they serve to achieve power and honor.

There are many examples of misunderstanding and that are confusing in social studies of the New Testament. For example, David de Silva speaks of "the alternative system of values," which Christians were committed to;[21] beside the unclear use of the term "system of values," Christians' understanding of honor issues does not seem to be so alternative to that of their non-Christian neighbors. De Silva speaks about the contradiction between Christian ethics of forgiveness and Greco-Roman ethics of honor,[22] while just some pages earlier he himself explains that Jesus' parable (Matt 18:23-35) is not about one skipping one's ambitions, but rather about the caution not to show disrespect "for God's honor and patience."[23] The contradiction between Christian and non Christian values is rather *seeming* than real, and can be confusing if only one does not make out the difference between general ideas of values and particular cases of their practicing.

De Silva is not alone in his opinion of Christianity offering "the alternative system of values." So says Crossan, for instance: according to him, social program of Jesus "is pointed directly and deliberately at the intersection of patronage and

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[21]   De Silva, *The Hope of Glory*, 148.

[22]   Ibid. 65.

[23]   Ibid. 62.

clientage, honor and shame, the very heart of Mediterranean society."[24] Crossan, furthermore, says that shared meals were "a strategy for *rebuilding* peasant community on *radically different principles than those of honor and shame, patronage and clientage.*"[25]

In the recent studies of Paul's letter to Philippians this understanding of Christian identity and values is a widespread view. Over and over again researchers repeat that the values of Jesus' followers contradict the values of their non-Christian milieu,[26] that Christians introduce new values such as love, compassion, humbleness, and suffering. Allegedly, two systems of values existed: a non-Christian one, where honor, pride, courage, strength, well-being, etc. took the central place; and a Christian system of values, where humbleness, suffering, and forgiving were at the core. Hellerman writes: "God's value system is utterly unlike that reflected in the social world of Roman Philippi."[27]

Witherington argues that in Philippians, "some" of the Greco-Roman cultural values "could be affirmed when they comported with Christian values;" and the values characterized as "true," "pure" and so on (Phil 4:8) could be accepted, others have to undergo a "critical shifting… with sieve of Christian values and believes."[28]

Yet such an approach generates some analytical ambiguity and methodological questions. David de Silva argues: "Christians lost their place and

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[24] J.D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991) 304.

[25] Ibid. 332, italics added.

[26] Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 32-33.

[27] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 149.

[28] B. Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011) 67.

standing in the society, stripped their reputation for being reliable citizens because of their commitment to an alternate system of values, religious practices, and social relationships."[29] The question is, which was the cause and which one was its consequence, i.e. Christians' commitment to "the alternate system of values," or their dissociation from society? Christians valued sufferings, which were the result of persecution from the dominant culture; yet the dominant culture persecuted Christians, because they had different values (such as suffering instead of well-being or humbleness instead of honor-pursuing). What arouse first then, disgrace or rejection of honor; persecution or high evaluation of suffering? The model does not explain clearly enough why Christians developed an alternative system of values; it also cannot explain the proximity between Christian and philosophical cultures.[30]

James Smith, in his deconstructing reading of Philippians underlines that "Paul can only think and say what the language and structures of his culture allow. The implication is that Paul's "theology" can only ever be based upon a logocentric pre-text: the immanent features of his social discourse."[31] He writes that "Pauline theology is troubled when it fails to take into consideration the presence of underlying social and ideological structures, because Paul's text is already

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[29] De Silva, *Hope of Glory*, 148; cf. Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 32.

[30] The proximity, which "impresses upon us" (de Silva, *The Hope of Glory*, 194). The investigating of the parallels between Christian world view and morality and these of Greco-Roman philosophers is beyond the limits of the present studies (for that, see A. Malherbe, *Paul and popular philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989); T. Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and Stoics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000); M. Lee, Paul, *Stoics and the Body of Christ* (SNTS MS 137; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); R. Thorsteinsson, "The Role of Morality in the Rise of Roman Christianity," in *Exploring Early Christian Identity*, 139-157, on p. 157).

[31] J. Smith, *Marks of an Apostle: Deconstruction, Philippians, and Problematizing Pauline Theology* (SBL 53; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005) 1.

constrained by them."[32] This "troubled reading" happens when one supposes that Paul offers an alternative setting of social values, totally different from his cultural matrix. One has to assume an extra-cultural invention, and interpret the Christ-event in a theological, not sociological perspective (what Nebreda admits he does).[33] Though we do not reject the possibility of super-natural (i.e. extra-cultural) invention, we strongly believe that every one of such inventions of God (i.e. super-natural one) can only be seen, understood and verbalized in terms of the existed human culture, common for the recipients of this invention.

Besides, if Christian values are so radically different from these of non-Christian society, then it is doubtful that the study of the Hellenistic culture can be helpful in understanding the processes which took place in the Early Christian Church. And if one admits the succession of the cultures, then one needs to define in which sense the culture and values of Christian communities remain the same as those of the social milieu from which it has originated, and what exactly the difference is. In other words, in what terms the continuity and discontinuity of Christian culture has been manifested. These terms can be identified only if one has a clear definition of values, i.e. a precise category for comparison. And first of all, the correlation between values and identity must be clarified.

There has been awareness among the scholars, the awareness of the fact that identity and honor are closely connected. The very notion of honor is a social matter,

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[32] Smith, *Marks of an Apostle*, 155. Cf. Moxnes: "honor-system was more than a "cultural" element… [but] expressed the very character of the political system, it was power made visible. This explains Paul's acceptance of the honor system…[his] criticism of the honor culture therefore had certain given limits" ("The Quest for Honor and the Unity of the Community in Romans 12 and in the Orations of Dio Chrisostom," in *Paul in His Hellenistic Context* (ed. T. Engberg-Pedersen; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004) 203-230, on p. 229).

[33] Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 64.

especially in a collectivistic society of the 1st century. Witherington writes: "'honor' and 'shame' in the culture Paul lived in… do not primarily refer to feelings of honor and shame, …but rather to *being honored or disgraced in public*."[34] Honor-shame system is a key mean for maintenance of group sustainability: the society encourages the behavior which serves the group's stability and strength; the same way it suppresses the behavior which jeopardizes them.[35] Stability and strength refer both to biological and social survival of the group: in the mixed society, a dominant culture tends to assimilate minor groups; so the honor-shame system serves the preservation of the group's very existence.[36] In other words, the aim of an honor-shame system is to keep the members of the group being loyal and conformed to it. And here again, one needs to carefully distinguish between goals and means: an honor and shame system is not just about certain behavioral patterns; these patterns are merely the signs of being conformed to *the group*. Hence, the key here is the group: certain behavior is considered "honorable" or "shameful" only because it is profitable or not for the group; and though the group's morality is often presented as the ultimate one, the understanding of what is honorable and what is shameful depends on the group.

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[34] Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 87, italic added. Cf. Pitt-Rivers, J. "Honour and Social Status," in *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society* (ed. J.G. Peristiany; (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) 19-78, on p. 21.

[35] See sections 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 of this study.

[36] Moxnes agrees that Paul's criticism of the honor culture is limited by "the area of self-determination for the group in question…[the goal is] the common good… of the group, unity and harmony instead of strife…" ("The Quest for Honor," 229). David de Silva demonstrates how the author of the letter to the Hebrews uses honor and shame language to promote loyalty to and solidarity within the Christian group (D. de Silva, *Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Revised edition; SBL: Studies in Biblical Literature 21; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008).

Among the most recent social studies of the letter to the Philippians, the theme of honor and identity is rather popular. Special attention is given to the Christological hymn (2:6-11) as to a paradigm of honorable behavior for the in-Christ group. In most cases, however, scholars follow the common tendency to mix social values and their practice, to interpret Paul's admonition of rejection honor-competition as rejection of honor itself, and to see the Christological hymn (2:5-11) as promoting a self-denial behavior, totally strange to the understanding of what is honorable for a Roman colony of the 1st century CE. J.P. Heil studied the letter to Philippians as a chiastically structured piece which "encourages its audience to rejoice… in *their being conformed to the selfless, humble mindset*, that enabled Jesus to obediently accept the suffering and death *which resulted* in exaltation as the universal Lord."[37] Analyzing the letter to Philippians – having Roman culture as the point of reference – has become a tradition due to the number of archeological evidences and the primary sources, which speak for the Roman character of the town.[38]

So Flemming writes that "self-empting Lord" of the hymn "…subverts Caesar's claims to universal dominion,… [and] also turns the whole Roman value system of what constitutes honor and power on its head."[39] This view is shared by other scholars such as Oakes,[40] Witherington, who read the hymn 2:6-11 as "a

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[37] J.P. Heil, *Philippians: Let Us Rejoice in Being Conformed to Christ* (SBL ECL, 3; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010) 180, italic added.

[38] The most significant works in this regard are: L. Bormann, *Philippi: Stadt und Christengemeinde zur zeit des Paulus*. (Leiden, New York, Köln: E J Brill, 1995); P. Pilhofer, *Philippi. Band1*: *Die erste christliche Gemeinde Europas* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebek, 1995); idem, *Philippi. Band 2: Katalog der Inschriften von Philippi* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebek, 2000); see also P.C. Oakes, *Philippians: From people to letter* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 1-50; Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 64-87.

[39] Flemming, *Philippians* (New Beacon Bible Commentary; Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 2009) 123.

[40] Oakes, *Philippians: From People*, 149-150, 171-172.

withing critique of the emperor cult;"[41] and Brawley, who calls the story described in the hymn as "Jesus experience of imperial system."[42] Heen argues that the hymn is "a pointed critique" of those who "grasped after honor…in the first place…of the emperor."[43] Joseph Hellerman interprets the hymn as *cursus pudorum*, i.e. as a challenge to *cursus honorum*; he concludes that Paul did not reject "in principle the social realities of honor and shame," but "sought to reconstruct" them, to promote "a radically alternative set of attitudes and... behavior to be honored in Christian commune."[44] Hellerman argues that "God's value system is utterly unlike that reflected in the social world of Roman Philippi."[45]

Sergio Nebreda criticizes Hellerman for the lack of "a concrete social location" of his reconstructed Christian community in Philippi,[46] and starts his analysis with a higher level of abstraction using Social Identity Theory.[47] Yet he comes to the same conclusion: identity is built upon honor: a person identifies

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[41] Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 156.

[42] R.L. Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection? Identity in Philippians 2.6-11 and its Context," in *Reading Paul in Context: Explorations in Identity Formation. Essays in Honor of William S. Campbell* (ed. Kathy Ehrensperger; London/New York: T&T Clark International, 2010) 128-146, on p. 142.

[43] E.M. Heen, "Phil. 2:6-11 and Resistance to Local Timocratic Rule: *Isa Theō* and the Cult of the Emperor in the East," in *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (ed. R.A. Horsley; Harrisburg, London, New York: Trinity Press International, 2004) 125-153, on p. 150.

[44] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 165. Cf. G. Sergienko: "Paul undoubtedly capitalizes on the Philippians' love of honor, introducing, however, a significantly revised version of the *courses honorum*. For whereas in the conventions of Greco-Roman culture the way to honor through self-aggrandizement and self-assertion, in Christianity it lay through humility and self-denial" (G. Sergienko "'Our *Politeuma* is in Heaven!': Paul's Polemical Engagement with the 'Enemies of the Cross of Christ' in Philippians 3:18-20" (PhD dissertation. School of Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2011) 144).

Cf. D. Watson's study on Messianic secret in Mark: "Mark's Jesus does not dispense with honor; rather, he turns it on its head" (D.F. Watson, *Honor Among Christians: The Cultural Key to the Messianic Secret* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010) 140). Watson speaks of "modified honor-shame values;" he argues that "the distinctions of status and honor were inverted, so that serving, rather than ruling, was most honored" (ibid. 141).

[45] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 149.

[46] Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 64-65.

[47] Ibid. 36-45.

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him/herself with something honorable; when it turns out that Christ goes through shameful events, when Christ behaves shamefully, the Christian group re-evaluates values and prescribes an honorable status to self-giving, humbleness and absence of ambitions, by this creating a new set of values.[48] That is, the Christological hymn is read over against the Greco-Roman culture of competitiveness, the hymn is interpreted as promoting "counter-cultural"[49] and "radically alternative"[50] values of humbleness and self-giving. According to Nebreda, Paul "uses [the hymn] as the basis for an alternative life-style to the status-quo in the colony."[51]

Yet such interpretation of early Christian communities' comprehension of the Christ event supposes two points. Firstly, that means that though the role of honor-shame system is to control an individual's behavior, in this case the behavior of an individual (Christ) destroys the traditional system of values. At the same time we know that despite the Christ-event, the honor-shame system has survived over centuries till now.[52] Besides, as it was pointed above, it is not clear where the new model of behavior comes from in the first place; and the scholars have to explain it theologically, by the super-natural intervention, which goes beyond scientific analysis.

Secondly, Nebreda's and Hellerman's interpretations suppose that the values themselves remain the same: it is still honor what is valuable. A Christian community controls the behavior of its members the same way a non-Christian community does it: by honoring certain conduct and shaming the deviants.

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[48] Ibid. 28-32.

[49] Ibid. 30.

[50] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 165.

[51] Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 64.

[52] See section 2.1.4 of this study.

Witherington demonstrates how Paul uses honor-shame rhetoric, shaming the wrong behavior and promoting (honoring) the one he wants his readers to conduct. So, what has really changed is a means – self-denial vs. self-boasting,[53] while the goal remains the same: it is glorification and receiving honor. Yet even the means seem to stay the same: denial of transient pleasure and comfort, readiness to suffer and even to die for the sake of future honor as a hero were part of Greco-Roman military's and athletes' ethics.[54]

Paul hardly had a selfless and humble mindset; he rather aspired for exaltation with Christ and was rather sensitive to his leading position within Christian community. It is this aspiring for exaltation which resulted in suffering, and not vice versa. Joseph Marchal offers a feminist view of Paul's letter to Philippians. His "hermeneutic of suspicion" allows him to see in the apostle's argumentation a promotion of a hierarchical type of relations, typical for the Greco-Roman world. He argues that the rhetoric of Paul is "far from running counter to imperial ideology in the first century."[55] According to Marchal, power dynamics inside the Christian community is very much the same as outside of it.[56] Marchal is not alone in this. Karl

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[53] Cf. Sergienko, "Our Politeuma is in Heaven," 144.

[54] T.C. Geoffrion, *The Rhetorical Purpose and the Political and Military Character of Philippians: A Call to Stand Firm* (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: Mellen Biblical Press, 1993) 42-48; E. Krentz, "Military Language and Metaphors in Philippians," in *Origins and Method: Towards a New Understanding of Judaism and Christianity*: *Essays in Honour of John C Hurd* (ed. B.H. McLean. JSNT SS 86; Sheffield, Eng.: JSPT Press, 1993) 105-127.

[55] J.A. Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation: A Feminist Rhetorical Analysis of Power Dynamics in Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (SBL AB 24; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006) 209. Cf. S.Kim, *Christ and Caesar: The Gospel and the Roman Empire in the Writings of Paul and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 44-45; G. Theissen speaks about some social features of Roman society (particularly, social mobility) as a "plausibility basis" of position so-called Christology and participation Christology (*Social Reality and the Early Christians: Theology, Ethics, and the World of the New Testament* (Trans. by M. Kohl. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992) 187-201).

[56] See also S. Polanski, *Paul and the Discourse of Power* (Gender, Culture, Theory 8; The Biblical Seminar 62. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

Galinsky, along with other contributors of the book "Roman and Religion. A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on the Imperial Cult,"[57] maintains that the post-colonial view on the relationship between Christian movement and Roman empire as being sharp opposition,[58] should be changed now to viewing these relationships as rather juxtaposition or competition.[59]

Witherington, Nebreda, Hellerman and others agree that the Christian groups value honor; the practice of this value, though, is different from the outer world. The key point here is the group, where the value is practiced. That is why identity, i.e. belonging to a certain group, becomes crucial for understanding both social value and its embodiment. In our view, the letter to Philippians speaks not about an alternative life-style, yet about alternative identity. We argue that in the Christian commune the values, as well as the honor-shame system, remain the same as what they are in a non-Christian society. What is changed is identity, i.e. the setting where these values are practiced.

In her article on "The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas," Anna Solevåg demonstrates how a Christian community reinterprets and re-establishes the social status of two female martyrs. She notes that the text reproduces "society's patriarchal norms within the Christian community"[60] and what seems to be (from a Roman

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[57] J. Brodd, J.L. Reed, eds., *Roman and Religion. A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on the Imperial Cult.* SBLWGRW SS 5. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

[58] See J.C. Hanges, "To Complicate Encounters: A Response to Karl Galinsky's "The Cult of the Roman Emperor: Uniter or Diveder?" in *Roman and Religion*, 27-34.

[59] K. Galinsky, "The Cult of the Roman Emperor: Uniter or Divider?" in *Roman and Religion*, 1-22, on pp. 11-12; see also *Idem*, "The Shadow (or Not) of the Imperial Cult: A Cooperative Agenda" in *ibid.*, 215-226; E.W. Stegemann, "Coexistence and Transformation: Reading the Politics of Identity in Romans in and Imperial Context," in *Reading Paul in Context*, 3-23.

[60] A.R. Solevåg, "Perpetua and Felicitas – Reinterpreting Empire, Family and Gender" in *Identity Formation in the New Testament* (WUNT 227; ed. B. Holmberg, M. Winninge; Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008) 269-284, on p. 283.

perspective) a disrespect to *paterfamilias* and disloyalty to the emperor, becomes "at the cosmic level" an honored submission to a true *paterfamilias* and an allegiance to a true emperor (God); and shamefully suffering women can still be seen as a respectable matron[61] and even a heroic man.[62] Solevåg says that the text of "The Martyrdom..." does not attempt "to subvert any categories, but to subvert the meaning of the still respected categories of emperor/empire, father/family and masculinity."[63] I would say that the text suggests setting a different perspective, or, in terms that Solevåg herself uses, re-casting the roles.[64] So, it is not the values or society's norms of behavior that are re-established; it is reality which the Christian community faces (persecution, suffering and shame), which is reinterpreted in a way it befits the conventional system of values.

Recasting of the roles, when God becomes the emperor and the ultimate *paterfamilias*, means nothing but changing one's identity. Changing one's identity supposes changing one's honor-bestower. A honor-shame system regulates the relationship within a Christian community, among its members, and also between an individual and God. In our opinion, the conflict between Christians and non-Christians, as well as between Jews and non-Jews was not about predominant values, and even not about main cultural rituals, as they all belonged to a Mediterranean type of culture. Their conflict was about identities: what group does one belong to? Who

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[61] Solevåg, "Perpetua and Felicitas – Reinterpreting Empire," 277-78. Cf. G. Theissen: "It is obvious that the bond with the emperor and the bond with the *kyrios* Jesus Christ have some structural similarities": same terminology, soteriology, and "even ecclesiology shows a structural kinship, with its 'sense of empire'" (*The Social Reality and Early Christianity*, 273).

[62] Solevåg, "Perpetua and Felicitas – Reinterpreting Empire," 281.

[63] Ibid. 283.

[64] Ibid. 283.

is my court of reputation? Who is my ultimate honor-bestower? Whose opinion matters?

It is reasonable, then, to investigate how one's understanding of what is honorable and what are the way's of achieving honor, depend on one's identity, i.e. on one's associating with a certain group. And also how one group's understanding of honorable behavior is seen from the perspective of another group.

Hence, the aim of the present research is to analyze how such social categories as identity and honor are presented in Paul's letter to Philippians.

The confusion of "honored shame" is especially obvious in Paul's letter to the Philippians. The so-called Christological hymn (2:6-11) has received special attention by scholars who study the honor value and identity in Early Christian communities.[65]

Unity and loyalty to the Christian community is one of the most important themes of the letter to the Philippians.[66] Thus, it is important to start the analysis from the question of identity, i.e. from the fact that now the group, in which the honor-shame system works in, includes God as the ultimate patron and honor-bestower. The so-called hymn (2:6-11) should be read with the focus on the group which the game of honor delivery is played in. Taking into account the identity issue, one can see that the rules of the acquiring honor within the "in-Christ" group are not that different from these of Roman society. Perceiving what is good for the group-

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[65] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*; Brawley "From Reflex to Reflection;" Nebreda *Christ Identity*.

[66] Heil, *Philippians*; Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation*; Oakes, *From People to Letter*; C.S. De Vos, *Church Community and Conflicts: the relationship of the Thessalonian, Corinthian, and Philippian Churches with Their Wider Civic Communities* (Georgia, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999); D. Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians in the Light of Disunity of the Church* (SNT 79; Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1995).

members, working hard for the group interest, loyalty to the group, absolute obedience to its leader – these are honored in the Christian community. Paul's letter to the Philippians, hence, is a perfect example of first, the interdependence and interrelations of honor and identity, and second, of the continuation between Greco-Roman social values and these of the "in-Christ" group.

1.4 The outline of the research

The aim of the present research is to fill in the existing gap in theoretical considerations of the social-scientific approach to the New Testament texts, namely to clarify the relation between identity and social values. It will be analyzed, how the two concepts correlate, where they overlap and how they differ. The understanding of identity and social values, driven from contemporary sociology, will be heuristically applied to the text of the letter to the Philippians and checked against it.

In the second chapter, the detailed definition of the main terms will be given: the meaning of the words like values, value-systems, culture, identity, and group will be discussed, as well as the relation between the concepts. The central social values of the Mediterranean culture type will be defined, and the variations of their practice in the Roman Empire, such as patronage and benefactor-beneficiary relationships, will also be described. At the end of the second chapter the possible models of acquiring honor in ancient Philippi will be discussed; the language of honor and identity in Paul's letter to the Philippians will be analyzed.

The third chapter of the research will be devoted to the theme of identity in the letter to the Philippians. We will analyze how Paul forces the new identity of his readers – as the "in-Christ" group members – both positively (by encouraging their unity in Christ) and negatively (by dissociating from the non-members). Paul's own example of changed identity (Phil 3:4-11) will also be studied.

The fourth chapter will deal with honor in the letter to the Philippians. We will see how the Christological hymn (2:6-11) and its context present honor and the way of acquiring it. We will also investigate how Paul describes his own strategy of achieving honor within the "in-Christ" community.

The results of the research will be summarized in the fifth chapter: Conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL VALUES AND IDENTITY IN THE LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

2.1 Key terms: values, identity and honor

To avoid the common confusion mentioned in the "Methodology," we need to define "values" as a sociological term. Special attention will be paid to basic values (or value-orientation; system of values) of a culture. It will be demonstrated that one's sense of identity is rather based on one's culture than on one's value-orientation (the latter mostly remains implicit).

2.1.1 Values and culture

The most well-known definition of the term "value" belongs to the pioneer of social values analysis, C. Kluckhohn, who first introduced the term "value-orientation" and "value-orientation system" in 1951.[1] According to Kluckhohn, a value is "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means,

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[1] C. Kluckhohn, "The Study of Culture," in *The Policy Sciences* (ed. D. Lerner and H.D. Lasswell; Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1951) 86-101.

and ends of action."[2] In other words, values determine one's "definition of rationality" and hence, also one's behavior.[3] Though values are not visible and not necessarily clearly verbalized, they are expressed in cultural phenomena, and hence, can be extracted or reconstructed from them (i.e. from cultural phenomena) by an observer or by an actor him/herself. This ability to be verbalized ("verbalizability") is what distinguishes value from instincts.[4] After all, "man is an evaluating animal."[5]

The reconstruction of values from practice is not an easy assignment. As every culture is heterogeneous, values and practice can contradict each other.[6] So, speaking of a system of values which is a characteristic for a certain culture, one can speak rather about the dominant value-orientation, remembering that it can vary from individual to individual (especially in heterogeneous, individualistic societies, like modern Western ones).

A system of values[7] forms a core element of culture.[8] To visualize the relations between values and other elements of culture, Hofstede uses a diagram of

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[2]   C. Kluckhohn, "Values and Value-Orientations in the Theory of Action," in *Toward a General Theory of Action: Theoretical Foundations for the Social Sciences* (ed. T. Parson and E. A. Shils; New York: Harper&Row, 1951) 388-433, on p. 395.

[3]   G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in work-related values* (Cross-Cultural Research and Methodology Series; London: Sage, 1984) 18.

[4]   Kluckhohn, "Values and Value-orientations," 397.

[5]   Kluckhohn, "The Study of Culture," 403; cf. Hofstede *Culture's Consequences: International*, 19.

[6]   J.K. Chance, "The Anthropology of Honour and Shame: Culture, Values, and Practice," in *Simea* 68 (1996) 139-51, on pp. 146-148; cf. D.D. Gilmore, "Anthropology of the Mediterranean Area," in *Annual reviews in Anthropology* 11 (1982) 175-211, on p. 180; see Hofstede *Culture's Consequences: International*, 19-20 on the difference between values as desired and values as desirable (i.e. what one ought to desire according to one's society's approval, *probably ideology*). Though Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck repeatedly maintain, different individuals belonged to one culture can have different value-orientations (F. Kluckhohn and F. Strodtbeck, *Variations in Value-Orientations* (Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson, 1961), it is true rather for XXth century society; ancient cultures were more homogenous.

[7]   System of values, or "value-orientation." "Value-orientations are complex but definitely patterned (rank-ordered) principles, resulting from the transactional interplay of three analytically

concentric circles ("the Onion Diagram"), where the inner one is values, while the outer ones are rituals, heroes, and symbols:[9]
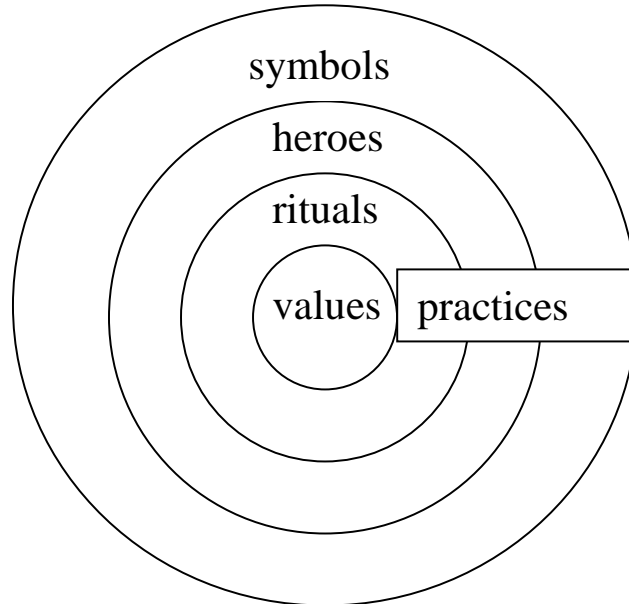
The outer circles are practical expressions of the inner one. These expressions differ from culture to culture, as well as values themselves can be different in different cultures. And as values remain invisible, the rituals, heroes and symbols, i.e. practical embodiment or realization of the values, are what distinguish one culture from another one.

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distinguishable elements of the evaluative process – the cognitive, the affective, and the directive elements – which give order and direction to the ever-following stream of human acts and thoughts as these relate to the solution of "common human problems" (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, *Variations*, 4).

[8] G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations* (2nd ed; London/New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2001) 10; cf. Kluckhohn, "The Study of Culture," 86, n.5.

[9] Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing*, 11, exhibit 1.4: "The 'Onion Diagram.' Manifestation of culture at different levels of depth."

The most well known social-anthropological classification of values belongs to F. Kluckhohn and F. Strodtbeck. In 1961, they proposed to analyze systems of values using five dimensions (according to five "common human problems"): man-nature (-supernature) orientation; time orientation; activity orientation; relational orientation; nature of man orientation.[10] This classification[11] is usually used in social-scientific studies of the New Testament: the table of values of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck is used for explanation of the difference between the culture behind the New Testament and that of the contemporary, westernized (20th century United States) reader.[12]

In this research, we do not attempt to study all the values of Paul's contemporary society. Our interest is limited to social values, i.e. to those, which have been named by Kluckhohn as relational ones. In every culture, human relations can be analyzed in two basic categories: first, "communial sharing" (sense of

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[10]   Kluckhohn, Strodtbeck, *Variations*, 10-20.

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck also mentioned the sixth dimension, namely "man's conception of *space* and his place in it" (*Variations*, 10, n.16). Nonetheless, the dimension had not been contemplated thoroughly. It can probably be related to the conception of "limited goods," see G. Foster, "Peasant Society and the Image of Limited Good," in *American Anthropologist* 67 (1965) 239-315.

[11]   For psychological and social-political classifications and respectful studies of values and different approaches towards these studies, see J. Berry, Y. Poortinga, M. Segall, and P. Dasen, *Cross-Cultural Psychology. Research and Applications* (2nd ed; Cambridge University press, 2002) 61-65; H. Triandis, "Dimensions of Culture beyond Hofstede," in *Comparing Cultures: Dimensions of Culture in a Comparative Perspective* (ed. H. Vinken, J. Soeters, and P. Ester; International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004) 28-29.

There are certain methodological problems concerning the validity of one's interpretation of the values of the culture one does not belong to, and hence one's conceptual language being different from that of the other culture (see K. Peng, R.E. Nisbett, and N. Wong, "Validity problems of cross-cultural value comparison and possible solutions," *Psychological Methods* 2/4 (1997) 239-341; see also J. Stiebert. *The Construction of Shame in the Hebrew Bible. The Prophetic Contribution* (JSOTSup 346; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 31-38; Chance, "Anthropology of Honor," 148; cf. C.S. LaHurd, "Exactly What's Ritual about the Experience of Reading/Hearing Mark's Gospel," *Simea* 67 (1995) 199-208, on p. 100).

[12]   B. Malina and J. Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality* (Louisille, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996) 189.

common identity as "us" and difference form "them"), i.e. determination of external borders of the group; and second, regarding to relations among the members of the group, (the ranking of authority, matching equality, etc.),[13] i.e. power game(s) and distribution of goods inside the group.

In other words, relational values should be investigated in two main directions: belonging to a group (group-identity) and relations inside this group (personal identity).

2.1.2 Identity

The term "identity" derives from the Latin adjective *idem* meaning "the same," i.e. it has comparative nature and emphasizes sameness or oneness with others.[14] One's identity formation happens through one's identification with others or through one's dissociation from others.[15] Hence, by definition, human identity has a social or collectivistic nature;[16] identity can take place only in a group: one can identify oneself only in relation to (an)other one(s).

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[13]   See Berry at al., *Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 56.

[14]   J. Rummens, "Saint Martin: A Plural Identities Approach." Unpublished dissertation. York University, 1993.

[15]   P. Weinreich, "Identity Structure Analysis," in *Identity: Cross-Cultural, Societal and Clinical Context*. (ed. P. Weinreich and W. Saunderson; London: Routledge, 2003) 7-76, on pp. 54-61.

[16]   Cf. D. Abrams, "Social Identity, Social Cognition, and the Self: Flexibility and Stability of Self-categorization," in *Social Identity and Social Cognition* (ed. D. Abrams and M.A. Hogg; Oxford: Blackwell, 1999) 197-229, on pp. 205-206.

Sociologically speaking, identity is a result of "naming, of placing ourselves in socially constructed categories, and language becomes central in this process."[17] That means that first, one's identity is expressed in terms of one's culture and consequently the second, one's identity reflects core values of one's culture.

One should keep in mind that identity and culture are not equal. Culture, as we have seen, consists of two "layers": the inner (or invisible) one, and the outer (visible) one. One's sense of identity is based on one's attitude to the outer layer of culture, i.e. to the language, models of behavior, norms, symbols, images and so on.[18] The inner layer of values, which the culture is actually built upon, remains in the shadow, as one is not necessarily aware of the very existence of these values (as values are not necessarily verbalized). Different cultures can share the same values and practice them differently; more than that, different cultures can share both some values and some of their practices. Hence, people can share values and even some practices, yet they can have different identities.[19]

Though based on the value-practice, identity has strong connection with values themselves. As identity takes place on the visible or verbalized level of culture, it is possible to trace the values of the culture by analyzing the language,

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[17] K. Plummer, "Identity" in *Blackwell Dictionary of Modern Social Thought* (Ed. by W. Outhwaite. 2nd ed. Malden, Ma: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 280-282, on p. 281.

[18] See Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing*, 10.

[19] For example, both the Muslim and Christian population of contemporary Turkey share such a social value as collectivism. They both express this value by having numerous families and by keeping the members of the extended family close. Yet they definitely keep different identities. See Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing*, 10 for more examples. See also F. Barth on ethnic character of Christian identity: Christians shared values with Greco-Romans and Jews, but distinguished themselves "ethnically," where "ethnic" difference in fact is "religious" one (F. Barth, "Vvedenie" ["Indtroduction"] in *Etnicheskiye Gruppi i socialnie granitsi: Socialnaja organizacia kulturnich raslichii* (Russian translation of *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (ed. F. Barth; Bergen-Oslo, London: Universitets Forlaget, George Allen and Unwin, 1969). Moscow: Novoe Izdatelstvo, 2006) 9-48).

which one uses to articulate one's identity: a person would use the most significant categories in the given circumstances for identifying him/herself. Accordingly, depending on the most important values of the society one belongs to, one's self-identification would be expressed differently. Sociological questionnaires demonstrate that people whose values are highly individualistic, would express their identities in individualistic terms.[20] In that context, Paul's self-description in Phil 3:5 ("I am… of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee…") indicates strong collectivist orientation, which demands, particularly, an association with an ethnic-religious group.

As identity is a result of one's location in society, it implies bordering, blundering: one puts a boundary between oneself ("me" or "us") and "others" ("you," "him/her," "them"). According to Frederik Barth, "society is an entity which rejects or discriminates others."[21] Hofstede points out that "[a] shared identity needs a shared Other."[22] In other words, self-identity has both positive and negative aspects (though both are not always clearly articulated) and answers both questions: "Whom I belong to?" and "Whom I do not belong to?" The statement "I am A" supposes (and often is followed by) the statement "I am not B."[23] Returning to Paul's self-identification in Phil 3:5-6: by describing himself as "circumcised by the eighth day," the apostle separates himself from the nations who did not practice circumcision (like

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[20] See Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing*, 227-234, referring to Bochner, "Perspectives on Inquiry II: Theories and Stories," in *Handbook of Interpersonal Communications*. (2nd edition; eds. M. Knapp and G.R. Miller. Thousand Oakes, California: Sage, 1994) 21-41.

[21] Barth, "Vvedenie," 11. Here and down, the quotations from F. Barth 2006 are translated from Russian into English by me – *M.K.*

[22] Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing*, 10.

[23] For example, if one says: "I am Caucasian" means one is not African or Asiatic; and if one says: "I am German" supposes one separates oneself not so much from Africans of Asiatics, as form British, Slavic or French people.

Greeks and Romans); as an Israelite, he separates himself from Semites who did practice circumcision but did not originate from Israel; as Benjaminite, he is different from Samaritans and/or from other tribes of Israel which "broke from the house of David" (2 Ch 10:19); as a Pharisee, he does not share the interpretations of the law of Sadducees and Essenes.

The identity mark – a sign or language which indicates one's belonging to a certain group – by definition belongs to the outer layer of culture. It can be a certain language, or hero, or ritual, or symbol, which serves as a group's boundary and is to discern between the groups. Identity marks are revered by the members of the group: maintaining the boundaries strengthens the group's identity (i.e. the group's very existence); threatening or disrespect of the identity mark is a threat or disrespect to the group itself.[24] For Jewish people, the identity mark was circumcision; circumcision separated them, the people of covenant, from the outsiders (Gentiles). When the followers of Jesus changed the identity mark of people of covenant from circumcision to baptism,[25] it entailed the consequences of changed identity and changed "others."

One's identity usually has different levels: one can identity oneself as a parent (regarding to one's children), as a child (regarding to one's parents), as a student, and as a tutor (if one works part-time helping some school kids with their homework). People can also share both values and culture, share same identities on some levels, while keeping different identities on other levels: the tribe of Judah is

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[24] "Survival of an ethnic group depends on stability of its borders" (Barth, "Vvedenie," 16).

[25] E.J. Christiansen, *A Covenant in Judaism and Paul. A Study of Ritual Boundaries as Identity Markers*. Leiden/New York/Koeln: Brill, 1995) 321-324. Christiansen studies the texts of Rom 9-11, Gal and 1 Cor. In the letter to Philippians baptism is not mentioned and it is not the identity mark of the Christian commune (see section 3.1.2.2 and 3.1.3.2 of this study).

different from that of Benjamin, but they have both kept loyalty to the Mosaic Law and in that sense they shared their identity against that of Gentiles.[26]

On the example of the section from the letter to the Philippians chapter 3, we have seen that an individual is always related to one or another group, and respectively, always considers him/herself as different from the group(s) of "others." And here the term "group" should be clarified. If an individual can be defined physically (one human being), then a group is not simply a number of individuals. The key here is the sense of identity: "a social group" is a number of people "perceived as a 'group' by themselves or by others,"[27] "have a sense of identity and feeling of belonging."[28] In other words, members of the group share identity and perceive themselves as "us," while out-groups remain "them." The only difference between the two is perception: "we" belong to our group, "they" do not.[29] That is why quite often, in-group's characteristics are considered as good ones, while that of out-groups are bad.[30] The existence and even demonization of out-groups also

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[26] In Social Identity Theory (SIT) this multiple and contextual character of one's identity is called "identity sailience" – depending on the context and social situation, one social role (identity) can be more important than others (see S. Stryker and R.T. Serpe, "Identity Salience and Psychological Centrality: Equivalent, Overlapping, or Complementary Concepts?" in *Social Psychology Quaterly* 57 (1994) 16-35, on p. 17). Brawley explains that in Phil 3:5-9, Paul did not reject his Jewish identity; he rather made his identity in Christ a priority here for rhetorical reasons (cf. Paul's salience of his Jewish identity in Rom 11) (Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection," 131).

[27] H.C. Triandis, "Cross-Cultural Studies of Individualism and Collectivism" in *Cross-Cultural Perspectives. Nebraska Symposium of Motivation 1989* (Current Theory and Research in Motivation 37; ed. J.J. Berman; Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1990) 41-133, on pp. 52-53.

[28] R.T. Schnaefer and R.P. Lamm, *Sociology* (New-York: McGraw-Hill, 1986) 446). In Schaefer and Lamm, it is a part of definition for "community" which is, in their interpretation, different from "group" (for their definition of "group," see ibid. 131). In this study, we do not distinguish between "community" and "group."

[29] Schaefer and Lamm, *Sociology*, 132; see also Triandis, "Cross-Cultural Studies," 52-53.

[30] R. Merton demonstrates, how "in-group virtues" magically turn into "out-group vices" (R. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Polish Plot: Free Press, 1968) 480-488).

"promotes a sense of belonging,"[31] and hence, it helps not only to build positive self-identity of the members of the group, but also to strengthen the relations inside the group.[32] Dissociation from the opponents in the letter to Philippians also seems rather helping to promote Christians' unity than disputing with real enemies.[33]

2.1.3 Individual and group: dynamic of relations

There is a dynamic in relations between an individual and his/her own group: besides having the sense of identity in terms of "belonging" (group-identity), i.e. one's self-location *in* the group, one also locates oneself *inside* the social structure of the very group (personal identity). In other words, beside horizontal self-location, or delimiting oneself from out-groups, one also finds one's role *inside* the group, and by doing this, one delimits oneself from other individuals of one's group.[34] The extent of freedom one has in one's group determines the collectivist or individualistic character of the group. In collectivist societies one's role in the group is assigned to a greater extent by the group (i.e. according to the group's traditions, opinion of other members, and also by one's gender, belonging to a certain family, etc.), while in individualistic societies one can *self*-locate oneself more independently.[35]

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[31] Schnaefer and Lamm, *Sociology*, 132.

[32] See Barth, "Vvedenie," 10-11.

[33] See D. de Silva (D. de Silva, "No Confidence in the Flesh: The Meaning and Function of Philippians 3.2-21," *Trinity Journal* 15 (1994) 27-54) and also the section 3.1.2 of this study.

[34]   Only to a certain degree, as one still remains inside the group.

[35] Though originally collectivism and individualism were seen as polar opposites on a single dimension, nowadays sociologists try to approach them as "conceptually and empirically

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As group-oriented (collectivist) societies one's self-esteem is strongly correlated to what sense of worth one receives from one's group, all these societies are characterized by having some sort of honor-shame system,[36] i.e. a system of public evaluation of one's socialization success, one's integration into a group.[37]

2.1.4 Honor, shame, and "a significant other"

The origin and existence of the honor and shame system can be attributed to the concentration of social power among aristocracy in stratified societies,[38] but it rather should be explained by the collectivist character of the societies, i.e. by the fact that

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independent" (Berry et al., *Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 69. Scholars offer a three-dimensional division: collectivism (individual and collective), individualism (independent, autonomous, agentic, separate), and a relational dimension (individual to other individuals, to other selves) (Y. Kashima, S. Yamaguchi, U. Kim, S.-C. Choi, M. Gelfand, and M. Yuki, "Culture, Gender, and Self: A Perspective from individualism-collectivism research," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69 (1995) 925-337, on pp. 925-926). Collectivism and individualism can co-exist in one culture (Triandis, "Cross-Cultural Studies," 43; see Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, *Variations*, 17-18, where they argue they collectivism and individualism "always" co-exist), besides, there are different kinds of both in the society and in one person. Firstly, both individualism and collectivism can vary being high or law in power distance (see Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing*, 209-2012; see also H.C. Triandis and M.J. Gelfand, "Converging Measurement of Horizontal and Vertical Individualism and Collectivism," *Journal of Personality and Social Phychology* 74/1 (1998) 118-128). Secondly, a person can behave as an individualist in one relationship and as a collectivist in others: for example, *familism* is a way of behavior when one demonstrates collectivist tendencies being inside one's own family, and behaves as an individualist being outside it. For the purpose of this study, we will concentrate primarily on collectivist societies, though keeping in mind that individualistic tendencies can also be present there (Triandis, "Cross-Cultural Studies," 109).

[36] See J.G. Peristiany, "Introduction," in *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society* (ed. J.G. Peristiany; London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) 9-18, on p. 10; J.G. Peristiany and J. Pitt-Rivers, "Introduction," in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology* (ed. J.G. Peristiany and J. Pitt-Rivers; Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology 76; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 1-17, on pp. 5-6; S. Brandes, "Reflection on Honor and Shame in Mediterranean," in *Honor and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean* (ed. D.D. Gilmore; SPAAA 22; AAA,1987), 121-134, on pp. 121, 124.

[37] D. Gilmore, "Introduction" in *Honor and Shame and the Unity of Mediterranean* (ed. D.D. Gilmore; SPAAA 22; AAA, 1987) 2-21, on p. 3.

[38] Chance, "The Anthropology of Honor," 147.

one is extremely oriented toward one's group and receives both sense of identity and evaluation (sense of worth) from the group.[39] F. Barth notes that "because the very belonging to a group supposes possession of basic identity, it also supposes aspire to evaluate and to be evaluated according to standards, relevant to this identity.[40] That means that identity (i.e. one's correlation with other(s)) is tightly connected with evaluation, i.e. with a sense of honor or shame. It is nobody else but the group who defines what is honorable and what is shameful.

As Aristotle puts it: "Honor is a sort of measure of worth" (*Rhet*. I.VII.30).[41] Shame, in turn, is not just "dishonor,"[42] but also very much "a kind of pain or uneasiness in respect of misdeeds… which seem to…bring dishonor" (*Rhet*. II.6.2; *Eth.Nic*. 3.8.1-3 sense of shame as a virtue). In other words, shame is the very "[sensitivity] to the judgment of others," both positive and negative.[43] It is necessary to clarify, nonetheless that "the judgment of others" matters only in the case if they are not just any others, but significant ones. One's "significant others" are these who

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[39] See also Brandes referring to the studies of honor-shame system in non-Mediterranean societies ("Reflection on Honor," 121).

