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CONSTRUCTING THE WORLD:

AN EXEGETICAL AND SOCIO-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF
PAUL'S USES OF ΚΟΣΜΟΣ AND ΚΤΙΣΙΣ

by

Edward Adams (B.D.)

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
to the University of Glasgow,
as a result of research conducted in the
Department of Biblical Studies
in the Faculty of Divinity

December, 1994

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Abstract of The Thesis

This study investigates how Paul uses the terms κόσμος and κτίσις to construct the social worlds of his readers.

Previous treatments of this terminology in Paul are shown to have been inattentive to the question of how far social factors might have affected his usage. This neglected issue forms the focus of concern in the present inquiry.

After surveying the historical and semantic background of κόσμος and κτίσις, Paul's uses of the terms are examined in their epistolary settings. Each epistolary usage is interpreted against the background of the community situation which is being addressed and within the context of the socio-rhetorical strategy deployed by Paul to achieve his social goals in writing.

Our analysis reaches the following conclusions:

1. Paul's largely negative and *defamiliarizing* usage of κόσμος in 1 Corinthians forms part of a socio-rhetorical strategy aimed at strengthening the boundaries between the Christian group and the macrosociety in Corinth in the light of a perceived situation of social and ideological compromise.
2. Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans help to underline the non-socially-subversive character of Christianity, a theme prominent in the paraenesis of Rom 12:14-13:10. This usage and underlying social concern may be understood against a background of mounting conflict with outsiders in Rome and the increasing vulnerability of the Roman congregations to repressive actions by the political authorities.
3. In response to the attempts of the "agitators" to impose a Jewish lifestyle on his converts in Galatia, in the Galatian letter, Paul uses κόσμος and the term καινή κτίσις polemically to stress the separation of the Gentile churches from the Jewish community.

By means of socio-rhetorical analysis of the texts and careful elucidation of the community situations, a case is made that Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις form important building-blocks in his constructions of the world.

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Author's Declaration

I affirm that this thesis is entirely my own work and that all significant quotations have been acknowledged in the footnotes. No part of this thesis has previously been submitted for consideration for any degree in any academic institution.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of biblical books, Pseudepigraphical and early Christian works, Dead Sea Scrolls, Targumic, Mishnaic and other Rabbinic works, as *JBL* 95 (1976): 335-8.

Aeschines, <i>falsa</i>	Aeschines, <i>De falsa legatione</i>
AJP	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt.</i> ed. H.Temporini and W.Haase. 1972- Berlin: de Gruyter.
Aristotle, <i>Cael.</i>	Aristotle, <i>De Caelo</i>
<i>Cat.</i>	<i>Categoriae</i>
<i>Eth. Eud.</i>	<i>Ethica Eudemia</i>
<i>Metaph.</i>	<i>Metaphysica</i>
<i>Meteor.</i>	<i>Meteorologicum</i>
<i>Phys.</i>	<i>Physica</i>
<i>Poet.</i>	<i>Poetica</i>
<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Politica</i>
<i>Probl.</i>	<i>Problemata</i>
<i>Rhet.</i>	<i>Rhetorica.</i>
<i>Top.</i>	<i>Topica</i>
BU	Biblische Untersuchungen
CGTC	The Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary
Cicero, <i>De nat.</i>	Cicero, <i>De natura deorum</i>
<i>Fin.</i>	<i>De finibus bonorum et malorum</i>
<i>Flacc.</i>	<i>Pro Flacco</i>
<i>Off.</i>	<i>De officiis</i>
<i>Rep.</i>	<i>De Republica</i>
CQ	<i>The Classical Quarterly</i>
Dio Cassius, <i>Hist.</i>	Dio Cassius, <i>Roman History</i>
Dio Chrysostom, <i>Disc.</i>	Dio Chrysostom, <i>Discourses</i>
Dion. Halic., <i>Ant.</i>	Dionysius Halicarnassus, <i>Antiquitates Romanae</i>
D-K	<i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker.</i> Vols 1-3. ed. H.Diels and W.Kranz. 1951-52. Berlin: Weidmannsche-Verlagsbuchhandlung.
DPL	<i>Dictionary of Paul and His Letters.</i> ed. G.F.Hawthorne, R.P.Martin and G.G.Reid. 1993. Leceister/Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP.