[40] Barth, "Vvedenie," 16.

[41] Cf. J. Pitt-Rivers, "Honour and Social Status," in *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society* (ed. J.G. Peristiany; London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965) 19-78, on p. 21; Malina, *The New Testament World*, 27.

[42] For honor and shame are not pure antonyms (opposites), see M. Herzfeld, "Honour and Shame: Problems in the Comparative Analysis of Moral Systems," *Man* 15 (1980) 339-51. On the opposition of shame and guilt (respectively, public (social) status and personal emotions; or external one and internal one), see J. Stiebert, *The Construction of Shame in the Hebrew Bible. The Prophetic Contribution* (JSOTSup 346; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 6-12; on the critique (shame is sociological category, while guilt itself and well as the relations between shame and guilt are rather psychological ones) see Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, "Introduction," 8.

[43] J.K. Campbell, "The Greek Hero," in *Honor and Grace in Anthropology* (ed. J.G. Peristiany, J. Pitt-Rivers; Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology 76; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 131; cf. de Silva, *The Hope of Glory*, 23-24.

first, belong to one's group, and second, have power to bestow honor or ostracize a person with dishonor (shame).

With his usual love for details, Aristotle explains that one feels shame for (i.e. is sensitive to the judgment of) "those whom [one] esteem," who possess some desirable goods and have power to give them to one, who are one's rival and finally, "those who are likely to be always with [one] or who keep watch upon [one]." Respectively, one has also less sense of shame for strangers, and feels no shame for those whose opinion one does not respect (*Rhet*. II.6.14-23).

To receive honor, to be acknowledged as an honorable one, one has to meet one's significant others (i.e. one's society) expectations.[44] This "tyranny of public opinion"[45] is the essence of a group-oriented (collectivistic) society and has its original purpose in the preservation of the group. Indeed, honor and shame play a great role in preservation of culture and maintenance of social stability.[46] Shame-consciousness is conformity towards one's group norms and moral code and an agreement to follow them. "Shameless" behavior means nothing else but "antisocial" behavior, and hence, shame is actually "a mechanism of social control."[47] A "shameless" person suffers both social isolation, which often, especially in pre-industrial societies, is also accompanied by the "economic handicap."[48]

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[44] See *Rhet*. II.6.26 how the opinion of significant others determines one's behavior.

[45] Brandes, "Reflection on Honor," 131.

[46] See de Silva, *The Hope of Glory*, 2-3; idem, *Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in the Epistle to the Hebrews* (SBL DS 152; Atlanta: Scholars, 1995) 80-144.

[47] Brandes, "Reflection on Honor," 129-130.

[48] D. Gilmore, "Honor, Honesty, Shame: Male Status in Contemporary Andalusia," *Honor and Shame and the Unity of Mediterranean* (ed. D.D. Gilmore; SPAAA 22; AAA, 1987) 91-103, on p. 95.

The "social control" of honor and shame is not only about moral codes of the group, but also very much about the borders of the group. In other words, honor and shame not only indicate the success of socialization, but also are the means of socialization processes itself: first of all, they indicate the very fact of one's belonging to a group. One can be evaluated only if one is *included* into the evaluation system.[49] Because inclusiveness into a group is the base for one's identity in collectivist societies, one's identity is closely connected with the honor and shame system of the group that one belongs to. The borders of the group separate "significant others" from strangers, i.e. a "court of reputation" from those, who is not included into this court, and hence from those, who are not included into the group itself.[50] The overlapping between identity and honor is most clearly seen in the ascribed honor, which is received passively, by simple connection (association) with honorable family, person or office.[51]

The depending of social, and often economical, well-being on the opinion of the significant other(s) explains the correlation of honor and power: the one who bestows honor has control over the one who needs to be acknowledged. So, in collectivist societies the group controls an individual by an honor and shame system, while the individual seeks to meet his/her group's expectations, conforms to it and stays loyal to the group.

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[49] If one wants to enjoy "the rewards of companionship," one must "be expected to be included into the gossip. Being gossiped about is as much sigh of belonging to the neighborly network as being gossiped with…no gossip, no companionship" (E. Bott, *Family and Social Network: Roles, Norms, and External Relationships in Ordinary Urban Families* (2nd ed; New York: Free Press, 1971) 67).

[50] See de Silva, *Despising Shame*, 80-144.

[51] See de Silva, *The Hope of Glory*, 10, 12; B. Malina and J. Neyrey, "Honor and Shame," in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991) 33.

2.2 Honor in the Ancient Mediterranean World

2.2.1 Specific features of Mediterranean honor and shame system

Though the honor and shame system can be found in every group-oriented (collectivist) society, the honor and shame of a "pan-Mediterranean culture type"[52] has its own specific features, which distinguishes it from other collectivist societies all over the world. First, anthropologists point out strong "pervasive sexuality" of honor and shame[53] in the ancient Mediterranean region.[54] That means, men and women have different norms of behavior. Following these norms, they can achieve honor and avoid shame. The expectations from men and women are so different that even their socialization is measured differently: for men the goal is to achieve honor, while for women the main aim is to avoid being called "shameless." Another very important trait of the Mediterranean honor and shame system is understanding honor as "a sort of limited good."[55] The ancient Mediterranean area is also characterized by specific family structures: due to ecological and historical factors, a nuclear family

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[52] Gilmore, "Honor, Honesty and Shame," 91.

[53] And not just "definitions of honorable behavior may vary between genders," as de Silva puts it (de Silva, *The Hope of Glory*, 13).

[54] Brandes, "Reflection on Honor and Shame," 131.

[55] Brandes, "Reflection on Honor and Shame," 121-122; see also Foster, "Peasant Society")

(small kinship) is predominant.[56] Together, these factors resulted in male competitiveness. If for women shame-conscience is manifested in the keeping of sexual purity, men are to win their honor in constant competition with other males.

Males compete with each other in order to get higher social status, so the competition over honor includes competition in different aspects of life such as moral and spiritual qualifications, physical strength and wealth. "To be honorable a man must be able to meet the dangers… His ability to do this depends… also upon material circumstances."[57] The connection between honor and wealth on one side, and dishonor and poverty on the other, can be traced in Homer and Hesiod.[58]

Honor competition, expected from Mediterranean men, can take place only between peers.[59] The established (legitimate) inequality in status/honor leaves no room for honor contest, as the honor of the senior has become "unchallengeable," and/or has evolved into *grace*, a non-agonistic phenomenon and in this sense opposite to honor,[60] so the junior side has nothing to compete over. For example, if

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[56] Brandes, "Reflection on Honor and Shame," 132; see also J. Schneider, "Of Vigilance and Virgins: Honor, Shame, and Access to Resources in Mediterranean Societies," *Ethnology* 10 (1971) 1-24.

[57] P. Walcot, *Greek Peasants, Ancient and Modern: A Comparison of Social and Moral Values* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970) 60; cf. J.K. Campbell, *Honour, Family, and Patronage: A Study of Institutions and Moral Values in a Greek Mountain Community* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964) 317.

[58] *Od*. 1. 329-3; 11.360-1; "poverty exposes a man to the risk of insult and humiliation" *Work and Days* 453-4.

[59] See Aristotle, *Rhet*. II.X.5-6: "they envy those who are near them in time, place, age, and reputation... nor those who... are either far interior or superior to him; and the people and things which one envies are on the same footing. And since men strive for honor with those who are competitors, or rivals, who aim same things... whence the saying 'Potter [being jealous] of potter.'" Cf. also *Rhet*. II.VI.12: "It is also shameful not to have a share in the honorable things which all men... who resemble us, or the majority of them, have a share with… they are rivals of those who are like them." Cf. de Silva, *The Hope of Glory*, 10.

[60] See Pitt-Rivers, "Postscript: The Place of Grace in Anthropology" in: *Honor and Grace in Anthropology* (ed. J.G. Peristiany, J. Pitt-Rivers; Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology 76; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 215-246, on p. 242.

one slaps one's peer, it is an insult, a challenge to be answered; if one slaps one's slave (an inferior one), it brings no shame to the slave.[61] Slapping of a king or god is not a challenge, it is a blasphemy;[62] it brings shame on the slapping person and is punished by death. That is why one would never even think of slapping a king or god: they are also outside of the power game.

For a superior person it is normal to demonstrate his/her superiority; the junior one is vulnerable and cannot protect him/herself from being hurt.[63] When a dominant person bestows honor upon these who recognize his honor, power, and superiority, he does not diminish his own honor (as it would happen in the peer competition, when honor is considered as limited good), but quite the contrary, he strengthen his domination.[64] So, while the junior one cannot win honor in the challenge, he still can achieve some by associating with the powerful person. In an unequal relationship there is no contest, but patronage and protectorate in return for the recognition of legitimate honor superiority.

The agonistic character of Mediterranean cultures can be traced from Aristotle's "men are always contending with [rivals]" (*Rhet*. II.V.9),[65] to the studies

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[61] "Slaves were outside of the honor-shame game, but not outside of the system... they were always in a state of dishonor" (Solevåg, "Perpetua and Felicitas," 276).

[62] Pitt-Rivers, "Postscript," 243.

[63] See N.R.E. Fisher, *Hybris: A Study in the Values of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greece* (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips, 1992) 148.

[64] See Pitt-Rivers, "Postscript."

[65] See also *Rhet*. II.X.4: "Nearly all the actions, which make men desire glory or honor and long for fame, and the favors of fortune, create envy (φθόνος)." See also A.W.H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study of Greek Values* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960); Fisher, *Hybris*.

of contemporary Mediterranean societies in collective essays edited by Peristiany[66] and Gilmore.[67] The study of Walcot[68] represents a special research in continuity of certain cultural features (namely, preoccupation with honor and competitiveness)[69] between ancient Greece (as it is reflected in the writings of Hesiod and Homer) and modern Greek villages. Although the original function of the honor and shame system is to maintain the stability of society, in ancient Mediterranean societies "there has always existed a tension between co-operation and competition."[70]

2.2.2 Honor and power dynamics: patronage, friendship and benefactor-beneficiary relations

As we have seen in the previous section, the honor issue is tightly related to power, social and material resources. Honor distribution correlates with power/material goods distribution: the one who has power, also has honor; stripping of honor (shaming) means deprivation of power and often material goods. Competition exists between equals; the interaction between different strata of society does not involve

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[66] J.G. Peristiany, ed., *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965).

[67] D.D. Gilmore, ed., *Honor and Shame and the Unity of Mediterranean* (SPAAA 22. AAA, 1987).

[68] Walcot, *Greek Peasants*.

[69] See especially Walcot, *Greek Peasants*, 57-93.

[70] Brandes, "Reflection on Honor and Shame," 132; Cf. Fisher, *Hybris*, 21-31, and p. 494 for *hybris*, i.e. serious assault (honor challenge) as a main cause of political instability in Ancient Greece. Competitiveness is an individualistic feature (see Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing*, 8-10), and honor and shame system is a characteristic of collectivist society. The very deep integration of honor contest in the ancient Mediterranean honor and shame system supports the relatively recent view of collectivistic and individualistic tendencies as co-existing and non-opposite ones.

competition. However, there are also reciprocity relations between unequal parties, yet it is obvious that the inferior side pays back in a different category of good.

Two major models of regulating relations between unequal parties in the Greco-Roman world are patronage/clientage and benefactor/beneficiary relations. These two forms of social exchange are rather similar and often overlap, so they often are treated as synonyms.[71] Both patronage and benefaction are "asymmetrical relationship; disparity between parties in access to certain goods and services; non-legal/contractual relationship; reciprocity and relationship expected; increase in honor intended; potentially viewed with either favor or distance by the general population; relationship to gods can be expressed in these terms; and the language of grace predominates,"[72] though some differences between them did exist.[73]

In his work "Paul as Benefactor," Joubert argues that benefaction is characterized as rather competitive relations between two equal parties: benefactor and beneficiary.[74] Indeed, when a benefactor bestowed a luxury gift onto a community/a city, a gift such as athletic games, festivals, new building, and so on, the beneficiary (the community/city) answered him by giving him titles (σωτήρ,

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[71] See Z. Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Berlin: Walter de Cruyter, 2004) 66; de Silva, "Honor and Shame" in *DNTB*, 102-104; J. Neyrey, "God, Benefactor and Patron: The Major Cultural Model for Interpreting the Deity in Greco-Roman Antiquity," *JSNT* 27 (2005) 465-492, though he underlines the asymmetrical character of the relations.

[72] J. Marshall, *Jesus, Patrons, and Benefactors* (WUNT 259 Reihe 2; Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 44.

[73] See Marshall, *Jesus, Patrons*, 47-49 for five main differences between patronage and benefaction. They are: 1) benefactor is a honorary title, given for the act of generosity, while *patrocinium* is a specific relationship involving legal protection and other; 2) the nature of benefits: daily survival matters were given by a patron, while occasional luxury items – by benefactors; 3) patronage was usually initiated by a client; after the act of benefaction, a person could receive a title of benefactor, which inspire him to further generosity); 4 and 5) the term "benefactor" referred to both Romans and Greeks, while "patron" was always a Roman.

[74] S. Joubert, *Paul as a Benefactor: Reciprocity, Strategy and Theological Reflection in Paul's Collection* (WUNT 2 Reihe 124; Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000).

εὐεργέτης, προζενός, θεός, etc.), installing inscriptions, awarding him with golden crown and so on,[75] "which inspires him to further generosity."[76] Though notionally benefits were not loans, the reciprocal character of social relations supposed that "the debtor should not only equal the gift bestowed upon him; but his ideal should be to surpass it in deed and spirit."[77] Such relations were definitely agonistic; the goal of a benefaction was to increase the benefactor's honor.

Patron-client relationship, on the other hand, can be described as a more hierarchical type of gift-exchange. Contrary to benefaction, in patronage the power and status difference between the two parties are acknowledged.[78] The patron provided his client(s) with protection, assistance, when needed – with lands, food and other material goods. The duty of client(s) was mainly to stay loyal and "to support their patron in any way he demanded."[79] Sometimes the term "friendship" was used, yet inequality in social statuses of patron and client remained the base of such relationship.[80] The aim of the patronage relations ("friendship") was not emotional

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[75] The most extraordinary example is the replacing the existing calendar by taking the birth of Augustus as the beginning of the new year (see Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*, 52-53, n.110).

[76] Marshall, *Jesus, Patrons*, 48.

[77] Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*, 49. Contra: Z. Crook argues that honorary inscriptions and other expressions of the public's gratitude "did not place the association or a city in a position of superiority to the benefactor; rather, they appeal to the *philotemia* of benefactors and patrons... as a form of enticement – if you give to us, you can be sure to receive plenty of honor and gratitude" (Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion,* 63).

[78] Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*, 24.

[79] S.N. Eisenstadt and L. Rosiger, *Patrons, Clients and Friends. Interpersonal Relations and the Structure of Trust in Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 57.

[80] See Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*, 37; R. Saller, "Patronage and friendship in early imperial Rome: drawing the distinction," in *Patronage in Ancient Society* (ed. A. Wallace-Hadrill; London, New York: Routledge, 1989) 49-62, on p. 57; J. Chow, *Patronage and Power: A Study of Social Networks in Corinth* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992) 41; Marshall, *Jesus, Patrons*, 42-49, Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 145. Cf. Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity and Imitation*, 24-50, where the author demonstrates that "friendship" imagery in the letter to Philippians is to convey patronage character of relations.

affection; each party has its own agenda: patron gained allies and hence, political influence and honor; a client gained security, protection and material goods, i.e. his association with his patron also gave him "honor" in the eyes of others.

Patron-client relations were the most important factor of social upward mobility in the Roman empire: A slave of a powerful master or a client of a powerful patron moved on the social scale together with his master(patron) or being promoted by him.[81] Loyalty to the patron was the key here: "A rise in the world was the reward for personal loyalty to an individual, so we might talk about an 'advancement loyalty.'"[82]

It is important for our study to note that personal relationship in most cases implied social inequality or/and power game. With the shortage of material resources and viewing honor as a limited good, social relations were very much about strengthening one's social position. And if in case with benefactor-beneficiary relations it was a continuing honor-competition between the two parties, in case of patronage, patron's honor was not the subject of challenge. A patron remained in the superior position even if he failed to fulfill his duty toward his clients.[83] One could gain honor either in victory over rival/friend or by associating oneself with powerful and reach patron.

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[81] See Theissen, *Social Reality and the Early Christianity*, 190-196; P.R. Weaver, "Social Mobility in the Early Roman Empire: The Evidence of the Imperial Freedmen and Slaves," in *Studies in Ancient Society* (ed. M.I. Finley; Past and Present; London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974) 121-140.

[82] Theissen, *Social Reality and the Early Christianity*, 191.

[83] Joubert, *Paul as Benefactor*, 67-68.

Though the difference between benefaction and patronage is sometimes vogue, and Joubert's view is criticized,[84] the point here is the type of reciprocity. Crook attributes both to "slightly different forms of exchange... general reciprocity, which should not be confused with balanced reciprocity."[85] Yet if a benefactor expects *to receive* honor from his beneficiary, that puts him in a position of *a needy* – he needs the public to give him honor; in fact, he buys that honor for the benefactions he bestows onto the commune. If the public has something the benefactor lacks, that places the latter in the equal position with the recipients of his gifts.

And if only one side has something to share, and the other side has nothing to pay back with, this situation means "asymmetrical relations" and gifts become part of generalized reciprocity, when the senior side needs nothing specific from the junior one, but the long-term loyal relationship. And this is the case of patronage: "the duties of clients were stated in a diffuse manner; they were required to be ready to support their patron in any way he demanded... loyalty was considered essential to the link."[86] Patronage involved both parties into long-term relationship, into a commitment, which made them kind of a family (when a patron is a *paterfamilias)*: disloyalty (accusing each other in law suits, acting against each other's interests, abuse of the patron's power or trust) was considered as treason.[87] Patronage relations existed between lords and their freed slaves, between nobles and individuals (or

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[84] See Crook, *Reconceptualizing Conversion*, 60-66.

[85] Ibid. 66.

[86] Eisenstadt, Roniger, *Patrons, Clients*, 57-58.

[87] Ibid. 58.

public) of lower social standing, between retired Roman soldiers and their former general, between Rome and depending provinces.[88]

Hellerman gives facts proving that competition was a significant phenomenon in the Roman army.[89] However, he does not make a distinction between the possible sources of honor. Equals fight over honor trying to overcome each other in any aspect of life, and assaulting each other is an integral part of such competition, as honor is "located" in a small group and the fewer honors the other has, the more has the one. In case of relationship between unequals (patronage), the situation is different. The entire honor is concentrated by the superior person; he is the one who distributes honor in a given group. The inferior ones can compete with each other for the patron's favor, yet they cannot take honor away from each other; the only source of honor is their patron.

One can say that generally benefactor-beneficiary relations had a kind of agonistic character and because of that, they did not help strengthening community's ties and had rather axiological force. On the other hand, patronage was a hierarchical, vertically structured system of social relations;[90] honor was distributed solely by a patron (and broker). It is no coincidence that benefaction was typical for democratic Greece, while patronage became a model of the entire Roman empire: it strengthened

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[88] See Eisenstadt, Roniger, *Patrons, Clients,* 52-53. Theissen writes: "The principate became the essential integrating factor, for it neutralized the power struggles in the Roman aristocracy which had plunged the republic into a profound crisis" (*Social Reality and the Early Christianity*, 272).

[89] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 75-80.

[90] Chow, *Patronage and Power*, 32.

the vertical line of power[91] and allowed Romans to rule the empire with means of relatively small bureaucracy.[92]

2.2.3 Honor and identity in ancient Philippi[93]

A lot has been written on the reconstruction of Philippi of Paul's time, including its demography and possible features of its Christian commune. This section is a summary of other scholars' works with primarily sources.[94]

In 356 BCE, a Thracian settlement was conquered by Philip II of Macedonia, who gave it his name. The region was rich in natural resources and because of that

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[91] See J.E. Lendon, "Roman Honor," in *Oxford Book of Social Relations in the Roman World* (ed. M. Peachin; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 377-495, on p. 396 on how aspire for honor (for honor, which was granted by the emperor to the loyal cities and its governors) helped to keep the Roman Empire stable.

[92] See R. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 205-206. Cf. Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 145-147. Cf. Theissen, *Social Reality and the Early Christians*, 196-201.

[93] In this section the cultural features of Philippi – the city to which Christian commune the letter of Paul under consideration of our study – is addressed. The understanding of honor and identity of the apostle himself will be discussed in the next chapter, where the text written by Paul will be studied.

[94] Primary sources (collection of inscriptions and documents related to Philippi) can be found in C. P. Pilhofer, *Philippi. Band 2: Katalog der Inschriften von Philippi* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebek, 2000). For the analysis of primary sources and the reconstruction of Philippi's demography of Paul's time, as well as the reconstruction of social profile of Philippi's Christian group, see C. Bakirtzis, "Paul and Philippi: Archaeological Evidents," in *Philippi at the Time of Paul and after His Death* (ed. C.Bakirtzis and H. Koester; Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity International Press, 1998) 49-66; C. Koukouli-Chrysantaki, "Colonia Iulia Augusta Philippensis," in *Philippi at the Time*, 105-35; de Vos, *Church and Community in Conflict*, 233-250, 275-287; Oakes *Philippians: From People to Letter*, 1-54; Nebreda, *Christ's Identity*, 64-87; Ascough, *Paul's Macedonian Associations* (WUNT 161 Reihe 2; Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebek, 2003) 117-160; Sergienko, "Our Politeuma is in Heaven," 63-81; and observation of the city's history in Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 64-69; R. Martin and C. Hawthorne, *Philippians* (World Biblical Commentary v. 43; Revised ed.; ed. B. Metzger, D. Hubbard, G. Barker; Colombia: Nelson Reference and Electronic, 2004), xxxiv-xxxviii; L. Portefaix, *Sisters Rejoice: Paul's Letter to the Philippians and Luke-Acts as Received by First-Century Philippian Woman* (CB NTS 20; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988) 59-60; Hellerman, *loc.cit*, 64-69; Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity and Imitation*, 99-112; Sergienko, *loc.cit.,* 64-66.

the city of Philippi had a strategic value. Yet not much references of the Greek period of the city's history survived. In the Roman period, Philippi was established as a Roman colony first in 42 BCE. Up to three thousand Roman veterans settled in Philippi and near it,[95] which "guaranteed that the colony of Philippi would have a distinctly Roman flavor."[96] Roman influence to the city was reinforced by the fact that the veterans became the city's elite. Hellerman points out that "though a numerical minority, the Romans remained an ideological majority, particularly where issues of honor, status, and social values were concerned."[97]

Social profile of Philippians Christian commune is difficult to reconstruct. However, several scholars have attempted to do so. Oaks tries to establish the exact percentage of the population belonging to different social strata, particularly his calculation is 40% of Roman citizens and 60% for Greek-speaking non-citizens.[98] This calculation was criticized by others for the questionable methodology, namely by de Vos.[99] Hellerman speaks about Roman veterans (i.e. Roman citizens) in Philippi being about 25% of the town's population, though the ideological and cultural influence of them was disproportional to their numbers.[100]

There is an agreement that though the population of Philippi (and hence, the addressees of Paul's letter to the Christian community in this city) was mostly

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[95] Oakes, *Philippians*, 25, 49; de Vos, *Church and Community in Conflict*, 236-37; M. Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue and State: Christians, Jews, and Civic Authorities in 1 Thessalonians, Romans and Philippians* (CB NTS 34; Stockholm, Sweden: Almquist and Wiksell International, 2001) 213; Hellerman, Reconstructing Honor, 69.

[96] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 65.

[97] Ibid. 70-71.

[98] Oakes, *Philippians*, 50, 70-77.

[99] De Vos, *Church and Community in Conflict*, 242.

[100] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 70.

Greek,[101] yet very much influenced by Roman culture.[102] Pilhofer writes: "Gewiβ waren die Römer zahlenmäβig nicht in der Mehrheit, … aber das Lebensgefühl war durch und durch Römisch."[103] The town of Philippi is characterized as a "pro-Roman one"[104] and "strongly Romanized."[105] What exactly does that mean?

Sergio Nebreda described a "model of Romanization," which includes seven major points.[106] The two most relevant to our study are: "a strong pressure to conform to the "higher" model (ideologically, culturally and socially) which provided a *new identity* for local populations" as "*petite Rome*;"[107] and "pacific"

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[101] Roman citizens were the elite of the town; the artisans, *liberti* and slaves were mostly Greek-speaking (see A.J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1983) 60-91). The text of the letter does not give any clear evidence of the social status of Paul's addressees. Though some of the Christian community members were relatively rich (Euodia and Syntyche (Phil 4:2, see B. Witherington, *Friendship and finances in Philippi: The Letter of Paul to the Philippians* (Valley Forge: Trinity, 1994) 108; Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*,126; Sergienko, "Our Politeuma is in Heaven," 126-127), Lydia from Acts 16). See Oakes, *Philippians*, 59-70, where he reconstructs the demographic features of Philippian Christian community. According to him, Greeks were in majority in the community (58-64%) (p.61). The evidences for the Roman citizens among the addressees of the letter are the references to τό πραιτώροι (1:13), ἡ Καίσαρος οἰκία (4:22), Latinized Φιλιππήσιοι (4:15), πολιτεύεσθε (1:27), and πολίτευμα (3:20) (p.65). The Latin name of Κλήμης (4:3) allows assumption that he was a Roman citizen (see Peterlin, *loc.cit.*, 168). Hellerman builds upon Oakes, arguing that Christian commune in Philippi included some high-profile members, and that Paul appeals to them not to use their high social status for their own advantage, but to use it for the needs of their less fortune siblings in Christ (Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 154). Nebreda criticized this reconstruction (*Christ Identity…*, 64-65). Brawley just says that "it is not likely that many of the Greek-speaking recipients of Paul's letter were Roman citizens, so they would be marginalized both in property and status" (Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection," 136). It is not clear though why he makes such assumption.

[102] The overwhelming majority of the inscriptions discovered in Philippi are in Latin (about 80% of them, in comparison with only 40% of inscriptions in Latin in Pisidian Antioch) (Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 5).

[103] Pilhofer, *Philippi. Band 1*, 92. "Certainly, Romans were not in the numerical majority … but the atmosphere was Roman through and through" (translation from German is ours – *MK*.). Cf. Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 70-71.

[104] Sergienko, "Our Politeuma is in Heaven," 81.

[105] De Vos, Church and Community in Conflict, 242.

[106] These points are "use of Latin language;" "efficient system of roads;" conformism to the high model of Rome; redistribution of land; "pacific government;" "challenge to local and ethnic identity;" "concern with *urbanitas*" (see Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 149-153).

[107] Nebreda, *Reconstructing Honor*, 149-150, italic original.

government and administration of the conquered region (whether as client or subjugated nation/city)…based on a system of punishment and reward."[108] In other words, "Romanization" meant the change of identity and the change of the source of honor – both now were to be found in the Rome state. Association with Roman Empire (citizenship) made a person included into the empire's justice system;[109] loyal service to the emperor (who was the head and the symbol of the state)[110] as a soldier or a governor, or as a good citizen caring for the good of the state, was rewarded by different kinds of honors (including material rewards). The services of soldiers, who were risking their lives for the sake of the Empire, were especially appreciated.[111] Roman ideology is described by Oaks this way: it is "Roman discourse, which sustains certain power relations… Externally, they constitute Rome's dominant position… Internally, they constitute a hierarchy that runs from the emperor down to the most marginal inhabitants of the Empire."[112]

We can conclude that the Roman way of social relations (including dealing with the honor issue) was grafted into an originally Greek-speaking community. One cannot say with certainty how smooth the process of integration of one culture into another was going;[113] the point important for the present study is that means that both

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[108] Nebreda, *Reconstructing Honor*, 151.

[109] See P. Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970) 221.

[110] Than is what made the cult of the emperor so important.

[111] Philippi is the best example of this, as the town experienced two waves of Roman veterans settled, who used the lands and resources of the town and its suburban for their own good.

[112] Oakes, *Philippians*, 302. Cf. Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 143.

[113] See Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 147-161 for different aspects of Romanization of the conquered lands, including social-economical tension between conquerors and the natives. The well-known paradox of Romanization of the Eastern part of the empire is that Romans had respect to "civilized" Greeks is about the fact that Romans could never assimilate Greek culture (see R.

models of treating honor (achieving it in the fight with equals and getting it through association with an honorable patron) co-existed in the city.

2.4 Conclusions

In the present chapter we have made some theoretical considerations. We clarified the key sociological terms, which are to be used in the present study, namely values, value-orientation, culture and identity. We established that though these terms are closely connected and sometimes overlap, one should distinguish between basic values and their embodiment: the former lie behind (or underneath) the culture and give it directions, while the latter forms the observable part of culture; though value-practice is the most visible manifestation of culture – it (practice) is determined by an implicit and often unconscious basic value-system. To avoid a common confusion, we underlined the difference between the values and their realization in culture. We pointed out that different cultures can share the same values.

We defined identity as a sense of belonging, of locating oneself in a society. Though identity is based and articulated in terms of the outer layers of the culture, it has a direct connection to the social values (relational orientation). That means that first, people with different identities can share the same values; and second, one can reconstruct (trace) a person's social values by analyzing the person's language of identity. That means further that a certain kind of honor-shame system exists in every human society and especially in a group-oriented one. The very meaning of a society

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MacMullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2000) 1-29.

being collectivistic is that it controls the behavior of an individual. The stronger the collectivist tendencies are, the more power has a group over an individual by honoring welcomed behavior and shaming the undesirable one.

A group has its own hero(s), either (and) symbols, or (and) rituals. Belonging to a group, i.e. one's identity is expressed in association with its hero, honoring its symbols, and practicing its rituals, which in turn, gives to one a sense of worth, i.e. honor. Changing the group (i.e. changing of identity) supposes changing of heroes, or symbols and/or rituals, yet not the basic values.

Merging our theoretical expositions with our findings regarding the Mediterranean culture type, we can now distinguish between what are basic (and common) values for all Mediterranean societies and what are different manifestations of these values. The relational dimension of the ancient Mediterranean value-system is characterized by strong group-orientation and specifically by a Mediterranean type of honor-and-shame. Returning to Hofstede's diagram, we can say that this group-orientation and male agonistic honor lie in the core of Mediterranean culture. The "rituals of honor," i.e. practices of the value of honor for the ancient Mediterranean area, are first, differentiation of opposite sexes: while women are domesticated, male rituals are more public. As we have said, every collectivist culture values belonging to a group and honor; yet the constant competition between males is the main ritual, which distinguishes Mediterranean culture type from other collectivist cultures. In case of the ancient Mediterranean, the practice of competition contradicts to the value of "belonging." These all are equally correct for many of the Mediterranean cultures, starting with Homeric Greece and Ancient Mesopotamia, continuing

through the Hellenistic period and Roman empires, and even up to the middle of 20th century Italy, Greece, Turkey and Spain.

We have also discussed different types of power/honor dynamics that existed in the Greco-Roman Empire. Two basic ones were those of gaining honor as reflected in two main features of the Mediterranean culture type: (a) benefaction can be understood as a form of honor-competition, and (b) patronage is an embodiment of value of belonging, when honor is gained via association with a powerful patron. We noted that honor-competition could jeopardize the interests of a group, while patronage served to the unification of a group.

At the end of the chapter, we described the cultural features of Philippi, where the addressees of the letter under consideration lived. By the first century A.D., the ancient Greek city was a Roman colony with authoritative elite of Roman veterans. One can expect that in Philippi the features of both cultures – a Greek one with its love to honor-competition, and a Roman one with its strong patronage tendencies, – coexisted.

The next chapter will be devoted to the analysis of how Paul understands honor and identity, and how the relation between them is presented in the text of the letter to Philippians.

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CHAPTER 3

NEW IDENTITY OF HEAVENLY SOCIETY MEMBERS

As it was established in chapter 1 of this study, identity can be expressed both positively ("who I am") and negatively ("who I am not").[1] As negative identity – dissociation from the opponents – is present in Paul's letter to the Philippians much more vividly than the positive one. We will analyze it first. Thereafter we will see how the identity of Christian community members is expressed positively. In the third section of the chapter we will examine Phil 3:4-11, where Paul speaks about who he used to be (negative identity) and who he is now (positive identity). As the apostle is the model to be imitated (Phil 3:17), his self-identity is an exemplary one.

3.1 Negative identity: "we" *versus* "them"

Negative identity is an important way of self-identification: defining one's opponent is also defining who one is not; the existence of "other" allows existence of "me" (see section 2.1.2 of this study). The attempts to describe the opponents ("the other")

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[1]   See section 2.1.2; cf. Meek's "language of belonging" and "language of separation" (W. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1983) 84-87.

of the Christian community in the letter to Philippians have a long history,[2] yet any proposition of connecting Paul's negative references in the letter to the historical group of people has its objection (see below).

Two major questions are asked towards the opponents in the letter of Philippians: firstly, who were the historical prototypes of these opponents?[3] And secondly, whether there were any real opponents and should we better concentrate on

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[2]   See E. Pretorius, "New Trends in Reading Philippians: A literature review," in *Neotestamentica*, 29/2 (1989) 273-298, for the history before 1995; see Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, l-lv for the review.

[3]   For the same group referred to throughout the entire letter: D.E. Garland, "The Composition and Unity of Philippians. Some Neglected Literary Factors," *NovT* 27/2 (1985) 172-40; H.W. Bateman, "Were the Opponents at Philippi Necessarily Jewish," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155 (1998) 39-61, on p.54, n.49; J.-F. Collange, *The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Philippians* (London: Epworth, 1979) 75; Hawthorne, "The Interpretation and Translation of Philippians 1.28b," *ExpT* 95/3 (1983) 80-81; C. Mearns, "The identity of Paul's opponents at Philippi," *NTS* 33/2 (1987) 194-204, on p. 202. Some scholars distinguish between Paul's personal adversaries (mentioned in 1:15-17) and another group, describer in ch.3. The identification of this second group is also difficult. Scholars almost unanimously see the "false teachers" in Phil 3:2-3, 18-19 as Jewish-oriented ones (because of the reference to circumcision in 3:2-3). It is not clear, however, whether Paul means here *non-Christian Jewish missionaries* (P. Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church* (SNTSM 10; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1969) 113; A.F.J. Klijn, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Trans. M. van der Vathorst-Smit; Leiden: Brill, 1967) 109-110, on the basis that 3:5-9 has a clear anti-Jewish character; and also on the book of Acts (17:5, 13; 18:6; 19:9) which says that Paul suffered from Jewish opposition after he left Philippi, see Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, lii) or *Christian Judaizers* (R. Jewett, "Conflicting Movements in the Early Church as Reflected in Philippians," *NovT* 12 (1970) 198-212; Bateman, "Were the Opponents..."). The section Phil 3:12-16, where Paul mentions "perfection" and when he himself can reach it, makes some to think about Gnostic Christians (G. Friedrich, "Die Gener des Paulus in 2. Korintherbrief,"in *Abraham unser Vater* (F.S.O. Michel; ed. O. Betz, M. Hengel und P. Schmidt; Leiden: Brill, 1963) 120; W. Schmithals, *Paul and the Gnostics* (Abingdon: Nashvill, 1972) 82-84).

There is an attempt to find a group which would satisfy all the allusions that Paul gives in Philp.3 (see J. Gnilka, "Die antipaulinische Mission in Philippi," *BZ* 9 (1965) 212-14; Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, lv). And as Paul's hints are quite assorted, the result looks rather like a hybrid of all false teaching once been identified in the text of New Testament: "Jewish Christians who used their identity badges to prove their essential Jewishness and promised an immediate salvation with its correlates of ethical indifference and a claim to 'perfection' now, based on realized eschatology" (Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, lv). Tellbe distinguishes four different fragments referring to three different groups of opponents in the letter to Philippians: 1:15-17 addresses Paul's personal rivals in the place of the letter origin; 1:27-28 and 3:18-19 address Philippians' conflict with civil society and Roman ideology; and in 3:2ff. the apostle refers to Judaizers (Tellbe, *Paul between Sunagogue and State*, 259, 269-74); see also Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, lii (cf. R. Martin, *Philippians* (New Century Bible; London: Oliphants; Greenwood, SC: Attic, 1976) 22). The point is that it is really difficult to find any realistic opponents in the letter to Philippians.

the opponent's *function* in Paul's argument?[4] Martin and Hawthorne start their observation of the studies on the opponents in the epistle without much confidence: "One cannot say with certainty who these opponents were,"[5] which indicates that the first question failed to get a final answer.

The opponents in the letter to Philippians cannot be identified with perfect certainty: as indicated, any attempt to connect whom Paul refers to as negative example, has its objections. Nonetheless, the negative illustration in the letter has its aim to emphasize the positive admonitions of the apostle. Whether "enemies of the cross" were pure fiction, or they had real prototypes, Paul gave them certain features, which would help his readers to find their own identity.

There are three major sections[6] which contain references to the opponents in the letter to Philippi. The opponents can be divided into internal ones, those who are still considered as "brothers" (1:15-17); and external ones, "enemies of the cross," who Paul refuses to regard as part of God's people (3:2-20). However, in the section 1:28-30, the two groups meet: the apostle seems to speak about both threats at the

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[4] Bloomquist writes that "the actual historical identity of Paul's opponents does not affect our understanding of Paul's rhetorical argumentation... what is at stake is not who those "opponents" really were, but how Paul saw them..." (L.G. Bloomquist, *The function of suffering in Philippians* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993) 196). Thurén argues that most references to the opposition in the New Testament epistles are not referring to any real personalities or real conflict; they are rather rhetorical constructions, used by the authors to built their argument and to clarify their theology (L. Thurén, "The Antagonists – Rhetorically Marginalized Identities in the New Testament" in *Identity Formation in the New Testament* (ed. B. Holmberg and M. Winninge; WUNT 227; Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008) 79-95). The letter to Philippians is not included in Thurén's research (Thurén concentrates on Galatians, Romans and the letter of Judas); yet on our opinion, this letter is the very case where the opponents have rhetorical function.

[5] Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, li.

[6] There are also some "silent features" of the opponents (Mearns, "The Identity of Paul's opponents," 195): the fragments which can be interpreted as implicitly referring to the antagonists. Such fragments are: 2:3-4; 2:21; 2:14-15; 3:12-16; 4:2. Because of the space limits, and for the sake of the argument, we will concentrate on the major fragments and will turn to the minor ones only occasionally.

same time: one from within and one from without. The sections that are dealing with the internal opponents, are Phil 1:15-18;[7] 2:3-4; 2:21. We will now have a closer look at each of these.

3.1.1 Internal opponents: Philippians 1:15-17; 2:3-4; 2:21

3.1.1.1 Wrong-motivated brothers

The section 1.15-17 is a part of the bigger passage 1:12-26(30), where Paul speaks about his present situation. He informs his readers about challenges he faces being under house arrest: some of the members of the Christian community envy him and try to make his situation worse.

There is a possibility that Paul's presentation of the situation here is not objective, as it is obviously the case in 3:2-19 (see below). After all, Paul's accusations that his rivals are being selfish, envious and driven by a hidden agenda are typical for rhetorical polemic.[8] However, the mild tone of the apostle, the emphasized absence of the hostility from his side, and his ability to admit that the adversaries' presentation of the gospel is correct, speak (at least relatively) for the objective depiction of the situation here. Hence, the material of 1:15-18 can provide some information for the reconstruction of the letter-writing situation.

The important issue here is that those adversaries of the apostle cannot be identified with Judaizers or other heretics against whom Paul argues in the letter to

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[7]   Cf. 4:8, where Paul gives the last exhortation and mentions that Philippians should thing only what is (among other epithets) ἁγνά, which probably calls up to the negative motive in 1:17 οὐχ ἁγνῶς.

[8]   See L.T. Johnson "The New Testament Anti-Jewish Slander and the Conventions of Ancient Polemic," *JBL* 108/3 (1989) 419-441, on pp. 430ff.

the Galatians and in the Corinthian correspondence.[9] Without any reservation, he repeats it three times that they do preach the gospel and Christ (Phil 1:15, 16, 17; cf. 2 Cor 11:4 ἄλλον Ἰησοῦν… ἢ πνεῦμα ἕτερον… ἢ εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον) and he even enjoys the fact that Christ is preached (Phil 1:18). The apostle refers to them as τοὶ Ἀδελφοί (1:14), and not as ψευδαδέλφους (Gal 2:4).

That makes it clear that the trouble with "some brothers" is not about their interpretation of the gospel and Christ, but it is a personal conflict, based on their dislike for Paul. The apostle interprets their antipathy towards himself as being based on strife, jealousy and selfishness: διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν, ἐξ ἐριθείας (Phil 1:15, 17). In 2:3 Paul appeals to his readers to avoid selfishness and conceit (κατ᾽ ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν); he also critically mentions selfishness in 2:21 (οἱ πάντες γὰρ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν, οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; cf. 3:4 μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες). The resemblance of the motives and even word-choices (ἐριθεια 1:15; 2.3) indicates that Paul most probably refers to the same problem in all three sections (1:15-17; 2:3-4; 2:21).

3.1.1.2 Inspired by Paul's imprisonment

Morna Hooker has assumed that "some brothers" misunderstood the apostle's imprisonment: they probably thought that Paul deserved to be punished by God;[10] or

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[9] Cf. F. Craddock, *Philippians* (Atlantha: John Knox, 1985) 26; B. Witherington, *Friendship and finances in Philippi: The Letter of Paul to the Philippians* (Valley Forge: Trinity, 1994) 45; Klijn, *An Introduction*, 109. Contra: Martin and Hawthorne insist that in chapters 1 and 3 Paul refers to different groups of people, "because the danger in 1.28 is real while the false teachers are only on the horizon in chapter 3" (*Philippians*, lii; cf. Martin, *Philippians*, 22).

[10] M. Hooker, "Philippians: Phantom Opponents and the Real Source of Conflict," in *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflict in Early Christianity. Essays in Honour of Heikki Räisänen* (ed. I. Dunderberg, C. Tuckett, and K. Syreeni; NovTSup 103; Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2002) 383-384.

they expected a miracle rescue, God's intervention (like the one which is described in Acts 16:26-34), and could not comprehend why it did not happen again. That means that "some brothers" could hardly be among those who were heartened by Paul's imprisonment: τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐν κυρίῳ πεποιθότας τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου (1:14), and hence, should be considered as "a minority."[11]

Yet the text of the letter hardly gives the base for such an interpretation. Paul writes that his imprisonment served to the success of the gospel and "most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much bolder to speak the word without fear" (NKJ 1:13-14). However, "some" of those brothers (who have started preaching more bravely) are doing this out of envy. Graphically, we can depict the situation like this:

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[11] Cf. Witherington, *Friendship and Finances*, 45.

^{14}καὶ τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐν κυρίῳ

πεποιθότας τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου περισσοτέρως τολμᾶν ἀφόβως

τὸν λόγον λαλεῖν.

^{15}τινὲς μὲν καὶ διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν,   τινὲς δὲ καὶ δι' εὐδοκίαν

τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν·

^{16}οἱ μὲν ἐξ ἀγάπης, ^{17}οἱ δὲ ἐξ ἐριθείας…

εἰδότες ὅτι εἰς ἀπολογίανοιόμενοι   οὐχ ἁγνῶς, θλῖψιν

ἐγείρειν

τοῦ εὐαγγελίου κεῖμαι,   τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου

τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν,

^{18}…εἴτε προφάσει   εἴτε ἀληθείᾳ,

Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται,

καὶ ἐν τούτῳ χαίρω.

Both groups, driven by different motives, are called by Paul τινές, and there is no grammatical reason to think that both τινές should not be traced back to τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐν κυρίῳ. The scheme shows that both groups (right-motivated ones and wrong-motivated ones) belong to the "majority of the brethren in Christ": the majority are preaching the Word (τὸν λόγον λαλεῖν, 1:14); and it is repeated three times that both groups – those who sympathize with Paul and those who are rather out of sympathy with him – are preaching Christ (τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν 1:15; τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν 1:16; Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται 1:17).

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Hence, there is no base to think that those who are jealous of Paul do not preach the gospel "boldly, without fear." Those who have not become "more confident" by Paul's chains (i.e. those, for whom the apostle's imprisonment has not been a stimulation to continue and reinforce his life-work), have not begun to preach the gospel more boldly; the apostle does not discuss their motives of preaching, as there is nothing to discuss: they do not preach. That means that those, who preach the gospel out of envy and strife, belong to "the majority," i.e. to those, who have been inspired by Paul's imprisonment to proclaim the Word without fear. In this case, the wrong-motivated preachers cannot be from those (the minority) who have been discouraged by Paul's situation. Besides, the apostle himself does not speak about some kind of misunderstanding of his situation by some people; on the contrary, he claims that they act from jealousy, and deliberately cause damage to him. Hence, the views that Paul's rivals were not motivated by his imprisonment or that there was a mis-comprehension of Paul's imprisonment hardly have any support from the text.

The question now is, what kind of inspiration did Paul mean in 1:14 (πεποιθότας τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου), if it was relevant for both his personal challengers and for his supporters. It is possible that the Christians were inspired by the fact that Paul was not treated badly by Roman authorities. They could see that Romans rescued Paul from an enraged Jewish crowd, and even protected him from assassins (according to the version in Acts 21:31-34; 23:12-25). That is why they started to preach the gospel "even more boldly, without fear" (περισσοτέρως τολμᾶν ἀφόβως 1:14), meaning that they were not afraid of the persecution from the Roman government. They could see that the Roman authorities would not accuse them in not being supportive to the emperor, and that they would even provide protection if Jews

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become to behave aggressively. This seems to be the only reason for active preaching in the view of Paul's imprisonment (like solidarity with Paul or desire to suffer for Christ), which would match the fact that one of the goals of this preaching was to challenge Paul and to harm him.

3.1.1.3 The cause of the conflict

If the conflict between Paul and "some brothers" was not a theological, but a personal one, what was its nature? From the apostle's point of view, his adversaries were led by selfishness and envy. The word ἐριθεία that Paul uses in 1:15 and 2:3 belongs to the honor-discourse (see section 4.2 of this study). It is possible that some preachers were envious of Paul's leading position in the church. In the previous chapter we established that the honor issue was extremely important for Mediterranean communities; honor was treated as a limited good, and one's personal increasing of honor meant lack of honor (i.e. disgrace) of another one. In the case of Paul, the honor he received from the members of the Christian communities as their leader meant that other church leaders felt dishonored. In order to gain more honor they needed to put Paul into disgrace.[12]

Another possible cause of the conflict, closely connected to the honor-competition among church leaders, is the financial issue. It is possible that "some brothers" envy Paul's leading position *and* the material assistance he received from his adherents. Paul says that his rivals are "seeking to increase the trouble of [his] chains": οἰόμενοι θλῖψιν ἐγείρειν τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου (1:17). Paul hardly means here

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[12] In the next chapter of this study we will speak more about honor competition within Christian commune.

that the jealous preachers tried to spread the gospel in order to make the Roman government less tolerant towards the apostle, as they themselves would receive the same treatment from the Romans. Besides, the officials' allegedly angry reaction would be the same to the activities of "right-motivated" Christian preachers, so in this case, *any* missionary work would deteriorate Paul's situation. In 1.18 the apostle expresses his gladness about the spreading of the gospel irrespectively of the motive it is done from. However, the word θλῖψις that Paul uses in 1:17, might shed some light on this issue.

In 4:14 the apostle employs θλῖψις to refer to his financial difficulties: καλῶς ἐποιήσατε συγκοινωνήσαντές μου τῇ θλίψει ("you did a right thing participating in my trouble"). The Philippians' material support of Paul is a very important aspect of their relationship with the apostle, which is reflected in the letter:[13] it is mentioned in the beginning (1:3-5, 7), again after a while (2:25, 30), and the whole passage at the end of the letter is devoted to the donations (4:10-19). The lack of material support could really worsen Paul's situation in prison: he would have to live (again) in hunger and need, and hence experience misery/disgrace (4:12). As writing letters in antiquity required certain material resources, and preaching presupposed that a preacher had leisure time to do so, shortage of money would prevent Paul from remaining a leader and an apostle. Paul was able to receive money from the congregation(s) only because of his high status in the Christian church. As we noted in the previous chapter, honor has not only social value, but also gives access to certain material resources.

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[13] Witherington speaks about Paul's "joy over [Philippians'] support" is one of the occasions of the letter (*Friendship and Finances*, 27).

So it is highly probable that in 1:15-17 Paul speaks about "some brothers" envying his leading position, and particularly the material support the apostle received in prison. Paul's house arrest made it clear that the Roman authorities would not relentlessly persecute Christian missionaries; and while Paul's ability to travel from church to church and hence to influence Christian communities was limited due to his arrest, they started to preach actively in order to gain leading positions and to receive financial benefits from such position. The strengthening of their status and pulling off the financial resources to themselves entailed weakening Paul's status and shortage of these resources of him.

To sum up: wrong motivation such as jealousy and selfishness was causing problems in the community which surrounded the apostle at the moment of the writing of the letter. As Paul thought it was worth mentioning in the beginning of the letter, the problem was rather severe; honor-competition between members ("envy and selfishness") were potentially dangerous for the Philippian congregation, as Paul warns his readers to avoid them (2:3-4; see section 4.2). At this point, the important fact is that the conflict between Paul and "some brothers" has had an internal character. The apostle's rivals are named among "brothers in Christ" (1:14), and though Paul regards their motives as wrong ones, he does not cast any doubt on the content of their preaching. The clash has been rather "a domestic affair," a sad disagreement *between brothers*, *inside* the "in-Christ" group. The wrong motives of τινές do not jeopardize their belonging to one family of brothers in Christ (οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἐν κυρίῳ 1:14).

3.1.2 External opponents: "dogs" and enemies of Christ (3:2, 3:18-19)

In contrast with serene report about the rivals and emphasized indifference to their motives in 1:15-17, Philippians 3 gives sudden and highly emotional vilification of the opponents. The change of Paul's attitude in 3:2 has given the base for the theories of the composite character of the letter.[14] As the sections in Phil 3 have a vilification nature, the identification of the opponents in this chapter is another challenge, which resulted in different answers: in the epithets Paul had given to the "enemies" in 3:2 and 3:19, as well as in Paul's argument in 3:3-18, scholars recognized Jews, Judaizers, and Epicureans; and in the apostle's argument in 3:12-16 some saw references to Gnostics.

Because of the circumcision theme that Paul develops in 3:3-5, the περιτομή and ultimately, all three expressions in 3:2 seem to be as a reference to Jews or Judaizers. "Dogs," "evildoers," and "mutilation" (κύνας, κακοὺς ἐργάτας, and κατατομήν) are used to be seen as "clear inversions of Jewish boasts."[15] In 3:19 Paul refers to the "enemies of Christ's cross," associating them with destruction (ἀπώλεια), bodily desires (κοιλία), and shame (αἰσχύνη). The commentators have to

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[14] On the integrity of the letter, see Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, xxx-xxxiv; see also Pretorius, "New Trends."

[15] Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue and State*, 259. Particularly, περιτομή refers to circumcision; κύνας to Jewish food law, and κακοὺς ἐργάτας – to other regulations of the law (cf. ἐργάται δόλοι in 2 Cor 11:13) (Garland, "The Composition and Unity," 168; E.P. Sanders, "Paul on the Law, His Opponents, and the Jewish People in Philippians 3 and 2 Corinthians 11," in *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity. V.1 Paul and the Gospels*. (ed. P. Richardson, D. Granskou; Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, 1986) 83; see also section 3.2.4 of this study).

build quite complicated allusions to explain these three as references to Judaizers.[16] The main reason for it is the obvious structural similarity with 3:2 (see below); however, by itself, 3:19 can hardly point to Judaizers or Jews.

So, the connection of κοιλία and αἰσχύνη with Judaism is rather weak. Κοιλία (belly) is assumed to refer to the Jewish food law, or even the male organ, which in parallel with αἰσχύνη (shame) allegedly points to circumcision, as circumcision was considered by Gentiles as something shameful.[17] It is not clear, however, why two of the similar-structured and consecutive phrases are parallel, and one (ὧν τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια) is separated. Secondly, if "shame" refers to circumcision, then Paul's accusation makes no sense: in that case, "enemies of the cross" have decided to be circumcised despite the fact that circumcision is something shameful for non-Jews, which means that they are exactly like Paul himself (3:7-11) and even like Christ (2:6-11): both Paul and Christ have rejected earthly honor to serve God (because, after all, circumcision is the first step of keeping the law that God has given Moses to obey). So, to follow his logic, Paul should praise "the enemies."

To support the Jewish interpretation of 3:19, line b. (ὧν ὁ θεὸς ἡ κοιλία) is assumed to be paralleled with Rom 16:18 (οἱ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Χριστῷ οὐ δουλεύουσιν ἀλλὰ τῇ ἑαυτῶν κοιλίᾳ). But it is not an established fact that in Rom 16:18 Paul speaks about Judaizers.[18]

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[16] So P. Perkins, "Philippians: Theology for the Heavenly Politeuma," in *Pauline Theology. V.1: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon*. (ed. J.M. Bassler; Mi: Fortress Press, 1991) 92-94; C. Osiek, *Philippians, Philemon* (Abingdon New Testament Commentaries; Nashvillr: Abingdon Press, 2000) 102-103.

[17] Mearns, "The Identity of Paul's opponents," 198.

[18] See Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue*, 165-170.

There is an attempt to link Paul's vilification in 3:19 with Gentiles. So, on the base of resemblance of the image "their belly is their god" with both Greek and Roman critics of intemperate life style,[19] Cotter proposed that Paul's language here can be interpreted as a reference to voluntary associations and symposiums.[20] In 3:20 Paul proclaims: "our citizenship is that of heaven" (ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει), which besides the antithesis τοί οὐρανοι – τὰ ἐπίγεια can also indicate πολίτευμα as "a catch word for the Philippians' opponents."[21] Πολίτευμα can designate both state and voluntary association.[22] The fact, that many of the social clubs in Philippi were devoted to the imperial cult[23] and that πολίτευμα can also mean a state, along with using the emperor's titles σωτήρ and κύριος to Christ (3:20), allows the conclusion that Paul refers here to the imperial cult.[24]

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[19] "In Greek and Roman literature κολία (or γαστήρ and its Latin equivalent *venter*) is often used of the stomach as the seat of hunger and desire, e.g. Euripides speaks of Cyclops' belly as the "greatest of all deities" (*Cyc*. 335), Xenophon of "slavery to the belly" (*Mem*.1.6.8)" (Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue*, 270, n. 254); see *ibid.,* n. 256 for critics of symposiums.

[20] W.C.S.J. Cotter, "Our *Politeuma* is in Heaven: The Meaning of Philippians 3.17-21," in *Origins and Method: Towards a New Understanding of Judaism and Christianity: Essays in Honour of John C Hurd* (ed. Bradley H McLean; JSNTSup 86; Sheffield, Eng.: JSPT Press, 1993) 98-104. Cf. de Vos, *Church and Community*, 273-75; Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue*, 270.

[21] Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue*, 271; Tellbe refers to P.C. Böttger, "Die Eschatologische Existenz der Christen: Existenz der Christen: Erwägungen zu Philipper 3 20," *Zeitschrift Für die Neutestamentiche Wissenschaft* 60 (1969) 244-263, on p. 260 and J. Gnilka, *Der Philipperbrief*. (Freibutg: Herder, 1976) 206. Brawley underlines that "though heavenly citizenship involves future expectation, the imagery is fist of all *spatial and qualitative rather than temporal*" (Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection," 135, italic added).

[22] For the meaning of πολίτευμα see G. Lüderitz, "What is Politeuma?" in *Studies in Early Jewish Epigraphy* (ed. J.W. van Henten and P.W. van der Horst; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 183-225. The term was applied both to "a body with political power within Greek polis" and to "festive associations of women, a cult society, a club of soldiers, associations of citizens from some city living abroad, and ethnic communities" (Lüderitz, *op.cit.*, 185, 189). See also P. Perkins, "Christology, Friendship and Status: The Rhetoric of Philippians," *SBL 1987 Seminar Papers* (1987) 509-520, on p.518; Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue*, 239-243.

[23] See L. Bormann, *Philippi: Stadt und Christengemeinde zur zeit des Paulus* (Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1995) 42-60; Pilhofer, *Philippi. Band 1*, 105, 110-12; cf. Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue*, 212-219; Sergienko "Our Politeuma is in Heaven," 107, 168.

[24] See Tellbe, *Paul between*, 271). The reasons for assuming Romans and Roman ideology in ἀντικειμένοι of 1:28 are the same. See below.

Sergienko argues that in 3:18-20 Paul opposes some Christians, who participated in a voluntary association (πολίτευμα) devoted to the imperial cult.[25] Though his argument is convincing (the emphatic ἡμῶν preceeding πολίτευμα in 3:20 indicated Paul refers "their πολίτευμα"), it is not fully satisfactory: firstly, it deals exclusively with the section 3:18-20, though the structural sameness of the sections 3:2-3 and 3:19-20 (see below) suppose they must be analyzed together; secondly, the anti-imperial character of Paul's discourse here[26] and elsewhere is now doubted.[27]

The short observation we have done above, demonstrates that none of the epithets referring to the opponents in the letter to Philippians, chapter 3, gives a recognizable picture of the opponents. As T. Geoffrion concludes, "the precise identity of the "enemy" does not appear to be recoverable."[28] The difficulties with the identification of Philippians' opponents can be explained by the very nature of the sections in which they are mentioned, as the insulting character of 3.2 and 3.19 does not presuppose the objective reflection of historical reality; these sections rather resemble the author's attitude to this reality.[29] This supports the thesis that the use of vilification texts "on the informational level is to abuse them."[30] Hence, any attempt

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[25] Sergienko, "Our Politeuma is in Heaven."

[26] It is a significant part of Sergienko's argument, see his "Our Politeuma is in Heaven," 197-214.

[27] See Galinsky, "The Cult of the Roman Emperor," 1-22; J.C. Hanges, "To Complicate Encounters: A Response to Karl Galinsky's "The Cult of the Roman Emperor: Uniter or Diveder?" in *Roman and Religion. A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on the Imperial Cult* (ed. J.Brodd and J.L.Reed; SBL WGRWSS 5; Atlanta: SBL, 2011) 27-34; Kim, *Christ and Caesar.*

[28] Geoffrion, *The Rhetorical Purpose*, 43; cf. Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, li.

[29] "…in passages where the attitudes, motivation and character of the adversaries dominated, their depiction was determined by the strongly subjective experiences and perceptions of the writer and by his personal interpretation of their actions within the framework of an existential ideological conflict. In these texts the element of historical reference would certainly diminish… To use these texts naively on the informational level is to abuse them." (A. du Toit, "Vilification as a Pragmatic Device in Early Christian Epistolography," *Biblica* 75/3 (1994) 403-312, on pp. 411-412).

[30] Du Toit, "Vilification," 412.

to find the real-life original behind the vilification texts is certainly doomed to failure. [31]

At this point we can say that Paul's attitude to the opposition in Philippians chapter 3 is totally different from that in 1:15-17: the apostle is furious; he is so overwhelmed with emotions that his speech does not reflect the reality any more. In contrast with 1:15-18, there is no tolerance to the existence of the opposition, no middle ground (in 1:15-18 the preaching of the gospel is this ground); the apostle dissociates them from the people of God in absolute terms and calls them "enemies of Christ's cross" (3:18). Due to the genre of the sections, nothing more specific can be said about the opponents in Philippians 3.

3.1.3 Mixed opponents: 1.28-30

The third group of opponents, ἀντικειμένοι themselves, is actually the second section referring to the adversaries in the letter (1:28-30). Their identity is also a mystery: Paul gives no clue to who they were. As Paul calls his readers not to be afraid (1:28), it seems they (the readers) are challenged by these opponents. In 1:28-30 the apostle tries to explain what is going on with the Philippians: ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ … τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα ἔχοντες, οἷον εἴδετε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί (1:29-30: "it is granted to you, for Christ…to suffer, having the same struggle you have seen in me and now hear about me" – *M.K.*). Here, Paul

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[31]   Cf. L.T. Johnson, "The New Testament Anti-Jewish Slander and the Conventions of Ancient Polemic," *JBL* 108/3(1989) 419-441, on p. 432.

links the Philippians' present experience with his own: they struggle for Christ's sake in the way he did and does now. However, it is not absolutely clear what he means.

The meaning of ἀγών as "struggle, contest, battle" involves several aspects:[32] first, it presupposes devotion, endurance, exertion, overcoming the hardship for the sake of the ultimate goal; secondly, it also presupposes the antagonist: one who struggles against somebody or something. So, here in 1:28-30 Paul speaks about both suffering (πάσχειν) and those who cause this suffering of the Philippians (ἀντικείμενοι).[33] Was Paul having the same antagonists as the Philippians had? And can we find out who these were?

The only known visit of Paul in Philippi is the one described in the book of Acts, when he and Silas were arrested and beaten (Acts 16:20-21). Hence, this visit seems to be the only opportunity for the Philippians *to see* Paul's struggle (οἷον εἴδετε ἐν ἐμοι).[34] Tellbe equalizes Paul's arrest described in Acts 16 and the one Paul is in at the time of the writing of the letter to the Philippians, as both were made by Roman authorities.[35] But the roles played by Romans in both cases are totally different: in the case of Acts,[36] Philippi's military authorities break the Roman law, having Paul and Silas arrested and beaten because of their Jewishness (Acts 16:20-21), without any official legal charge. Hence, the sufferings of Paul in Philippi are

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[32]   See E. Stauffer, "Αγών, ἀγωνίζομαι and Compounds," in *TDNT*, I:136-139.

[33]   See Stauffer, "Αγών," 137-139.

[34]   Cf. 1 Thess 2:2 Paul says that he and his co-workers experienced a spiteful treatment in Philippi and proclaimed the gospel with amid opposition (λαλῆσαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν πολλῷ ἀγῶνι).

[35]   Tellbe, *Paul between Synagogue*, 233, n. 99.

[36]   On the reliability of Acts and on the use of the book as a source for Pauline studies, see Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 110-113; Riotto, *Behaving as a Christ*-Believer, 171-173.

rather caused by anti-Semites than by the Roman authorities. Paul's current long-lasting arrest by Roman officials has been, in fact, initiated to rescue him from the furious Jewish crowd, who wanted to lynch him;[37] The Romans kept him, not in prison but under house arrest.[38] Even when the attitude from the Roman officials changed (as Fest had sympathy towards Jews against Paul, see Acts 24:25; 25:9), Paul still was sure that the Roman government had nothing against him (Acts 25:8 …οὔτε εἰς Καίσαρά τι ἥμαρτον), and Agrippa was ready to let him go, if only he had not had demanded the trail before Caesar (Acts 26.32). The book of Acts leaves us with the fact that Paul stayed in Rome waiting for his trail, being free to live *not in prison* and to preach the gospel freely (28:30-31).[39] Paul's arrest is presented as being initiated by hostile Jews (Acts 28:17-20). However, we realize that the author of the book of Acts has had his own agenda and hence has presented the facts to create a certain impression to the readers. Yet, in the letter to the Philippians Paul himself views his imprisonment as the opportunity to preach the gospel to the high representatives of Roman government (Phil 1:16 ἀπολογίαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου κεῖμαι, cf. 4:22). In the section 3.2.1 of this study, we underlined that both Paul's allies and his personal rivals were encouraged by his imprisonment to preach the gospel more boldly (1:14). It could hardly be possible that "brethren" were heartened by the perspective to be arrested for anti-governmental activities. On the contrary, it is highly probable that they were inspired to preach even more intensively as they saw

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[37] Acts 21:31-34; 23:10; cf. 23:12-24.

[38] Acts 24:23; cf.26:3; 28:14, 26, 30-21 – Paul is allowed to walk wherever he likes and to communicate to everybody and "to preach Christ unhindered."

[39] CONTRA: See R.J. Cassidy, *Paul and Chains: Roman Imprisonment and the Letters of St. Paul* (New York: Heder &Heder / Crossroad Publishing Company, 2001) on how Paul's circumstances and relationship with Roman officials changed over the time from positive (letter to Romans) to hostile (letter to Philippians).

that the Romans are rather supportive (at least as regards to the conflicts between Christians and Jews). In the letter to the Romans, the apostle speaks of the (Roman) authorities as about being established by God, and underlines its positive role in maintaining the civil order, punishing the criminals and protecting those who do right things (Rom 13:1-6). So, if Paul means by οἷον εἴδετε ἐν ἐμοί his arrest and battery described in Acts 16 and 1 Thess 2:2, it is highly unlikely that his statement has an anti-Roman character, and that he sees the Roman government as his or/and the Christian community's opponents here in Phil 1:28-30 or elsewhere in his letters.[40]

It is possible that by the struggle Paul's readers "have seen" and "now hear" in him the apostle means two different situations. So, it is highly probable that νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί (1:30) referred to Paul's difficulties that he has just described: as the letter was read aloud in the congregation, the Philippians were "now hearing" about the apostle being challenged by "some brothers" (1:15-18). The Philippians also knew about Paul's financial hardship: after all, that was the reason why they supported him (cf. 2:25 χρεία; 4:10-18). We have already connected the apostle's problems with "some brothers" with pecuniary issues (see section 3.2.1). Does that mean that the Philippians are also experiencing shortage of finances? Hardly so, as in that case they would not be able to support Paul (cf. 4:10).[41] It is more probable that the apostle means here not any particular issue or particular disagreement, but the very fact of having challengers who wanted to harm him. As with the case of οἷον

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[40] CONTRA: Cassidy, *Paul in Chains*; Hellerman (*Reconstructing Honor*) sees the whole letter and especially the Christological hymn 2.6-11 as being anti-Roman. On this, see section 4.1.

[41] Paul's phrase ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ ἐφρονεῖτε, ἠκαιρεῖσθε δέ ("you concerned [for me] before, but you lacked the opportunity" 4:10b) indicates that it was time when Philippians could not support Paul, though they wanted to. However, according to 4:10a ἤδη ποτὲ ἀνεθάλετε τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ φρονεῖν ("now you have revive to concern about me"), this period is over.

εἴδετε ἐν ἐμοί, he rather speaks in general terms, meaning the large sense of the word ἀγών as overcoming the hardship. Together, his past and present experiences point, firstly, to the consistency of the ἀγών, and secondly, that it could come from both in and out of the Christian community.

However, the apostle presents the Philippians' conflict with the(ir) opponents in 1:28-30 as being more glaring than his personal conflict which he described in 1:15-18. Paul refuses to admit the opponents' belonging to the family of Christ (cf.1:14), and contrasts not just motives, but the very being and the lot of two parties: "you" are set off with "the opponents" (ἀντικείμενοι); "you" are heading the salvation, while "the opponents" are heading towards destruction (ἀπώλεια), which connects 1:28 with 3:19-20.[42] As we have seen above, due to the vilification character of the fragment, 3:19 is not of much help in the identification of the opponents. Phil 1:28 seems to be the same.

In 1:28 Paul says that the Philippians should not be intimidated, as there is a sign of their salvation and their opponents' demolition (καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων, ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἀπωλείας, ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας, καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ·). This sign (ἔνδειξις) separates the two destinies, and hence it is the point of the contradiction. However, the waning syntax of 1:27-28 makes the interpretation

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[42]   This parallel refutes the Martin and Hawthorne's interpretation of ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἔνδειξις ἀπωλείας, ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας as they argue for the connection of ὑμῶν to *both* ἀπωλείας and σωτηρίας: "your [present] suffering and persecution (ἀπωλείας) is sign of your [eternal] salvation" (*Philippians*, 73). The reconstruction seems to be exaggerated and syntactically "barely defensible" (M. Silva, *Philippians* (Backer Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament; Michigan, Grand Rapids: Backer Book House, 1992) 95). The parallel with 2 Thess 1:4-9 argues for the understanding of both ἀπωλείας and σωτηρίας in soteriological sense (F.F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Word Biblical Commentary 45; Waco, Texas: Word, 1982) 149; Silva, *Philippians*, 95; G. Fee, *Paul's Letter to Philippians* (The New International Commentary of the New Testament; ed. N.B. Stenehouse, F.F. Bruce, and C.D. Fee; Michigan, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 156 n.74).

quite difficult: what the antecedent is of ἥτις, has been the object of many discussions. Nevertheless, a closer look might help. Morphologically, the relative pronoun ἥτις (1:28) correlates with τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (fem. sing.; 1:27).[43] Hence, the faith of the gospel denotes the opponents' distortion. On the other hand, the Philippians themselves are called to close ranks around τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου,[44] as it brings them salvation. Martin and Hawthorne see the verb στήκετε as being explained in two participle phrases.[45] If one divides the sentence according to the two participles (συναθλοῦντες and μὴ πτυρόμενοι), the structure of the passage can be seen as the following:

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[43]   Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 72-73; Martin, *Philippians*, 84 (refers to H. Binder, *Der Glaube bei Paulus*. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1968) 78); CONTRA: O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians* (New International Greek Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) 154; Fee argues: sometimes in *koine* Greek the number and the gender of the relative pronoun depend on these of the predicate noun that follows, and not on the number and gender of its antecedent. In this case, ἥτις is attracted to ἔνδειξις, which is also fem.Sg.. Hence, the antecedent of ἥτις can be any other noun and not necessarily τῇ πίστει. However, it does not give much help, as what exactly is the sign of the opponents' defeat and Philippians' salvation, remains unclear: in the cases of 1 Cor 3.17 (ὁ γὰρ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιός ἐστιν, οἵτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς) and Eph 3.13 (διὸ αἰτοῦμαι μὴ ἐγκακεῖν ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσίν μου ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, ἥτις ἐστὶν δόξα ὑμῶν) the antecedents are respectively ναός and θλίψις, i.e. the closest nouns. But Phil 1:27 cannot be read in the similar way: the preceding clause has no noun but ἀντικείμενοι, and the opponents themselves cannon symbolize their own destruction. So, Fee suggests that "the indefinite [pronoun, ἰὲ ἥτις] is used because it refers not to any specific word or idea that precedes, but to the whole of the preceding clause" (Fee, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 168, n. 53), and can be "either the steadfastness of the Philippians, their sufferings, or the opposition they are encountering" (O'Brien, *loc.cit*, 154; cf. J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. A Revised Text with Introduction, Notes and Dissertations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervann, 1953) 106). However, according to Greek grammar, "If the main clause as a whole is regarded as the antecedent, the relative stands in the neuter singular with or without a demonstrative" (H.W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1956) 562.2501a), which is observed in 1:28b-29, where neutral demonstrative pronoun tou/to refers to Philippians situation of faith/faithfulness and suffering: καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ·ὅτι ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, οὐ μόνον τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν πιστεύειν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ πάσχειν (cf. also οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι τοῦτό μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν (1:19) where tou/to refers to the preaching of Christ (1:18)). In the case of ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἔνδειξις, the application of the rule cited above, and hence the possibility of ἥτις being related to the whole situation, is questionable.

[44]   The verb συναθλέω can be understood as "to struggle along with someone" (Fee, *Paul's Letter*, 166) or "united for one goal" and "here the goal is to preserve τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου" (Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 71).

[45]   Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 71.

στήκετε

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┌── συναθλοῦντες
│          └──────────────────┬── ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι,
│                             ├── μιᾷ ψυχῇ
│                             └── τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου
│                                        │
└── καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ          ↓
    ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων [τῆς πίστεως],
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ἥτις [τῇ πίστει] ἐστὶν ἔνδειξις

αὐτοῖς... ἀπωλείας,

ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας
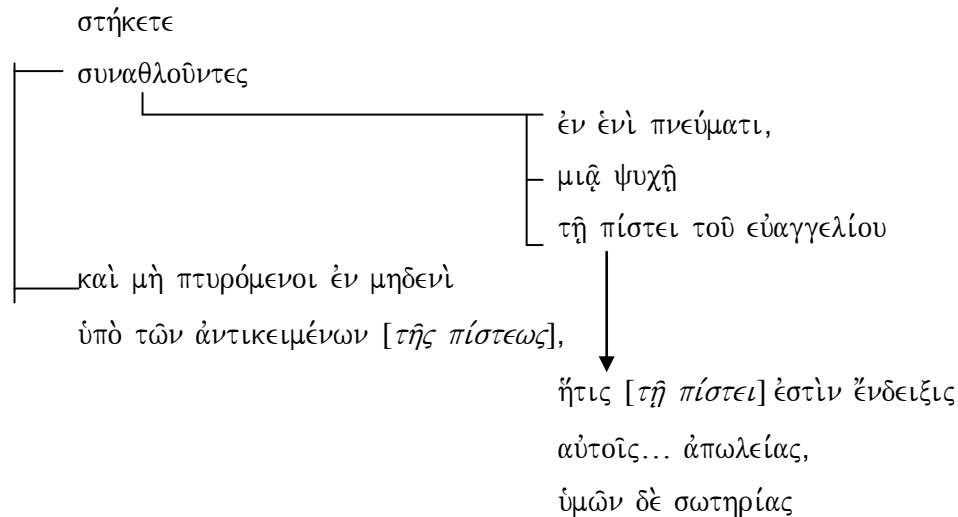
Verses 27-28 can be interpreted as: "I want to hear that you remain unanimous, with a single heart, with one mind, standing up together for the faith of the gospel, and not being intimidated by the opponents (of the faith), because this (faith) brings salvation for you and defeat for your enemies." In both clauses the faith of the gospel (τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) takes the central role: in the first case, the Philippian Christians are called to unite themselves around the faith;[46] secondly, the faith is the reason of not being afraid of the opponents; in other words, they should unite *around* the faith *against* the opponents. What is this faith?

The word-combination τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου refers to "the faith brought about by the gospel"[47] or "faith whose content is the gospel"[48] and hence, represents the Christian creed. The very formation of Christian communities has been caused by

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[46]   The dative in the word-combination συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει should hardly be understood as "with the faith" (as Hall argues, see D.R. Hall, "Fellow-Workers with the Gospel," *Expository Times* 85 (1974) 119-20), but rather as "dative of interest or advantage" ("for the faith") (Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 71; cf. O'Brien, *Philippians*, 152). Hence, faith is what unites them in staying and struggling together for one goal, because faith *is* this goal (see V.C. Pfitzner, *Paul and the* Agon *Motif* (NTS 16; Leiden: E J Brill, 1967) 114-118).

[47]   Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 71.

[48]   M. Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Black's New Testament Commentaries; 4th ed; London: A&C Black, 1997) 99.

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the faith in the gospel (i.e. in the death and resurrection of Christ); so the gospel is the reason of the community's existence. In other words, the faith of the gospel is what distinguishes Christians from non-Christians, it is the Christians' boundary with the outer world. This faith is the identity mark of the Christians, it differentiates "them" from "you," so ἀντικειμένοι stands against, not only Philippians themselves, but also against the faith proper. Whether ἀντικειμένοι attack Philippian Christian communities or Christian faith, such an attack threatens the very subsistence of the community: without its faith the community cannot exist; yet the faith (i.e. its content) proclaims the destruction of the ἀντικειμένοι.[49] The contrast between "them" and the faith of the gospel, as well as between salvation and distortion refer to the section 3:18-20: the enemies of Christ's cross (i.e. the opponents of the essence of the gospel) will meet ἀπώλεια, while "you"/ "we" (united around the cross/the faith of the gospel) will see salvation and the savior. So faith of (in) the gospel becomes the watershed between Paul's readers and their opponents.

Because the significance of the gospel as the identity mark of the Christian group is often missed, scholars struggle to follow Paul's argument: the correlation between the threat to the Christian faith and Paul's appeal to unity is being questioned.[50] Yet the Christian creed can be preserved only by the group who would

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[49] Though we agree with Martin and Hawthorne that ἥτις points to τῇ πίστει, we cannot agree with them that ἔδειξις points to "adherence to the faith" (*Philippians*, 72-73; cf. S.E. Fowl, "Philippians 1.28b, One More Time," in *New Testament Greek and Exegesis: Esseys in Honor of G.F. Hawthorne* (ed. A.M. Donaldson and T.B. Sallors; Michigan, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 167-179), as in this case it turns out that ἥτις refers to the idea behind the whole phrase μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων. Arguing for the "adherence" as ἔδειξις, Martin and Hawthorne make the discussion of ἥτις being connected to τῇ πίστει (which they support) pointless. So, the emergence of "adherence of the faith" instead of just "faith" in Martin and Hawthorne's argument is very surprising.

[50] "The issue here [1:27-28] is apostolic faith. The faith is being threatened… *Thus* the plea for unity is no small matter. Only be the total cooperation of Christians striving together… can the true

practice it. The annihilation of the creed results in the annihilation of the group and vice versa: the creed, i.e. the belief in certain tenets (in this case, the belief in Christ's death and resurrection), is what separate Christians from non-Christians. Hence, the consolidation of the Christian community's unity and defense of the Christian faith, are two sides of the same coin: it is the Christian creed what calls the community into being, yet the community keeps the creed from sinking into oblivion.

Though the identity of the ἀντίκειμαι in the section 1:27-30 remains a mystery, the opponents here obtain an important feature: Paul sets them off, sends them to destruction, and contrasts them to his faithful community in Philippians. In 1:15-18, speaking about his personal opposition, the apostle contrasts right and wrong motives, which move different groups to preach the gospel. Despite being wrongly motivated, "some brothers" (τινὲς [ἀδελθοι]) remain "brothers," and they are not hostile to the gospel.

In the section 1:28-30 the identity of the opponents is dualistic: on the one hand, the opponents are set off and contrasted with the positive group of "you" (ὑμεῖς), described as being hostile to the faith and because of that they are going to end up in destruction, which connects them with "the enemies" in Phil 3. On the other hand, ἀντικειμένοι are connected to Paul's own experience (1:30 τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα ἔχοντες, οἷον εἴδετε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί). The nature of the last association is also not clear, as the apostle seems to refer to different occasions of experiencing hostility from insiders and outsiders of the Christian community. This last remark of Paul has an important meaning: by causing the apostle's sufferings, his

gospel be preserved… *But this is an extension of Paul's thought, however legitimate*" (Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 71, italic added).

Christian rivals described in 1:15-18 become closely associated with opponents of the Christian faith and enemies of Christ's cross.

3.1.4 Opponents as one group

As we have mentioned above, scholars offered different views on how many groups of opponents Paul deals with in the letter to the Philippians. In our opinion, the rhetoric of Paul's letter must be taking into account to clarify the meaning of his references to the opponents. Despite the difference in tone, all passages mentioning the opponents are tied together having the same function in Paul's argument.

In the section 3.2.1.1 we demonstrated, that sections 1:15-17, 2:3-4, and 2:21 have the common feature of dealing with motives, which Paul does not see being appropriate for his readers. In 1:15-18 the apostle speaks about his personal adversaries being selfish and driven by rivalry (ἐριθέα 1:17; τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν 2:21); in 2:3-4, he addresses his readers and plead them not to be driven by egoistic interests and jealousy (μηδὲν κατ᾿ ἐριθείαν; μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες).

Beside the linguistic similarities, the structures of these sections also resemble each other: each time Paul mentions "wrong motive(s)," he alternates it with a positive one, making them even more distinct:[51]

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[51] Martin and Hawthorne speak about "double chiasm (a crisscross structure here) (*Philippians*, 45).

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1:15-18

⌐τινὲς μὲν καὶ διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν,
└τινὲς δὲ καὶ δι' εὐδοκίαν τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσουσιν·
⌐οἱ μὲν ἐξ ἀγάπης, εἰδότες ὅτι εἰς ἀπολογίανοιόμενοι τοῦ εὐαγγελίου
└κεῖμαι,οἱ δὲ ἐξ ἐριθείας τὸν Χριστὸν καταγγέλλουσιν, οὐχ ἁγνῶς,
                        θλῖψιν ἐγείρειν τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου.
⌐...εἴτε προφάσει
└εἴτε ἀληθείᾳ...

2:3-4

⌐μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν
└ἀλλὰ τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἀλλήλους ἡγούμενοι ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν,
⌐μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες
└ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἑτέρων ἕκαστοι.

2:21

⌐οἱ πάντες γὰρ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν,
└οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστου.

These structural and semantic similarities allow the conclusion that in all three sections the apostle speaks about the same trouble and hence, the same group of opponents.

In our view, the two vilificatory passages in Phil 3 should be seen as parallel to each other and referred to the same problem. We have already established that both sections 3:2-3 and 3:19 have the same character, which makes the reconstruction of the addressees nearly impossible. However, a similar structure allows connecting them at least to each other. Both consist of trice-repeated labeling and the following generalization:

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a) 3:2-3: imperative + noun[52]

> ²Βλέπετε τοὺς κύνας,
> βλέπετε τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας,
> βλέπετε τὴν κατατομήν.
>   [οἱ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότεςἡμεῖς]

b) 3:19: noun + noun[53]

> ὧν τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια,
> ὧν ὁ θεὸς ἡ κοιλία
> καὶ ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ αἰσχύνῃ αὐτῶν,
>   οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες.

In the first section, the generalization is not explicitly present. However, implicitly it is quite obvious: though Paul picks here the last word and uses paronomasia

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[52] The imperative is the same all three times, and the nouns are connected by alliteration: all the nouns begin with k: ku,naj; kakou.j evrga,taj; katatomh,nÅ

[53] Martin and Hawthorne put together "enemies of the cross" (3:18) and "their goal is destruction" (3:19) and see in them those, who could not accept suffer and death of the Son of God, i.e. those, whom Paul refers to in 1 Cor 1:23 and 2 Cor 10-13 (*Philippians,* 223). "They, therefore, could not accept the message of the cross, nor could they tolerate its dissemination. Nor could they tolerate the idea of a suffering apostle" (*ibid.*). This interpretation connects 3:18-19 with 1:15-18, and refers both fragments to those who expected Christ's exaltation revealed in his followers *now*, and not *one day* (cf.3:20-21). In Christ's case, the recovery from shame to glory (resurrection) was rather quick, what takes it so long to reveal this glory to the entire world?

The problem with Martin and Hawthorne interpretation is that they disconnect ὧν τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια from the following ὧν ὁ θεὸς ἡ κοιλία καὶ ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ αἰσχύνῃ αὐτῶν, analyzing the latter separately (*Philippians*, 224-225). They explain it as: "The conjunction καὶ… links ἡ κοιλία and ἡ δόξα together as a single subject, with ὁ θεὸς as the predicate," which should be translated as "whose god is the belly *and* the glory in their shame," i.e. "they have made their stomach and their glory in their shame their god" (*loc.cit.* 225). Silva objects this interpretation as being "artificial and possibly even solecistic" (Silva, *Philippians*, 212). Indeed, it does not seem to be enough arguments to detach the three-fold accusation and to break it into two-fold one. Hawthorne does not hesitate to assume that Paul meant some words, which are actually missing to reconstruct a perfect parallel (see his reconstruction of 1:28)

> ἐστὶν [μὲν] αὐτοῖς ἔνδειξις ἀπωλείας [ὑμῶν],
> ἥτις
> ἐστὶ δὲ ὑμῶν ἔνδειξις σωτηρίας ὑμῶν

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κατατομή – περιτομή,[54] he employs the summary "relying on flesh" very closely and repeats it three times (vv. 3-4…οἱ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες, καίπερ ἐγὼ ἔχων πεποίθησιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί. Εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον·), which indicates its importance. As the theme of circumcision is extremely significant for Paul, he clearly gets sidetracked here by the consonant and could not resist mentioning it. However, he is back on track soon and clearly makes his point by repetition of the image of "relying."

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[54] Garland views the fragment 3.2-3 as a chiasm: starting with the paronomasia κατατομή – περιτομή as a centre ("The Composition," 169-170; see also Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 172):

> a. Those dogs (τοὺς κύνας)
>   b. those evilworkers (οὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας)
>   c. the mutilators (τὴν κατατομήν)
>   c'. the (true) circumcision (περιτομή)
>   b'. the ones who serve (οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες)
> a'. the ones who boast… not in the flesh (καὶ καυχώμενοι… οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες)

The b-b' lines of Garland reconstruction is based on the Lightfoot's suggestion that Paul uses the word λατρεύειν deliberately, as in LXX it indicates Israel's service to God (Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle*, 145; H. Strathmann, "Λατρεύω, λατρεία," *TDNT*, IV: 58-61). Nonetheless, Garland notes that "the key phrase of the section is 'confidence in the flesh'" ("The Composition," 170), though the chiastic structure supposes that the centre of the chiasm (in this case κατατομή – περιτομή) is the key phrase. So, Paul's purpose of using the chiasm here is not clear.

Bateman proposes the parallel structure for the fragment ("Were the Opponents," 54):

τοὺς κύνας	ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν ἡ περιτομή
οὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας	οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες
τὴν κατατομήν	καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ
πεποιθότες,	

The trouble with Bateman's version is, however, that the obvious parallel κατατομή ¨ περιτομή disappears, which is highly problematic. The parallel between καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ and τὴν κατατομήν is not less unlikely than that with τοὺς κύνας proposed by Garland: in both cases the second participle remains unsettled. Bateman himself does not explain why his interpretation of the fragment's structure is more preferable than that of Garland: his comment is merely "The chiasm seems forced" (Bateman, "Were the Opponents," 54 n. 50).

In both interpretations, the unit βλέπετε blurs, as it is divided into three separate lines, and each of them has separate parallel. Besides, both chiastic and parallel structures come apart and get lost in the offshoots and clauses of 3:3-4. It is difficult to see parallel between short, as shouts, insults of 3:2 and long, intensified by participles, descriptive sentences of 3:3-4. 3:2 contains three verbs, while supposedly parallel 3:3-4 – of four verbs/participles. In addition, neither parallel structure, nor chiastic one seems to be found in 3:9-20, the fragment, which resemblance to 3s2 is glaring.

Naming three features of "bad guys" and summing their negative nature with resumptive images ("relying on flesh" and "earthly mindset" respectively) are not all the similarities of the sections. In both cases Paul gives an alternative: in 3:2-3 he contrasts relying on flesh and relying on no flesh; and in 3:19-20 he does the same with earth and heaven.[55] Indeed, as we demonstrated above, Paul's mentioning of circumcision slips away quickly, and he gives much time to the contraposition of flesh / no flesh (spirit, God, Christ). The antithesis of v. 20 (ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει) creates a pair "earth – heaven,"[56] which supports our reconstruction of the implicit antithesis in vv.2-3 "[flesh] – non-flesh (spirit)."