- EBC* *The Expositor's Bible Commentary.*
ed. F.E.Gaebelstein. Regency
Publishing House. Grand Rapids:
Zondervan.
- EDNT* *Exegetical Dictionary of the New
Testament.* Vols 1-2. 1990-91.
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Epictetus, *Disc.*
Ench. Epictetus, *Discourses*
Enchiridion
- Euripides, *Ba.*
fr. Euripides, *Bacchae*
fragment
- HBT* *Horizons in Biblical Theology*
- Hesiod, *Theog.* Hesiod, *Theogony*
- Homer, *Il.*
Od. Homer, *Iliad*
Odyssey
- Isocrates, *Panath.*
Paneg. Isocrates, *Panathenaicus*
Panegyricus.
- JDTh* *Jahresbücher für deutsche Theologie*
- JETS* *Journal of the Evangelical
Theological Society*
- JLT* *Journal of Literature and Theology*
- Jos. As.* *Joseph and Asenath*
- Josephus, *Ant.*
Ap. Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*
Contra Apionem
Life *Life of Flavius Josephus*
War *The Jewish War*
- JPSTh* *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und
spekulative Theologie*
- JSNT* *Journal for the Study of the New
Testament*
- JSNTSS* *JSNT Supplement Series*
- JSPSS* *Journal for the Study of the
Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series*
- Justin, *Apol.* Justin Martyr, *Apology*
- Juvenal, *Sat.* Juvenal, *Satires.*
- KBANT* *Kommentare und Beiträge zum Alten
und Neuen Testament*
- K-R* *The Presocratic Philosophers: A
Critical History with a Selection
of Texts.* ed. G.S.Kirk and
J.E.Raven. 1957. Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press.
- Ling Bib* *Lingua Biblica*
- L-S* *The Hellenistic Philosophers.
Volume 1. Translations of the
principal sources with
philosophical commentary.*

- Lucretius, *De rerum*
 Marcus Aurelius, *Med.*
 Minucius Felix, *Oct.*
 NA 26
- NCBC
 NIBC
- NIDNTT
- NIGTC
- Origen, *Cels.*
 Orosius, *Hist.*
 NIV
 PGM
- Philo, *Abr.*
 Aet.
 Cher.
 Conf.
 Decal.
 Det.

 Deus
 Ebr.
 Flacc.
 Her.

 Jos.
 Leg. All.
 Migr.
 Mos.
 Mut.
 Opif.
 Plant.
- Volume 2. *Greek and Latin texts with notes and bibliography.* ed. A.A.Long and D.N.Sedley. 1987. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lucretius, *De rerum natura.*
 Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations.*
 Minucius Felix, *Octavius*
Novum Testamentum Graece.
 Nestle-Aland. 26th edition.
 1979. Stuttgart: Deutsche
 Bibelgesellschaft.
- New Century Bible Commentary
 New International Biblical
 Commentary
*The New International Dictionary of
 New Testament Theology.* 3 Vols.
 1975-78. ed. C.Brown. Exeter:
 Paternoster.
- New International Greek Testament
 Commentary.
- Origen, *Contra Celsum*
 Orosius, *History against the pagans*
 New International Version
*Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die
 Griechischen Zauberpapyri.* Vol.
 1. 1928. ed. K. Preisendanz.
 Leipzig/Berlin: B.G.Teubner.
- Philo, *De Abrahamo*
 De Aeternitate Mundi
 De Cherubim
 De Confusione Linguarum
 De Decalogo
 *Quod Deterius Potiori
 insidiari soleat*
 Quod Deus Sit Immutabilis
 De Ebrietate
 In Flaccum
 *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres
 Sit*
 De Josepho
 Legum Allegoriae
 De Migratione Abrahami
 De Vita Mosis
 De Mutatione Nominum
 De Opificio Mundi
 De Plantatione