The brackets of contrasting "them" and "us" frame chapter 3:

[2 they… are…] ⤷ 3but we are…   [19their… is…] ⤷ 20but our… is…
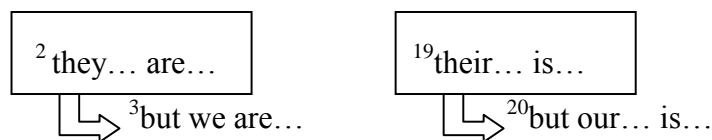
This framing allows an assumption that the section 3:12-16 also has a polemical character and the situation that Paul refers to is the same which caused the emotional vilification in 3:2 and 3:19. The structural parallel of the brackets supports the view shared by the majority of scholars: the opponents mentioned in 3:2 and 3:19 should be treated as a single whole.[57] However, the vilificatory nature of the sections does

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[55]   See C.F.D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek* (Free State and Others, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968).

[56]   In the phrase ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχεί the pronoun ἡμῶν is emphatically placed first, to contrast "our" πολίτευμα and "their" one (see O'Brien, *The Epistle*, 459; Fee, *Paul's Letter*, 348, n14; M. Silva, *Philippians: Commentary* (The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary; ed. K. Barker; Chicago: Moody, 2005) 183; Sergienko, "Our Politeuma is in Heaven," 152.

[57]   H. Koester, "The Purpose of the Polemic of a Pauline Fragment (Philipians iii)," *New Testament Studies* 8 (1961) 317-332; Schmithals (*Paul and the Gnostics*) and Martin (*New Testament*

not allow reconstruction of the opponents' identity.

In 1:28, the apostle explicitly speaks about the opponents (ἀντικείμενοι). Paul persuades his readers not to be afraid of them. Whom exactly does he mean: his personal rivals at the place of his imprisonment or a group opposing the Christian community in Philippi? The analysis of the text (see section 3.2.1 in this chapter of the study) demonstrates that Paul could actually mean both: as he contrasts "you" and "them" in 1:28 (αὐτοῖς/ὑμῶν), the opponents are obviously these of Philippi; however, in 1:30, explaining the significance of the events taking place in the life of his readers, he refers to his own experience: τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα ἔχοντες, οἷον εἴδετε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί. The former (εἴδετε) cannot be interpreted as denotation of Roman authorities, and the latter (νῦν ἀκούετε) seems to refer to just mention Paul's adversaries. The assumption that in 1:30 the apostle speaks about himself being challenged by "some brothers" (1:15-18) is supported by the location of the section: in 2:3-4 and 2:21 he continues contrasting wrong motivation by strife and rivalry with correct motivation by love and selflessness.[58]

The sections 1:27-28 and 3:19-20 have striking linguistic parallels: Paul's appeal to his readers in the nearest contexts of both fragments contain paronyms: πολιτεύεσθε (1:27) and πολίτευμα (3:20); in both cases, Paul speaks of contrasting destinies of "them" and "us":
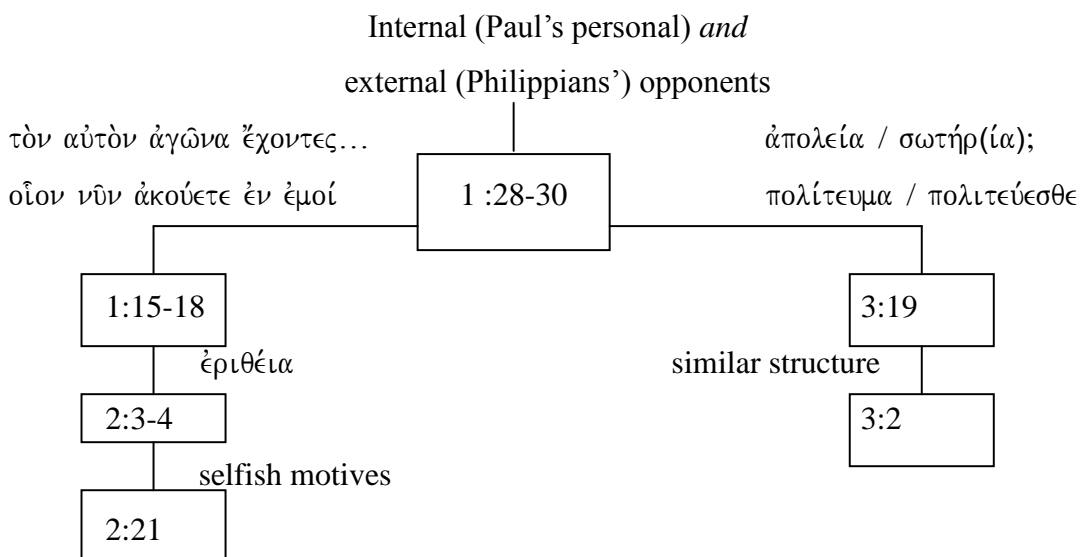

Foundations. Vol.2 - The Acts. The Letters. The Apocalypse (Grand Rapids, Mi: Eerdmans, 1978) 205-208) agree that there should be one group of adversaries (see Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, liv).

[58] Hooker agrees that in 2:21 Paul refers to the same people as in 1:15-18 ("Philippians: Phantom Opponents," 390).

1:28 ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἔνδειξις <u>ἀπωλείας</u>, ὑμῶν δὲ <u>σωτηρίας</u>

3:19-20 ὧν τὸ τέλος <u>ἀπώλεια</u>… <u>σωτῆρα</u> ἀπεκδεχόμεθα κύριον

These linguistic similarities point to the fact that in both sections Paul speaks about the same group or "opponents."[59]

We can summarize all these parallels in one chart which would demonstrate the way of linguistic, semantic and structural connections among all the sections referring to opponents in the letter:

Internal (Paul's personal) *and*

external (Philippians') opponents

τὸν αὐτὸν ἀγῶνα ἔχοντες…   ἀπολεία / σωτήρ(ία);

οἷον νῦν ἀκούετε ἐν ἐμοί   1 :28-30   πολίτευμα / πολιτεύεσθε

1:15-18   3:19

     ἐριθέια   similar structure

2:3-4

   selfish motives   3:2

2:21

However, the difference in the tone between 1:15-18 and 3:2, 19 cannot escape one's attention and needed to be explained. We have already mentioned that 3:2, 19 has a vilifactory character, and that Paul openly blame and label the opponents. In 1:15-18,

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[59]   Cf. Hooker, "Philippians: Phantom Opponents," where she argues that there were no real opponents in Philippi, and Paul's references to those who present danger to his readers (1:28; 3:2, 18-19) actually relate to his own opposition at the place of his imprisonment (1:15-18).

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the apostle seems to be greatly concerned to emphasize the absence of the theological split in the insignificance of the rivals' number. Yet he devotes them a sizable section in chapter1; in addition, the location of this information about "the brothers" seems to point to the reason of the writing of the letter in the first place.[60] Paul continues the topic again and again and even uses a Christological hymn to support his argument against his rivals.[61] Hence, the theme of "some brothers" is not transient at all.

We have already observed that in 1:15-18 Paul seems to belittle the real scope of trouble: in the section, both parties seem to be equal, though we know that in ancient rhetoric the abilities and success of opponents were usually played down. If being minimized, the negative group is equal to the positive one and it must have been much bigger in reality. This assumption is supported by 2:21: Paul splits out that "all" are driven by selfishness, and only Timothy stays by Paul/Christ's side (οἱ πάντες γὰρ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν, οὐ τὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). In 1:15-18, Paul introduces his rival rather neutrally, underlying his primarily interest in preaching the gospel. In 1:19, he involves his readers, making them the participants of the conflict and expressing no doubts they take his side: their prayers for Paul will help him to overcome his hardship. Though his rivals seek for harming him, he is far from giving up and is confident to succeed in his work with the Philippians.

We can conclude that in 1:28 Paul does not start a new theme: the ἀντικείμενοι are the development of the character which has already been introduced. In 1:27 the apostle asks his readers to close their ranks against the

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[60] Γινώσκειν δὲ ὑμᾶς βούλομαι (1:12) is a disclosure formula, which indicates "a moving into a discussion of an important issue" (D. Aune, *The New Testament and its Literary Environment* (ed. W.A. Meeks.; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1987) 188).

[61] See section 4.1.5.1 of this study below.

opponents; and he does the same in 2:1-4: the unanimity in Christ, spirit and love (ἀγάπη, cf.1:17 ἐξ ἀγάπης) are set off against the selfish motives of rivalry (ἐροθεία, cf.1:17 ἐξ ἐριθείας). In 1:30, he connects ἀντικειμένοι to his own past and present ἀγῶν. Now his real feelings to the adversaries get out: even though they preach Christ, because of their attitude they deserve Inferno. In 3:17-18 Paul calls the behavior of many *Christians* (πολλὸι γὰρ, cf. 2:21ὸι πάντες γὰρ) that of "enemies of the Cross;" he also mentions that this situation is not something new (οὓς πολλάκις ἔλεγον ὑμῖν, νῦν δὲ καὶ κλαίων λέγω).[62] Then Paul claims that *these* people are going to destruction (ὧν τὸ τέλος ἀπώλεια...), which puts "them" out of the group of "us" (as "we" are going to meet σωτῆρ, 1:19-20).

In his conclusive admonition, the apostle makes a full circle: οὕτως στήκετε ἐν κυρίῳ (4:1; cf. 1:27 στήκετε ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου). He pleads his readers to have a certain way of thinking: it should be "true" and "pure" (4:8 ἀλητής, ἀγνός, etc.; cf. 1:16 ἐξ ἀγάπης and 1:17 οὐχ ἀγνῶς).

We can conclude that the image of the opponents in the letter go through certain development: at first, Paul presents them as an insignificant group inside the church, which existence does not bother him; then he identifies his personal rivals with these of Philippians, and ultimately, he denies their (opponents) right to belong to the in-Christ group. The image of the opponents Paul creates, serves two goals: on the one hand, the apostle needs to demonstrate to his readers that he is not intimidated by the opponents, so the readers also should not be intimidated; on the

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[62] This second reference of Paul to something already known to Philippians allows to see the ἀγῶν of 1:30 in different light. Probably, in 1:30 he does not speak about his experience in Philippi described in Acts 16 and 1 Thess 2:1, but about a different situation, when the conflict took place *inside* the Christian commune.

other hand, the image must be expressive enough to make Philippians decisively dissociate themselves from the opponents. The emphasized separation of the opponents has an essential function in Paul's argument: as his challengers do not belong to (his) group, they are disfranchised, and hence, their opinion does not matter; their critique of Paul is not relevant.

The character of the references to the opposition in the letter to Philippians does not give much for the recovery of the protagonists' identity. At the same time, all the sections, though different in their tone, share a lot in their structure, linguistics, and semantics. That gives the base for treating the opponents in the letter as a single whole and to analyze their function in Paul's argumentation. De Silva argues that in the letter to the Philippians, "the opponents function rhetorically as a foil… as a device."[63]

3.1.5 Opponents in the letter to Philippians: those, who are not "us"

In 1.18 Paul sums up the bad motives of his rivals: they preach out of προφάσει, while "good guys" out of ἀληθείᾳ. In 1 Thess 2:5 he rejects the accusations in being προφάσει, and in 2 Cor 4 insists on being ἀληθείᾳ, which means Paul himself was

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[63] De Silva, "No Confidence in Flesh," 52). Cf. Hooker, "Philippians: Phantom Opponents," 294; Nebreda distinguishes "envious and rival preachers," "political adversaries" and "enemies of the ross," yet he agrees that they all function as the outgroup: "... the rhetorical and historical contexts *somehow* merge... the apostle makes use of the adversaries to drive his point home" (*Christ Identity*, 275, italic original).

accused in being προφάσει and not ἀληθείᾳ.[64] So, accusing others in being wrong, he at the same time underlines himself being right: by detaching "them" he is actually more concerned about "us;" by thickening the line of border separating "them" he thickens the line defining "us." So, the apostle utilizes his opponents for his own agenda: they become part of an apophatic argument: what "we" are not.

It stands out that the apostle not just criticizes inappropriate behavior and encourages correct behavior, but he constantly puts them next to each other, contrasts them and by doing that, emphasizes the difference.[65] It seems that this persistent comparison helps to underline their differences and at the same time, to see each of them more clearly. Being put next to its opposite, each quality or motive fills up with a sense more intensively, as black is best seen on white, and light – in darkness:

2.15 ἵνα γένησθε ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι,

τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα

↑ μέσον ↑

γενεᾶς σκολιᾶς καὶ διεστραμμένης,

ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ

This theme of distinction, continual juxtaposition, endures and develops throughout the letter. Paul starts with the accusation of "some brothers" in selfishness and envy

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[64] Hooker, "Philippians: Phantom Opponents," 285.

[65] See Marchal categorizes different kinds of dissociations in the letter to Philippians (appearance of reality, division from unity and difference from sameness, destruction from safety or salvation, human from divine, and "other dissociations" (*Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation,* 158-166) and concludes that the argument by dissociation "lies at the heart of Paul's argumentation in Philippians" (*loc.cit.*, 161).

(1:15-17, 2:2-4). Selfishness and envy are nothing else but honor-competitiveness, when one aspires to gain goods (including honor) at the expense of others. As we noted in the discussion in sections 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 of chapter 2 of this study, competitiveness can harm the unity of the group; challenging the group's leader (Paul) ultimately means harming the group and that is how Paul's personal adversaries develop into "enemies of the Cross" in Phil 3 (because Christ is also part of the "we"-group, which Paul and his readers belong to). If in Phil 1 and 2 we see repeating contrasting of motives, in chapter 3 the juxtaposition reaches its climax: as we have demonstrated above, the chapter is framed by the contrast of a three-lined labeling of opposition followed by a summarizing title (3:2-3 and 3:19) and a positive image of "we" (in both cases the description of "them" and "us" belong to the same semantic field: literally and allegorically "flesh" (3:3-4) is something what belongs to earth (3:19), while "spirit" and Christ (3:3) belong to heaven (3:20). In addition, Paul also uses other devices to emphasize the contrast between "them" from "us" through the entire chapter:

a) paronomasia: κατατομη – περιτομή (concision – circumcision) vv.2-3;

b) same phrases, one is negative: οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες vs. πεποίθησιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί (vv.3-4);

c) same nouns and different attribute: δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου vs. (ἀλλὰ) τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ (9);

d) same verbs and different modifiers: "live like… us" περιπατοῦντας… ἡμᾶς. – "live like… enemies" περιπατοῦσιν… τοὺς ἐχθρούς (vv.17-18);

e) traditional opposite pair: earth – heaven (vv.19-20);

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f) semantic opposition of βλέπετε and σκοπεῖτε.[66]

In Phil 3 Paul states clearly that the "them-group" does not include Christ, while "we" are the "in-Christ-group": "we" are described as καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησου (3:3) and σωτῆρα ἀπεκδεχόμεθα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν (3:20), while "them" are explicitly called τοὺς ἐχθροὺς τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῦ Χριστου (3:18).

The analysis of the "opponents sections" indicates that Paul emphasizes the difference between two groups: "us," or a positively evaluated group – which are Paul himself, his readers, his co-workers (Timothy, Epaphroditus, and others), – and "them," or a negatively evaluated group – opposition, challenging Paul's leadership over the Christian community. Paul underlines the distinction between "us" ("you") and "them" through the letter. In other words, Paul not just describes his opponents, but constantly *compares* and *contrasts* them with the group that he himself and his readers belong to.

So, with every mention of the "other" side, of the people who do not belong to his circle, Paul accentuates their difference and tries to demonstrate the contradictions between the two groups. The idea behind all the tools that Paul uses for describing (his) opponents in ch. 3 and in other chapters, is the following: with all seeming similarity, the opponents are totally different from "us":

– as "us," "they "preach Christ – but their motives are wrong;

– as "us," "they" aspire to a goal; but for "them" the end would be distortion, and for "us" – salvation;

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[66] Βλέπετε means "to look at something in order to beware" while σκοπεῖτε "to look at something in order to imitate" (de Silva, "No Confidence in the Flesh," 33).

– as "us," "they" claim to be God's people – but "they" are not, "they" are outsiders;

– as "us," "they" have a relying flesh – but for "us" it is spirit (Christ), and for "them" – (just) flesh.

– "they" claim to serve God – but they serve to themselves.

Consequently, Paul's point of mentioning the opponents in the letter to the Philippians are not the discussion with them, rather than using them as a background to emphasize the necessity of the "right" we-group unity. The main feature of the opponents is that they are "them," they are not "us." By dissociating from "them," Paul defines "us." That means that the opponents are a background, a decoration, an instrument which the apostle uses to help his readers realize and build their identity. By marking off "them," Paul defines what "we" are.

A negative view on the "other" helps to build a positive view of "us." As we have stated in section 2.1.2 of this study, the very existence of "other" is a necessity for one's self-identity. Maintaining the borders between "us" and "them" is the key for the very existence of the group.[67] Speaking about early Christians building their self-identity, Judith Lieu writes: "identity develops only in social interaction... so even where we may catch authentic glimpses of their [the 'other'] shadows these serve only the purposes of the self being so shaped."[68]

Accentuating the differences between "them" and "us" seems to be the

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[67] See Barth, "Vvedenie," 16.

[68] Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 314.

purpose of Paul's references to the opposition. Comparisons with the "they"-group give Paul the opportunity to describe the "us"-group features more vividly. In that sense, the existence of "enemies" is a necessary condition for Paul's "we"-group self-identity. The negative characteristics of "them" are to emphasize the positive characteristics of "us," to make belonging to the "us"-group attractive.[69] The only specific feature of the border between "them" and "us" is Christ; Christ is the most (the only) significant identification mark between two groups.

3.2 Positive identity: unity in Christ

The positive identity, i.e. the understanding of who "we" are, is expressed in the language used to describe and to refer to a person and to the group the person belongs to. Besides such language, one can find in the letter to the Philippians the deliberate appeals to strengthen the group bounds or/and to conduct a certain behavior or mindset appropriate to the group. It is difficult though to distinguish between explicit and implicit admonitions for unity, because the very usage of identity language supposes, reflects and strengthens the ties within the group.

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[69] Cf. D.K. Darko, speaking about the letter to Ephesians, notes, that the negative description of outsiders is part of "a rhetorical strategy to promote positive group identity" ("No Longer Living as the Gentiles: Differentiation and Shared Ethical Values in Ephesians 4:17-6:9," *TynBul* 59.2 (2008) 318-319); Osiek writes on "the opponents" in Philippians: "They are "ogres" whom Paul can draw upon to portray rhetorical contrast" (*Philippians, Philimon*, 83).

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3.2.1 The language of positive identity throughout the letter

The implicit positive identity is contained in the very language Paul uses to address his readers and to refer to other members of the Christian community. Being separated from his readers, the apostle obviously addresses them as "you" (2 Pl, ὑμεῖς), and himself and his co-workers at the place of the writing "we" (ἡμεῖς 3:17). Paul underlines the fact that the Philippians share his experience (1:30); calls them to follow his (and Christ's, and his co-workers') way of life (2:5, 3;17, 4:9). Eventually, when Paul speaks about confrontation with the opposition, "you" becomes "we" (ἡμεῖς) (3:3, 20). He, his close helpers and his readers form one group ("we"-group); this group includes also God (as Father, 1:2; 2:11, 15; 4:9, 20) and Christ (especially in 3:7-12).

As in his other letters, Paul prefers to address his readers and to refer to his fellow-Christians using kinship-language: "brothers" (ἀδελφοί 1:12, 14; 2:25; 3:1,17, 21; 4:1, 8), children (τέκνα 1:14, τέκνον 2:22), beloved ones (ἀγαπητοί μου 2:12, 4:1), which indicate close and faithful relationships like these of the household members. Aasgaard notes that "the [sibling] metaphor functions as a support for unity and mutual responsibility."[70] Trebilco agrees: Paul always [except for Rom 9:3] "reserves ἀδελφοί for Christians... as a boundary-constructing term... – only community members are ἀδελφοί."[71] The apostle speaks about his relations with

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[70] R. Aasgaard, *"My Beloved Brothers and Sisters": Christian Siblingship in Paul* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004) 311.

[71] P. Trebilco, *Self-designations and Group Identity in the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 37.

Timothy as these of father and child (2:25), though this probably refers rather to hierarchy in these relations as well as to the close character of them. "Paul's use of sibling language projects roles of equality, mutual responsibility, and solidarity without denying asymmetrical relationship implied by parent-child imagery."[72]

Emphasizing "what they hold… in common,"[73] Paul also speaks about κοινωνία, the fellowship or partnership, which has already been established between him and Philippians over time (1:5, 7) and which he hopes will be developed and reinforced (4:10-14). Though in the mentioned fragments Paul means financial support he has received from the Philippian community (4:15-16), this sponsorship has also spiritual meaning (4:17-19). The important aspect of κοινωνία is a shared reality that Paul refers to when appealing to the Philippians for unity (2:1 κοινωνία πνεύματος) and speaking of his new life "in Christ" (3:10 (τὴν) κοινωνίαν (τῶν) παθημάτων αὐτοῦ).[74] Paul's own and his readers' "sharing" of Christ's way of life is verbalized in terms of identifying with Christ:

3:10(τὴν) <u>κοινωνίαν</u> (τῶν) παθημάτων αὐτοῦ,

<u>συμμορφιζόμενος</u> τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ,

21ὃς <u>μετασχηματίσει</u> τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν

<u>σύμμορφον</u> τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτου...

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[72] (Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection," 133; cf. Horrell, "From ἀδελφοί το οἶκος θεοῦ: Social Transformation of Pauline Christianity," *JBL* 120 (2001) 293-311, on p. 298).

[73] Κοινωνία and κοινός are typical terms used to appeal to the audience to the unity (see Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity and Imitation*, 92. As an example Marchal refers to Aelius Aristides, *Or.* 24.37).

[74] See F. Hauck, *TDNT*, III:798, for κοινωνία with genitive could mean "the person or thing shared" and "the person in whom there is sharity."

The συν-compounds used by Paul in the letter (1:7; 2:17, 18; 2:5; 4.3) emphasize mutuality.[75] The phrase συμμιμηταί μου γίνεσθε (3:17) is often interpreted as "become imitators with me," [76] also can have a connotation of "join with me in representing."[77] As with the case of father-son language, there is no doubt the idea of mutuality is present; the question is to what extent the idea of hierarchy (that Paul *along with Christ* being the example for Philippians to follow) is contained here.

Πολιτεύομαι and τὸ πολίτευμα (1:27, 3:20): both words are illustrations of Christian "society" and have a clear allusion to Roman citizenship, which, along with certain privileges and protection[78] gave to its holders responsibility to stay loyal to the emperor and to the interests of the empire. Lightfoot notes that the verb πολιτεύομαι "seems always to refer to public duties devolving on a man as *member of a body*,"[79] which in the context of the letter supposes that membership in the Christian commune impose certain responsibilities on a person, namely the loyalty to

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[75] Fee, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 364, n.10.

[76] See E.A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: John Knox/Westminster Press, 1991) 95-96; Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation*, 145ff.

[77] Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection," 133; K. Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power: Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ-Movement* (LNTS 325; T&T Clark, 2009) 139-142; see also M. Hooker, "Phil 2.6-11," in *From Adam to Christ* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 92-93. CONTRA: Hansen argues that in other instances of using the Genitive pronoun together with μίμηται, Paul indicates the object of imitation (1Thes 1:16; 2:14; 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Eph 5:1), so the phrase should be translated as "join with others in following my example" (C.W. Hansen, *The Letter to the Philippians* (The Pillar New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 2009) 261, n.222).

[78] In the light of the incident in Philippi described in Acts 26:12, 37, 38, this illustration in the letter to Philippians is significant.

[79] Lightfoot, *St.Paul's Letter to Philippians…*, 105, italic original.

Unlike in 1 Cor 12, there is no metaphor of the Christian community as "the body" in the text of Philippians. Yet from the reference of Lightfoot one can see that politeu,omai contain this image of of unity, which has its origin in Stoic writings (see Seneca, *De ira* 2.31.7; *Epistulae* 95.51f; 92.30; Epictetus, *Dis.* 2.5.24.ff; 10.3f). The emperor, as the head of th body, played the role of the "essential integrating factor," very much the same as the role Christ has in the Christian community (Theissen, *Social Reality and the Early Christians…*, 198-200).

τό εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστου in its struggle with the enemies συναθλοῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (1:27). The connotation of protection is loaded in clear terms in 3:20, where it is opposed to the distortion expecting "the enemies." Σωτηρία and σωτήρ, used in close connection to πολιτεύομαι and τὸ πολίτευμα (in 1:28 and 3:20 respectively) support the view that in both cases Paul means Christian community as a state, where God (Christ) is an emperor.[80]

The religious metaphor ἡ περιτομή (3:3) has a clear anti-Jewish connotation and refers to the question of who the people of God are. Though Paul states "we are the circumcision," the following participles contain the meaning of this metaphor: οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες. It is part of the polemic with the opponents, so each characteristic is a contrast to that of the "enemies" (see section 3.2.2). The key words here are "by spirit," "not in flesh" and "Jesus Christ." So, "spirituality" (which in the given context most likely means "not belonging to this world")[81] and Jesus Christ are what differs "true people of God" from the false ones.

We can see that Paul did not invent a new language for the "we" group; he uses the same fictive familial language and terms, which was used in the Old

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[80] Tellbe believes that in 3:20 Paul describes Christian commune as a club or a voluntary association (*Paul between* Synagogue, 271; see also Oakes, *Philippi: From People to Letter*, 199; cf. Sergienko, "Our Polituema is in Heaven."

Riotto argues that in 1:27 Paul instructs his readers to live ἀξίως, i.e. reputable live as citizens of Philippi (*Behaving as a Christ-Believer*, 270); such interpretation corresponds to Paul's admonition against the external opposition of the church and with the admonition in 4.8, which Witherington believes is adoption of non-Christian values (Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 67). Yet linguistic agreement between 1:27-28 (πολιτεύεσθε; ἀπωλείας, ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας) and 3:19-20 (ἀπώλεια; ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα… καὶ Σωτῆρα ἀπεδεχόμεθα), as well as connections among all the references to the opposition throughout the letter (see section 3.2.4 below) allow the conclusion that the images Paul uses are also the same.

[81] Cf. Phil 4:21, 22 οἱ ἅγιοι.

Testament referring to a fellow Israelite,[82] in the Qumran community and also in the Greco-Roman world by associations and religious communities.[83] Yet the apostle uses this language in order to "challenge the received models of 'people' or of 'Israel',"[84] and in case of the letter to the Philippians, also from different communities of the Roman society. The only difference of "Christian" identity language is Christ himself; relation to Christ is the identity mark of the community members.

The scholars also point to repetition of the word "all" (πάντες ὑμεῖς 1:25; 2:17, 26; 4:2, 21, 22) as to Paul's way of encouraging cohesion of the Christian commune in Philippi.[85] This word is used in the address (1:1, 4, 7 (twice)), and then in the parts of the letter with explicit admonitions for unity (1:25; 2:17, 26; 4:2), which makes a perfect connection to the next section of our study.

3.2.2 Explicit admonitions for unity

The section 1:27-2:4 contains the explicit admonition to the readers to unite. Marchal selects the section as a single unit on the base that it is "direct exhortation to the

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[82] See especially Deuteronomy 3:18; 15:2-3, 7, 9, 11-12; 22:1-4; 23:19; 24:7.

[83] For references to the primary sources see Trebilco, *Self-Designations and Group Identity*, 17-18.

[84] Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 131.

[85] See Lightfoot, *St.Paul's Epistle to the Philippians*, 83; P.T. O'Brien, *Introductory thanksgivings in the letters of Paul* (SNT, XLIX; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977) 58; Peterlin, *Paul'e Letter to Philippians*, 19-30; Silva, *Philippians: Commentary*, 42.

community."[86] In 1:27-30 Paul's main message is to close the ranks in view of enemies,[87] while in 2:1-4 he speaks rather about rejection of honor-competition.[88] Yet the two themes are connected, as strife and competitiveness inside community is a real threat to its cohesion: στήκετε ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι (1:27) correlates with εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος (2:1), σύμψυχοι (2:2) is a parallel to μιᾷ ψυχῇ (1:27). The difference between the two admonitions for unity is that in the first case Paul uses military-political language,[89] and in the second one his appeal is rather an emotional, affectionate one.[90] In both cases Paul exhorts his readers to unite for the sake of the community benefit: the words εἰς τὴν ὑμῶν προκοπὴν καὶ χαρὰν τῆς πίστεως, ἵνα τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν περισσεύῃ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησου (1:25-26) precede the μόνον of 1:27; and in 2:2 he says: πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν. Joy over the faith of Christ and the success of faith is the goal, while unity of the Christian community is a means for it.

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[86] Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity and Imitation*, 128. D.F. Watson sees 1:27-30 as *propositio*, while 2:1 starts *probatio* ("A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians and its Implications for the Unity Question," *NovT* 30/1 (1988) 57-88. Cf. Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*); Heil divides 1:19-30 and 2.1-16 as two different chiastically structured fragments (*Philippians: Let Us Rejoice*). Yet those who analyze the letter from the perspective of unity, cannot ignore thematic resemblance of the both fragments (see Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 54 (1:27-2:18), cf. J. Marchal, "Expecting a Hymn, Encountering an Argument: Introducing the Rhetoric of Philippians and Pauline Interpretation," *Int* 61/3 (2007) 128-132; see also those whose primer interest is not the theme of unity: O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians*; Fee, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*; Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, lix. P.A. Holloway links 1:27-30 to the preceding exhortation of 1:12-16 (*Consolation in Philippians: Philosophical Sources and Rhetorical Strategy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 116, n. 71).

[87] See section 3.1.3 of this study, above.

[88] See section 4.1.5.1 of this study, below.

[89] The military character of συναθλέω and στήκω is a common place for the commentators of the letter (see Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 70-72; Geoffrion, *The Rhetorical Purpose*, 55; O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians*, 149-150; Portefaix, *Sister Rejoice*, 140; Krentz, "Military Language and Metaphors," 120; de Vos, *Church and Community in Conflict*, 277-278). For the political color of πολιτεύομαι see G. Lüderitz, "What is Politeuma," 185; Krentz, *loc.cit.*, 113; Geoffrion, *loc.cit.*, 25, 35-82; Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 269-270.

[90] Especially the phase εἴ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοι (2:1), which "is difficult to interpret. It can be translated in variety of terms which cover feelings such as compassion, affection and mercy" (Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 61).

96

In his admonition for unity, Paul mentions like-mindedness twice: τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε... τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες (2:2). Strictly speaking, the call to be ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ / σύμψυχοι has the same connotation.[91] Yet according to Willis, the word φρονέω and its cognates, so important for the letter,[92] has an additional semantic load, namely "envisioning the proper way followers of Christ look at their life in general society."[93] Willis demonstrates that ancient writers used τό αὐτό φρονέω (and cognates) referring to "political or social factions or allegiances" spoken about against their adversaries.[94] Hence, the use of φρονέω in the letter to Philippians "has a basic political cast, in the sense of [Paul's] encouraging loyalty to one leader... and a shared outlook – implying rejection of another group and its outlook."[95] That is Paul's appeals τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε, τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες (2:2), τοῦτο φρονῶμεν (3:15 together with ἑτέρως φρονεῖτε 3:16), τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν (4:2) are not only about a proper mind-set, yet also about identity (both positive and negative one). Silva writes: "the verse [2:5] appeals to the Philippians union with Christ and not to his attitude,"[96] and interprets the verse like: "Be so disposed toward one another as is proper for those who are united in Christ Jesus."[97] Philippians must remember that they belong to an "in-Christ" group (τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (2:5), τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν κυρίῳ (4:2)), and that this group is surrounded by

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91   See Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 59.

92   The verb and its cognates are used 10 times in the letter to Philippians in comparison to 9 times in Romans and 3 more in the other Pauline writings.

93   W. Willis, "Seeing the Faith as Paul Sees it," in *Renewing Tradition* (ed. M. Hamilton, T. Olbricht, and J. Peterson; Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2006) 181-192, on p. 182.

94   *Ibid.* 182-183. Cf. Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity and Imitation*, 93.

95   Willis, "Seen the Faith," 184.

96   Silva, *Philippians. Commentary*, 95.

97   *Ibid.* 97. The interpretations of Willis and Silva goes along with Käzemann's understanding of 2.5 and the meaning of the hymn 2.6-11, which will be analyzed in section 4.1.2 of this study (below).

adversaries. And here positive and negative identity meets.[98]

We can see that a significant part of the letter (sections referring to the opponents, admonitions to the Philippians themselves) contain the same idea of identity: belonging to the "in-Christ" community and dissociation from the "others." The text of the letter "is replete… in a markedly intensified way, (with allusions) to the structure of belonging."[99] The language Paul uses to describe this new identity of believers in Christ is very much the same to Roman politic military vocabulary. Theissen argues that Roman rhetoric of imperial unity served as a plausibility basis for Paul's "participation Christology,"[100] i.e. in Christian community's self-understanding as a group united in and through Christ.

Paul's description of his own entering the "in-Christ" group experience is to be found in the center of Phil 3 within "vilification brackets." In contrast to other descriptions of this event (in Gal 1:13-17 and Acts 9:3-20), Paul's presentation in the letter to the Philippians emphasizes the change of identity, the change of the group that Paul belongs to.

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[98] In ancient Mediterranean, belonging to one group meant being an enemy of the another one (see S.K. Stowers, "Friends and Enemies in the Politics of Heaven: Reading Theology of Philippians" in *Pauline Theology. V.1: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon* (ed. J.M. Bassler; Mi: Fortress Press, 1991) 105-121, on pp. 113-114).

[99] J. Kloppenborg, "Edwin Hatch, Collegia and Churches," in *Origins and Method: Towards a New Understanding of Judaism and Christianity: Essays in honour of John C. Hurd* (ed. B.H. McLean. JSNT SS 86. Sheffield: JSPT Press, 1993) 212-238, on p. 238.

[100] Theissen, *Social Reality and the Early Christians*, 196-201.

3.3 Paul's own example of the changed identity (3:4-11)

Paul's self-description in 3:4-14 represents both positive and negative identities in one section (pericope). Based on his own example, the apostle pictures the difference between the two groups.

Dunn considers Paul's self-identity being a transitional one, i.e. moving from his original identity as a Jew and dealing with his new revelation in Christ.[101] It is rather correct if one analyzes the entire collection of Pauline writings;[102] however, in Phil 3:4-11, Paul's identity is presented as not being transitional, but as a completely dislodged one: he totally rejects his *past* Jewishness and associates himself exclusively with Christ.

The structure of the section serves to emphasize this complete break: there are three parts: Paul's past identity (3:5-6), the very moment of the change (3:7-8), and his "new identity"[103] (3:9-11).

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[101] J.D.G. Dunn, "Who Did Paul Think He Was? A Study of Jewish-Christian Identity," *NTS* 45 (1999) 174-193, on p. 193.

[102] See the comparison of Paul's continuing acknowledge of his Jewishness (Rom 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22, (24)) and emphasizes his severance with Judaism (Gal 1:13-14; 2:19 and Phil 3:7-8) in Dunn, "Who Did Paul Think He Was."

[103] Grammatically, the last piece is rather something desirable than real: Paul has rejected whatever was valuable for him in the past *in order to achieve* certain things in Christ. So, strictly speaking it is not literal identity in terms of "I am," but rather new kind of goal-setting. See below.

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3.3.1 Paul's old identity: περιτομή ὀκταήμερος (3:5-6)

Philippians 3:5-6, the description of Paul's Jewish past, is introduced as the explanation (or as the base) of his reasons to rely on flesh: 3:4 καίπερ ἐγὼ ἔχων πεποίθησιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί. Εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον. Hence, the section is connected to 3:2-3, where he unites "dogs," "evil doers" and "mutilation" under the concept of "relying on flesh."[104] Therefore, Paul puts his past Jewish experience on one level with "dogs" etc., which gives strong ground to read the whole section 3:5-6 as an anti-Jewish (anti-Judaizing) one.[105]

Paul's description of his base for "relying on flesh" consists of two major parts: one is united under the preposition ἐκ (ἐξ),[106] referring mostly to Paul's ethnicity, and the other one under the preposition κατά, referring to his relationships with Jewish Law (κατά νομον), i.e. to his religious believes.[107]

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[104] The collective image of "dogs," "evil doers" and "mutilation" as those who rely on flesh is supposed in (is apparent from) the contrast ἡμεῖς γάρ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες (3:3), see section of this study 3.1.1, above.

[105] Cf. Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 181.

[106] φυλῆς Βενιαμίν has no such preposition; but as it has same Dative case as ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ, the preposition ἐκ is presupposed there.

[107] Again, fist and last lines has the Law as indirect object (κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος...κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος), while the middle line does not have it (κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν). However, the zeal here is definitely zeal for the Law, as together with being a Pharisee, his persecution of the church the term itself indicates the same zeal to the Law which emerging is described in 2 Maccabees (ζῆλον νόμοῦ 1 Mac 2:28); See below.

⁴καίπερ ἐγὼ ἔχων πεποίθησιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί.

Εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον·

⁵περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος,

ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ,

φυλῆς Βενιαμίν,

Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων,

κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος,

⁶κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν,

κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος.
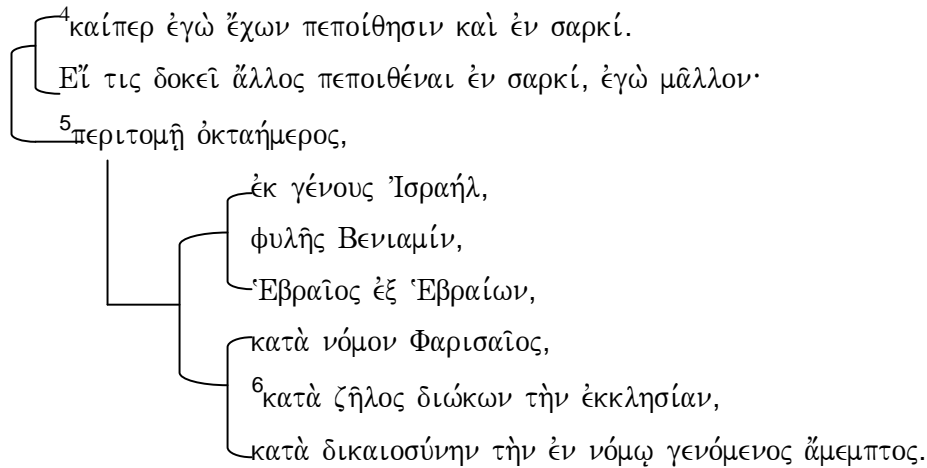
Verse 4 clearly represents the introduction (or heading) of the following passages, which are the detailed description of what is "relying on flesh." The position of the first line of v.5 (περιτομή ὀκταήμερος) is not clear: being interpreted in a narrow ethnic sense,[108] περιτομή ὀκταήμερος seems to duplicate the following line ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ.[109] Circumcision has been *both* a sign of Jewish nationality *and* a first step of keeping the Law;[110] besides, in the given context of the letter, "circumcision" is a substitute for "relying on flesh": ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν ἡ περιτομή... οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες (3:3). As περιτομή ὀκταήμερος in 3:5 has no preposition and can be

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[108] See Lightfoot, *St.Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 146 for περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος starts the ascending scale of the list, where each following characteristic intensifies the preceding one: a) eighth-day-circumcised (as a non-Ishmaelit, which was circumcised on 13th day (see Josephus, *Ant.*1.122.213-14)); b) Israelite (as non-proselyte); c) Benjaminit (as not from renegade tribe); d) Hebrew (as non-Hellenistic one, i.e. as one who keeps Hebrew language, cf. Acts 22:2-3; 21:40). But the circumcision on the eighth day is also a sign of being non-proselyte, as it could be performed only by Jewish parents; at the same time being an Israelite means being non-Ishmaelit.

[109] The Israel's covenant ideology had "the built-in tendency" to become the "*ethno*-centric" one (Christiansen, *A Covenant in Judaism and Paul*, 323, italic original). CONTRA: Lieu points out that Paul's concentration on circumcision as identity marker contradicts with evidences of Jewish sources of the time, and he probably does it for the sake of argument (*Christian Identity*, 128). As for the text under consideration, Phil 3:4-6, circumcision is *one of* the terms Paul uses to describe some aspects of Jewish identity, including the Law as evaluative system (3:6b κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος).

[110] J.D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids, Mi. / Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 1998) 458.

similarly related to both stanzas (ἐκ… and κατά…), it is rather the heading of the list than it is one of the items among the other Jewish attributes of Paul.[111]

Περιτομή and especially περιτομή ὀκταήμερος represent a special status of God's chosen people: it is an identity mark of Israel, the people of the covenant; it is a dividing line between "Israel" ("we") and Gentiles (other nations).[112] As a true and pious Jew (ἐκ-group), Paul was assiduous in keeping, celebrating and strengthening his identity (κατά-group). One should not make a strict distinction between "ethnical" and "religious" (if only for analytical purposes), firstly, because it is difficult to believe that a fist-century Jew could ever make this distinction,[113] and secondly, because Paul himself combines them under one concept of "the eight-day circumcision" (see above) and then rejects them all together (3:7-8).[114] His zeal against the Church (3:6) was in fact the zeal for his national identity, i.e. for keeping his group boundary: in the followers of Jesus, he saw a danger for the unity of Israel

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[111] Cf. O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians*, 368-369.

[112] See Christiansen on circumcision as an identity marker, as a boundary by which "a particular identity is protected" (*A Covenant in Judaism and Paul*, 332).

[113] See 1 Macc, where the Law is called alternately "law of fathers" and "laws of God" 6:1, 7:23-24; (τῶν πατρίων νόμων καὶ τοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ νόμοις); in 7:1-2, kashrut is called "law of fathers;" in 8:21, Maccabean army expresses its readiness to die "for the law and for the homeland" (ὑπὲρ τῶν νόμων καὶ τῆς πατρίδος). See R. Wallace and W. Williams, *The Three Worlds of Paul of Tarsus* (London, New York: Routledge 1998) 118: "Jewish self-identification by religious allegiance rather than by political or ethnic ties was probably unique in the ancient Mediterranean world."
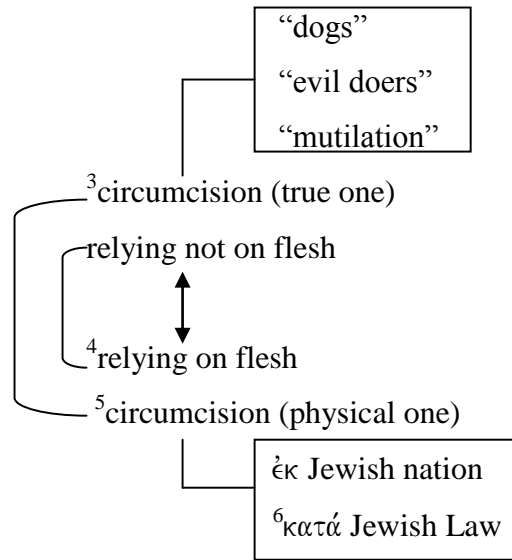
[114] CONTRA: Dunn takes περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος as a first of seven equal lines, and argues that in 3.7 Paul rejects three last lines (κατά νόμον) and still keeps first three (referring to his nationality), while the fourth one (Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων) is given a middle place, marking "the transition from an older identity still embraced ("Hebrew") to the older identity now devalued ("Hebrew of the Hebrewes") (Dunn, "Who Paul Think He Was," 186). Such structure has no textual support: as it is noted above, the lines from two to four are united under ἐκ preposition; the emphasizing repetition of πάντα in 3:8 (ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι… τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην) excludes any speculation about Paul's selective renouncement of what he described in 3:5-6. Though in the other Pauline texts the apostle reserves his Jewishness, there is no base for this conclusion in Phil 3:5-8.

as religious/ethnic entity.[115] Conceptually, both ethnically belonging and keeping the Law represent Jewish "relying" on their inherited covenant, i.e. identity and socialization within the group. This covenant, symbolized by circumcision,[116] is very corporal or substantial: it is inherited by the very fact of being physically born into a Jewish family; it is also expressed, first and foremost, in the act of physical circumcision. In his arguments, Paul opposes "circumcision," as a physical (fleshly, σάρξ) way and as non-physical, i.e. irrelative to the circumstances of birth (i.e. belonging to the Jewish ethnos), way of entering God's covenant ("true circumcision"). Hence, the specification that Paul's physical circumcision has happened at the eighth day, in the context of his discourse in Phil 3, has more to do with distinguishing it from (true or spiritual) circumcision which Paul claims for "us" in 3.3, than with distinguishing him from Ismaelites or proselytes.[117] Paul's excursus in his own life experience is a continuation of the contrast he started in 3:2:

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[115] The claim of the Hellenistic followers of Jesus that one can enter the "people of God" without being circumcised destroyed the boundary between "we" as Israel and "them" as Gentiles. Diluting the boundary means disappearing of the group itself (see Barth, "Vvedenie," 16).

[116] Circumcision and covenant are actually synonyms here; Cf. Rom 15:8.

[117] Cf. A.F. Segal "The language of flesh and spirit is not allegorical. It is a reference to the two kinds of Christian community – one priding itself in the flesh, circumcision; the other defining itself by means of spiritual transformation…" (*Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 1990) 140).

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                              ┌─────────────────┐
                              │  "dogs"         │
                   ┌──────────│  "evil doers"   │
                   │          │  "mutilation"   │
                   │          └─────────────────┘
  ³circumcision (true one)
  ┌─relying not on flesh
  │   ↕
  │
  └─⁴relying on flesh
      ⁵circumcision (physical one)
                   ┌─────────────────┐
                   │  ἐκ Jewish nation │
                   │  ⁶κατά Jewish Law │
                   └─────────────────┘
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Describing his former relying on flesh, Paul speaks in terms of his belonging to a certain group and his living according to the rules of this group. First, he presents himself as a pure-blooded Jew (ἐκ…) and then claims that his socialization within this Jewish-Law group has been an absolute success: he has managed to achieve perfect righteousness (i.e. honor)[118] according to the Law, (κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος). Election and Torah are two main pillars of Paul's Jewish identity. Dunn notes that the special covenant with God is more rooted in Israel's self-consciousness than even monotheism.[119] As for a Pharisee, the Law was for Paul what defines (or identifies) the chosen people of Israel from Gentile sinners; i.e. the Law-keeping was rather "an expression of… covenant membership" than of

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[118] On the connection between righteousness and honor see H. Moxnes, "Honour and Righteousness in Romans," *JSNT* 32 (1988) 61-77; see also below, chapter 4 of this study.

[119] J.D.G. Dunn, *The Parting of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London: SCM Press, 1991) 21.

moral choice.[120] It was Mosaic Law, that separates or defines (i.e. making the border) Israel from other nations. Hence, Paul's triple reference to the Law (3:5-6) is as much about his Jewish identity, as it is his triple reference to his ethnicity (3:5). The eight-day circumcision incorporates both ethnicity and the Law.[121]

Paul points out his zeal and that he persecuted the church out of it. The concept of the zeal for the Law takes a special meaning for Israel in the Maccabean period. The jealousy for the Law becomes a synonym for the fight for the maintenance of Jewish self-identity as that of the people of the Law.[122] Hence, Paul's persecution of the church out of zeal[123] indicates that he saw the Christian movement jeopardizing the identity of Israel, as through faith to Jesus God-fearers entered the covenant passing over Mosaic Law.[124]

In his description of his former "relying on flesh," Paul combines all three: being a Pharisee, being a zealous persecutor of the Church and being perfectly righteous. For him, as for a Pharisee, the precise keeping of the Mosaic Law was the only way of maintaining the identity (i.e. the very existence) of God's people of the

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[120] Dunn, *The Parting of the Ways*, 102; cf. E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London: SCM Press, 1977) 84-104.

[121] See J.D.G. Dunn, "What was the Issue between Paul and 'Those of Circumcision'?" in *Paulus und das antike Judentum* (ed. M. Hengel and H. Heckel; Tübingen: JCB Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1991) 296-317, on pp. 303-305.

[122] See 1 Macc 2:26-27; 50, 58; 2 Macc 4:2; 7:2, 9, 11, 37; 8:21; 13:14. Donaldson writes: "First-century Judaism was characterized by a considerable degree of tolerance… however… Christian movement… [was perceived] as… threatening *social cohesion*; their response was to take… action to *preserve social boundaries and protect ethnic solidarity*" (T.L. Donaldson, "Zealot and Convert: The Origin of Paul's Christ-Torah Antithesis" *CBQ* 51 (1989) 655-682, on p. 670, italic added). Dunn: "Zeal for the law expressed in defense of Israel's covenant distinctiveness… as the covenant people of God… by the sword" (*The Parting of the Ways*, 121). See also Dunn, "What was the Issue," 298-299; L. Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 34; Leuven, Paris, Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2003) 145-147.
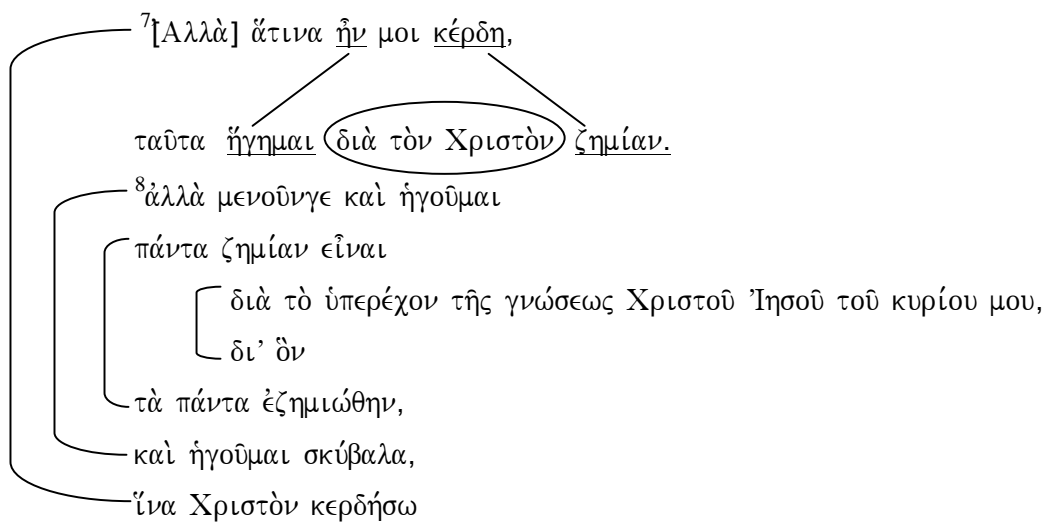
[123] (κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, 3:6; cf. Gal 1:13-14).

[124] Dunn: "[Paul] saw Hellenists as a threat to his own identity as a covenant member and as a threat to the covenant itself" (*The Parting the Ways*, 122).

covenant; the identity and the very existence which were constantly challenging by Gentiles.[125]   So ἐν σαρκί, Paul had a full confidence of been in the privileged position as a member of the covenant (κέρδη 3.7; cf. Rom 3:1-2). Why did he decide to renounce it?

3.3.2 Changing point: διὰ τὸν Χριστόν (3:7-8)

In 3:7-9 Paul describes his own transition from one evaluative setting to another:[126] what had been his gain, has become loss *through Christ*:

[7][Ἀλλὰ] ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη,

ταῦτα ἥγημαι (διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν) ζημίαν.
[8]ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι
πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι
   διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου,
   δι’ ὃν
τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην,
καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα,
ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω

It is important to note that there is no argumentation here, no theological reasoning to

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[125]   Dunn: as a Pharisee, "[Paul] wanted to draw a tighter stricter line round the "righteous," to mark them off even more clearly from the Gentile 'sinner'" (*The Parting of the Ways*, 121).

[126]   The timing of this change is not clear: does Paul speaks here about his experience on the Damascus road or is it his later re-thinking of the significance of (his) Jewish piousness in the light of his missionary activities among Gentiles. See D. Georgi, *Theocracy in Paul's Praxis and Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991) 19.

explain, and no historical reasoning to justify *why* Paul has admitted Christ's superiority over everything he had considered previously as something valuable.[127] Christ's superiority is purely postulated as an axiom; it is not (even hypothetically) questioned here.

Paul's aim here is to draw a solid line between the two worlds: one without Christ, and another one with Christ. He introduces his main idea straight away: through Christ (διὰ τὸν Χριστόν) everything which seemed to be valuable (ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη) turns to be rubbish. In other words, his Jewish advantage of being in the exclusive position of covenant does not stand against what Christ can offer. Paul plays with words here: Christ himself becomes the advantage (ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω); and in that sense, Christ replaces περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος,[128] i.e. he now is the distinctive mark of those who is in the covenant with God. Paul's Jewish worldview is changed now: the division between Jews and Gentiles has got no sense any longer, as the world is now divided by Christ.

So, Christ is not just an alternative way to enter the covenant (created especially for Gentiles in order not to trouble them with circumcision and observing the Law); it is an absolute way: in comparison to Christ, what used to be Jewish privilege is not just less valuable, but should be rejected as waste. It is rather different with Paul's discourse in Rom 3:1-2 ("…what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect," NAU). Here in the letter to Philippians, Paul speaks in terms of black and white, where there is no gradation

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[127] Cf. Gal 3, Rom 4 and the letter to the Hebrew where Christ's superiority over Jewish worship to God is a subject of long and detailed explanations.

[128] See section 3.3.1 above, for "circumcision" as a symbol of Paul's Jewish identity.

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or penumbras, no middle ground, but there is only a solid bound; and one is either here or there, either with "us" or with "them." What Paul has rejected, is referred to his base of relying on flesh (3:4); and Christ, his new gain (new κέρδη, 3:8) is, therefore the base for his relying on the spirit (3:3 – "[true] circumcision" is "not flesh," "Christ" and "spirit": οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες).
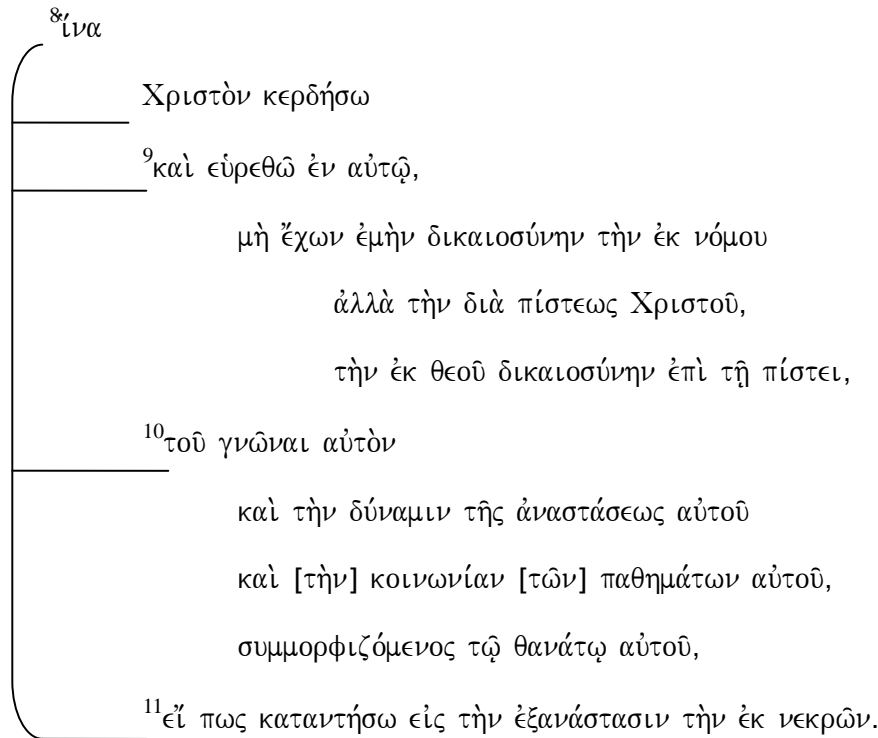
Though in his other texts, Paul still pays respect to his ethnical origin and is proud of his belonging to the covenant people, here he rejects *both* his Jewishness and his accomplishments in the Law. It obviously has a polemical reason, as 3:7-8 is a part of the discussion with "others" and arguing for the Christian community being a true people of the covenant (3:3 ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν ἡ περιτομη).[129]

In 3:9-11, Paul speaks about *what for* he did it (ἵνα). The answer is the same: Christ. There are four verbs in the passage; and three of them (κερδήσω, εὑρεθῶ, and καταντήσω) are in the subjunctive aorist 1st pers. sg, which make them all conducted by the preposition ἵνα ("in order to gain Christ, and be found in him… and attain resurrection from death" – my translation, *M.K.*).[130] The second verb, (γνῶσαι) is in

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[129] Brawley sees here an example of so-called "salience identity," when for rhetorical reasons Paul makes his in-Christ identity salient (see section 2.1.2 of this study, above): In other contexts, for example, in Rom 11.1, the apostle's Jewish identity is emphasized (Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection," 131). See also Campbell, *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity*, 88, 149-51, 157-158, where he underlines that Paul does not reject his Jewish identity thoroughly, yet he compares it with that in Christ, and by doing so, builds a new reality. This supports our argument that the apostle accentuates belonging to Christ as new identity consciously, he does it on purpose. To make his readers to think about whom they relate to is his point here.

[130] Most commentators view the last verb, εἴ πως καταντήσω, as belonging to the clause started in v.10 and introduced by τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν (see Fee, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 237-337). We take καταντήσω as an equal predicate, as, according to Gundry, εἴ πως should not be interpreted as a weakening adverb (meaning certain level of doubt), but as an expression of Paul's expectation "whose fulfillment comes from God" (V. Gundry, *Paul and Perseverance* (WUNT 2. Reihe 37; Tübingen: J C B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1990) 257-258). Paul also uses particle ἐι in 3:12 (διώκω δὲ εἰ καὶ καταλάβω), which together with the ἐι-clause of v.11 has a polemical

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an infinitive aorist, which together with the Genitive define article expresses the purpose. Though there are other possibilities, it should be taken as a parallel to the other verbs.[131]

⁸ἵνα

Χριστὸν κερδήσω

⁹καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ,

μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου

ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ,

τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει,

¹⁰τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν

καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ

καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ,

συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ,

¹¹εἴ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν.

Paul's reason for throwing away his previous identity is clear: Christ is mentioned in

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purpose, directing against "his perfectionist opponents" (*ibid*. 258; see also Gnilka, "Die antipaulinische Mission in Philippi," 197).

Fee tends to view v.11 as a clause of v.10 because of the chiasm:

"*so that* I may know him
A both the power of his resurrection
    B and participation in his suffering
    B' being conformed to his death
A' if somehow I might attain the resurrection from the dead"

(Fee, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 329, italic original). Though semantically one can see a pattern "resurrection-suffering-suffering-resurrection," the syntax of the Greek does not support it. There is a certain rhythm in first three lines of an alleged chiasm: there is no verb; each of the lines ends with αὐτοῦ. The fourth "line" (v.11) is syntactically totally different, and, as we have noted, the form of verb indicates that it should be taken separately, as one of the ἵνα-group.

[131] See Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 196; CONTRA: Collange, *The Epistle of St.Paul to Philippians*; Martin, *Philippians*.

Fee takes ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτω as a penultimate purpose, while τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτόν as the ultimate purpose (*Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 327).

7 out of 10 lines. So, as in the previous passage, Christ is a central figure: in 3:7-8 he was the reason for rejecting what was valuable; here he becomes not only a new gain (κερδή / κερδήσω 3:7-3:8) and a new measure of righteousness (v.9), but also a new identity mark: as Paul savors his ethnicity in 3.5, now (in 3:10) he speaks with the same precise minuteness about his imitating of Christ's life, almost quoting the Christological hymn (2:6-11). The pattern which is clearly made here is Law vs. Christ.

In this fragment, Paul develops the Christ-theme up to the point, where Christ becomes not just an orientation-mark, according to which he re-evaluates what he previously regarded as "gain" (διά τού Χριστού). Paul picks up the theme of righteousness and contrasts that of the Law and that of God (3:9). This, probably, gives some the impression that the Law and the righteousness from it is the only thing of Paul's past that he rejects.[132] But the apostle does not stop here and continues extending the Christ-topic, when Christ is not just an object, which one can gain (κερδήσω) or which is a characteristic of something (διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ), but Christ becomes almost a subject, as Paul wants to totally identify with him and literally repeat his way of life (τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτόν 3:10-11).[133] In that sense, Christ is not just something external to Paul: Christ forms the very entity of the new group

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[132] See Dunn, "Who Did Paul Think He Was," 186.

[133] Paul presents "the γνῶσις Χριστοῦ Ιησοῦ as a distinctive mark of the Christian" (Bultmann, Γινώσκω, γνῶσις, ἐπιγνώσκω, ἐπίγνωσις in *TDNT*, I:710). In 3:10-11 Paul describes in detail how he is going "to know" Christ. The detail the apostle goes into (resurrection, suffering, death) resembles the details he describes his ethnicity in (3:5). The distinction between the two ways of association with Christ in 3:9-11 is conditional: even in 3:10, where he speaks about righteousness, Paul starts with εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, i.e. with identification. Bultmann also notes that in Jewish usage, knowledge of God is equal to fear of God and obedience to him (loc.cit., 701) – the nuance, which correlates with hierarchy in the in-Christ group (see chapter 4 of this study, below).

(which Paul now is a member of) – the in-Christ-group, which is, in the given context, the opposition to the Israel group (ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ). The righteousness that Paul wants to achieve in Christ is the righteousness in God (τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην 3:10). The fact that "in-Christ" eventually means "in God," again, connects with 3:3 οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες – the assertion that "we are" the true chosen people of God, the ones who are in the ("true") covenant with God ("the circumcision," ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν ἡ περιτομή).

Paul's example, hence, forms a chiasm, where he contrasts two identities, both claiming to be "circumcision," i.e. in the covenant with God:

A' ethnical entity (ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ, 3:5)

    B' the Law as evaluative system δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου

        C Shifting point (3:7-8) διά τόν Χριστόν

    B' δικαιοσύνην… τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ (3:9)

A' (spiritual) entity with Christ (3:10-11)

The following verses join it very closely:[134] in 3:12-14 the apostle continues speaking about his relationship with Christ. The fragment makes an ambivalent impression: Paul is being humble and clearly articulates his imperfection (3:12a, 13a), a thought that also clearly puts his ultimate goal quite high and declare that he, with all of his strength and ability, wants to be with Christ and to gain the price for being absolutely loyal to him (3:12b, 13b-14). To describe his aspiration towards

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[134] Heil sees the whole chapter 3:1-21 as a chiastically structured unit (*Philippians: Let Us Rejoice*, 114).

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Christ himself and God's reward, he uses the same word he used to describe him persecuting the church (διώκω 3:6). That indicates that Paul still continues his thought and wants to underline that he has the same zeal and the same eagerness for his new community with Christ as he has had in his previous life as a Jew. Thus, Paul's personality did not change: he is still the same enthusiast and pursuer of what he believes is good for the community he belongs to; he is still very competitive (see section 4.2 below). The only thing which has changed is the community his fervor is directed to. The continuation of Paul's personal character sets off the change of his identity.

In 3:15-17 Paul asks his readers to imitate him and his co-workers, i.e. to complete the transition from the old, "relying on flesh" mind-set to the "in-Christ" one. He wants all his progenies to be like-minded as himself - that is to be totally concentrated on Christ and to view the world having Christ as the orientation mark.

Those who do not have Christ as their guiding line, automatically become "enemies" (3:18): if one does not belong to "us," then it means one belongs to "them" and hence, is our enemy. The contrast of "earthly mind-setting" and "heavenly πολίτευμα" (3:19-20) indicates (again) the spiritual character of the new commune (cf. 3:3 οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες... οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες). And the main feature of τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς is that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming from there to make the new identity obvious and the difference between "us" and "them" visible:

^{20}ἐξ οὗ καὶ σωτῆρα ἀπεκδεχόμεθα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν,

^{21}ὃς μετασχηματίσει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν

σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ

κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ δύνασθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα.

Paul's conversion to Christ has not been a conversion from one religion to another one, but as a commission for the mission to the Gentiles.[135] The point is that as the result of his Damascus road experience, Paul stopped seeing the Law and the Jewishness as the identity markers of the covenant. The world stopped being divided by the Law into Jews and non-Jews (as Judith Lieu puts it: "the boundary line drawn is being erased"),[136] and started being divided by Christ into Christ-followers and Christ-enemies. To enter the covenant, a Gentile does not need to be circumcised and to keep the law any more, as the new entrance to the covenant is Christ himself.[137]

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[135] See J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul and the Law. Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1990) 101, n.1; *idem*, *The Parting of the Ways*, 122; Georgi, *Theocracy in Paul's Praxis*, 19.

[136] Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 128.

[137] There is a discussion on whither Paul totally obliterates his previous Jewish identity and socialization and becomes "a new creation" (Barclay, "Paul's story: Theology as Testimony," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* (ed. B.W. Longenecker. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002) 139-140), or his identity was rather "transformed" or "reevaluated" (Campbell, *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity*, 88-89). Campbell argues that obliteration of social and historical categories in Christ is rather an eschatological expectation, which has not been yet fulfilled. Social, ethnical, gender differences (i.e. identities) remain actual, though having "only relative significance" (loc.cit., 89).

In Phil 3:4-11 Paul clearly states obliteration of his previous identity. Formally, 3:7-8 is a *comparison*, yet in fact the contraposition κέρδη *versus* ζημία means "significant" *versus* "no value, zero." Paul literally annuls his forms identity marks displacing them with Christ. In other texts (Rom 9, 11; Gal 2:14; 2 Cor 11:22) the fact that his Jewish identity is still significant for him is obvious. Yet in Phil 3, for the sake of the argument (i.e. emphasizing his readers' identity in Christ as the base for keeping unity), he concentrates on the absolute superiority of Christ as a source of identity and an honor-bestower.

So, previously, the main orientation mark of his self-understanding and his world-view was "covenant focused on Torah,"[138] i.e. he viewed himself as one who belonged to the elected people of God and who keeps the Law zealously. Now Christ has become this identity mark: Paul views himself as being "in Christ" and his devotion to Christ is so intense that it demands total dedication and rejection of any other identity marks (πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι 3:8). Relation to Christ as to a border of one's identity presupposes that one's socialization takes place within this "in-Christ" group, which is a subject of the next chapter or our study.

3.3.3 Conclusion: Paul's new identity in Christ

Paul's testimony in ch.3:4-11 is a part of the discourse with the opponents in Phil 3 and overall in the letter. In Phil 3, his autobiographical passage is incorporated into the larger section dedicated to the warning against the opponents: it follows the trice-repeated "beware" and is connected to it by linguistic and semantic parallels. The apostle's testimony here does not emphasize God's intervention into his life (as in Acts 22:1-21) or Divine origin of Paul's apostolic authority (as in Gal 1:13-24 ff.); the purpose of Paul's own example here is to demonstrate the superiority of the "us"-group over the "them"-group by the transition from one group to another one.

The analysis of the passage 3:4-11 demonstrates that Paul does not bring any real argument for the advantages of being a member of the "in-Christ" group. In the

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[138] The term of Dunn (*The Parting of the Ways*, 23).

absence of any historical, theological or ethical reasoning, the only difference between the two groups is Christ himself. So, Christ becomes the only identification marker, dividing those, who are "in" him (ἐν αὐτῷ) from those who still think in the fleshy categories of earth (ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες, οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες).

Paul's story is built in a way which serves to underline the specific subjects: as previously Paul's life and self-consciousness were defined by his ethnic belonging to Israel and keeping the Law, the same way now his life and self-consciousness are defined by the personality of Christ. In the past, Paul identified himself and evaluated himself according to his biological and cultural settings; now the only reality and the only criterion for it is Christ. In that way, in resemblance of the historical Israel people of the covenant, defined by the Mosaic Law, Paul declares superiority of the new community, the true community of covenant (ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν ἡ περιτομή 3:3), which is defined by Christ himself.

In Phlilippians 3, Paul makes a full circle arguing against the wrong identity: he warns his readers to be aware not to be "dogs," i.e. those, who are not part of the covenant people. By his own example, he explains that the only true people of God are those who are separated off the rest by Christ.

3.4 Conclusion: accentuating new identity as an expression of the value of belonging

This chapter was devoted to the analysis of how Paul speaks about Christians' self-understanding in the letter to the Philippians.

First, we analyzed the negative identity in the letter. We observed that the way Paul treats the opposition does not allow reconstructing the historical reality behind its image. Over the letter, the apostle refers to the opponents as to fellow Christians having personal conflict with him (1:15-18), as to some unidentified enemies, which he and the Philippians must fight with (1:27-30), and as to some ugly personalities, which have all possible vices and because of that are "enemies of Christ's cross" (ch. 3). We established that though there was no historical character that could fit all the features of the opponents in the letter, the analysis of the opponents as rhetorical personage helps understand Paul's argumentation. The analysis of the opposition references demonstrated that all of them, in different combinations, share linguistic, structural and semantic matches. The main characteristic of the opponents in the letter is that they are not "us," the apostle uses the image of the enemy for the articulation of "we"-identity, to strengthen the border of the "we"-group.

Next, we looked at the positive identity language in the letter. We pointed out that though Paul and his readers were separated by distance, the apostle keeps addressing them as close friends, underlying strong ties of relationship between him and them. Family language such as ἀδελφοί, as well as very emotional character of

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Paul's addresses (ἀγαπητοὶ καὶ ἐπιπόθητοι) reflect and at the same time reinforce close, even intimate terms. Obviously, the Christian community was perceived by its members as a fictive family. The term κοινωνία reflects not only the active and mutually beneficial character of Paul and the Philippians relations, namely Paul being the spiritual leader and Philippians financially supporting Paul's mission. Together with πολιτεύομαι (πολίτευμα), κοινωνία presents a partnership in a commonwealth. Even being separated, Paul, his co-workers and Philippians share the same reality, which differ from that of the opposition. The center of the cause, which unites all the members of the commonwealth, is Christ and dissemination of the gospel (τό εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἡ πίστις τοῦ εὐαγγελίου), which is nothing else but the expansion of the "heavenly city" (τό πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς). Paul explicitly appeals to his readers to stay faithful and loyal to their Christian community (1:27-28, τοῦτο φρονεῖτε 2:5, 3:15, 4:2), and honor-competition is banned (2:2-4) as a possible reason for conflicts inside the group. All abilities and energies of the group-members must be concentrated on ὁ ἔργον Χριστοῦ.

In the third section of the chapter we examined Paul's own example of the changed identity, his transition from the outer circle into the in-Christ group. We established that Paul's testimony in 3:4-11 is all about contrasting his previous life and his present Christocentric world-view. He used to locate himself within the borders of Mosaic Law and Jewish culture; now, in the same terms, he identifies himself according to Christ. The figure of Christ dominates in Paul's story; his significance is indubitable and needs no justification or explanation. Christ is the definition of reality, the identity mark, measure of value and the value itself; Paul's

ultimate goal is total identification with Christ; and this is what the apostle wants his readers to imitate.

We could see that self-understanding of the Christian community seems to be the most significant theme of the letter to the Philippians. Admonitions for unity are to solidify the Christian group; polemics with the opposition is to set the border between "them" and "us;" Paul's own testimony is to set the example of the correct identification – identification with Christ. This correlates to the fact that belonging to a group is a fundamental value for a collectivist society; this value does not disappear even if the group is changed. Maintaining their solidarity, dissociation from "others" is vital for the Christian community. If previously they associated themselves with a family, a nation, a religious group, now each of them identifies him/herself with Christ and his group. The relation value (see section 2.1 of this study) remains the same; the only thing that changed regarding the identity, is the identity symbol (marker): now Christ is both the border and the unifying center of church.

CHAPTER 4

PAUL'S ARGUMENTATION OF HONOR-VALUE: DEALING WITH HONOR IN A HEAVENLY SOCIETY

In the previous chapter we have established that throughout the letter Paul uses different examples to outline the boundaries of a new reality, a new dominion – that of Christ. For the "in-Christ" group, Christ is a boundary, an identity marker; and at the same time, he is the center of the group, which fastens the group together and holds it with centrifugal force (unity in Christ). The in-Christ-group by definition has a collectivist character: one's identity is defined by "the other" – Christ; the unit here is not an individual, yet some *number* of the members or non-members of the "in-Christ" group; even speaking about his *personal* experience, Paul presents himself in terms of his relationships with *others*, about his displacement from one group to another one (from the "relying-on-flesh" group to the "in-Christ" one). Also by definition, the relationships inside a collectivistic group are regulated with a honor and shame system.[1] Indeed, the honor-issue (namely, the apostle's honor being challenged by his rivals) is one of the main themes of the letter to Philippians. And in the present section we will analyze how, in Paul's presentation, honor-value is dealt with in the "in-Christ" group.

We will start with the Christological hymn[2] in 2:6-11, which is agreed to be the

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[1] See sections 2.1.3 and 2.1.4 of this study.

[2] Phil 2:5-11 was first identified as a hymn by J. Weiss *Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik* in 1897; E.

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base on which Paul builds his argumentation on in the letter.[3] In our opinion, the apostle uses the hymn to make his point that a member of the in-Christ-group should expect to be rewarded for his/her loyalty to God as the only patron; and this loyalty must be of a total nature (up to the point of suffering and death). God is the one who bestows honor upon his loyal clients.

The hymn is very important for the structure of Paul's message to Philippians: as

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Lohmeyer described it as "ein Carmen Christi in strengem Sinne" ("a hymn of Christ in the strictest sense") (*Kyrios Jesus: Eine Untersuchung zu Phil.2, 5-11* (Heidelberg, 1961) 7). See also L.J. Kreitzer and D.W. Rooke, "'Singing in a New Key:' Philippians 2.9-11 and the 'Andante' of Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata,*" *ExpT* 109/8 (1998) 231-233; R. Martin, *[Carmen Christi] A Hymn of Christ: Philippians 2.5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 1997) lv-lxv. The reasons for considering a section as a hymn see R. Martin, "Hymns, Hymn Fragment" in *DPHL*, 419-422. There is a discussion on the nature of the section: G. Fee argues that the section is not a pre-Pauline hymn, yet a piece of "exalted Pauline prose" ("Philippians 2:5-11: Hymn or Exalted Pauline Prose?" *BBR* ii (1992) 29-46); however, later the giveaway slips out: the section 2:5-11 "obviously sings" (idem, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 126, n.42). R.S.J. Murray uses inverted commas for "hymn" in order to "reflect an abiding lack of conviction about this fashionable identification of the genre" ("'Disaffected Judaism' and Early Christianity," in *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us." Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity* (ed. J. Neusner and E.S. Frerichs; Scholar Press Studies in the Humanities; Chico, California: Scholar Press, 1985) 276). Amongst the recent studies, Nebreda is also not convinced of the poetic nature of the section and uses the term "so-called hymn" (*Christ Identity*, 288-297), though he admits that this does not have much influence on "the apostle's overall rhetoric strategy" in the letter (ibid. 292). Witherington treats the section as a hymn, arguing that in the non-Pauline writings, the poetic description of Christ's story adopts the same V-structure as in Philippians (Heb 1; John 1; 1 Pet 2:3) (*Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 132-136).

[3] The section 2:6-11 has been attracting so much attention that it overshadows its context and even the entire epistle (e.g. Käzemann argued that the hymn should be seen as a hermeneutical key to the whole letter ("A Critical Analysis of Philippians 2.5-11," in *God and Christ: Existence and Province* (Journal for Theology and the Church 5. New York: Harper and Row, 1968) 45-88.

Martin and Hawthorne call the hymn the "kerygmatic center," "the most important section of the letter" (*Philippians*, 90, 99). Cf. Perkins, "Philippians: Theology of," 89-104; N.A. Dahl, "Euodia and Syntyche and Paul's Letter to the Philippians," in *The Social World of the First Christians. Essays in Honour of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L. White, and O. Jarbrough; Fortress Press, 1995); P.S. Minear, "Singing and Suffering in Philippi," *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul and John in Honour of J. Louis Martyn* (ed. R. Fortna and B. Gaventa; Nashville: Abingdon, 1990) 202-219. CONTRA: Witherington notes that it is "an enormous mistake to overshadow the ethical admonition of 2.1-4 which gives the clue to the hymn interpretation" (*Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 134). Though we do agree that the author of the letter has "the power to shape the interpretation of the earlier materials in an overall argument" (C.B. Kitterege, *Community and Authority: The Rhetoric of Obedience in the Pauline Tradition* (HTS 45; Harrisburg, Pensilvania: Trinity Press International, 1998) 75), we would not go with Witherington that the hymn is just *one of* illustrations to 2:1-4 (*op.cit,*. 116-117): Christ is definitely a primary exemplary figure and this figure should not be seen in one line with Timothy, Epaphroditus and even Paul (3:10).

Christ is the primary figure and the role-model,[4] his example is located in the first part of the letter[5] and is introduced by the phrase Τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησου (2:5).[6] Paul's own story has the same plot that the hymn has: secure position – voluntary rejection of it – reward (3:5-11), and the phrase τοῦτο φρονῶμεν is repeated after Paul tells his own story (3:15, cf. 3:17). That is why after analyzing the hymn and its context, we will also see how the apostle explains "the correct attitude" on his own example and how he deals with his own honor in the Christian community. We will demonstrate that via the orientation of his readers to God as the only granter of honor and strengthening their identity as members of in-Christ group, Paul makes them to re-evaluate suffering and disgrace caused by the outsiders and to understand their hardship as a token of honor they are about to receive from God. By doing this, the apostle does not reject the honor-value, nor praises the suffering; he rather changes the set and pleads with his readers to seek for honor in the context of πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς.

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[4]   Käzemann argued that the hymn (2:6-11) does not present Christ as a model to imitate, yet is an account of soteriological events ("A Critical Analysis"). According to him, Paul builds his ethical admonition (2:1-4) not on the example of Christ, but on the *new situation* ("being in-Christ") in which believers now live (see R. Morgan, "Incarnation, Myth and Theology: Ernst Käzemann's Interpretation of Philippians 2.5-11," in *Where Christology Began: Essays on Philippians 2* (ed. R. Martin and B. Dodd. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998) 66). On this, see also section 4.1.5.1 of this study, below.

[5]   The hymn opens the *probatio* part of the letter and hence it is "the prime paradigm," "the community-creating example" (Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 117). Thought Käzemann does not see the hymn presenting Christ as an example to be imitated. For his *ecclesiological* interpretation of the hymn see below. See critique of Käzemann's view in Oakes, *Philippians: From People*, 190-191.

[6]   "Have this attitude," "think this way" is one of the connotations of the phrase τοῦτο φρονεῖτε. See section 4.1.5.1 of this study, below.

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4.1 Christological hymn: Christ's way of dealing with honor

The hymn recounts Christ's parabolic story: his descent and exaltation. The sequel of the two is important,[7] as there is a tendency to concentrate on the suffering as the only way to identify with Christ.[8] The hymn starts with the statement of Christ's original status as that of equal to God (2:6). Despite his high position, Christ decided to derogate himself (ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν 2:7) and to undergo the humiliation down to death (2:7-8). For this experience, God exalted Christ (διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν 2:9a), giving him the highest honor admitted by the whole universe (2:9b-11). Paul interprets the story of Christ for the specific rhetorical needs of the letter to the Philippians.

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[7] See Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering*, 195-196.

[8] The most of the scholars takes the humiliation of Christ as the central theme of the hymn (following the parallel of Paul's appeal τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἀλλήλους ἡγούμενοι ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν (2:3) and the hymn's ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν (3:8)). Humbleness and self-humility, i.e. avoiding honor competition by putting oneself in scienter inferior position, are considered as the new virtues of Christ followers, as it was Christ's way of life. Hence, suffering becomes the main point and the main indication of unification with Christ. Christians are to adopt Christ's self-denying and voluntary suffer and care for each other, as Christ was suffering for their sake: "Like Christ, the two [Timothy and Epaphroditus], as well as Paul himself, have acted out of a concern for Philippians"(K.O. Sandnes, *Belly and Body in the Pauline Epistles* (SNTS MS 120; Cambridge: University Press, 2002) 142; cf. S.E. Fowl, *The Story of Christ in the Ethics of Paul: An Analysis of the Function of the Hymnic Material in the Pauline Corpus* (JSNTSS 36; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 92-95; see also T. Engberg-Pedersen, "Stoicism in Philippians," in *Paul in His Hellenistic Context* (ed. T. Engberg-Pedersen; London, New York: T&T Clark, 1994) 256-290, on pp. 274-7; O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians*, 342-344. However, relatively recently the tendency seems to change: Martin, *Carmen Christi*, xxiv-xxv.

Seeley in 1990 and Bloomquist in 1993, in two independent studies, challenged this view. Seeley marks out the obedience (to God) as the key characteristic of Christ's in the Philippians' hymn (D. Seeley, *The Noble Death: Graeco-Roman Martyrology and Paul's Concept of Salvation* (JSOT SS 28; Sheffied: JSOT Press, 1990) 57). Analyzing the letter to Philippians from rhetorical point of view, Bloomquist argued that the theme of suffering in the whole letter and in the Christological hymn in particular had an ancillary role, helping Paul to achieve certain rhetorical aims (Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering*, 191-193); and secondly, suffering in Philippians is closely tied to the sequel suffering-vindication: "suffering points beyond itself to vindication" (*loc.cit,* 196). The point of the hymn 2:6-11 is "[the] underscoring the fact that vindication follows suffering" (*loc.cit,* 195). "Paul's emphasis is not on suffering itself but on the experiences of Christ in their totality," i.e. his suffering *and* his resurrection (*loc.cit.,* 170, italic added; arguing with Schweizer's suggestion that "the meaning of obedience… is: acceptance of suffering" (E. Schweitzer, *Lordship and Discipleship* (SBT 28; London: SCM Press, 1960) 62).

4.1.1 Christ's interaction with God in terms of honor

Though the poetic character of the section 2:6-1 is agreed on among scholars,[9] its structure is far from agreement amongst each other.[10] This can be explained by a hypothesis that in the present text of the letter we have got *a version* of the original hymn, edited by Paul for his own purposes.[11] The hymn has been attracting the attention of theologians of all times. It has been giving a lot of materials for the discussion over the pre-incarnational status and nature of Christ, over the nature and mechanics of his incarnation and *kenosis* and over the relation between the two.[12] The aim of this part of our research is to analyze the honor-discourse of the section, and not the literal analysis of it or its hypothetical pre-Pauline form (though some references will be made where it is helpful for the main purpose).

As it has just been mentioned, from the literary point of view one can structure the hymn in different ways. Yet if one takes as criteria "spatial" or "kinetic" characteristics, one can see a three-phase sequence of Christ's story: Christ being in the

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[9] Fee doubted the piece was a pre-Pauline hymn and argued that it was "exalted Pauline prose" ("Philippians 2:5-11"). On the question of genre, and on the reconstruction of the original form of the hymn, see Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 288-292; Martin, *Carmen Christi*, xl-xlix. For the sake of space herefrom we will call the section "the hymn."

[10] Lohmeyer was first to propose 6 stanzas with 3 lines in each (*Kyrios Jesus*, 5-6; cf. Silva, *Philippians: Commentary*, 93-94). Matthew Black sees the hymn as consisting of four twisting chiasms (the last two lines of each chiasm form the first two lines of the next one) (*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 45 (1962), 314 ff.; reference from N. Turner, *Style* (Volume 4 of A Grammar of New Testament Greek; ed. J.H. Moulton; Edingurg: T&T Clarck, 1976) 98). See Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 24-41 for other variants of the hymn's structure.

[11] See Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 101; Bockmuel, *The Epistle to Philippians*, 119.

[12] The statement has given a lot of material for the study of early Christology, which lies beyond the limits of our topic. Anyway Christology is not the main theme of the letter to Philippians and if only one's agenda is not the reconstruction its *Sitz im Leben* or its *Vorlage*, one's concentration on it means "missing the point" (Whitherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 135-136).

image of God (2:6); Christ's kenosis (2:7-8); and Christ's exaltation by God (2:9-11). The journey of Christ is a parabolic one: from above down and then up again. As the first phase is expressed by only one phrase, even probably without a proper verb,[13] the three-phase sequence is not too convincing.

However, if one analyzes the actions and interactions of the characters in the hymn, then the two-part division is preferable: there are only two active personalities in the hymn: God and Christ; and they act one after another: first, Christ expresses his obedience to God, then God (in return) bestows honor upon Christ. Besides, from the syntactical point of view, the hymn consists of two extensive sentences; in the first part Christ (implied by the relative pronoun ὃς) is the subject; in the second one the subject is God (ὁ θεός):

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[13] 2:6a ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων "which, being the image of God." The second part of the verse, 2:6b οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ is difficult to interpret (see below 3.2.1.2a); it can both mean Christ's equality to God and his beginning kenosis.

I. ⁶ὃς   ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων

  οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,

  ⁷ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν

    μορφὴν δούλου λαβών,

  ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος·

    καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος

  ⁸ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν

    γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου,

    θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.

 ⁹διὸ καὶ (therefore)

II. ὁ θεὸς   αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν

  καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα,

    ¹⁰ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ

      ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων

    ¹¹καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσηται

ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός.

Both parts are united by causation (διὸ καί):[14] Christ's obedience is rewarded by God. "The καί marks the element of reciprocity; The καί implies that God on his side responds in raising Jesus. The αὐτόν is emphatic by position, as is natural in a statement of reciprocity. He emptied *Himself*, and God exalted *Him*."[15]

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[14] As the two parts of the hymn differ in style, syntax and also have different subjects (Christ and God respectively), there has been a theory that the hymn actually combines two independent Christologies (see Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 247-148).

[15] Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 231; cf. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 113.

There is also the "third party" in the Christ-God interaction: the heavenly, earthly and subterranean ones, which sometimes are referred to as "cosmic powers."[16] They emerge only in the end of the hymn (though they are probably implicitly present in 2:7-8 also, see below), in the clause, and hence, they play the role of rather witnesses (if not a background) and not the main participants of Christ-God interplay.[17]

One can put it this way: the hymn describes the dynamic of relations between God and Christ, which (relations) take place on the background of the universe: it starts with original equality of Christ and God; then Christ voluntary admits/takes the subordinate position to God (which (position) involves disgrace (in front of cosmos); and then (because of that act of Christ) God restores Christ's status (or gives him the highest possible status) and the universe acknowledges it. In that sense, one can say that the hymn is as much theological as it is Christological, as it tells about both Christ *and* God, about the dynamic of relations between the two.[18]

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[16]   See Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 128; The powers listed in 2:10-11 a called also "demonic" powers, or "all rational beings and in particular alien powers... everyone who is capable of making an intelligent acknowledgement concerning the lordship of Jesus Christ" (loc.cit. 129).