<i>Praem.</i>	<i>De Praemiis et Poenis</i>
<i>Prov.</i>	<i>De Providentia</i>
<i>Sacr.</i>	<i>De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini</i>
<i>Somn.</i>	<i>De Somniis</i>
<i>Spec.</i>	<i>De Specialibus Legibus</i>
<i>Virt.</i>	<i>De Virtutibus</i>
<i>Vit. Cont.</i>	<i>De Vita Contemplativa</i>
Philostratus, <i>Vit. Ap.</i>	Philostratus, <i>Vita Apollonii</i>
Pindar, <i>Ol.</i>	Pindar, <i>Olympian Odes</i>
Plato, <i>Criti.</i>	Plato, <i>Critias</i>
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistulae</i>
<i>Gorg.</i>	<i>Gorgias</i>
<i>Lac.</i>	<i>Laches</i>
<i>Leg.</i>	<i>Leges (Laws)</i>
<i>Men.</i>	<i>Menexenus</i>
<i>Phaed.</i>	<i>Phaedo</i>
<i>Phaedr.</i>	<i>Phaedrus</i>
<i>Phileb.</i>	<i>Philebus</i>
<i>Polit.</i>	<i>Politicus</i>
<i>Prot.</i>	<i>Protagoras</i>
<i>Rep.</i>	<i>Respublica (The Republic)</i>
<i>Symp.</i>	<i>Symposium</i>
<i>Tim.</i>	<i>Timaeus</i>
Pliny the Elder, <i>Nat. His.</i>	Pliny the Elder, <i>Naturalis Historia</i>
Pliny the Younger, <i>Paneg.</i>	Pliny the Younger, <i>Panegyricus</i>
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistulae</i>
Plotinus, <i>Enn.</i>	Plotinus, <i>Enneads</i>
Plutarch, <i>Mor.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Moralia</i>
<i>Rom.</i>	<i>Romulus</i>
<i>Comp. Lyc. Num.</i>	<i>Comparison of Lycurgus and Numa</i>
<i>Pub.</i>	<i>Publicola</i>
Ps-Arist., <i>Mund.</i>	Pseudo-Aristotle, <i>De Mundo</i>
Ps-Luc., <i>Syr.</i>	Pseudo-Lucianus, <i>De Syria Dea</i>
Ps-Plato, <i>Epin.</i>	Pseudo-Plato, <i>Epinomis</i>
Quintillian, <i>Inst. Or.</i>	Quintillian, <i>Institution Oratoria</i>
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RTR</i>	<i>The Reformed Theological Review</i>
Sallust, <i>Iug.</i>	Sallust, <i>Bellum Iugurthinum</i>
Seneca, <i>Ben.</i>	Seneca, <i>De Beneficiis</i>
<i>Nat quaes.</i>	<i>Naturales quaestiones</i>
<i>De prov.</i>	<i>De providentia</i>
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistulae</i>
SJTOP	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>

	Occasional Papers
SIG	<i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum.</i> 3rd edition. ed. W.Dittenberger. Lipsiae: Apud S.Hirzelium.
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
Strabo, Geog.	Strabo, <i>Geography</i>
Suetonius, Claud. Ner. Aug.	Suetonius, <i>Claudius</i> <i>Nero</i> <i>Augustus</i>
Tacitus, Ann. Hist.	Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> <i>Histories</i>
TB	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
TGF	<i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta.</i> <i>Supplementum.</i> ed. A.Nauck. 1964. Hildesheim: Georg Olms.
TJ	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
TLG	<i>Thesaurae Linguae Graecae.</i> Computerized data-base.
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentary
TPINTC	Trinity Press International New Testament Commentaries
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur
Tertullian, Ap.	Tertullian, <i>Apology</i>
VE	<i>Vox Evangelica</i>
Virgil, Aen. Ecl.	Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> <i>Ecloges</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
Xenophon, Mem.	Xenophon, <i>Memorabilia.</i>

References to D-K and K-R are by page numbers.