[17]   Technically, "every knee" and "every tongue" (πᾶν γόνυ 2:10; πᾶσα γλῶσσα 2:11) are also subjects, and hence can also be considered as "characters." However, both "knee" and "tongue" are members of clauses, not of the main sentence, and hence, they are dependent on the sentence of ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα and only helps to illustrate it. The subordinate position of 2:10-11 is indicated by the subordinating conjunction ἵνα and the subjunctive of κάμψῃ and ἐξομολογήσηται; it can also be seen from 2:10 picking up the last word and developing the idea of 2:9: …τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα, ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ… Verse 2:11 works as the coda (the final accord) of the hymn: though πᾶσα γλῶσσα is a parallel to πᾶν γόνυ, the content of its testimony refers to both two main objects of the hymn: Christ and God ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός. Nonetheless, these secondary personages of the hymn create an additional aspect of the post-rewarded position of Christ. One can develop a wide discussion about the relationships between God, Christ *and* the universe, using the material of verses 2:10-11 (see Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 249-270). However, the limitations of the present investigation force us to omit this aspect of the hymn, though it will be slightly mentioned later.

[18]   Fee ("Philippians 2:5-11," 40, n.38) and N.T. Wright (*The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992) 84) speak about the hymn being "theological." They both mean by that Christ self-giving is a display of his Godlikeness. In the present study, the subject of the discussion is the character of God as it is revealed in *his interaction* with Christ: God bestows honor upon the one, who has proven his absolute loyalty.

4.1.2 The meaning of 2:6

The hymn starts with a statement that Christ has been an image of God, having a distinct possibility to be God's equal (2:6):

ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων

οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ

The first line of the verse presents Christ as having the highest position one can think of: he was God's image, i.e. somebody at least *comparable* to God. The second line develops this idea and verbalizes the possibility of Christ being God's equal.

The phrase ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων is extremely difficult to translate,[19] as the word μορφή ("form")[20] occurs in the New Testament only three times: Phil 2:6 (the phrase under discussion), 2:7 (μορφὴν δούλου λαβών) and Mark 16:12 (ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ); and in both Old Testament and Jewish literature "there is no room for positive statement about μορφή θεοῦ."[21] Hence, the reconstruction of the meaning should firstly be based on the understanding that the language of the hymn is mythic or mythopoetic,[22] which means it should be rather interpreted than literally translated; and secondly, it should fit into the context of the hymn.

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[19] The survey of possible readings see Marting and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 110-114; Lightfoot, *St.Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 127-133.

[20] Behm, *TDNT*, I:742. Usually in Greek: something "which may be perceived by the senses" (Ibid. 745-46). The question is how it can stay next to θεός as God is invisible (Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 114).

[21] Behm, *TDNT*, I:749.

[22] Which means the language is not descriptive, but rather conveys the idea. See Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 112-113; J.D.G. Dunn, "Demythologizing – The Problem of Myth in the New Testament" in *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods* (ed. I.H. Marshall; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 235,241.

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So, the obvious antithesis[23] between Phil 2:6a and 2:7b demands that whatever meaning of μορφή is employed here, it should apply in the same way to both phrases.[24] For now it is needed to note that among the possibilities of the meaning of μορφή here, there are: "glory" (δόξα);[25] "image" (εἰκών);[26] "mode of being" (*Daseinsweise*);[27] and "condition, status."[28] As the focus of the present study is to analyze the dynamic of honor-shame relations, the latter connotation of μορφή is one that requires our interest.

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[23] "The drama of the hymn is built around the extreme contrast between God and slave, the major opposition in the first half of the hymn" (Kitterege, *Community and Authority*,7 8).

[24] Schreiner writes: "The safest way to resolve this debate [on the meaning of μορφή] is to confine ourselves to the existing context instead of attempting to import the meaning of *form* from other passages" (T.R. Schreiner, *The Apostle of God's Glory in Christ* (Downer Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2001) 171, italic original). Cf. Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 110; Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 204.

[25] As God's appearance in the OT was his glory (Ex 16:10; 24:15; Lev 9:6, 23; Num 12:8; 14:10; Cf. John 17:5 where Christ refers to his pre-existence as to "glory" (Behm, *TDNT* 1:751). However, this reading is dismissed by the impossibility to apply the meaning to μορφῇ δουλοῦ (see Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 111).

[26] Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 281-88; J. Murphy-O'Connor, "Christological Anthropology in Phil:6-11" in *Revue biblique* 83 (1976) 25-50. In this case, ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων is read as being synonymous to ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ (2 Cor 4:4) and ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου (Col 1:15) and hence, refers to Christ as the second Adam (see Rom 5:18-19; 1 Cor 15:45-47). This suggests that Phil 2:6 speaks about Christ being already a human, though 2:7 indicates that Christ's incarnation was part of him taking on μορφὴ δούλου (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος). CONTRA: Martin, *Carmen Christi*, xx-xxi ("[I]n order to achieve the required result, i.e. the final glory of the last Adam, the hymn's sequence needs to begin with how it was with Christ's state *ab initio*. The hymn's thought cannot start from Adam of Genesis but must go behind that Adam to Him who was the archetype of Adam" (op.cit., xxi); cf. Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 111-112.

[27] Käzemann, "A Critical Analysis," 59-63. This view is heavily dependent on the suggestion that the hymn refers to the Gnostic "Heavenly Hyman Being" myth. The view was criticized by D. Georgi, "Der Vorpaulinische Hymnus Phil 2,6-11," in *Zeit und Geschichte. Dankesgabe an Rudolf Bultmann zum 80. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1964) 263-266; cf. Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 121-128.

[28] Schweizer, *Lordship and Discipleship*, 62; Bockmuel, *The Epistle to Philippians*; Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 95-96. However, this the meaning of μορφή as "status/position" is absent in Greek literature (Behm, *TDNT* I:742-743) with the exception of Tob 1:13 (Martin, *Carmen Christi*, xx; though Behm gives a figurative meaning in Tob 1:13 as "good-pleasure" and *Corp.herm.*1.13-14 (*TDNT* I:743). The latter was used by Käzemann, though later he rejected the redeemer myth as a help for understanding of Phil 2.5-11 (Käzemann, "A Critical Analysis," 63; see R. Morgan, "Incarnation, Myth and Theology: Ernst Käsemann's Interpretation of Philippians 2.5-11," in *Where Christology Began: Essays on Philippians 2* (ed. R. Martin and B. Dodds. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998) 43-73, on p. 69).

Due to the uncertainty with the meaning of ἁρπαγμόν, the meaning of οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεω has also been widely debated.[29] The word is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament, and is also very rare in Greek.[30] The ways of interpreting the word ἁρπαγμός can be divided into two main directions: it can have an active or a passive meaning.

If the connotation of the noun ἁρπαγμός follows that of the verb ἁρπάζω, it will mean "plunder" or "robbery."[31] In this case, the phrase οὐχ ἡγήσατο ἁρπαγμὸν τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῶ can be interpreted as "considering himself as God's equal one was not a crime in his position," which means that claiming the equality with God was defensible due to the high status of Christ.[32] As 2:6a does not have a predicate of its own,[33] the verb

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[29] See Martin (*Carmen Christi*, 134-164) for the details of the debate. See Nebreda (*Christ Identity*, 302) on the clear explanation of possible meanings of the phrase.

[30] Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 134.

[31] This reading is stated by early Latin commentators: Tertullian *de Resurr. Carn.* 6, *adv. Prax.* 7, *adv. Marc.* v.20; St. Ambrose *de Fid.* ii. 8; St. Augustine *Sermons*, 92, 118, 183, 186, 213, 244, 264, 292, 304; *Questions on the Old and New Testaments* 97.2 *On the Trinity* 6.5 Quodvultdeus *On the Creed* 1.3.14-15 and Ambrosiaster *Phil* 2:6 (quoted by Lightfoot (*St.Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 134-137). Lightfoot explains this reading by the mistaken translation of the construction οὐ... ἀλλα as "non... sed" which does not "bring out the idea of contrast so strongly as οὐ... ἀλλα" and by the fact that "rapinam arbitrary," a Latin translation of ἡγήσατο ἁρπαγμὸν, does not convey the possible passive meaning which the Greek word ἁρπαγμός has got (*loc.cit.*, 134).

[32] Cf. S.H. Hooke, *Alpha and Omega* (Nisbet: Welwyn, 1961) 257; Barclay, "Great Themes of the New Testament: I. Philippians 2.1-11," *ExpT* 70 (1958) 1:4-7; 2:40-44. The same meaning has Hammerich's reading: according to him, ἁρπαγμὸς should be understood "to be caught up in a mystical rapture," as the same root is used in 1 Thes 4:17 (ἁρπαγησόμεθα ἐν νεφέλαις εἰς ἀπάντησιν τοῦ κυρίου εἰς ἀέρα) and 2 Cor 12:2-4 (οἶδα ἄνθρωπον... ἁρπαγέντα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἕως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ.... ὅτι ἡρπάγη εἰς τὸν παράδεισον); in contrast with believers and Paul himself, for Christ being with God was no rapture, "it was his nature" (L.L.Hammerich, *An Ancient Misunderstanding: (Phil. 2.6 "robbery")* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1966) 193). Russian Orthodox tradition interprets the phrase in the same way: the equality with God is not something which does not belong to Christ; this interpretation is obvious in Russian Synodal Translation of Phil 2:6.

Pavel Florensky argues, that ἁρπαγμός does not have connotation of "robbery" or "theft," "it should be understood as a technical term of mysticism – 'rapture,' 'mystical ecstasy,' and the whole passage takes the following meaning: "Иисус Христос… пребывая… в сущности Божественной (и следовательно, не нуждался в возвышении, не нуждался в том, чтобы взять себе, усвоить сущность Божественную)… *то не видел в этом Своем равенстве Богу экстатического акта*, или, другими словами, в равенстве Своем Богу не усматривал для Себя того возвышения над Своею природою, которое мечтают получить мистики…Вопреки тому, что обычно бывает в

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phrase οὐχ ἡγήσατο ἁρπαγμόν serves as a predicate for both the lines. Both lines are parallel to each other (Christ did not regard his equality with God being a robbery *because* he was his image), and hence, the antithesis (what he actually did despite of his status) starts with 2:7 (ἀλλά ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν).[34]

In his brilliant commentary on the epistle to the Philippians, Lightfoot explains, why the active reading of ἁρπαγμός is not adequate.[35] He builds his argumentation on two facts: first, the particles οὐ and ἀλλά create a construction οὐ... ἀλλα, often used in the New Testament[36] and in Pauline writings particularly,[37] should be translated as "*not so much... as ...*," "in which the first element is not entirely negated, but only toned down."[38] If the line 2:7a was opposite to the line 2:6b, ἀλλα would be rendered as ἀλλ ᾽ὅμως, which, by the opinion of Lightfoot, is both "unnatural" and "fails entirely to

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экстазе, где человек хочет *подняться* над своею природою, Христос себя умалил… взял на Себя существо рабье в отношении к Его собственной Божественной природе" ("Jesus Christ… being… in the essence of God (and hence, had no need in any elevation; had no need to take on the Divine essence)… *he did not see his equality to God as an ecstatic act*, or, in other words, in his equality to God he did not see any elevation over his own nature (the elevation, which mystics dream to get through ecstasy)… Contrary to what usually happens in ecstasy, when a human wants *to rise over* his nature, Christ humiliated himself… he took on the essence, which is slavery to his own divine nature." Translation is ours – *M.K.*) (P. Florensky, "Ne voschichenie nepcheva" ["He did not consider it robbery," in *Sochinenia v 4 tomach. Tom 2 [Writings in four volumes. V. 4]* Moskva: Misl, 1996) 143-188, on p. 146, italic original).

33 As ὑπάρχων is a participle, ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων does not has its own proper verb.

34 If one takes ἁρπαγμός as standing for "prize," or "booty," or even "good fortune/windfall" (if one takes the whole phrase ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο as an idiom; see Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 143-144; Käzemann, "A Critical Analysis," 70; Lohmeyer, *Kyrios Jesus*, 23ff.), the antithesis starts at 2:6b. In fact, the antithesis disappears, as there is almost no thesis: the latter is shorten to ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων (what Christ was), which first, has no predicate, and second, lengthwise looks rather scanty next to the 2:6b-7 (what Christ decided to do).

35 Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 133-137.

36 This usage of the construction is very often in the New Testament: Mk 9:37, Mt 10:20, John 12:44, Acts 5:4.

37 The usage of the construction in Pauline writings: Rom 4:13; 8:15; 9:8; 1 Cor 9:12; 15:10; 2 Cor 5:2; 10:12; 12:6.

38 *BDF*, 448.1.

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explain the emphatic position of ἁρπαγμόν."[39] The second argument of Lightfoot is that early Greek commentaries support the passive reading, when ἡγήσατο ἁρπαγμὸν τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεω is interpreted as the act of Christ's self-humiliation already.[40]

The reading of the ἁρπαγμός is in its passive meaning as "prize" or "booty," which has already being possessed (*res rapta*) or yet needs to be gained (*res rapienda*).[41] The difference between *res rapta* and *res rapienda* is significant for the estimation of whither Christ had the equality with God before his *kenosis*,[42] or he gained it only after his incarnation and death.[43] Foester defines the word in some middle way, as "a possibility soon to materialize which must not be lost"[44] (see below). The two passive meanings are not mutually exclusive:[45] Their common ground can be found in the possibility to understand ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγεῖσθαι as a proverbial expression meaning "to

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[39] Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 134.

[40] Ibid. 135. Lightfoot refers to Euseb. *H.E.* v.2, *Ecl.Proph.* iii.4, *Eccles.Theol. i*.13, 20; Origen *Comm. Jo.* vi.37, *Comm. Rom* v.2, x.7; Pseudo-Athanasius *Hom. de sem.* ii.; Isidore of Pelusium *Epistles* iv.22; Cyril of Alexandria *c.Jul.*vi. Interestingly enough that Russian Synodal Translation (RST) reads it as "не почитал хищением быть равным Богу" ("he did not consider being equal to God as robbery." RST follows Church Slavonic text ("не восхище   ," which reads literally: "no robbery considered to be equal to God"), which in its turn was made from Greek by Cyrill and Methody in IX CE, and checked against Greek manuscripts in XIV CE.

[41] See Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 137-139.

[42] Käsemann, "A Critical Analysis," 69ff.; Schweizer, *Lordship and Discipleship*, 62.

[43] Heen supports this view that Christ's equality to God should be seen not already possessed (E.M. Heen, "Phil. 2:6-11 and Resistance to Local Timocratic Rule: *Isa Theō* and the Cult of the Emperor in the East," *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (ed. R. Horsley; Harrisburg, London, New York: Trinity Press International, 2004) 138). "The text suggests that such a divine status (τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,) was granted to Jesus *in response to* his life of service and obedience (vv.7-8)" (Ibid. 139). That means that v.2:6b refers to something (i.e. Christ's *divine honors*) which temporally follows vv.7 and 8 and belongs to vv.9-11. The problem here is that according to grammar, present-tense participle of the line 2:6a (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων) cannot be separated from the verb ἡγήσατο – both acts happen simultaneously (D.B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basis. An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Syntax, and Greek Word Indexes* (Grand Rapids: Zondervann, 1996) 625-626), which means that Christ's "being in the form of God" also belong to his pose-exaltation state.

[44] W. Foester, *TDNT*, I:473.

[45] Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 149.

regard as a lucky find/windfall."[46] In 1971, Hoover, having done a meticulous analysis of Hellenistic use of the term ἁρπαγμός, made the conclusion that the line 2:6b should be translated as "he did not regard being equal with God as something to take advantage of"[47] – the view which now is held as a standard one.[48]

In all variants of the passive reading of ἁρπαγμόν, the connotation of 2:6b is changed into the opposite one to that in case of active reading: Christ rejects his equality to God, i.e. Christ rejects to grasp (or to hold on) the privileges he could easily have (or has already got) and line 2:6b is parallel to line 2:7a: Christ's decision not to claim the equality with God (i.e. not to claim the privileges this equality imply) is materialized in his *kenosis*. That is, Christ's rejection of equality means that his descending from the highest status of being in God's image begins with 2:6b. And as the refusing of the equality with God is Christ's first step of renunciation of his high status, 2:6b is to be seen as a parallel to 2:7a-8:[49]

^{2:6a} ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων

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^bοὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,
^{7a}ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν
^bμορφὴν δούλου λαβών…

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46 See for details Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 143-144.

47 R.W. Hoover, "The Harpagmos Enigma: A Philological Solution," *HTR* 64 (1971) 95-119, on p. 118.

48 See O'Brien, *The Epistle toPhilippians*, 215-16; Hawthorne, "In the Form of God and Equal with God (Philippians 2:6)" in *Where Christology Began: Essays on Philippians 2* (ed. R. Martin and B. Dodd; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 102-103. NRSV translates it as "did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited;" RSV: "did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped."

49 Silva argues that "v.6 is simply concerned to state negatively what the main verbs in vv.7-8 state positively" (*Philippians: Commentary*, 103). See also Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 305.

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The difficulty with this reading is that syntactically and structurally it is rather complicated: First, line 2:6a is the opposite to all the following lines up to 2:9, which makes it kind of hanging in midair;[50] second, μορφή θεοῦ (2:6a) is obviously antithetically parallel to μορφή δούλου[51] and the four lines can be viewed as a chiasm;[52] this chiastic structure is also supported syntactically:[53] v.6b and v.7a both are sentences with proper verbs; and v.6a and v.7b both are clauses with participles:

[50] Some see Christ's "being in the image of God" is the reason he behaved the way he did (C.F.D. Moule, "Reflection on So-called 'Triumphalism,'" in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology in Memory of George Bradford Caird*. (ed. L.D. Hurst and N.T. Wright. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) 223-25; *idem,* "The Manhood of Christ in the New Testament," in *Christ, Faith and History: Cambridge Studies in Christology* (ed. S.W. Sykes and J.P. Clayton; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972) 95-110; ἀρπαγμός means "snatching," so Christ thought that being equal to God does not mean to snatch everything to himself, but to give away, to empty himself. Hence, 2:6b and 7a reveal the essence of 6a (being an image of God). Wright has the same interpretation (*The Climax of Covenant*, 76-77; cf. D.J. MacLeod, "The Christological Hymn of Philippians 2.5-11," *Biblical Studies* 158.3 (2001), 308-330.

Martin and Hawthorne object this interpretation: first, this reading makes hymn being theological, and not Christological, as it gives an interpretation on what does that mean to be equal to God); second, the tension between v.6 and v.7 is lost; third, there is also a problem with 2:6a: while it is rather concessive ("*though* he was in the form of God"), and according to Moule (see above), it becomes causative ("*because* he was in form of God") (Martin and Hauthorne, *Philippians*, 116).
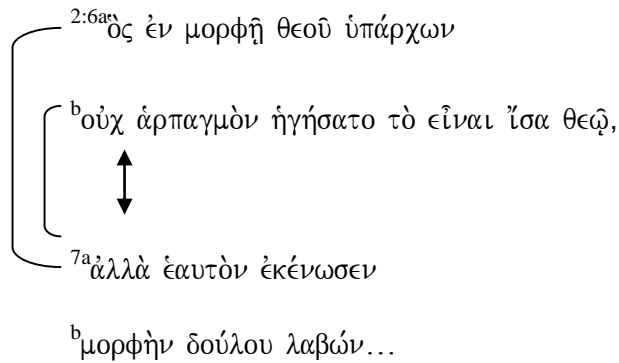
From historical-cultural perspective this reading is also difficult: v.6a (μορθή θεοῦ) becomes parallel to 7b (μορθή δουλοῦ) which is nearly impossible (cf. Käzemann, "A Critical Analysis," 48 critique on Lohmeyer). One can speak about pious "servant of God," which lot is suffering in this world; Christ can also be regarded as a servant or the one who takes "an image of a servant" (see John 16); and the church struggled to accept the passion and death of Christ (i.e. the disgrace of Messiah). God cannot be seen as a servant or as one serving to someone else. It can be possible in the mind of 20th century Christian theologian, but not in the mind of 1st century man.

From literary point of view it also does not make much sense as seen 2:6a being revealed in the following lines steals away the drama of the hymn.

[51] Kittredge says: "The drama of the hymn is built around the extreme contrast between God and slave, the major opposition of the first part of the hymn" (*Community and Authority*, 78).

[52] The chiasm is noted by Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 37.

[53] Cf. Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 134; O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians*, 216; Hawthorne, "In the Form of God," 104.

$$^{2:6a}\overset{}{\text{ὃς}} \text{ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων}$$

$$^{b}\text{οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,}$$

$$^{7a}\text{ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν}$$

$$^{b}\text{μορφὴν δούλου λαβών…}$$

The positions of the verbs in the first part of the hymn also make the passive reading of ἁρπαγμός difficult: We have verbs in 2:6b, 2:7a and then only in 2:8a; all other lines contain participles (all present tense, which means they concur with the verbs). Hence, v.2.6 should be seen as one sentence (as it contains only one predicate):[54]

$$\text{οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο}$$

$$\text{ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων} \qquad\qquad \text{τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ}$$
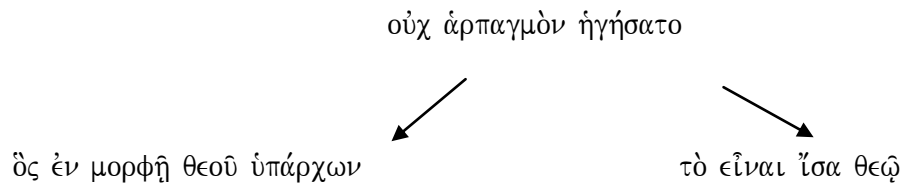
The proposed structure also helps the understanding of 2:6a ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων: Christ's "being in form of God" and his "being equal to God" have overlapping connotations. If 2:6a speaks about Christ being "in form of God," 2:6b[55]

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[54] Ὑπάρχων is a participle; τὸ εἶναι is an infinitive; hence, neither of them can take on the role of the predicate. The only proper verb here is ἡγήσατο.

[55] CONTRA: Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 114-15, as they see the equality with God as only the possibility, which Christ could "snatch" (2:6b), but decided to obtain it through *kenosis* and obedience. Their "chief criticism" is that if Christ has already hold the equality, "it loses the essentially *dramatic* quality of the saga, envisaged as the odyssey of Christ who held his "station" (μορφή) in the divine glory as a springboard from which he might have seized such equality with God but chose otherwise" (*loc.cit.,* 115, italic original). The objection is, however, that if Christ has already been equal to God, his decision to renounce it is even more *dramatic*, as it not only makes higher the status he gave up; it also makes the reason for his decision different: snatching the equality with God has already been proven as a fruitless task by Adam and Satan; so Christ decided to take another route. *Or* he surrenders his equality to God out of truly selfless desire to render homage to the

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refers to the same status being rejected: "'the being equal with God' is precisely another way of saying 'in the form of God.'"[56] "In both cases [2:6a and 2:6b] the idea of status stands at the forefront,"[57] and in that sense, 2:6 states something opposite to the statement of 2:7 (ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν).[58]

The word μορφή stands for the appearance of something;[59] Christ's existence "'in the form of God' implies that outside of his human nature Christ had no other manner of existing apart from… being in possession of all the characteristics and qualities belonging to God."[60] Though one can speculate about different attributes of God which Christ shared before his incarnation, the author of the hymn seems to be interested in God's status as the Supreme Being. This assumption is supported by the fact that both Christ's acts – a negative one (he <u>did not</u> hold on his equality with God, οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ) and a positive one (he <u>did</u> take on the form of slave, μορφὴν δούλου λαβών) – form a contrast of the highest status and a lowest one (θεός and δοῦλος) (see section 4.1.3).

We can conclude that though there are more arguments for seeing οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ as a parallel to 2:7a ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, this preferable reading does not go without difficulties. The reason for that is that τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ is a very powerful claim: it draws one's attention by itself and has the strongest ties with ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων. So, though οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ *is* the first

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Almighty. The latter version seems to be far more gripping.

56   Hawthorne, "In the Form of God," 104.

57   Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 134.

58   Cf. Marting and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 117.

59   Behm, TDNT, I:742-743.

60   Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 114.

step of Christ's *kenosis,* it still points to his highest status as God's equal and "form of God."[61] That fact makes possible the middle interpretation of ἁρπαγμὸς made by St. Chrysostom: "Suppose someone... possesses an estate by nature. He would not have any fear of losing it. He would not then be afraid to descend temporally from his estate of dignity... to God divinity belongs by nature... His dominion was not acquired by seizure but was natural."[62]

Thus, being in God's form, Christ had the right to claim equality with God.[63] For the purpose of the present study it is important to underline that *he knew* he had this right, that is why he was able *to consider* not to exploit it (2:6.b). In the ancient Mediterranean world claiming the equality with someone meant defiance (see ch.2 of the present study). As honor was treated as a limited good, peers constantly fought for it, challenging each other. On the other hand, no honor-challenge was possible between two unequal persons: A legitimate superior one was by definition more honorable than an inferior one. Besides, the honor of an ultimately superior one (such as a king or god) transformed into *grace* − an unchallengeable honor; the defiance of grace was a crime/blasphemy.[64]

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[61] Cf. Hellerman agrees that 2.6b states Christ's real equality to God (*Reconstructing Honor..*, 134-135), yet at the same time "Christ's disposition or attitude toward that status" (Hellerman refers to S.E. Fowl, "Christology and Ethics in Philippians 2:5-11," in *When Christology Began*, 140-153, on p. 142.

[62] St. John Chrysostom, *Homily on Philippians* 8.2.5-11, quoted from *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. New Testament VIII: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians* (ed. Edwards; General ed. T.C. Oden' Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1999) 240.2.

[63] Cf. Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 148; S. Vollenweider argues that the hymn and God-Christ relationship in it should be seen against the hubris of the Hellenistic kings and rulers, against Biblical and Jewish traditions about usurpation of equality with God by kings and rulers ("Der 'Raub' der Gottgleichheit. Ein religionsgeschichtlicher Vorschlag zu Phil.2.6(-11)," *NTS* 45/3 (1999) 413-33; see also Heen, "Phil 2.6-11 and the Resistance," 138-9).

[64] The understanding of οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ as "he did not consider his equality to God as robbery" would fit perfectly, yet as it was explained earlier, it seems there is more data

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In the hymn, Christ is named God's image. It is stated, he was equal to God (2:6b οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ). Though he did not take advantage of it, he *was* God's peer. And hence, Christ was able to challenge God: The rivalry was a natural relation between two equals.

4.1.3 The essence of Christ's kenosis: obedience to God

Though it was expected that Christ would oppose God,[65] he choose to do something quite different: ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν. As the point of v.6 is Christ's divine honor – his equality to God, his being in the same form as God, the very status of his – is what he deprived himself of (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν) is this very status of his; the terms describing his *kenosis* support this view.[66]

Instead of keeping the position of God's peer, Christ not only decided not to challenge God (2:6b), more than that, he deliberately deprived himself of this power, i.e. he positively admitted God's superiority. The inferiority of Christ's new status is emphasized in the hymn by the expanded description which reaches its climax in picturing the shameful and agonizing death on the cross.[67] One can say that 2:6 is an

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supporting the view of this line being parallel to the ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν.

[65] Especially in the light of the myth of Satan (Is 14:12-15; *Slavonic Enoch* 29:4-5; *Life of Adam and Eve* 12-17). On the resemblance between Philippians' hymn and the myth on Satan see Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 157-161.

[66] By *kenosis* we mean the events described in both 2:7 and 2:8, i.e. both verbs ἐκένωσεν and ἐταπείνωσεν.

[67] The last phrase θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ can be Paul's addition to the original text of the hymn (Martin, *Carmen Christi*, xlix). Even without this (additional) phrase (ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου, "obedient up to death") refers to the ultimate obedience.

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introductory verse, which is to accentuate the caliber of Christ's decision as well as to clarify the meaning of his *kenosis*; after all, for what he did, God exalted him.

Though all three verbs of the hymn (ἡγήσατο, ἐκένωσεν and ἐταπείνωσεν) refer to Christ depriving of his high status as God's equal, the verb κενόω seems to be the main one: It has an emphatic position following the οὐ ... ἀλλα construction, i.e. it is the main act of Christ. Technically, the verb ταπεινόω also follows οὐ ... ἀλλα, yet not directly. That is why the Christ's event, which (as we have established above) starts in v.2.6b was given a name *kenosis*. Christ emptied himself, i.e. he gave up[68] all the possession/status/power he had had. The verb κενόω literally means "to make empty," "to pour out" (Gen 24:20); the figurative meaning can be "to deprive of content or possessions."[69] As in the text of Philippians the verb has no object, there is a discussion about what exactly Christ deprived himself of.[70] As the structure of the hymn points out at 2:6 (the pre-kenotic condition of Christ) as at the subject of deprivation/rejection, the meaning of ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν depends on one's understanding of 2:6, i.e. on how one see

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[68] Martin and Hawthorne turn down the assumption that Christ has given up something (particularly, his divinity, as they argue against kenotic theory of incarnation), and propose to read the hymn in the light of Chalcedonian creed: "the Philippian text does not say that Christ gave up anything. Rather it says that he added to himself that which he did not have before: "the form of slave," "the likeness of human being." Thus the implication is that at the incarnation Christ became more than God, if this is conceivable, not less than God" (Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 121). Yet one should also carefully distinguish between theological value of Chalcedonian creed and that of a hymn in one of Paul's letter: beside time difference between the two, in contrast to the creed, the hymn hardly has its purpose to give exact and full wording of Christological formula; however, though the hymn can reflect certain aspects of Paul's Christology, the apostle's main point here is not teaching about Christ's nature, yet about certain attitude he wants his readers to adopt.

[69] In passive mood the verb means "to languish/pine away" (Jer 15:9), or "to make no meaning or effect" (Jer 14:2).

[70] Martin and Hawthorne give the versions: he emptied himself of his glory (Plummer); of his independent exercise of authority (Hendriksen); of the prerogatives of deity (Lightfoot); of the insignia of majesty (Calvin, Lightfoot); of the "relative" attributes of deity (Gore, Forsyth, Mackintosh); of being equal with God (Oepke, TDNT III:661). They conclude that the hymn "gives no clue as to the object of Christ's self-empting," and hence, any assumptions are speculative (Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 117).
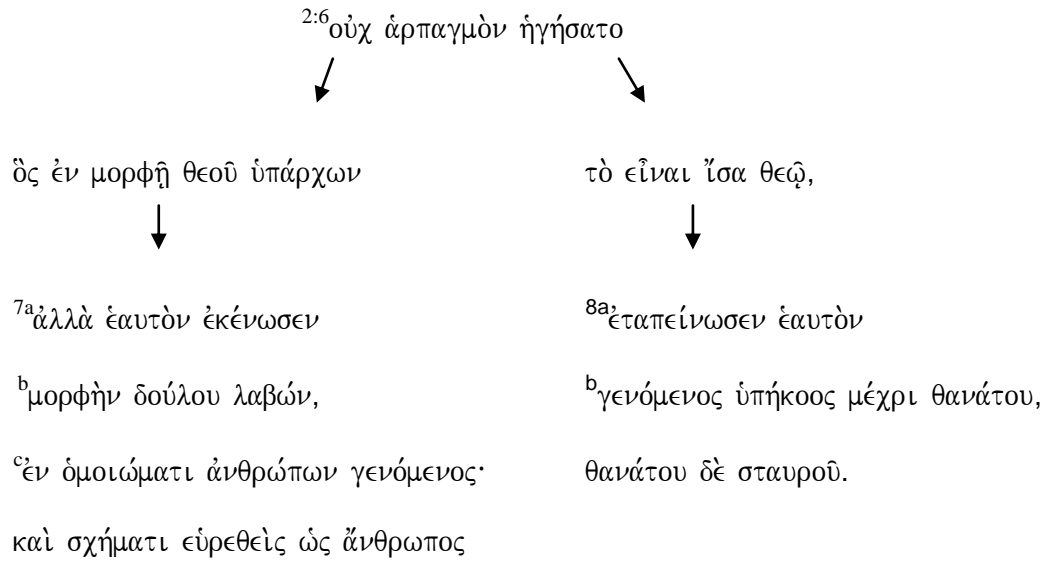
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Christ being ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ and his (potential or real) equality to God.

We propose to see v.7 (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν) as a repudiation of the *form of God* (as 2:7b μορφὴν δούλου λαβών is a direct antithesis to ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων); and v.8 (ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν) as explicit subordination to God in terms of humiliation (against God) and total obedience to Him and in that sense referring to τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ. Taking into account the syntactical role of the verbs, and continuing the view of 2:6 offered above, the first part of the hymn can be seen as the following:[71]
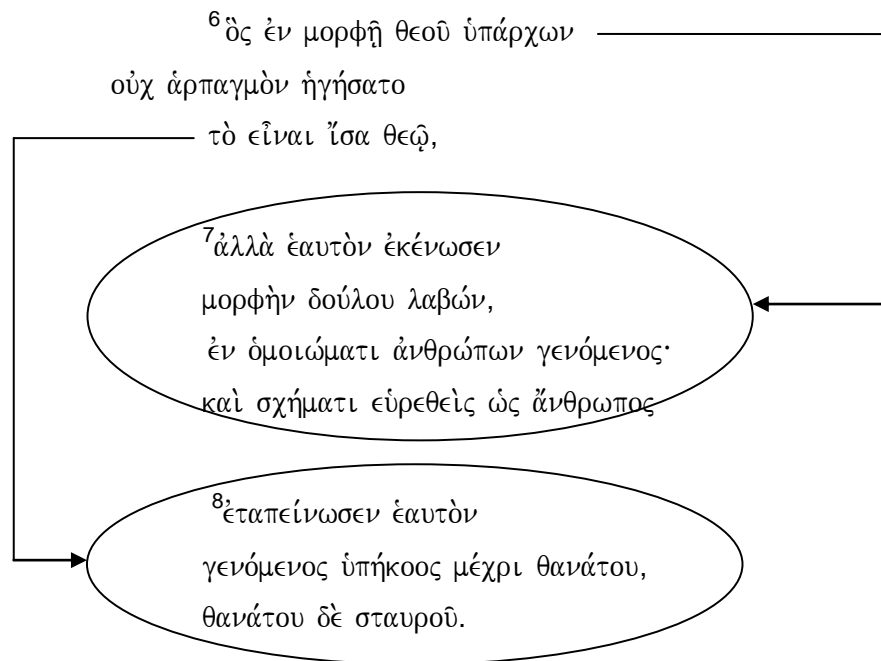
Or:

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71   To remind: the author of this paper does not have any pretensions to find a perfect scheme; her purpose here is to analyze God and Christ interaction in terms of honor.

$$^{2:6}οὐχ\ ἀρπαγμὸν\ ἡγήσατο$$

ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων   τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,

$$^{7a}ἀλλὰ\ ἑαυτὸν\ ἐκένωσεν$$ $$^{8a}ἐταπείνωσεν\ ἑαυτὸν$$

$$^{b}μορφὴν\ δούλου\ λαβών,$$ $$^{b}γενόμενος\ ὑπήκοος\ μέχρι\ θανάτου,$$

$$^{c}ἐν\ ὁμοιώματι\ ἀνθρώπων\ γενόμενος·$$ θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ.

καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος

It is important to note here that the participles of the verb construction ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν (2:7a) include both Christ becoming a slave and him becoming a human (2:7b,c). Both lines (b and c) bear the sign of parallel to 2:6a: From the phrase ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ 2:7b picks up the word μορφή; while 2:7c takes the preposition ἐν+Dative. As we know, Jesus from Nazareth was a free man, hence μορφὴν δούλου λαβών refers exclusively to status difference with μορφή θεοῦ.[72] The next line clarifies that "a slave" here means "human," who by definition is lower than God: beside physical limitations, humans are finite beings: they are mortal (cf. 2:8b).[73] So, Christ kind of squeezed himself into the form of a servant: He became a human and hence, confined himself from exercising his powers

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[72] It should be mentioned that we do not interfere here with the sphere of systematic theology and do not speak about Christ losing his divine nature in the process of *kenosis*. Augustine says "he… emptied himself in no other way that by taking the form of a servant, not by losing the form of God. For that nature by which he is equal to the Father in the form of God remained immutable while he took our mutable nature" (*Contra Faustum* 3.6; quoted from *Ancient Christian Commentary*, 242). The author of the present study speaks exclusively about Christ's *status* as equal *or* inferior to God, as it is pictured in the hymn.

[73] Christ's voluntary transition from ethereal/celestial category to the terrestrial one represents the historical event of incarnation; for the present discussion, it also indicates indirect introducing of the third party of the drama: "spectators," which are explicitly named in 2:10-11 (see below).

and his honor as equal to God as divine being, "he concealed that dignity which was his."[74] The servile status of his (μορφὴν δούλου λαβών) points on the deprivation of his rights as God's equal. He renounced himself from his significance and ultimately submitted himself *under* the power of God (see also 2:8).

The δοῦλος word-group is used (beside the direct description of slave and slavery) in a Jewish context "as the usual linguistic form for the relation of the subject to the king in the despotic monarchies of the ancient Orient,"[75] and – especially important for the present study – to describe one's attitude to God. This religious usage of the word is "the sharpest possible antithesis to that of Greek and Hellenistic world;"[76] and especially for the Semitic tribes – relations with God (Baal, Adon, Adonai/κύριος). In Semitic languages deity is represented as Lord, which reflects the concept of God as bearing "the stamp of unconditional majesty and absolute superiority to man."[77] Any other attitude towards God, besides being his δοῦλοι, "implies disobedience and betrayal."[78]

Rengstorf also argues that μορφή δούλου describes Christ's new situation of incarnation, and not his attitude (which comes into play only in v.8 with obedience and humbleness). [79] Yet Christ's attitude towards God is present already in 2:7: the decision

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[74]   Theodore of Mopsuestia *Phil*.2.2; see *Ancient Christian Commentar*, 242).

[75]   Rengstorf, TDNT, II: 266.

[76]   Ibid. 267

[77]   Ibid. 268.

[78]   Ibid. 268.

[79]   Ibid. 278-279). Because obedience is explicitly mentioned only in 2.8, its importance is disputed by Bornkamm, who argued for the interpretation of the term δοῦλος as referring exclusively to incarnation, not to humiliation of Christ (G. Bornkamm, "On understanding of the Christ-Hymn," in *Early Christian Experience* (New Testament Library; Harper and Row, 1969) 112-122). After all, one should not expect from Pauline texts being strictly logical (see Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 194; Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 102).

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to empty himself and to change the mode of existence in the first place was his own decision, and not that of God or of blind fate.[80] The reflective character of both acts of Christ is clearly articulated by the reflexive pronoun ἑαυτὸς: ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν; ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτόν; in 2:7 this reflective pronoun is emphatically placed before the verb (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν).[81]

Obedience was the key element of Jewish piety: obedience to God, an absolute submission to him and conformity to his will, is what was understood as true piety in late Judaism(s).[82] Malina and Neyrey point out that "[b]y responding in obedience, Jesus assumed the most virtuous posture possible in Israel's culture, that of the obedient son (see Heb 3:2; Phil 2:9)."[83] It is remarkable that Paul picks up the term "obedience" right after the hymn and calls upon his readers to be "obedient in everything" – Ὥστε, ἀγαπητοί μου, καθὼς πάντοτε ὑπηκούσατε (2:12) as it is the key point of the hymn (see section 4.1.5).

Because this subservient attitude towards God was considered as a righteous one in Judaism, Christ's image in the hymn is sometimes paralleled to the image of God's servant in Isaiah 53. Yet the corresponding between Phil 2:6-11 and Isaiah 52-53 is not that obvious and supposes a number of linguistic alterations, conceptual and sequential

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[80] Cf.: "the obedience of Christ belongs to his pre-incarnate choice (cf. Heb 10:5ff.)" (Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 193).

[81] The syntax of *kenosis* – object-predicat (2:7), predicat-object (2:8) – is paralleled by the syntax of Christ's exaltation – object-predicate, predicat-object αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ (2:9).

[82] See Bousset and Gressmann: "To the mind of late Judaism religion is obedience (ὑπακοή)… Humble, servant-like (*knechtlische*) submission of the human will to God's almighty, inscrutable will, acting according to His commandments, comprehensible or incomprehensible, at every moment of life – this is piety (*Frömmigkeit*)" (W. Bousset, H. Gressmann, *Die Religion des Judentums* (HzNT, 1926) 375, quoted by Schweizer, *Lordship and* Descipleship, 55, and also by Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 192).

[83] B. Malina, J.H. Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew* (Foundation and Facets; Social Facets; Sonoma, California: Polebridge Press, 1988) 123. The quotation refers to the Gospel according to Matthew.

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differences.[84] Two main differences between Christ in the Philippians' hymn and the Servant in Isaiah 52-53, relevant to the present analysis, are the following: first, the term παῖς in Isa 52:13 has an honorific character, while δοῦλος in Phil 2:7 is a part of Christ's *kenosis*; and second, the theme of obedience is absent in Isaiah, while in Philippians it is important.[85] In other words, the voluntary character of Christ's humbleness and the emphasis on his obedience (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν; ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου) contrasts with forced suffering of the proudly God's servant in Isaiah.[86]

The theme of obedience makes many scholars see the parallel between the hymn and the myth of Adam. Though the chart of comparison of Adam and Christ looks convincing at first sight[87] and can work as a foil: Christ's rejection of equality with God and choosing to be obedient to him contrasts with Adam's disobedience (Rom 5:15-19), the parallel between Adam and Christ of the hymn is not full. First, it supposes the similarity of the original positions of Adam and Christ, which, as we could see, is problematic: the hymn explicitly speaks about Christ's equality to God, so the points of departure in the stories of Adam and Christ cannot be seen as parallel ones. It is also not clear, whither the serpent's words towards Eve "you will be like gods" (Gen 2:3-5)

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[84] For the discussion see Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 183-190; Seeley, *Noble Death*, 51-56.

[85] Seeley, *Noble Death*, 56; cf. S.K. Williams, *Jesus' Death as Saving Event: The Origin of a Concept* (Harvard Dissertations in Religion 2; Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1975) 49.

[86] Seeley argues that Isaiah's Servant Songs (Is 52-53) is hardly connected to Phil 2:6-11: a) "the lack of exact correspondence in language; 2) the lack of sequential correspondence [cf. Martin, *Carmen Christi* 186]; 3) the switching must be assumed between the LXX and Masoretic text; 4) the failure of the songs to parallel the central position given to obedience by the hymn [cf. Williams, *Jesus' Death*, 49]; 5) conceptual gap between the Songs and the hymn" plus two more: "6) the failure of the hymn to develop any of the seemingly fertile soteriological material in the Songs [cf. Martin *loc.cit.*, 317; P. Stanley, *Christ's Resurrection in Pauline Soteriology* (Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1961) 101-2]; 7) the absence of any hint of pre-existence in the latter [the Songs]" (Seeley, *Paul and Noble Death*, 56).

[87] Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 105, "The popular First Adam – Last Adam typology" diagram (referred to an unpublished diagram by L.A. Losie, who follows Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 76). Dunn calls the section under consideration "the fullest" of Adam Christology in the New Testament (*loc.cit.*, 286).

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should be interpreted as Adam's desire to challenge God. Another important issue is that Christ's incarnation, him becoming a human, is part of his act of obedience (2:7) which had already taken place, while for Adam humanity was the only way of existing.[88]

The only real Biblical parallel between Rom 5:19 and Phil 2:6-11 is remarkably that in both sections obedience (ὑπακοή; γενόμενος ὑπήκοος) is presented as the essence of what Christ did. However, different implications of this obedience are made: Rom (5:17-19) speaks about the opposite consequences for humankind of Adam and Christ's deeds, while in Phil 2:6-11 the lot of human race is out of concern (see below).

Christ's *kenosis* does not end at him becoming a human,[89] it continues in explicitly verbalized self-humiliation and obedience up to death (2:8). At the same time, his death is an ultimate expression of his humanity, as a deity cannot die;[90] so all the lines of 2:7-8 are bound together, as they all describe Christ's new position against God. This new position is the opposite to the one described in 2:6, where Christ is presented as God's equal with the corresponding self-evaluation ("he considered himself as equal to God," paraphrase); in 2:7-8 Christ voluntary and entirely submits himself under God's superiority.