All other abbreviations of Periodicals, Reference Works and Serials, according to *JBL* 95 (1976): 339-46.

Unless otherwise stated quotations from ancient classical texts are taken from the relevant volumes of *The Loeb Classical Library.*

Quotations from pseudepigraphal texts are taken from *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J.H.Charlesworth. 2 Vols. 1983, 1985. London: Darton, Longman & Todd).

The Greek text of the New Testament followed in this study is that of NA 26.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The recent application of sociological perspectives to the study of the New Testament has generated interest in *world-construction* and *world-maintenance* in earliest Christianity. P.L.Berger's theoretical model of the creation and conservation of social worlds has provided the paradigm for this line of inquiry.

In his book, *The Social Reality of Religion*, Berger claims that "Every human society is an enterprise of world-building"; religion is a particular example of this phenomenon.¹ The socially constructed world constitutes a "nomos" for those who inhabit it: it orders experience, shapes behaviour and gives coherence and meaning to life.² *World-construction* relates to the processes whereby a social world is established.³ *World-maintenance* has to do with the way in which the social world is sustained and "legitimated", i.e., explained and justified.⁴ For Berger the highest level of legitimation is the "symbolic universe", a notion he develops in the book *The Social Construction of Reality*, co-authored with T.Luckmann. The symbolic universe is the

¹ Berger (3).

² Berger (20-1).

³ Berger (3-4) highlights three stages in the process: externalization, objectivation and internalization.

⁴ Berger (29).

"all-embracing frame of reference" within which all human experience can be conceived as taking place.⁵ Symbolic universes serve as "sheltering canopies over the institutional order as well as over individual biographies" and "set the limits of what is relevant in terms of social interaction".⁶

Berger's paradigm of world-construction and world-maintenance, in conjunction with other sociological models, has been used by New Testament scholars to explain and interpret the rise and development of early Christian communities. Gager applies it to the early Christian movement as a whole.⁷ Kee adopts it to explore Christian origins.⁸ Meeks, the first to employ the model in New Testament study, brings it to bear on the Johannine community⁹ and on the Pauline churches.¹⁰ The framework forms the basis for Esler's analysis of the Lucan community.¹¹ Esler's study focuses on the way in which Luke erects a symbolic universe "beneath which the institutional order of his community is given meaning and justification."¹²

⁵ Berger and Luckmann (114).

⁶ Berger and Luckmann (120). Berger and Luckmann's concept of symbolic universes is close to Geertz's notion of "world views". According to Geertz (1975b: 127), the world view of a people is "their picture of the way things in sheer actuality are, their concept of nature, of self, of society. It contains their most comprehensive ideas of order."

⁷ Gager (1975: 9-12).

⁸ Kee (22-6, 30-53).

⁹ Meeks (1972: 70-2).

¹⁰ Meeks (1983a: esp. 8).

¹¹ Esler (1987: 16-23). See also Esler (1994: 6-12).

¹² Esler (1987: 222).

MacDonald applies the model to the Pauline communities, interpreting the belief system of Pauline Christianity as the symbolic universe legitimating the Pauline sect.¹³ Overman employs Berger's construct to illuminate the social dynamics of the Matthean community.¹⁴

The present study is an attempt to enquire into and elucidate the enterprise of world-construction in (what may be broadly termed as) Pauline Christianity by isolating and investigating one particular element of it, namely, the roles Paul's various uses of κόσμος and κτίσις play in the process. These words are Paul's main terms for "world" and "creation" and figure prominently at key points in his teaching and paraenesis.¹⁵ Their relevance to a consideration of world-construction is thus immediately apparent.¹⁶

Our inquiry is essentially an exercise in "word-study". However, it differs from the more conventional type of word-study in at least one respect. Since the main focus of this investigation is on how Paul uses the words κόσμος and

¹³ M.Y. MacDonald (1988: 10-11).