The verb ταπεινόω (ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν, v.8) develops and deepens the theme. If the first verb (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν v.7) refers rather to his pre-incarnate equality to God, then "he humbled himself" explicitly accentuates the new inferior position of Christ. It also has a participle which explains the meaning of Christ's humbleness: he became

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[88] Cf. Witherington 2011, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 144-145.

[89] Rengstorf sees ὁμοίωμα ἀνθρώπου as the lowest possible point on the way of the κένωσις of Jesus, since there is no term which stands in greater contrast to κύριος or θεός than δοῦλος" (TDNT II:278).

[90] Cf. Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 227; Lohmeyer, *Kyrios Jesus*, 41.

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obedient (γενόμενος ὑπήκοος). His obedience is also vividly depicted, so the whole theme of humbleness is amplified:

"he humbled himself" ➡ "he became obedient" ➡ "up to death" ➡ "up to death on the cross."

It is important to accentuate the fact that the hymn tells exclusively about Christ and God's relations. The text of Philippians gives no reason to see Christ's *kenosis* as having any relation to or concern about human race. Though many interpreters see Christ of the hymn as having undergone death "for the benefit of others,"[91] the text itself gives no base for such conclusion. There is no "for us" in the text of the hymn or in its context,[92] no sign of God's love towards a human being, or human sinfulness, or salvific meaning of Christ's death in the hymn or in its closest context.[93] The hymn tells about Christ's and God's interaction and not about the meaning of Christ's event for humankind.[94] If the reference to the salvific meaning of Christ's death was not in the

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[91] See Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 67; Nebreda, Christ Identity; Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 135.

[92] Cf. ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν in Rom 5:8, 1 Cor 5:7, Gal 3:13, 1 Thess 3:1 (ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν in 1 Cor 1:13, 11:24); διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν Rom 4:25; ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτῶν ἡμῶν 1 Cor 15:3 and Gal 1:4.

[93] Käzemann sees the description of Christ's incarnation in the hymn as a reference to the soteriological event, and because of this interprets the hymn soteriologically (Käzemann, "A Critical Analysis"). Nebreda speaks about "Jesus' radical self-identification with the human race" (*Christ Identity*, 312). As it was mentioned in the Introduction, we try to keep to social analysis of the hymn, without unnecessary theological constructions.

[94] On the matter of Christ's faithfulness to God being transformed into saving faith of his believers (πίστις Χριστοῦ as *both* "faith *of* Christ" and "faith *in* Christ"), see Williams, *Jesus' Death*,47-49; Bultmann, TDNT, V:197-208. The transition was influenced by Maccabean tradition: in 4 Macc (Antioch ca. 35-40 AD): "a human death could be beneficial for others because it was regarded by God as effective for the ransom of their lives, the expiation of their sins" (Williams, *loc.cit.*, 253) "For hellenized Christians… beset by the problem of sin and the scandal of Jesus' execution, [the] fundamental similarities [of Jesus' death and deaths of martyrs in 4 Macc] can hardly have gone unnoticed. The idea that the precipitous and undeserved death of an exceptionally worthy person can effect expiation for the sins of others served as the lens through which the crucifixion of Jesus could be viewed and understood. When that happened Christians could affirm not only that God raised Jesus from the dead but also that his death was meaningful in itself. Because God regarded Christ crucified as a means of expiation for all men (Rom 3:25), Gentile as well as Jew could now confess: "Christ died for our sins" (1Cor 15:3)" (ibid.).

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original version of the hymn, why did Paul not interpolate it as he probably did with 2:8c θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ?[95] The answer is that Paul has a different agenda here.

Martin argues, that Christ's obedience, as a part of Christ's incarnation, underlines "the reality of his identification with us men," and hence, to whom he was obedient is not important.[96] Yet the fact that Christ was obedient *to God* is the key for the understanding of the hymn. It is true that obedience is natural for humans in terms of human bondage to the elements. In that sense, of course, by the act of incarnation, Christ became "obedient" or subordinated to immaterial powers, and also to physical forces and laws, as he took on physical restrictions of the human body, and ultimately, human mortality.[97] The question is what comes first: obedience or incarnation? If obedience is just a part of being a human, then what did the idea of becoming a human come to Christ from? We believe that obedience lied in the bottom of Christ's decision to come to earth,[98] and that logically we see Christ's incarnation being a part (continuation) of his obedience, and not his obedience being a part of his incarnation.

Another argument is that though becoming a human made Christ mortal, the cause of his death was not natural. The text underlines how he died: θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ, which definitely cannot be arrogated to natural causes. Even if the last phrase had been added by Paul, the listeners to the original version of the hymn must still know Christ's story, and for them the reference to Christ's death was nothing else but the

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[95] See discussion in F.W. Beare, *The Epistle to Philippians* (Black New Testament Commentaries. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1959) 85. Martin and Hawthorne note that the word *love* is absent in the hymn, though if the hymn was really about God's giving and selflessness, this word would make a perfect sense (*Philippians*, 116).

[96] Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 227.

[97] See Lohmeyer, *Kyrios Jesus*, 43; Käzemann, "A Critical Analysis."

[98] And Martin actually agrees on it, see his *Carmen Christi*, 193.

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reference to the cross.[99] Hence, though theoretically one can speculate about Christ's obedience to some unidentified cosmic powers, in the particular context of the hymn this is not the point. Christ's death on the cross is the terminal of his obedience, which started from his deliberate renunciation of claiming equality to God (2:6b).

The hymn indicates the only reason for Christ's incarnation, suffering and exaltation: his obedience to the Father. Williams points out that "Jesus is exalted by God *precisely because* ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου;"[100] Kitteredge says that though the traditions about Jesus being "a slave of all" and obedient to God ("Gethsemane tradition") did exist in early Christianity, in the text of the Philippians' hymn "the mythological pattern of *reversal of status dominates* the interpretation of Jesus' death."[101] In the hymn we see the perfect example of the "advancement loyalty" – one's rise social status for personal loyalty to one's master.[102]

We can conclude that the extended description of Christ's humiliation in the hymn accentuates the difference between his pre- and post-kenosis positions. All his deprivation, suffering and death are the result of his decision to become God's inferior, i.e. the result of his voluntary submission to God's power and not to stay his equal. In terms of honor, Christ becoming God's inferior means that Christ chooses a certain route of achieving honor: not by competing with God over it, yet by submitting to God as to his ultimate superior one, by serving God with absolute loyalty and obedience.

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[99] See especially 1 Corinthians: ὁ λόγος γὰρ ὁ σταυροῦ (1:18), ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμένον (1:23), and τὸν θάνατον τοῦ κυρίου καταγγέλλετε (11:26); see also Gal 5:11; 6:12, 14; Rom 6:5-6.

[100] Williams, *Jesus' Death*, 49, italics added.

[101] Kitteredge, *Community and Authority*, 78, italics added.

[102] See Theissen, *Social Reality and the Early Christians*, 191-196.

Christ's kenosis is not just accidental failure in his honor-competition with God; it is his voluntary admission that God possesses glory – unchallengeable and unlimited honor. The owner of glory can bestow honor upon the one whom he or she finds worthy. That is exactly what happens in the second part of the hymn (2:10-11).

4.1.4 God as the ultimate significant other

God rewards Christ for his obedience, for the fact that he acknowledges God as the god, i.e. as the ultimate honor bestower. Christ does not compete with God, but demonstrates total obedience and loyalty to him, which makes Christ a perfect client of God the patron. In return, God, the owner of grace, bestows honor upon Christ.

Christ's move from his original status against God is two-fold: he puts himself on a lower level against God by taking "a form of slave" and becoming a human; secondly, his attitude towards God is explicitly articulated, since his humiliation is expressed in terms of obedience. The point is that the hymn conveys not only the status difference between God and Christ, but also Christ's very attitude towards God: he voluntary takes the lower status to God (he is not *been* humbled, but humbled *himself*, ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν), *and* he also explicitly admits his own (Christ's) subordinate position (γενόμενος ὑπήκοος). So, it is not only formal correlation (higher/lower), yet rather acknowledgement of God's authority.

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As Christ did not claim his rights of equality, but voluntary surrendered his honor to God, subordinated to him up to the point of death, God bestowed upon him the highest honor ever (2:10).[103] Hence, Christ's obedience to God, his voluntary subordination to him, is what is valued and rewarded by God when he exalts Christ.[104] The connection between what Christ did and how God reacted to it is expressed by the conjunctive pair διὸ καί where διό points out that "the inference (διό) is self-evident."[105] While some scholars say that the reward of "self-sacrificing, morally good acts" is normal for the imperial power,[106] others argue that it is "the wholly unexpected."[107]

Christ's incarnation and death are pictured as his obedience to God, while his glorification is presented as his exaltation over the creation and spiritual powers, though the first and the last lines of the hymn's second part refer to God the Father (διὸ καὶ ὁ

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[103] Here, again, we can see the rhetorical extremes: obedience is total (ὑπήκοος μέχρι θανάτου), glorification is universal (αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα...). Cf. the extremes of Paul's language on opponents: salvation against distortion.

[104] Bloomquist argues against the concentration of Christ's suffering as the key virtue; he says that in the hymn, suffering has an auxiliary role as something which leads to vindication (Bloomquist, *The Fuction of Suffering*, 196). It must be added that rather suffering-vindication sequel points beyond itself to *the reason* which causes both suffering and vindication – to the obedience to God.

[105] BAGD, 198. Cf. O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians*, 233; Fee, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 220 n. 10.

[106] Oaks, *Philippians: From People to Letter*, 203. Cf.: "The pattern of a divine reward given for a humble service is a common topos of the panegrycs of rulers and emperors" (Heen, "Phil 2:6-11 and the Resistance," 139), referring to Wilfred L. Knox, "The 'Divine Hero' Christology in the New Testament" in *HTR* 41 (1948) 233; See also the discussion on the desired characteristics of Hellenistic rulership in A. Wallace-Hadrill, "Civilis Princeps: Between Citizen and King," *JRS* 72 (1982) 33-34.

[107] Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 209 n. 68). See Martin arguing that the context of the hymn excludes the possibility of God "rewarding" Christ, as Paul's exhortation in the letter is to rebuke any self-seeking (Martin, *Carmen Christi*, xxxvii, 231ff.). CONTRA: Oakes argues that Martin is closer to the Stoics ethics than to the New Testament one: in Heb 11:6 the awaiting of a reward is clear (*Philippians: From People to Letter*, 203). See also Nebreda, who notes: "the exact relationship between διό and καί is debatable, but the emphasis of the expression is clear" (*Christ Identity*, 311, n. 141,). Cf. Silva, *Philippians: Commentary*, 115.

θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν... κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός).[108] Christ's

reward, his new status is described in 2:10-11 as the cosmos acknowledging Christ's

highest status; and God the Father still stays as the source of this honor:

[9]διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν

καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶν ὄνομα,

[10]ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ

ἐπουρανίων

καὶ ἐπιγείων

καὶ καταχθονίων

[11]καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσηται

ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός.

This extended description of Christ's glorification is to balance the detailed story of his

kenosis in the first part of the hymn. The cosmic powers being absent in the first part

and explicitly present in the second part of the hymn means that in the first part Christ's

position is correlated with God, and in the second part – with God *and* creation.[109] One's

correlation with others is nothing else but one's identity.[110] That is in the first part of the

hymn Christ is identified exclusively by his relations with God; in the second part,

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[108] Though some argues that the last words (εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός) does not belong to the original hymn and has been added by Paul (Käzemann, "A Critical Analysis," 89; Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 273-4), it connects the last line with the first one: Christ's original status and his final position meet making a perfect closure for the hymn. R. Martin argues: ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός is "…a liturgical conclusion of the entire hymn. All praise, honor and power finally belong to God the Father. The ultimate note of the hymn is thus not… the lordship of Christ, but the glory of the Father… the last line forms a sort of doxology which rounds off the whole" (Martin, *loc.cit.*, 273).

[109] Silva underlines that God's reaction to Christ' action has "social, political" effect (*Philippians: Commentary,* 108). Cf. Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 312.

[110] Identity is an answer to the question: Who am I? Whom I belong to? See section 2.1.2.

cosmic powers become witnesses of his new mode of relations with God: Christ stays in submissive position to God, so his (Christ's) exaltation can be seen only against a third person, which is the cosmos. In his new status, Christ is above all the creation (2:10),[111] yet still under God (κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός).[112] The name given to him by God is above "every name;" "every knee" is to bow before his new name; "every tongue" is to confess that Christ is "to the glory of God the Father." In other words, cosmos is the foil, which Christ's glorification is seen against.

Honor is a social phenomenon, it works only inside a group.[113] So in the hymn, cosmos is "the other," the one who by paying homage to Christ indicates that he has been honored. Yet cosmos is not the *significant other*; it is not the one who distributes honor; this role belongs exclusively to God. God is the subject of the second part of the hymn: ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερύψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα;[114] "cosmic powers" are the subjects in the clauses; their predicates (κάμψῃ, ἐξομολογήσηται) are subjunctives introduced by the proposition ἵνα. That means God is the principal actor; all other characters are either objects (Christ, αὐτὸν, αὐτω) or subjects of subordinated clauses (πᾶν γόνυ, πᾶσα γλῶσσα) – the clauses which are adverbial modifiers of the main sentence.

Though it is obvious that "cosmic powers" existed also during the time of Christ's *kenosis*, their opinion or their attitude to Christ's humiliation is not mentioned.

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[111] The "inclusive-styled rhetoric works simply to subordinate all under a figure described in terms of exclusive rule" (Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation*, 134).

[112] Ralf Martin interprets the last phrase of the hymn (ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός) as the one which argues "against the idea that there is any rivalry within Godhead" (Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 276).

[113] See sections 2.1.3 and 2.1.4.

[114] Cf. Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 150 "Paul's market transition in subject from Christ to ὁ θεὸς (v.9) draws attention to the exalted status of the One who honores Jesus."

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"Cosmic powers" are out of Christ and God's interaction in the first part of the hymn; Christ's *kenosis* is described exclusively in terms of his relationship with God. And as there is no sign of Christ's status being evaluated by any other scale yet in correlation with God, for the plot of the hymn, no one's evaluation matters. God is Christ's significant other; and more that that, God is his ultimate honor-bestower. Christ does not receive honor from anybody but God: at the beginning he was God's equal, yet decides not to *compete* over honor; he surrenders himself to God, waiting for God to bestow honor upon him.

Being taken out of the context of the hymn, i.e. out of the context of the exclusive God-Christ relations, what happened to Christ is not the deed of honor. In the Mediterranean culture, where honor is treated as a limited good and is the subject of constant competition, humiliation is shameful. Yet again, competition takes place only between equals, and humiliation can be seen as such only if the humiliated one used to have a higher social status. A fortiori unequal social statuses leave no place for honor competition: one cannot compete with a king; a slave cannot be humiliated by his master. Quite the contrary: in patron-client relations, a humble service to a patron, an absolute loyalty to him is rewarded and hence, honored.[115] This is the process described in the hymn. The "status dissonance" – a slave of God is above the whole universe – has its "plausibility basis" in the process of social mobility, one of the features of Roman

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[115] "Servanthood or... slavery Christ takes on is seen in entirely positive light" (Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 167). See also D. Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990) 1-50 on the positive meaning of slavery in Greco-Roman society: "being connected to someone in power, even if only as slave, was the next best thing to being in power oneself" (*loc.cit.*, 30), "a slave of a local power broker or of respected aristocrat could... hold considerable power and respect. A slave of Caesar was even higher, potentially holding power and enjoying an informal status rivaling important free provincials" (ibid. 48). See also Theissen, *Social Reality*, 190-193.

society.[116] So, the conjunctive pair διὸ καί is the "self-evident inference" because, by his total loyalty and obedience to God, Christ has earned the honor being bestowed upon him.

Therefore, the key point in evaluation of Christ's behavior is his choice of his identity, his significant other, his court of reputation, i.e. his source of honor and status. What group does he belong to? From whom does he expect the evaluation (honor)? With whom does he identify himself? He has chosen the God-group, and in this group the only approved behavior, the only correct attitude to God is obedience, loyalty to him and accepting honor exclusively from him. In the God-group, rejection of one's own honor or refusing to get honor in competition with others is not something shameful; it is the very admission of God's absolute superiority and his exclusive holding of honor. If such a behavior means one's humiliation in the eyes of others (e.g. cosmic powers – μορφὴν δούλου λαβών, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος), it does not matter, as "others" are not members of one's court of reputation. Christ's humiliation in the eyes of creation is nothing but the by-product of Christ-God interaction; it is not its original purpose. Christ chooses God as his vis-à-vis,[117] his significant other – his only one, whose opinion does matter.

The concept of honor/shame regulates relationship in a group and serves to encourage the members to conduct a certain behavior.[118] If one is in God's group, it implies certain behavior, the behavior which is approved by God. One cannot enter honor-competition with God: God has no equals, and his honor is unchallengeable by

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[116] See Theissen *Social Reality*, 195. "Christ had a diametrically opposite status before God and before the world… He took upon himself the greatest possible status dissonance" (ibid.).

[117] Cf. Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 192.

[118] See sections 2.1.3 and 2.1.4.

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definition. One cannot enter honor-competition with anybody else either: God is the only source of unlimited honor in this group. That is why Christ was rewarded: he received honor from the source of honor (significant other) of the God-group for the behavior proper for this group; and he is honored in the terms of that group: κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός.

4.1.5 The hymn's context: application of the hymn

The hymn 2:6-11, as it has been demonstrated, states God as the ultimate honor-bestower and Christ's obedience to God as the exemplary way of gaining honor: instead of competing for honor, Christ achieves it by keeping absolute obedience to God. The context of the hymn is devoted to the same ideas: the verses preceding it speak about the advantage of the unity over the competition; the verses following it speak about obedience and loyalty leading to honor.

4.1.5.1 Unity and rejection of the competition (2:1-5)

The hymn is introduced by the phrase Τοῦτο [γάρ] φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (2:5), which refers to the connection with the previous text.[119] And the previous

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[119] "…the anacoluthon involved in τοῦτο standing alone seems to cry out for a connective, whether γάρ or οὖν or καί (each of which is found in a variety of witnesses)" (B. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994) 545). The absence of any of such a connection can be explained by the fact that 2.5-11 was a beginning of

text, as we have demonstrated in 3.2.2, contains Paul's admonition for unity in the light of the opposition threatening the very existence of the Philippian Christian community. The direct introduction to the hymn (2:5) is traditionally interpreted as "have the same mind/feelings/attitude Christ has." As we also mentioned in 3.2.2, Willis demonstrated that the phrase τοῦτο φρονεῖτε "draws upon a background of political loyalties based upon common purpose (or a common leader). These loyalties are most commonly set in opposition to other groups (fractions)."[120] That is, the introduction to the hymn continues Paul's theme of closing the ranks in withstanding the opposition.

The Willis' view of 2:5 goes along with that of Käzemann, though for different reasons. Käzemann believed that ἐν Χριστῷ must be treated in Paul's terms as "in the realm of Christ."[121] That is Philippians must have the attitude to one another, which is appropriate for those who are in the realm of Christ.[122] According to Käzemann, the hymn does not contain any moral example, yet points to the soteriological event, which brings believers into the realm of Christ. One of Käzemann's arguments is that the second part of the hymn (Christ's exaltation) cannot be imitated.[123]

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lection, so the copulative alone, is dated earlier than the presumed date of developed lectionary system (*ibid.*).

[120] Willis, "Seen the Faith as Paul," 192.

[121] Käzemann, "A Critical Analysis," 84.

[122] See Morgan, "Incarnation, Myth and Theology," 65.

[123] Cf. Nagata: Christ cannot be imitated as in the second part of the hymn "he becomes the passive recipient and the object of God's own act" (T. Nagata, *Philippians 2.5-11. A Case Study in the Contextual Shaping of Early Christology* (PhD dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1981) 264); Cf. Martin, *Carmen Christi*, xiv. CONTRA: Oakes; his argument is: "Both Hellenistic kings and Roman emperors provided examples for their subjects: those who are in their realm… The Emperor's… acts were, *ipso facto*, inimitable – yet they could be regarded as ethical example" (Oaks, *Philippians: From People to Letter*, 190).

In our interpretation, the second part of the hymn is the object of imitation as much as the first one is, as it is supported by the wider context of the letter.[124] Hooker argues that "Pauline ethics does not consist *simply* on an exhortation to be like Jesus" and that it also depends on the believer's "being in Christ."[125] And, she continues, one should not oppose these two grounds of ethical admonition: "it is not a case of either/or, but of both/and."[126] Schneider holds a similar view: "The admonition in 2:5 *in context* is to call to imitate Christ. The second part of the verse… should not be understood as to imitate Christ. The words ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ …designate what is true of believers in light of their union in Christ."[127]

The hymn, which is to illustrate ἐν Χριστῷ, presents Christ's attitude as being characterized by the absolute obedience to God as to the ultimate significant other. Christ has decided to reject honor competition and has chosen to gain honor by staying loyal to God, his patron, despising shame and death. This is the only attitude which can enable the Christian group to survive, and this is the idea Paul wants his readers to grasp. Continuing the topic of withstanding the enemies and struggling for the gospel (1:27-30), Paul appeals to the fact of his readers belonging to the Christ's group (2.1), the apostle convinces them to be united (2:2), not to enter honor competition (2.3) and to seek for the interest of the group (2:4):

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[124] See section 4.2.2 of this study below, for the discussion on the parallels of the hymn (2:6-11) in Philippians 1:21-26, 3:7-21).

[125] M. Hooker, "A Partnership in the Gospel: Paul's Understanding of His Ministry," *Theology and Ethics in Paul and His Interpreters. Essays in Honor of Victor Paul Furnish* (ed. E. Lovering, Jr. and J. Sumney; Nashville: Abington Press, 1996) 95, italic original.

[126] Hooker, "A Partnership," 95.

[127] Schreiner, *Paul, apostle of God's* Glory, 170, italic original. Cf. Silva, *Philippians*, 107-108.

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Unity	[1.27]...στήκετε ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι,
	μιᾷ ψυχῇ
	συναθλοῦντες...
Christ's group	[1]Εἴ τις οὖν παράκλησις ⟨ἐν Χριστῷ,⟩
	εἴ τι παραμύθιον ἀγάπης,
	εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος,
	εἴ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί,

[2]πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν

Unity	ἵνα <u>τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε,</u>
and	τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες,
loyalty	σύμψυχοι,
	<u>τὸ ἓν φρονοῦντες,</u>
Rejection of	[3]μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν
the competition	μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν ἀλλὰ τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ
	ἀλλήλους ἡγούμενοι ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν,
Pursuing	[4]μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες
the group's	ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἑτέρων ἕκαστοι.
interests	
Loyalty	[5]<u>Τοῦτο φρονεῖτε</u> ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ⟨ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,⟩
to Christ	↓
	The hymn

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Τοῦτο φρονεῖτε is an appeal to the unity and solidarity in Christ, to loyalty to his group. Christ himself did not take part in the honor competition, yet chose to receive honor passively, via submitting himself to God – the honor bestower. Competitiveness, a behavior so natural for any ancient Mediterranean person, can easily endanger the interest of the group, especially in the context of an external threat. That is why humility and obedience to the superior one, to the head of the group are virtues in a military situation.[128] Paul expects his readers not to act out of strife and conceit (ἐριθεία and κενοδοξία) yet to be humble (ταπεινοφροσύνη) and work for the success of the group as a whole. In that sense, the hymn illustrates τοῦτο φρονεῖτε as much as it explains ἐν Χριστῷ.

Paul sees the danger which the Christian community meets in Philippi; he says it is very much the same which he himself is experiencing being in prison (Phil 1:30). Jealousy and adversary can torn the church apart; that is why he entreats his readers to share Christ's outlook and to see for honor being granted to them from God as a reward. Paul's call to his readers in 2:1-5 is twofold: he wants them to be united in Christ and he wants them to leave behind honor competition. The appeal of 2:5 has a double connotation: Philippians should conduct the behavior, which is appropriate for the members of the in-Christ community;[129] and they should follow Christ's example of gaining honor within the "in-Christ" group. They must not fight for honor with each other; they must stay loyal to the group (to the Christian community) and by this they must stay loyal to God himself.

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[128] See Geoffrion, *The Rhetorical Purpose*, 134-140; De Vos, *Church and Community in Conflict*, 280-281; Krentz, "Military Language."

[129] In Käzemann's terminology, "the realm of Christ;" cf. 1:27 Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε.

4.1.5.2 Obedience of the children (2:12-30)

After the hymn Paul makes a conclusion: Ὥστε, ἀγαπητοί μου (2:12). The theme of obedience is taken by the apostle as the main output of his citing of the hymn: …καθὼς πάντοτε ὑπηκούσατε… μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε (2:12).[130] He appeals to the Philippians' obedience and asks them to continue with it and to work out their salvation "with fear and trembling," which is also a metaphor of obedience and describes a respect and submission to God's will.[131] Salvation here also refers to honor, which God gives to his loyal servants.[132] In 2:14 Paul gives instruction on what exactly his readers are to avoid: πάντα ποιεῖτε χωρὶς γογγυσμῶν καὶ διαλογισμῶν, though having a connotation of avoiding disagreement within community,[133] should be interpreted in the light of the following clause 2:15: the "crooked and depraved generation" (which seems to do everything *with* grumbling and quarrel) is opposed to the "children of God" (τέκνα θεοῦ ἄμωμα). The main characteristic of a "good child" is obedience,[134] hence 2:14 should be understood as "do everything without any sign of disobedience." The exemplary honor achieved here is

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[130] Cf. Kittredge: the apostle uses the hymn to encourage obedience (*Community and Authority*, 99). (Kittredge sees the main idea or the hymn as a shift of powers (*loc.cit.*, 82)). Cf. Martin and Hawthorne giving to the section 2:12-18 the title "Application [to the hymn]: To Obedience, with Paul as Model" (*Philippians*, 135).

[131] Martin and Hawthorne translate the phrase straightly as "obediently" or "holding oneself in weakness" toward the will of God (*Philippians*, 141-142).

[132] Salvation here refers either to God's help in suffering (1:19-20) or to the future glorification (3:20-21), or both.

[133] See Martin, *Carmen Christi*, liii; Peterlin, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 127; Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 143-144.

[134] Cf. Rom 1:30, 2 Tim 3:2 γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς "disobedient to parents" as a part of vice list. See also Lk 1:17 …ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα καὶ ἀπειθεῖς ἐν φρονήσει δικαίων – the righteous mindset will be given to disobedient [children]. Cf. Mt 21:28-32: though the point of the parable is different, it is important that an obedient child was not supposed to argue with his father.

that of well-behaved (i.e. dependent and obedient) children: blameless and harmless, without fault (ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀκέραιοι… ἄμωμα). These terms with an α-prefix are also the terms of a woman's honor, which is gained through passive avoiding of reprehensible behavior and certainly not through competition (cf. 2:3 μηδὲν κατ᾽ ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν).

In the Timothy-Epaphroditus section, Paul explicitly moves from being obedient to God to being obedient to himself as to the leader.[135] In vv.20-22 Paul describes Timothy's outstanding eagerness in service. In v.20 it is his care for the Philippians, in v.21 – service to Christ (seeking for Christ's profit), and in v.22 it is his service "in gospel," but actually "service to Paul" is also meant.[136] The nature of Timothy's work, as it is described by Paul, characterizes the apostle's understanding of Christian community (3:22): τὴν δὲ δοκιμὴν αὐτοῦ γινώσκετε, ὅτι ὡς πατρὶ τέκνον σὺν ἐμοὶ ἐδούλευσεν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ("his loyalty is known to you, because as *son to the father* he served *with* me in the gospel" – italic added, *MK*). Ὡς πατρὶ τέκνον means here Paul's dominative and authoritative role in his and Timothy's collaboration, rather than just "intimate, personal" or "affectionate relationship."[137] The echo of the hymn is obvious in 1.30. Epaphroditus was risking his life "for the work of Christ" μέχρι θανάτου, which is a clear reference to Christ's obedience "up to death" (2:8).

The behavior of Timothy and Epaphroditus are the perfect examples of Christ's mindset presented in the hymn (2:6-11). They do not compete for honor, yet they

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[135] See section 4.2 of this study below.

[136] O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians*, 234.

[137] Cf. O'Brien, *The Epistle to Philippians*, 325. CONTRA: Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 155-156. Yet if the apostle wanted to emphasize his and Timothy's equality, he would write ὡς ἀδελφὸς σὺν ἀδελφῷ. (cf. 2:25 reference to Epaphroditus as to brother and co-worker).

demonstrate absolute obedience and loyalty to Paul and the Christian community, and for that they are receiving respect and honor from the community and from God himself (v.29 τοὺς τοιούτους ἐντίμους ἔχετε). That way of achieving honor via submission to the group's rules, obedience to its leader and absolute loyalty to it "up to death" has clear parallels in the hymn, which makes Christ of the hymn an example to imitate.

4.1.6 Conclusion

The analysis of the hymn and its nearest context demonstrates that Paul uses this piece of early Christian poetry in order to promote unity within the Christian community using a two-fold idea: firstly, he wants his readers to leave aside honor-competition which can easily jeopardize the unity of the community; and secondly, he wants them to take an inferior position and stay loyal and obedient to the church leaders (i.e. to himself). This strengthening of unity and giving up any inner disagreement is important in the light of the danger that the Christian community faces.

Christ, the main orientation mark, is presented as the one, who himself rejected the competition and behaved as loyal and as an obedient one; for that, he was rewarded by God. It is emphasized that Christ did not claim honor he could claim; yet he chose to subordinate to God alone and despite any hardship, suffering, shame and death, he stayed loyal and obedient to God. For that, God praised Christ and made the universe to admit Christ's honor.

Christ gains honor not in honor-competition, yet via association with God as with

an honor-bestower. He gains honor not as a rival over his peer, yet as a loyal servant of a powerful patron. God as a patron, as an honor-bestower, is Christ's only significant other; and this is an exemplary behavior Paul wants his readers to adopt.

The text preceding the hymn (2:1-5) is about unity and loyalty to the in-Christ group. The repetition of ἐν Χριστῷ appeals and "have same mind" appeals is to promote the sense of identity, of belonging to the in-Christ group. Believers are to behave as it is appropriate to the members of this group: they must act for the interests of the whole group, not each of them individually. They must not compete for honor with each other, but look for honor from God alone.

The apostle promotes the virtues of obedience and loyalty also by the secondary examples of Epaphroditus and Timothy: their hard work for the interests of the community, their avoiding honor-competition, their absolute loyalty to Paul is to strengthen the community in the face of the outer danger.

Members of the in-Christ group are encouraged to live out their identity: for the in-Christ group, God is the only honor-bestower; hence to achieve honor within this group, Philippians must serve God in obedience and loyalty, as good children of God the Father. That is, the value of honor and aspiring for it is not rejected within an in-Christ community; yet the certain way of gaining honor – via honor-competition – is banned as threatening the unity and hence the very survival of the group.

In the next section, we will see how Paul deals with his own honor-issue in the text of Philippians.

4.2 Paul's own dealing with honor throughout the letter

Paul's dealing with honor in the letter to the Philippians is closely connected to the issue of the community's unanimity. It is not something unusual: as it was demonstrated in section 2.1 of this study, the very nature of honor is based on one's dependence on the community and its evaluation. In Philippians 3, in his polemics with the opponents, Paul speaks about his former way of life as about a perfect example of "relying on flesh" (3:4), in contrast with "relying on no flesh" and "serving to God in the spirit, boasting in Jesus Christ" (3:3 οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες). As after presenting his own experience, the apostle speaks about his hope to receive honor from God (3:10-11, 14; 3:21), it is clear that the whole passage is not only about identity, yet also very much about honor.

4.2.1 New source of κέρδη

Speaking about his former κέρδος, his relying on flesh, Paul does not mention any material goods (like wealth or well-being); he speaks exclusively about his place in a certain social group. The apostle's base for "confidence in flesh" or his "gain" (κέρδος) is described in seven lines, where the first one is kind of a heading, while the next three refer to his lineage and the last three, united by the preposition κατά – to his

socialization:[138]

> [5] περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος,
>
>   ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ,
>
>   φυλῆς Βενιαμίν,
>
>   Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων,
>
>   κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος,
>
>   [6] κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν,
>
>   κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος

These two important factors – belonging to a respected family (ascribed honor), and behaving in a respectful manner, fulfilling the expectations of his group (achieved honor) – form a base for his "confidence in flesh," i.e. for being in a secure position within his social group. The successful socialization of Paul, his honor, is described in the terms of the Jewish group he belongs to: his linage was meaningful within Hebrews (Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων);[139] he keeps the Law (ὁ νόμος), i.e. the norms of his Jewish society and fights against the enemies of the group (3:6a).[140] The final definition of his κέρδος is "blameless" in terms of "righteousness according to the Law" (3:6b κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος).

All this "gain" (κέρδος), all this confidence in flesh, i.e. secured social position, was rejected by Paul for the sake of Christ (3:7-8). The apostle changes his goals and

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[138] See section 3.3.1 of this study.

[139] Pilhofer sees here resemblance of typical Roman self-representation (*Philippi. Band 1*, 122-126). CONTRA: Witherington argues that the section is addressed to Judaizers (*Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 199).
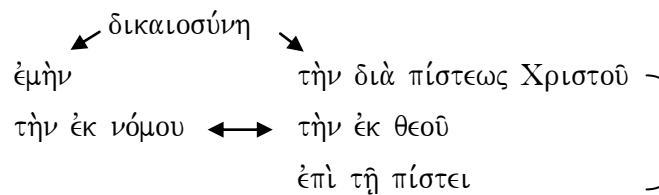
[140] See Bockmuel on Paul positioning himself here as an (ex-)member of radical Pharisee group, which aspired both to observing the Law and punishing those who break it (*The Epistle to Philippians*, 200-203) Cf. Ps 105:29-31.

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his orientation mark,[141] yet the nature of his aspiring to honor remains the same: Paul speaks about the new situation in the same terms, which he uses to describe his former way of life:

"relying on flesh"	⟷	["relying on no flesh"]
μοι κέρδη		ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω
δικαιοσύνη τὴν ἐν νόμῳ		τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη
διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν		διώκω δὲ εἰ... κατὰ σκοπὸν διώκω

That can indicate that the model remains the same, only the labels are changed.

The first opposition (κέρδος/κερδήσω 3:8) contrasts "my" gain and gaining Christ himself;[142] 3:9 demonstrates the opposition of two kinds of righteousness, one is repudiated in order to gain another one:

$$\nearrow \text{δικαιοσύνη} \searrow$$

ἐμὴν   τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ ⌐

τὴν ἐκ νόμου ⟷ τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ

                ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει ⌐

The point of contrast here is obvious: the Law is opposed to God;[143] and the righteousness from God has an additional quality as being gained through faith(fullness) (of Christ). Interpreting this verse in sociological terms and trying not to get involved into doctrinal discussion on justification by faith, one can say that Paul opposes here two courts of reputations.

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[141]   See section 3.3.2 of this study.

[142]   On the usage of διώκω in 3.6 and 3.9 see section 4.2.2.

[143]   There is a direct grammatical parallel between two opposite attributes: substainative article in Acc + preposition ἐκ.

The Greek word δικαιοσύνη etymologically can be traced to the name of a goddess Δίκη, the one who helped Zeus to judge, i.e. to see what is right and what is wrong. It refers to a divine principle of law, to what is right, legally, to a way, manner, or custom.[144] That is that every group has its own definition of righteousness, and the righteous person is the one who conforms to the group's rules and acts for the group's best interests. As the Jewish group includes God, the Law which is believed God gave to his people becomes that rule or custom,[145] living according to which a person (not every person, yet the member of the Jewish group) can become a righteous one.[146] The word δικαιοσύνη (righteousness) in a Jewish context has a social connotation in a sense that it describes a relationship between God and man.[147] Yet it is not just personal relationship, it is a corporate relationship: to be able to have relationship with God, one has to be a member of a Jewish group, which in its turn is defined by the Law.

Faith (πίστις) is mentioned twice in the description of the new righteousness (within the in-Christ group), to which Paul aspires (3:9). Greek πίστις means "trust," "confidence," as well as "reliability" and "faithfulness;" in a religious sense it describes man's relationship to God.[148] In the Hellenistic period, the verb πιστεύειν was used to express "the idea that there are gods," "the attitude of πιστίς is … a religious attitude to the degree that in it a man…actualizes his relationship to God."[149] In the Old Testament, *he'êmîn* has the same connotation: it "embraces… personal relationship between God

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144 Schrenk, *TDNT*, II:174-179, 193.

145 (or the customs and traditions of the group are sanctified by attributing the status of God's law).

146 Sanders puts it this way: "the pious… think that they are *true Israel in the sense that they live as Israelites should*" (Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 408, italic original).

147 See section 3.3.1 of this study.

148 Bultmann, *TDNT*, VI:175-182.

149 Ibid. 182.

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and man… an expression of the particular being and life of the people of God which stands both individually and collectively in the dimension of a vital divine relationship."[150] Neyrey notes that "faithfulness" (*fides*), is "the most important element" of God's patronage relationship.[151]

The notion of faith(fullness) was also important for Romans in terms of the structure of the empire. Latin *fides* (πιστίς) "is the key Roman concept… [it] represents Roman 'identity marker.'"[152] Faith(fullness) or loyalty to Rome (*fides*) distinguished the nations of Roman empire from its enemies.[153] That is, faith(fulness) is an essential element of patronage relationship: it supposes first, a long-term (life-long) mutual obligations ("denotes a relationship of reciprocity")[154] and second, "there is always a hierarchical difference."[155]

That is, faith supposes that first, a person includes God (gods) into his/her universe (or rather he/she enters God's universe); and second, God is a significant other, the one who's opinion matters, the one who delivers honor (in the given context – righteousness).

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[150] Weiser, *TDNT* VI:196.

[151] Neyrey, "God, Benefactor and Patron," 470.

[152] Stegemann, "Coexistence and Transformation," 20, with reference to C. Strecker, "Fides – Pistis – Glaube. Kontexte und Konturen einer Theologie der 'Annahme' bei Paulus," in *Lutherische und Neue Paulusperspectivee. Beiträge zu einem Schlüsselproblem der exegetischen Diskusion* (ed. M. Bachmann; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 223-250, on p. 231.

[153] Stegemann, "Coexistence and Transformation," 21.

[154] Ibid. 20. God is a faithful in the sense that he keeps his promises to his people (1 Cor 1:9; 1 Thes 5:23-24; Rom 9:7). Yet it is the inferior party of the relationship who is supposed to be faithful to the patron (Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 146, 250). On "faithfulness" and loyalty as part of patron-client relationship see section 2.2.2 of this study (above).

[155] Stegemann, "Coexistence and Transformation," 20. "[T]he transformation of hostile relations between Tome and those outside of its empire to *fides*-relations establishes… Rome as the dominating power and the conquered as the subjugated peoples" (ibid. 21).

If the phrase τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ is seen as objective genitive, it has the meaning "through faithfulness of Christ." One can see here the reference to the hymn (2:6-11), which presents the faithfulness of Christ up to death on the cross. [156] So the phrase speaks either about gaining righteousness of God for the very fact of entering His group (the entering becomes possible through Christ's event), [157] or about gaining this honor from God by following Christ's way of faithfulness. The next passage (3:10-11), where Paul describes his imitation of Christ[158] supports the latter reading.

We can summarize that Paul's "righteousness from[159] God, through[160] faithfulness of Christ, by faithfulness" mean positive evaluation (honor) within the group which includes God and Christ. The key point of the difference between "righteousness from the Law" and "righteousness from God" is the source of honor, the group which forms the "court of reputation." The double mentioning of πίστις[161] can refer to two faithfulnesses: that of Christ, which gives one the opportunity to enter the community of God, and our personal (Paul's) faithfulness to God (to his community),

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[156] On faithfulness of Christ see R.B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3.1-4.11* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philipians*, 204-205. CONTRA: Dunn argues that objective genitive here is sometimes forced, particularly in Phil 3:8-9 πίστις Χριστοῦ "is used in close proximity" with ἡ γνῶσις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, and the latter definitely cannot be read as an objective genitive (J.D.G. Dunn, "Once more, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ" in *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3.1-4.11* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 251).

[157] Cf. "[T]he larger argument Paul here conceives… justification in relational terms" ("and might be found in him")" (Holloway, *Consolation in Philippi*, 138, n.39, referring to P. Bonnard, *L'épître de Saint Paul aux Philippiens et l'épître aux Colossiens* (CNT 10; Neuchâtel and Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1950) 65); cf. Sanders "participational terms" and "belonging to Christ… determines the whole thrust and point of the passage" (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 505).

[158] See section 4.2.2 of this study.

[159] See P. Stuhlmacher, *Revisiting Paul's Doctrine of Justification: A Challenge to the New Perspective* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001) 18.

[160] Witherington says that διά here should be interpreted as "through" (not "in"), i.e. faith is "the objective means by which one has obtained this righteousness (*Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 205).

[161] First time πίστις Χριστοῦ, preposition δία+Gen., and second time without Χριστοῦ, preposition ἐπί+Dat.

which allows to gain a reward from God.[162]

We can conclude that the two kinds of "gain" ("righteousness") Paul contrasts speaking of his own experience, have no conceptual difference: both are "gains," confidence, boast,[163] i.e. successful socialization, yet in different contexts: the former one is in the context of Paul's ethnic and religious group, where the Law is an identity mark and the source of honor; the new "gain"/"righteousness" is found in the context of a different group, the group which includes God and Christ as identity mark(s) and source(es) of honor. The only difference between the two "gains" is their sources.

That is, Paul wants now to socialize and to gain status within the borders of God's ("in-Christ") group. He does it by exercising the rules of his group and following the example of Christ as it is described in the hymn 2:6-11.

4.2.2 Christ as the source of honor and source of identity

Paul has decided to enter "the realm of Christ;" he does not explain why, he just claims ὁ ὑπέρχος τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ. The apostle does not confine himself to entering "the Christ' realm; he also wants to repeat Christ's way in every single step of it: he wants to participate in his suffering and death (τὴν κοινωνίαν τῶν παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ 3:10b) in hope to attain his resurrection (3:11). The positive outcome of such imitation prevails the suffering Paul has to endure to achieve

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[162] Hooker notes: "the 'imitation' of Christ depends on union with him, and it is a question of being conformed to his image…" (M. Hooker, "Interchange in Christ," in *From Adam to Christ*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 13-25, on p. 17).

[163] Cf. 3:3 καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες.

it: the suffering and death of Christ, in which Paul is to participate is mentioned between two lines where he expresses his hope for the resurrection (3:10):

> ¹⁰τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν
>
> καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς <u>ἀναστάσεως</u> αὐτοῦ
>
>   καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ,
>
>   συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ,
>
> ¹¹εἴ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν <u>ἐξανάστασιν</u> τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν[164]

Veses 20 and 21 continue and develop the idea of resurrection, including all the members of the "in-Christ" group, which makes the theme of glory and reward to excel the theme of suffering. As in the hymn of Philippians 2, in chapter 3 suffering is a by-product, an episode (though significant) of the main goal – honor received from God in resurrection.[165]

The correlation of status left for the sake of status gained is the same in the story of Jesus and the story of Paul:[166] in the hymn of Phil 2:6-11 the original status of Christ as equal to God is expressed in only one line (2:6a),[167] and his exaltation by God takes a half of the hymn (2:9-11); in Philippians 3, the extended presentation of Paul's past "gain" (3:4-6) serves to underline the superiority of Christ (3:7-11). Paul's continuing identification of Christ's suffering and death ([ἡ] κοινωνία [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, 3:10) leads to the future reward of cosmic

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[164] See Lightfoot, *St.Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 150-151 for chiastic structure of the fragment; cf. W. Schenk, *Die Philipperbriefe des Paulus: Kommentar* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984). CONTRA: Holloway, *Consolation in Philippi*, 138-139.

[165] Witherington points that suffering is a part of confirming in the image of Christ, it is a part of sharing in his resurrection (*Paul's letter to Philippians*, 205).

[166] Cf. Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation*, 142.

[167] The second line οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ refers to Christ's decision not to stay equal to God. See section 4.1.2 of this study.

dimension, also is similar to that of Christ: τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (3:14), κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός… μετασχηματίσει τὸ σῶμα… ἡμῶν σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ δύνασθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα (3:20-21).[168] That is, Paul's decision to prefer Christ is his decision to choose Christ's way: the way of suffering for the sake of future glory.

The story of Paul's life presented in Philippians 3 resembles the Christological hymn (2.6-11) linguistically and conceptually. Both Christ and Paul share the parabolic pattern of their stories: Christ voluntarily renounced his privileged position as God's equal, submitted to God up to death, and as a result received the highest honor bestowed to him from God. Paul also had a position of honor (3:5-7; γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος), rejected it for the sake of being with Christ (3:8-9, 10b); he is looking forward to the reward he is about to receive from God (3:20-21). Paul's current situation of suffering and his future reward are described in similar terms with *kenosis* of Christ and his glorification:[169]

- Christ's name is repeated in the end of the passage as it is in the hymn: κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (2:21; 3:20);[170]

- The body of Paul and his followers is currently "humiliated" (ὁ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν 3:21), yet it is about to be transformed into "the body similar

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[168] Cf. μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ σώματί μου (1:20).

[169] Cf. Schreiner gives a list of verbal similarities between the hymn (2:6-11) and 3:10-21 and concludes that the connection between the two sections "is hard to deny, yielding to the conclusion that the believer's reward in Phil 3:21 is analogues to Christ's reward in 2:9-11" (T.R. Schreiner, *The Apostle of God's Glory in Christ* (Downer Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2001) 170). See also Marchal, *Hierarchy, Unity, and Imitation*, 142; Garland, "The Composition and Unity," 157, 159. CONTRA: B.J. Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic "I": Personal Example as Literary Strategy* (JSNT SS 177; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) 193.

[170] Note also the references to the Lord Jesus Christ in the beginning of description 3:8; and mentioning of Jesus Christ in the end of shorter section 3:14.

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to that of Christ of glory" (σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ);

- Paul describes his future salvation, the changes that are about to happen with his "body" in the same words which are used in the hymn referring to Christ's renouncing of his status: μετασχηματίζω (3:21) and σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος (2:7); σύμμορφον (3:21) and μορφὴν δούλου λαβών (2:7).

In the section 4.1 we have demonstrated that the Christological hymn of Phil 2:6-11 presents the essence of Christ's way: it is admitting God as the only source of honor, the only significant other, the only honor-bestower. The same happens with Paul, as he describes it in Philippians 3: he rejects any other "confidence" for the sake of looking for honor from God alone (ἡ ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη, where ἐκ θεοῦ is emphatically put in the first place).

Paul has left his already possessed honor (i.e. positive evaluation by his former group) for the sake of getting honor from God alone. His former honor, the one he used to have in his original group, was limited by the borders of this group – the Law (ἡ δικαιοσύνη τὴν ἐκ νόμου). The honor Paul expects to receive from God has a cosmic dimension: it comes from heaven (3:20), it involves getting under God's power, which submits everything to its sway (3:21).[171] The example of Christ, as it is presented in the hymn (2:6-11) demonstrates that God's glorification of his loyal servant overpasses every possible source of honor ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων. Christ is named as the reason of Paul's choice to change his identity and his source of honor, and that is why Paul refers to the hymn several times: honor, with which God rewards to his

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[171] Cf. 2:10-11: "conceptually the notion of subjecting (ὑποτάσσω) of all things to Christ is found in Phil 2:9-11" (Schreiner, *The Apostle of God's Glory*, 170.

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loyal servants (the honor one gets within τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς), is so much bigger than what one gets within the "earthly group" (οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες)[172] that they can be compared as "salvation" and "distortion." It turns out that the main point of conflict with the opposition is the source of honor (see below).

That is, proclaiming Christ his only source of identity in Phil 3:7-11, Paul also means that Christ is his only source of honor. Honor here is secondary to the identity; source of honor is determined by the source of identity; at the same time, one's source of honor is an indication of one's identity.

4.2.3 God as the only source of honor: the conflict of identities

The theme of honor correlates with the theme of identity throughout the letter. In the very beginning, Paul informs his readers about "some brothers," whose honor-challenge of him caused separation (1:15-18).[173] The same theme of strife, envy and competitiveness repeats throughout the letter (2:3, 4, 21) and over and over again Paul asks his addressees to stay united (1:27; 2:1-4; 4:2), which indicates that the problem was not a single instance.[174] The story of Paul's changed identity is located in the middle of his most severe attack against opposition (3:2 and 3:18-19). In the section 3.1 of this study we have established that the main and the only recoverable accusation against the opponents throughout the letter is their wrong identity: they are not "ours,"

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[172] Phil 3:19-20, cf. 1:28.

[173] See section 3.1.1 of this study.

[174] See sections 3.1.1.3, 3.1.4 of this study.

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they are not "in Christ."[175] The apostle reassures the Philippians that he will be honored by God, and he calls them to unify against the opponents (1:20, 28). In 1:18-20 Paul underlines that he is not getting involved into honor-competition, yet is confident of getting the reward from God for the Gospel to be spread (1:19), i.e. for the fact of expanding of the Christ community.[176]

In Philippians 3, the theme of reward from God is incorporated into the theme of identity and unity of the group.[177] On a bigger scale, the theme of reward/honor from God serves to the argument against the opponents, which frames chapter 3:

3:2	a) Blaming the opponents
3:3	But we are…serving to God, boasting in Christ
3:5-6	b) Wrong identity
	c) Wrong honor
3:7-8	d) New identity: Christ
3:9-11	d') New honor: that from God through Christ
3:12-14	c') Serving to God to receive honor from Him
3:15-17	b') Admonition to unity
3:18-19	a') Blaming the opponents
3:20-21	But we are… about to receive honor from God

The connection between identity and honor is perfectly seen in 3:9 (the contraposition of righteousness from God and that from the law) and 3:19-21 (the final destination of

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[175] Beside some personal issues between Paul and his rivals; see sections 3.1.5 and 3.3.3 of this study, above, and section 4.2.3, below.

[176] τοῦτό μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν (1:19). Paul hardly speaks here about his hope to be released from prison (for "salvation" in 1.19 understood as Paul's winning the trail, see Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 312). 1:28 and 3:21 σωτερία/σωτήρ have clearly eschatological meaning. The parallel of 1:20 and 3:21 (glorification of Paul's body in Christ) support this view.

[177] Paul gets in through conforming to Christ and following his way (3:10-11); he wants his readers to stay unanimous (3:14-15).

both groups are expressed in similar terms of glory: δόξα / τό σῶμα τῆς δόξης). The nature of honor, its essence remain the same: it is the approval (the positive evaluation) or reward from the significant other, from the group one identifies oneself with.

The apostle carefully notes that he has not yet reached his goal of being rewarded by God (3:12-14); honor, bestowed by God, is seen as eschatological resurrection.[178] The specific language Paul uses here indicates that within the in-Christ community honor is delivered for the work for the good of the group (cf. 2:29-30).

Philippians 3:12 is difficult to interpret: διώκω δὲ εἰ καὶ καταλάβω, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ Ἰησου. The last part of the phrase, κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ Ἰησου, ("I had been captured by Christ Jesus") refers to the fact that Paul changed his identity and became a member of the Christ's group. In the first part the same verb καταλαμβάνω is used, yet now in an active mood and with no object.[179] The

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[178] The section was usually interpreted as a reference to the perfectionist opponents (Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 205). Though they have some reservations though, noting that Paul's rhetoric here is to affect his readers, to encourage them to get to know Christ, rather than to fight against the opponents (ibid.).

The verse is also seen as an evidence of power game within Christian community: Castelli interprets this verse as promoting Paul's higher position within Christian congregation: Paul's example "imbues the model with a privileged and unattainable status" (Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 89). Brawley argues that as in 3:12-14 Paul speaks on "his own incomplete state," he cannot be "an example of unattainable status" so much as "a fellow traveler on the way of life imprinted by God's power" (Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection," 134).

Yet if we take into consideration Christ's glorification (2:9-11) which is supposed to be repeated in his follower's lives (3:11, 21), we can see that the incompleteness of this status is caused by two factors: first, the full identification with Christ will be reached only in eschatological future, when believers will have glorified bodies Christ had (3:21), i.e. it happens only after resurrections and hence goes beyond the limits of this life (The word δεδικαιῶμαι, which P[46], D and other Western manuscripts have here, can refer to the judgment of Christ after his return, i.e. to the eschatological future (see Silva, *Philippians: Commentary*, 187; Withreington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 209); second, this overcoming of the limits can refer to the God's glory (i.e. to the honor God bestows upon his faithful servants) at to an *unlimited* good. Everyone can have a part in it; nobody's status is "unattainable": as God's honor is unlimited, Paul's working for Philippians' success in faith (i.e. helping them to gain honor from God) does not decreases his own (Paul's) honor, yet multiplies it (1:25-26; 4:1).

[179] In the first case, in passive voice, κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ Ἰησου, the object is "me:" "I was apprehended by Christ" means nothing but "Christ apprehended me."

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meaning of ἐφ᾽ ᾧ can be causal or consecutive,[180] yet it is definitely not the comparative one;[181] the point is that the meaning of the verbs in both parts of the phrase should be rather the same.[182]

If Paul wants to do something – the same what Christ did to him – and he does it in the context of aspiring for the reward from God, and also giving to the fact that the combination of διώκω and καταλαμβάνω is used both in LXX and Ancient Greek as "pursuing and capturing,"[183] 3:12 can be a hint to Paul's missionary activity. Such verbalization of his ministry is a clear reference to his former lifestyle within his former identity: in 3:6, speaking about his status within the group of those who rely on the flesh he says: κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. Philippians 3:6 belongs to the section on Paul's former κέρδη: his activity in persecuting the church was one of his main merits within his former group.

However, 3:13a and 3:14 add to the meaning of διώκω and καταλαμβάνω as to the aspiration to and getting the reward (correspondingly): ἐγὼ ἐμαυτὸν οὐ λογίζομαι κατειληφέναι….κατὰ σκοπὸν διώκω εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Paul utilizes the athlete metaphor διώκω εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον,so the

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On the opinion that the object is missing on purpose, as a polemic with Gnostics, see Martin and Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 206.

[180] See Fee, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 346, n. 31; 430, n.28; Bockmuehl agrees with the meaning "because" (*The Epistle to Philippians*, 221). See also Witherington inclining to "because," as it suits the context (3:14) and also "better suits the hortatory character of the whole discourse" (Witherington, *Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 209).

[181] Cf. 1 Cor 13:12 …τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσγην. Here the different conjunction is used (καθώς) and the subject and object change their places: "(I) will know [the Divine] in a similar way (I) am known [by the Divine]."

[182] Martin and Hawthorne suppose that the meaning of καταλαμβάνω "shifts slightly" in the second part of the phrase, so Paul "had been gasped" by Christ, and not he wants "to comprehend" Him, that is, Christ's personality (*Philippians*, 208).

[183] See LXX Exodus 15:9, Joshua 2:5, 1 Sam 30:8, Hos 2:7. See also Herodotus ix.58; Lucian Hermot 77 (reference from Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 152).

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connotation of διώκω is "aspiring." Yet the same metaphor used in 1 Cor 9:24-27,[184] in the context of Paul's hard work in "gaining" (κερδέω) people for Christ and the gospel.[185] That is, two ideas can be loaded into 3:12: Paul's preaching the Gospel and recruiting new people for Christ *and* his desire to be rewarded by God: "I aspire to get [people into the community of Christ], wherefore[186] I was captured by Christ."

Being a Jew, Paul persecuted the church because he believed it threatened Jewish identity; he was doing nothing but guarding the borders of the group.[187] Now the group has changed, yet the type of activity for which Paul expects to get honor remains the same. He works for spreading of the gospel; he also guards the Christian community from its diffusion by the opponents (both inner ones and from the outside). That is, he works for expanding the in-Christ group and maintaining its boundaries. The reward (honor) in both cases is given to the one who works for the strengthening of one's group (by following the group's rules (i.e. exercising the group's identity) and keeping the boundaries (again, maintaining the group's identity). That is the conflict of honors between the two groups (the contraposition of "relying on flesh" / "relying on no flesh" and "righteousness from the Law" / "righteousness from God") is nothing else but the conflict of identities.

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[184] 1 Cor 9:24: εἰς δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ βραβαῖοὗ οὕτως τρέχετε ἵνα καταλάβητε.

[185] 1 Cor 9:19-21: πᾶσιν ἐμαυτὸν ἐυδούλωσα, ἵνα τοὺς πλείονας κερδήσω – the connection of δουλόω and Christ's μορφὴν δούλου λαβών of Phil 2:7 can be a topic of separate investigation; … ἵνα κερδάνω τοὺς ἀνόμς... ἵνα τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς κερδήσω... and especially important in the context of this discussion v.23: πάντα δὲ ποιῶ διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ἵνα συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι – Paul "gains" people into the community of Christ in order to fulfill his participation in this community.

[186] Lightfoot sees this meaning of ἐφ' ᾧ as a preferable one (*St .Paul's Letter to Philippians*, 152).

[187] Cf. B.Malina and J. Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality* (Louisille, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996) 156.

As the apostle belongs to the entity which includes the immortal God and resurrected Christ, death does not frighten him (1:21-23).[188] At the same time he believes that εἰς ἀπολογίαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου κεῖμαι (1:16), that is why his life, work, and even death for the sake of community is his "advantage" (μοι καρπὸς ἔργου 1:22). He calls his readers "my joy and my crown" (χαρὰ καὶ στέφανός μου 4:1), and looks for Christian community success and development (1:25-26; 4:17b). Paul does it not only because of his personal affection: if he manages the community of Christ to stay loyal and obedient to Him, he receives reward from God: …εἰς καύχημα ἐμοὶ εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ, ὅτι οὐκ εἰς κενὸν ἔδραμον οὐδὲ εἰς κενὸν ἐκοπίασα (2:15-16).

That is, for the apostle, one's service to the church is at the same time one's service to God himself. Paul has decided to enter the group of Christ and has chosen God as his source of honor. Like Roman local elite were serving to the emperor by fulfilling their duties as heads of polices and regions,[189] for Paul, working for the success of that group of Christ is his service to God himself. In the same way, the service of his co-workers to the apostle is considered as their service to the Gospel (2:21-22); this work of Timothy and Epaphroditus builds for the good of the Christian community and hence, it is also service to God and Christ (2:25, 30; 4:18).[190] The work for the good of the community is honored within the in-Christ group and will be rewarded by God (2:29-30; 3:17; 4:3). That is, humbleness and "looking for the

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[188] Ἐμοὶ γὰρ τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κέρδος… ἀναλῦσαι καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι. Physical death means for Paul total union, bounding, identification, "being" with Christ. In the light of 3:7-11, death as κέρδη can be seen as imitation of Christ, and hence, Χριστὸν κερδῆειν.

[189] See Theissen, *Social Reality and the Early Christianity*, 196-201, 272.

[190] See section 4.1.5.2 of this study.

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interests of others" (2:2-4) is not rejection of honor *per se*,[191] but rejection of looking for honor from any source other than God.

As patron/client type of relations, being a model of Roman empire, helped to overcome disconnection of the provinces,[192] the same way emphasizing Christ as the only honor bestower become an important argument against opposition in the letter to the Philippians.[193] Any rival within the Christian community (including challenging Paul's leading position (1:15-17)), is seen as seeking after honor not being bestowed by God, yet being won in honor-competition, and is considered a treason: it does not only weakens the community, which would be torn apart by inner rival; as identity and source of honor are connected inseparably, an alternative source of honor (not God alone) is a sign of changed identity. The admonition to avoid any strife and competition with the Christian commune is given in the context of conformity to Christ (2:1-5).[194] Looking for an alternative source of honor, these πολλοί (3:18, cf. οἱ πάντες 2:21) are in fact looking for an alternative source of identity, and hence, they stop being "brothers." That is why, in Paul's rhetoric, "some rival brothers," through their strife and selfishness, which jeopardizes the unity of congregation, evolve into "the enemies of

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[191] See T. Engberg-Pedersen, "Epilogue," in *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism: Contributions from Cognitive and Social Science* (ed. P. Luomanen, I. Pyysiäinen & R. Uro. Biblical Interpretation Series 89. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007) 197-214, on pp. 208-209, where he argues that in Phil 2:4 there is no "abject self-denial," yet rather re-orientation of one from individualism to seeing oneself as a part of community: "the perspective of oneself-as-one-of-the-others;" he also notes parallels of this idea of Paul with Stoics (*loc.cit.*, 209-211).

[192] See Eisenstadt, Roniger, *Patrons, Clients*, 52-58; Theissen, *Social Reality and the Early Christianity*, 272; see also section 2.2.2 of this study.

[193] Carter names "imitation" among "various dynamics" of interaction between Roman Empire and emerging Christian church (Carter, "Roman Imperial Power: A New Testament Perspective," *Rome and Religion*, 137-151, on p. 139).

[194] See section 4.1.5.1 of this study.

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Christ' cross."[195] God and Christ, the only patrons of the "in-Christ" group, bestow honor to their faithful clients. For the members of the in-Christ group, the only legitimate way of gaining this honor from God is to work for the good of the community, submitting to the group's leaders and awaiting for the reward; the only legitimate source of honor is God and Christ.

We can conclude that in the letter to the Philippians Paul gives much attention to the theme of honor; in the apostle's language, honor is overlapping with the theme of identity. The apostle does not invent a new way of gaining honor; the model he promotes is typical for patron/client relationship. In the community of Christ, God is presented as an exclusive honor bestower; one can gain honor only by obedience to the group's rules and work for the community's growth and strengthening. The purport of life for Paul is to identify with Christ and to repeat his way in humbling obedience to God, selfless service to the Christian community and future glorification in resurrection.

4.3 Conclusion: Πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς: keeping values, changing identity

In this chapter of the study we have analyzed how the letter to Philippians presents dealing with honor in the Christian community. Two major sections of the letter were examined: the Christological hymn (2:6-11) and Paul's testimony of his own change of priorities (3:4-14), as long as other fragments, where the issue of honor is touched.

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[195] On the connection of the opponents references throughout the letter, see section 3.1.4 of this study.

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The hymn is closely connected to its contexts, and the aim of its using is to support Paul's main idea: within the Christian commune honor is to be achieved passively, by obedience and loyalty to the group patron(s) and definitely not by competition with other members of the group. The analysis of 2:6-11 indicates that the Christological hymn is not praising suffering *per se*. Christ's *kenosis* and death is a by-product of his absolute obedience and loyalty to God.

The context of the hymn was analyzed in order to see how Paul uses it for his purposes. The introduction to the hymn (2:5) can have a double connotation: an appeal to stay in Christ and an appeal to imitate him. The boarder context supports both aspects: Phil 2:1-2 summons the readers to stay "in Christ;" while Phil 2:3-4, 12, and the examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus are rather about following Christ's example: they teach Philippians to avoid honor competition, to stay obedient to God and his commune. Such behavior must be honored (2:29) and emulated by the community: no doubts, Paul means Timothy and Epaphroditus among "us," whom Philippians should imitate (3:17).

Philippians 3 contains the climax of Paul speaking about his honor. He explains in detail how successful and respectful he used to be when he was a member of the Jewish commune. Rejecting his old κέρδη, he does not stay empty-handed; he rejects his previous identity and his socialization *in order to* find a new identity. Having entered "the realm of Christ," i.e. having found his new identity in Christ, Paul starts his way in repeating Christ's way of faithful and obedient service to God and his community, in hope to receive from God honor similar to the one Christ has received for his obedience. As previously Paul gained his honor (δικαιοσύνη ἡ ἐκ νόμου) for his belonging to a

respectful Jewish family (3:5), for zealous observation of the Law and the borders of his former group (3:6), the same way now the apostle wants to find himself having honor ascribed to him by the very fact of his belonging to the in-Christ group (διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, ἡ ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη 3:9a) and second, having honor bestowed to him by God for his work for the group's success (1:18-20; 2:16; 4:1) the same way Christ did – ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει (3:9b-11).

So, it is not a just rejection of honor; it is rather the replacement of borders, i.e. the changing of group-identity. *The theme of honor is interweaved with the theme of group-identity throughout the letter*. Paul sees God as his patron and expects reward from Him for his work for the good of Christian community; the well-being of his co-members and expanding of the "in-Christ" group is his goal, as that means for him increasing prize from God. Any rival within the group can jeopardize its stability and growth, so the apostle argues against it claiming that any competition and strife damages the congregation and is a deed of hostility against the patron of the group – against Christ himself (3:18). Paul insists that God is the only legitimate honor-bestower for the members of the "in-Christ" group.

From the analysis of certain sections and also from the overall argument developed by the apostle in the letter to the Philippians, we can see that honor is an important subject of it. Paul is anxious about honor issues; he is very sensitive to it as any other person of his time and culture. We also noted that honor-discourse in the letter goes along with identity-discourse: the topic of honor always has the themes of belonging, unity, and opposition as its context.

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We can conclude that in the letter to the Philippians, the apostle's understanding of honor is very much the same as a non-Christian one (particularly, as Roman patron/client model of relations). Being a member of the in-Christ group, Paul gains his honor from the fact of belonging to the group of Christ and via service to its patron (i.e. Christ himself), via loyal and selfless work to the community of Christ. He looks for an ascribed honor, honor bestowed from God alone, for honor strongly within the in-Christ group. For Paul, rejecting honor-competition is the declaration of God being the only honor bestower; in addition, avoiding competition works for the good of the commune. He still values honor and aspires for it, yet in terms of his new group.

Having his identity changed and having become a member of τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς, Paul has not changed his value-orientation. Two most important values remain the same: belonging to a group and honor.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

Humans are social beings, and socialization – belonging to a group and finding one's place in this group – is one of the main human psychological necessities. The fact that the need for socialization, together with the need and ability to reflect on this socialization, are something that unites the human race through time and cultures makes social studies of the New Testament relevant to the needs of the contemporary church.

As any other kind of text, biblical texts reflect social structures to which their authors and original audiences belonged to. The New Testament texts, and especially Paul's letters, were intended and created in order to instruct and to help their readers to build their new social identity as members of Christian community. Social-psychological approach to Biblical texts draws so much attention in recent decades: it helps us to understand the mentality of the culturally and temporally remote writers and original readers of the texts; it also helps us to see the significance of these texts to nowadays readers.

The aim of this study is the analysis of social concepts of honor and identity in Paul's letter to Philippians.

5.2 Survey of the study

In the **first chapter** (Introduction) methodology has been defined. It was noted that any attempt to reconstruct social patterns embodied in the text (cognitive discourse analysis) should be based on thorough exegesis. That is why this research is a combination of text analysis and social analysis.

The research gap was also addressed. Social studies of New Testament texts are especially helpful for an understanding of early Christian identity: how the community viewed itself and the outer world. We had to point out difficulties in terminology, especially in the usage of the term "(social) values." The confusion of the concept is a common neglect: more evident manifestations of values are often taken for values themselves. The relation between values and identity is not defined; as a result, what happens with values, when identity is changed, is not clear.

Paul's letter to Philippians is the perfect example for the analysis of relations between social values and identity. The researchers agree that in the letter, the value of honor is rejected by the apostle, and that suffering (which was considered as something shameful in Greco-Roman culture of the 1st century) is declared as being a new value: God rewarded Christ for his suffering and self-denial; and Christians should imitate him in suffering and love to their brothers.[1] There is an inconsistency though. The unexpected and illogical aspiration to suffering of Christ and his followers (instead of a natural desire of honor and success) has to be explained as super-natural intervention.

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[1] See Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 30; Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor*, 165.

A hypothesis has been proposed: in the letter to Philippians, Paul does not speak about changed values: rejecting honor and praising suffering. Rather, he speaks about changed identity, i.e. about changed significant other. The events and circumstances are evaluated by Paul from the perspective that God is the only bestower of honor.

In **chapter two** of this study, the main terminology for the research have been clarified. The definitions of values, culture and identity, were given; the correlation between these concepts was described. The two main analytical categories of the study were defined, and the relations between them ascertained. Values are invisible, often non-verbalized "definition of rationality," "of the desirable," which determines behavior of an individual.[2] In this research, the social values, i.e. the orientation of a person in society, is under consideration.

A group is defined as a number of individuals, who consider themselves and are considered by others as "a group." Values, shared by a group, in different ways are embodied in norms of behavior, in the group's heroes and symbols. Together, values and their embodiments form culture. As same value can be practiced differently in different groups, different cultures can share same values, but they practice these values differently.

Identity is built upon the visible part of culture, i.e. upon values embodiment and not upon values themselves. So, people can have different identities, yet share the same values. Identity is understood as a sense of belonging (to a group); it sets a border between "me" ("us") and "them," i.e. it has positive and negative connotations. Belonging to a group gives a person a sense of worth. Identity forms an

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evaluation system: "significant others" are those who are within the group; the evaluation of non-members is not significant.

Honor is a part of the honor/shame system, especially strong in collectivist societies (i.e. in the societies where the relational value is oriented to the belonging to a group); the system regulates behavior of the group-members by praising the correct behavior and shaming the wrong one. A person is sensitive to honor (i.e. to the judgment of the group) only if he/she relates him/herself to this group. The source of honor (a significant other) is always a member(s) of one's group: inclusion into a group means inclusion into an evaluation system. The very fact of belonging (identity, association) gives a person a sense of worth. That is, identity and honor go together: changing of identity supposes changing of source of honor; and changing of source of honor means changing of identity.

The social value system of ancient Mediterranean culture type is characterized by strong group orientation (collectivism) and specifically treatment of honor as limited good. In the Greco-Roman world two basic models of honor-dynamic existed: one could get honor via achieving, when honor was won in contest with other group-members, and via ascribing, when honor was bestowed onto a person for loyalty and service to a patron. It was noted that honor-competition could contradict to the interests of the group; and quite the contrary, patronage strengthened the structure of the group: it was the patronage system which allowed Romans to keep their huge empire together.

At the end of chapter one of this study, the cultural features of ancient Philippi were described. It was concluded, that the addressees of Paul's letter lived in the city, which though being historically mainly a Greek one, by the middle of the 1st

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CE was highly Romanized. The significant part of the elite population was Roman veterans and their descendants, and the Roman influence in the city was strong. It was concluded, that one can expect Philippi dwellers to be group-oriented people, practicing both honor-competition and patronage as ways of achieving honor.

The **third chapter** of the study was devoted to the analysis of Paul's language of identity in the letter to Philippians. As the letter contains some bright references to the opponents, we have started with parsing the negative identity in the letter. Some opponents could be characterized as the apostle's personal rivals (1:15-18, 2:21), other references have a vilificatory character and do not provide any reliable information about who these opponents were (1:27-30; 3:2, 18-19). It was demonstrated however, that all cases of the apostle's mentioning of the opponents could be seen as being referred to one (the same) group, whose main feature was not belonging to "our" circle. It was concluded that the role of the opponents in the letter is to provide the background, on which the identity of Christian group can be seen.

Next, we researched the positive language of identity in the letter. Addressing his readers and referring to his co-workers, Paul uses kinship language ("brothers"), which indicates close relationships within the Christian commune. The apostle calls Philippians and Timothy "his children," which points to his leading position. The repeated admonition "to think the same" (τοῦτο φρονεῖν 2:2,5; 4:2) has a double connotation: to share the same attitude and to stay in alliance with Christ and each other (i.e. with "in-Christ group"). There are several direct appeals to stay united and to leave aside honor competition (1:27, 2:2-4, 3:14); military and political language used in the letter (1:27-28; 2:16; 3:12-14, 20) is to make the Philippians to unify and be ready to protect their group, which is an "in-Christ group."

Paul's own testimony of identity change was also examined. The section 3:4-11 of the letter contains both positive and negative identities of Paul. He contrasts his former life, the life within the borders of the Jewish community and Mosaic Law, and his present self-understanding, the one which has Christ as an identity-mark. Being "in-Christ" is Paul's new identity; God is Paul's significant other, the one who gives him both the sense of belonging and a sense of worth.

We have concluded that the theme of Christian community's self-understanding is one of the most important ones in the letter to Philippians. References to the opponents, together with admonitions to unity are to strengthen the sense of belonging among the members of the congregation. Paul's own example is to demonstrate that the new identity "in Christ" is much more significant than any other former one; it is his "salient"[3] identity in the giving context. Strong orientation of the members of the Christian commune to their group reflects the common dependence of an individual on his\her group in collectivist societies.

In the **fourth chapter** of the study we analyzed how dealing with honor in the Christian community is presented in the letter to Philippians. We have started with parsing the so-called Christological hymn (2:6-11), which plays an important role in the argumentation of the letter: it is to give the exemplary attitude of the Christian community members. We have demonstrated that the hymn tells about Christ taking the only right position towards God – the position of a servant, who is loyal and obedient to his master to the point of death. God is presented as the only source of honor, who bestows honor onto his faithful servant in the eschatological future. The context of the hymn supports our findings: it is introduced by an appeal to leave

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[3] Brawley, "From Reflex to Reflection," 131.

honor competition and to unite as members of the "in-Christ" group (2:1-5). Right after the hymn Paul calls his readers to stay obedient and to work for the good of the community without competing for honor with each other (2:12-18). Timothy and Epaphroditus are examples of the utter devotion to the interests of the "in-Christ" group, whose (devotion) includes acknowledgement of Paul's leading position (2:19-30); this kind of behavior is honored within the community (2:29 τοὺς τοιούτους ἐντίμους ἔχετε). That is, the hymn and its context promote getting honor from God alone, via loyal service to his community; getting honor via honor-competition with other members of the "in-Christ" group are prohibited. Such attitude would strengthen the position of the Christian group and help it survive in the hostile environment.

Paul's own example of dealing with the honor issue was examined by analyzing his own testimony in 3:4-21 and other sections of the letter. Speaking about his conversion to Christ, the apostle uses the language of honor. He describes his former life as a Jew in terms of his successful socialization in the community of the Law; he underlines the high social status he gained in this group. All this was rejected for the sake of Christ himself and the position similar to his (resurrection and glorification by God). The apostle still aspires for honor, yet now the source of it is God and Christ. Paul is determined to stay loyal to Christ's community and to serve to it despising any difficulties, sufferings or death. Expecting eschatological glorification (honor) from God (1:20; 3:13-14, 21) makes meaningful hard selfless work for the interests of God's group and obedience to God, which can cause suffering and even death from the enemies of God and his group.

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The language Paul uses speaking about his experience within the "in-Christ" group indicates that Christ is both source of honor and source of identity for the members of his group. Honor, by definition, is dealt with in the context of one's group. Within the "in-Christ" group, honor and identity are explicitly overlapping: Paul wants "to be found in Christ," and "to gain Him."

The interdependency of honor and identity is perfectly seen in how Paul treats the opponents in the letter. Paul starts with mentioning the honor-rival within Christian community; he returns to the topic over and over again, underlining the necessity to unite, to leave aside any competition and to work selflessly for the good of the "in-Christ" group. The members of the Christian community expect to be rewarded in the future resurrection, by God himself, for the loyal service to God in building, expanding and strengthening of his Church. Every time Paul speaks about receiving honor from God alone, it is done within the context of identity in Christ and appeal for the unity of the commune. If one considers oneself a member of God's group, one is supposed to have God as one's only significant other, the only source of honor. Competing over honor with other members of the group does not only jeopardizes the group's unity and weakens the group; it is a factual renouncing of God's universal lordship; rejecting him as the only honor-bestower. That is why in Paul's rhetoric, "the rival brothers" become "the enemies of Christ's cross."

We could see that Paul did reject neither honor nor aspiring to it; he did not invent new ways of achieving honor either. The pattern he promoted was very much the same the Roman Empire was built on: the centralized distribution of honor by the only patron served to strengthening of the group. What Paul did should be called

"recasting the roles,"[4] "change of interpretive framework,"[5] relocating the borders, or rather, using terminology of this research, changing the identity in which the honor-gaining ritual was practiced.

Paul points to God as to the only source of honor; he points to the service to God and God's group as to the only way of gaining honor. So, it is not new values invented, but the same values practiced in a different group. Values remain the same; what has been changed is identity.

5.3 Conclusions

Various cultures and societies of Mediterranean region, having different identities, still shared the same value of belonging to a group; they all had a similar honor/shame system. Identity is not based on values, it is based on symbols, heroes; identity is the answer to the question: Whom do I belong to? Who is my significant other? That means that *the fight between Christians and non-Christians was not about the value of honor per se, but about who is the hero, the bestower of honor: God and Christ, or the emperor (or the Mosaic Law).* The bestower of honor is the ultimate "significant other;" and who is one's significant other depends on what group one belongs to.

Therefore, when in the 1st century a person entered a Christian commune,

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[4] Solevåg, "Perpetua and Felicitas – Reinterpreting Empire," 238. Cf. Carter's "hybridity, reinscribing, and imitation" as possible characteristics of the interaction between Roman Empire and the early Christian church (Carter, "Roman Imperial Power: A New Testament Perspective," in *Rome and Religion*, 139).

[5] Watt, "Radical Social Redefinition and Radical Love," 129.

his/her system of values did not change. He/she remained oriented to the group and aspiring to honor.[6] What changed was his/her identity: the person became a member of a different society – a Christian group, a group which included God and Christ as the ultimate honor bestowers. The person's seeking for honor now took place in the borders of this new group. Competing for honor with other members was not the suitable way of gaining honor within this group: first, it questions the position of God as the ultimate honor bestower; and second, it could jeopardize the group's stability, which was undesirable especially in the hostile environment; it damaged the group's interests and hence, the interests of God, who was the ultimate Lord of the group. In the Christian group, honor could be gained only by one's association with God: by serving his interests, by staying loyal and faithful to him, even if such loyalty could cost suffering and death. This strategy of gaining honor was typical for the Roman imperial system, where service to the emperor and selfless fight for the imperial interests were honored by the authorities. As Lendon puts it: "Honor is one of history's strong forces… it can thwart the state, destroy the state or make the state impossible… But placed at the service of the community, honor can create, and preserve, an empire."[7]

That is, for Paul, honor was an important issue and a powerful tool for building and strengthening the Christian community identity and unity. Common for Mediterranean cultures relational values – belonging to a group and aspiring to the high evaluation by this group (to honor) – were practiced now in the "heavenly society," πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς.

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[6]   Avoiding shame for females, this gender issue, could be also changed, as Solevåg demonstrates in her "Perpetua and Felicitas – Reinterpreting Empire."

[7]   Lendon, "Roman Honor" in *Oxford Book of Social Relations in the Roman World* (Ed. by M. Peachin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 398.

5.4 Contribution of this study

First of all, this research is based on the shoulders of other scholars. Some of them have spoken about the fact that it is not values, but their identification with Christ is what differed followers of Jesus from their Jewish and Gentile neighbors. In his concluding chapter to *Exploring Early Christian Identity*, Bengt Holmberg notes that the identity of Christian movement was not based on its unique ethical teaching (because this teaching was not unique); their identity was "bound up with… identity of their confessed Lord, Jesus of Nazareth."[8] Andrie du Toit points out that in the letter to Romans, "Paul saw God as being the ultimate source of the new identity of believers," and that "the most remarkable aspect" of seeing themselves as part of God's family was that it gave the believers "an unheard-of dignity,"[9] that is, for the followers of Jesus, God was both the source of identity and the source of honor. Identity was changed; correspondingly, the source of honor was also changed; yet the very values of belonging and honor remained. As van der Watt refers to the Johanine community: "The value system is not devalued, but the way the value system is interpreted is altered."[10]

Having analyzed Paul's understanding of honor and identity in the text of the letter to Philippians, this work has made three major contributions to the studies of the New Testament texts:

1. This study offers a coherent methodological approach, a fully sociological

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[8] Holmberg, "Early Christian Identity," 175.

[9] Du Toit, "Shaping Christian Lifestyle in the Roman Capital" in *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos in the New Testament* (BZNW 141; Ed. by J.G.van der Watt; Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006) 167-197, on pp. 169-170.

[10] Watt, "Radical Social Redefinition and Radical Love," 113.

analysis of the text. All the characters of the text, all the members of the in-Christ group – Paul, his readers, Christ and God – are included in one social set, which follows a single social conduct – that of a 1st century Greco-Roman one. In the words of Smith, "we subordinate our reading of [the text]… to the cultural constrain present to… [its author]."[11] The Greco-Roman cultural matrix grants us all "the necessary dynamic context."[12] There is no need for ideological/theological insertion(s) into social analysis of the text in order to explain, why Christian social values allegedly contradict with these non-Christian ones.[13]

2. This investigation helps to clarify the terminology used for social-anthropological approach to the New Testament texts, which have not been done before. Particularly, the concepts of values and honor are investigated; values, honor and identity are put in one coordinate system; the relations between them clarified. As it was addressed in chapter 1 (Introduction) of this study, social-anthropological and social-psychological approach to the biblical texts, though having a history of decades,[14] and elucidating the motives of biblical characters' behavior, failed to explain why honor, this "provital value" of a Mediterranean person, was rejected by members of the Christian movement. *This study demonstrates that honor was not rejected, and values were not changed. What was changed is identity, and hence the source of honor.* Christians identify themselves with Christ, and receive honor from God alone. That is why they are not supposed to participate in honor-competition, and that is why they are able to despise suffering and shame: they believe they will

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[11] Smith, *Marks of an Apostle*, 156.

[12] Ibid.

[13] See Nebreda, *Christ Identity*, 64.

[14] See collection of essays *After the Fist Urban Christians: Social-Scientific Study of Pauline Christianity Twenty-Five Years Later* (ed. D.G. Horrel and T.D. Still, T.D.; Bloomsbury: T&T Clark, 2009).

receive honor from God. That is, the Christian community did not invent new standards of honor; it promoted a new identity, a new source of honor: God and Christ.

3. This study offers a new point of view for the interpretation of the Christological hymn Phil 2:6-11. The hymn, traditionally understood as praising suffering, is seen as promoting the only source of honor – God. According to the proposed understanding of honor and identity dynamic, Paul uses the hymn to teach his readers that being a member of the "in-Christ" group means to seek honor only from God, which involves total obedience to God's will, avoiding honor-competition, and working for the good of Christ's community.

5.5 Applications

The study has some practical applications. The understanding of honor as a natural human need in approval by a group deprives aspiring for honor of negative evaluation as something not appropriate for a Christian. This understanding also makes the "honor issue" of ancient Mediterranean person close and comprehensible for the contemporary reader; it makes Bible texts more relevant. The human desire to be accepted and positively evaluated is not something a Christian must get rid of; after all, it is not possible due to biological and psychological features of a human being. The church should not force a person to do something he/she is not capable of. Becoming a Christian means changing one's identity, i.e. changing one's court of reputation, one's significant other. Following Paul the apostle, we need to teach

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people how to see for honor which God gives: to stay loyal to God and to work for the good of his community. Aspiring for honor is not a negative "non-Christian" desire; it can benefit the church. The point is not if one looks for honor or not; **the point is *from whom* one looks for honor, because this is what defines one's identity.**

5.6 Perspectives for further studies

There are a lot of potential for further studies of different aspects of honor and identity in Biblical texts.

1. In this research, Paul's letter to Philippians was a test-case, in which, to our opinion, the discussion over honor and identity was most evident. Other New Testaments texts should also be analyzed on the subject of dealing with honor and identity in the community of Christ.

2. The historical and theological process of transforming the idea of aspiring for honor from God despising suffering into aspiring to suffering for God should be investigated.

3. There are studies on parallels for Christians' and Stoics' understanding of humanity and human identity.[15] The comparison of Christians' and Stoics' understanding of the significant other and honor should also be investigated.

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[15] Both Paul and Stoics universalism, i.e. understanding humanity and human identity as a corporate, universal one, was "the basis for formulating a concrete set of moral rules for political communities" (Lee, *Paul, Stoics and the Body of Christ* (SNTS MS 137; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 65).

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Summary

The aim of this study is the analysis of social concepts of honor and identity in Paul's letter to the Philippians.

In the **first chapter**, the research problem is formulated and the appropriate methodology, which could address the issue under investigation, is chosen. It was observed, that in the social studies of the New Testament texts, the key analytical categories – honor, identity and (social) values, – as well as the correlation between them, were not properly defined. At the same time, the text of the letter to the Philippians demonstrates that to aspire for honor is not totally rejected within Christian community (1:20; 2:29; 3:14). The discourse analysis (discovery of social patterns embedded in the text) was taken as main methodological approach; clarifying of social concepts and text analysis were main tools used to test the hypothesis: In his letter to the Philippians, Paul does not argue to reject honor as a social value, yet he promotes a new identity and new source of honor; aspiration to honor within one's group remains the same for non-Christians and for "heavenly society."

In the **second chapter**, the main terminology is defined. So, "value" is an often non-verbalized, invisible conception, which determines one's understanding of the desirable or rationality. The same values can have different embodiments in different cultures; the same values can be shared by different groups. Identity is based on the visible manifestations of a culture; people of different identities can share the same values. Honor is a positive evaluation of one's behavior; it is very significant for every collectivistic society. The source of honor is at the same time the source of identity: the

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one whose opinion matters, whose approval is valuable is the one with whom a person associates/identifies him/herself.

In the **third chapter**, the language of identity in the letter to the Philippians is analyzed. Paul pays a lot of attention to his readers' new identity "in Christ." He accentuates their distance from the non-members of the group (negative identity); he insists on their unity, mutual support, and call to leave aside any inner quarrel or competitiveness in order to concentrate on the survival and development of the "in-Christ" group. His own example of changed identity demonstrates that Christ gives Paul both a sense of belonging and a sense of worth. Strong orientation of the members of the Christian commune to their group reflects the common dependence of an individual on his/hew group in collectivist societies.

In the **fourth chapter**, the issue of honor in the text of Philippians is investigated. The Christological hymn (Phil 2:6-11) and its context presents the only appropriate way of behavior and hence, gaining honor within the "in-Christ" community: God is the only honor-bestower; one must stay loyal to the community and obedient to its leaders despite suffering and death. Paul's account of his own experience demonstrates that he is anxious about honor, yet he seeks it exclusively in terms of the "in-Christ" group: God is the only source of honor; hence honor must be achieved strictly via loyal service to God and his group. Any attempt to gain honor in competition with other members of the "in-Christ" group is interpreted as treason, as it denies the status of God as the only honor-bestower.

In the **fifth chapter**, the findings of the research are summarized. It is concluded that social values of "heavenly society" are very much the same as these of a non-Christian one. Belonging to a group and positive evaluation of this group (honor) –

these common for Mediterranean cultures relational values – are still most significant for the "in-Christ" group members. The only thing which is changed is identity (and hence, the source of honor): for Christians, God and Christ are an exclusive source of identity and an exclusive source of honor. Hence, the "in-Christ" group and the outer world both share the value of honor; the only difference between them is the source of that honor (i.e. identity). Values remain the same, identity is different.