¹⁴ Overman (esp. 6, 90-1, 104, 130-1, 134). The notion of symbolic universes is also adopted by Kuck (36-7); Neyrey; Räisänen (129-31); Witherington (1994: 86-93).

¹⁵ Other words and expressions in the semantic domain "world", "creation", "universe", "inhabited world/earth" in Paul's writings are: αἰῶν (with the sense "world-age", in Rom 12:2; 1 Cor 1:20; 2:6, 8; 3:18; 2 Cor 4:4; Gal 1:4), γῆ (Rom 9:17, 28, 1 Cor 10:26, all three occurrence in OT quotations; 1 Cor 15:47), ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, (1 Cor 8:5, εἴτε ἐν οὐρανῷ εἴτε ἐπὶ γῆς), οἰκουμένη (Rom 10:18, again in an OT citation), and (τὰ) πάντα (with the sense "the universe as a whole", in Rom 9:5; 10:12; 11:36; 1 Cor 3:21; 4:13; 8:6; 11:12; 15:27-28; Phil 3:21, and possibly also in Rom 8:22).

¹⁶ The significance of the term κόσμος to this area of interest is underlined by Kee (24-5).

κτίσις to configure the social worlds of his readers, the question we are primarily seeking to address is, What *social functions* do Paul's uses of these terms serve in the communities he addresses? Before laying out in detail the aims, assumptions and method of approach of our investigation, it will be necessary first to offer a brief introduction to κόσμος and κτίσις in Paul and to draw an outline of the main currents in the interpretation of this terminology.

1. κόσμος and κτίσις in Paul: Main Trends in Interpretation

A count of occurrences secures the place of κόσμος as Paul's main term for "world" or "universe": the word appears 37 times in the undisputed letters, the highest number of instances in the New Testament outside the Johannine literature.¹⁷ The term is not evenly distributed. There is a heavy concentration of occurrences in 1 Corinthians. It appears in this epistle 21 times, in comparison with 9 times in Romans, 3 times each in 2 Corinthians and Galatians, and once in Philippians. It may be helpful at this stage to set out, in a preliminary fashion, the main ways in which Paul uses κόσμος. To do so we adopt the classifications of W.Bauer¹⁸ which we shall, of course, seek to clarify and refine as the study proceeds:

- 1) the orderly universe, the whole creation, *e.g.*, Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 8:5; Phil 2:15;

¹⁷ In the Johannine writings, it appears 102 times, 78 instances in John, 23 in 1 John, and 1 in 2 John. Colossians and Ephesians have 4 and 3 occurrences respectively; 1 Timothy has 3.

¹⁸ BAG 446-8.

- 2) the sum total of beings above the level of the animals: 1 Cor 4:9;
- 3) the world, the habitation of humankind, e.g., Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 5:10; 14:10;
- 4) the world as humankind, e.g., Rom 3:6, 19; 5:12; 11:15; 2 Cor 5:19;
- 5) the world as the scene of earthly joys, possessions, cares, sufferings: 1 Cor 7:31a, 33-34;
- 6) the world at enmity with God and Christ, e.g., 1 Cor 1:20-21, 27-28; 3:19; 5:10; Gal 6:14.

Several occurrences are difficult to classify. For instance, the meaning of κόσμος in the phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in Gal 4:3 has been the subject of much debate.

The term κτίσις is employed by Paul much less often than κόσμος. It occurs only 9 times in the commonly accepted epistles (Rom 1:20, 25; 8:19, 20, 21, 22, 39; 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15). Interestingly, in three of these, it appears in close proximity to κόσμος (Rom 1:20; 2 Cor 5:17-19; Gal 6:14-15). Paul's uses of κτίσις may be set out as follows:

- 1) the "act of creation": Rom 1:20;
- 2) "creature", "created thing": Rom 1:25 and 8:38;
- 3) "creation": Rom 8:19-22, though its precise denotation in this passage is debated;
- 4) the phrase, καινὴ κτίσις, 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15; again its meaning here is considerably debated.

1.1. Trends in the Interpretation of κόσμος in Paul

Treatments of κόσμος in Paul have tended to be brief and summary in form, confined mainly to dictionary articles and works of New Testament/Pauline theology.¹⁹ The most

¹⁹ For discussions and reviews of κόσμος in Paul see: Bandstra (48-57); Baumgarten (160-2); Bultmann (1952: 254-9); D.Guthrie (137-8); Ladd (397-400); Painter; Sampley (26-7); Sand (169-70); Stuhlmacher (1992: 269-73); Vos (12-14). On κόσμος in the New Testament as a whole see: Auer; Balz (1991); Bratcher; Dinkler; Guhrt (1975); G.Johnston (354-7); Löwe; Mussner; North; Sasse (1965); Zimmermann.

significant and influential accounts in the last few decades have been those of Bultmann in the first volume of his *Theology of the New Testament* and Sasse in his article on κόσμος in *TDNT*.

a) *Bultmann*. Bultmann treats κόσμος as a negative term for Paul. He sets it alongside "sin", "flesh" "death" and "the law", placing it under the heading of "Man Prior to the Revelation of Faith".²⁰

Bultmann stresses that κόσμος is a "historical" term with Paul rather than a "cosmological" one.²¹ Apart from a few instances, κόσμος, Bultmann insists, is a term which has to do with humanity, denoting the human world and the sphere of human activity.²²

For Bultmann, the most important feature of κόσμος in Paul's usage is that the term "often contains a definite *theological judgment*": κόσμος, implicitly or explicitly, serves as the "antithesis to the sphere of God or 'the Lord'".²³ This is the case, Bultmann points out, when κόσμος denotes human possibilities and conditions of life (appealing to 1 Cor 3:22; 7:31-34), human attitudes and estimations (1 Cor 1:20, 27-28), and human beings in their sinfulness (Rom 3:6, 19) and need of reconciliation to God (Rom 11:15; 2 Cor

More generally, on Paul's view of the world see: Flender (2-7; 26-7); Sampley (25-33); Schnackenburg (1968, cf. 1967); Schulz; Völk1 (179-298).

²⁰"Man under Faith" for Bultmann, is marked by "*freedom from the world and its powers*" (1952: 351).

²¹Bultmann (1952: 254).

²²Bultmann (1952: 254-5).

²³Bultmann (1952: 255).

5:19).²⁴ But it is particularly so, he stresses, where the expression ὁ κόσμος οὗτος is used (1 Cor 3:19; 5:10; 7:31b; cf. ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος in 1 Cor 2:6, 8; 3:18) and where κόσμος on its own carries the significance of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος (appealing to 1 Cor 1:20-21, 27-28; 2:12; 7:31a, 33-34; Gal 6:14; 2 Cor 7:10). When employed in this way, so Bultmann claims, κόσμος is a "time-concept" or more precisely "an *eschatological concept*", which

denotes the world of men and the sphere of human activity as being, on the one hand, a temporary thing hastening toward its end..., and on the other hand, the sphere of anti-godly power under whose sway the individual who is surrounded by it has fallen.²⁵

The power exerted by the κόσμος is interpreted by Bultmann in terms of suppression of individuality: the κόσμος (the macrosociety, as it were) gains the ascendancy over the individual and masters her/him. In so doing, it "comes to constitute an independent super-self over all individual selves".²⁶ This emerges from Paul's portrayal of the κόσμος in personal terms, *i.e.*, when he speaks of the κόσμος having wisdom (1 Cor 1:21; 3:19); when he attributes grief to it (2 Cor 7:10); when he speaks of the "spirit of the κόσμος" (1 Cor 2:12), which in modern terms is "the atmosphere to whose compelling influence every man contributes but to which he is always subject."²⁷ Christians are already beyond the anti-godly power of "the world" (appealing to 1 Cor 2:12;

²⁴ Bultmann (1952: 255).

²⁵ Bultmann (1952: 256).

²⁶ Bultmann (1952: 257).

²⁷ Bultmann (1952: 257).

3:21-23; 6:2; Gal 4:9; 6:14; 2 Cor 5:17).²⁸

The mythological character of Paul's understanding of the κόσμος, *i.e.*, that the κόσμος, though God's creation, is also "the domain of demonic powers"²⁹ (appealing to such texts as Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 2:6, 8; 2 Cor 4:4; Gal 4:3, 9), is taken by Bultmann as expressive of a particular understanding of human existence. Through these notions a core insight is revealed: that the individual is not the master of his/her own life, but is always confronted with the decision of choosing his/her lord. And, as Bultmann puts it, "natural man has always already decided against God, his true Lord, and has let the threatening and tempting world become lord over him".³⁰

In Bultmann's exposition, we may note two characteristic emphases which mark his whole approach to Pauline theology. First, his analysis is heavily determined by his concern to re-interpret Paul in terms of existential philosophy. His existentializing is apparent in the emphasis on "decision" - either for God or for the κόσμος - and especially in the way he sets "the world" in antithesis to *the individual*. Bultmann gives the individual a decisive place in his interpretation of Paul's theology. In Bultmann's view, the world, the κόσμος, constitutes a depersonalizing force: in order to achieve authentic existence, the individual must stand out from the world and gain his/her independence.³¹

²⁸Bultmann (1952: 257).

²⁹Bultmann (1952: 257).

³⁰Bultmann (1952: 259).

³¹The existentialist/individualist strain in Bultmann's approach is more explicit in an essay comparing the New Testament view of the human being in his/her world with the

Without questioning the value of such reflections for modern western society, we may wonder if the recasting of Paul's words in an existential frame does complete justice to his intentions. The key role credited to the individual by Bultmann, as Käsemann pointed out, owes as much, if not more, to the idealist tradition than to Paul.³² Bultmann fails to take adequate account of the corporate dimension in Paul's theology. Thus, on closer examination, it will be seen that when κόσμος specifies the realm which stands in opposition to God, it serves as the antithesis to the *community* of Christ, rather than to the *individual believer* (e.g., 1 Cor 1-3, esp. 1:26-28; 6:1-2; 7:29-31). It may be objected that Paul's statement in Gal 6:14 - that the κόσμος was crucified to me (ἐμοί) - appears to have primary reference to the individual, but the context (vv. 12-13, 15-16) shows that Paul's words are oriented toward the community.³³

Second, Bultmann's approach betrays his typical stress on the anthropological orientation of Paul's theology: hence his concern to play down, in all but a few places, the cosmological and "mythological" elements in Paul's usage of κόσμος. Following Käsemann's criticisms, it is now widely felt that Paul's theology cannot be so easily isolated from its apocalyptic and cosmic frame in the way Bultmann

Greek view (1955b). There he argues that the key difference between the Greek *Weltanschauung* and the teaching of the New Testament is that the former teaches human beings to find their security by incorporation into the κόσμος, while the latter directs men and women to find authentic life in the sphere of individual responsibility and decision (1955b: 78, 83).

³² See Käsemann (1971a: 10-11).

³³ See Barclay (1988: 102).

suggests.³⁴ It may be questioned, therefore, whether Bultmann's historicizing and demythologizing interpretation of κόσμος obscures as much as it reveals.

b) Sasse. Like Bultmann, Sasse stresses the negative shading of κόσμος in Paul. For Sasse, the majority of instances of κόσμος in Paul (as in the Johannine writings) fall into the category of "Humanity, Fallen Creation, the Theater of Salvation History".³⁵ He lays particular emphasis on the distinction between God and the κόσμος in Paul's epistles.³⁶ He points out that the gulf between God and the κόσμος is traced back by Paul to the emergence of sin and death in the world as the consequence of Adam's sin (Rom 5:12).³⁷ Now, πᾶς ὁ κόσμος stands before God as guilty (Rom 3:19); the κόσμος falls under the judgement of God (Rom 3:6; 1 Cor 6:2) leading to condemnation (1 Cor 11:32). The true people of God are set apart from the κόσμος (appealing to 1 Cor 6:2; 11:32).³⁸ The full extent of the antithesis between God and the κόσμος can be appreciated only in the light of Christ, for only Christ can effect the reconciliation of the κόσμος (Rom 11:15; 2 Cor 5:19).

In contrast to Bultmann, Sasse stresses that κόσμος can "transcend the framework of human history".³⁹ He points to the comprehensiveness of the term in 1 Cor 4:9, embracing even the supernatural powers. Appealing to Rom 8:22 (where

³⁴ See Käsemann (1969a; 1971a); Beker (1980).

³⁵ Sasse (1965: 889).

³⁶ Sasse (1965: 892).

³⁷ Sasse (1965: 892).

³⁸ Sasse (1965: 892).

³⁹ Sasse (1965: 893).

κόσμος does not actually occur), he notes that the whole universe takes part in the history of salvation.

Bringing all these observations together, Sasse reaches the following definition of κόσμος in Paul:

The κόσμος is the sum of the divine creation which has been shattered by the fall, which stands under the judgment of God, and in which Jesus Christ appears as the Redeemer.⁴⁰

Sasse insists that Paul, like the other New Testament writers, refrains from using κόσμος when describing the redeemed world. He contends, "When the κόσμος is redeemed, it ceases to be κόσμος". The term "is reserved for the world which lies under sin and death" and, he claims, "This is very clear in Paul".⁴¹

c) Evaluation: Theological Analysis of κόσμος.

Bultmann's and Sasse's analyses of κόσμος are of the theological word-study variety. Both interpreters operate on the assumption that when all the occurrences of κόσμος in Paul's writings are put together, one can identify a final and general theological "concept" of κόσμος. The kind of evaluation they offer thus falls foul of the criticisms leveled by J. Barr at the concept-oriented approach to word-study adopted by the early contributors to *TDNT*.⁴² Barr highlighted a failure to distinguish between word-sense and concept: words are seen as vehicles of theological ideas. He drew attention to a number of errors that arise from this basic confusion, two of which are pertinent here. Firstly,

⁴⁰ Sasse (1965: 893).

⁴¹ Sasse (1965: 893).

⁴² Barr (206-62). See also Cotterell and Turner (106-28).

there is what Barr called the "illegitimate totality transfer", whereby the "meaning" of a word is derived from a synthesis of the various statements in which the word occurs, and is then read back into particular instances of that word as its "sense".⁴³ Secondly, in seeking to formulate a general "concept" to which a particular word may be tied, there is a danger of exaggerating some uses of the word and playing down or even overlooking others, particularly those which do not easily fit the theological mould which is being framed.⁴⁴

We find such tendencies in Bultmann's and Sasse's analyses of κόσμος. Sasse, whether or not he intended to do so, certainly gives the appearance of attempting to develop a total concept of κόσμος (heavily based on Rom 5:12ff) which can then be applied to individual occurrences of the term. Bultmann also gravitates toward "illegitimate totality transfer" when he claims that κόσμος usually contains "a definite theological judgement". If such a judgement is present, this is to be inferred from the context and not seen as inherent in the word itself.

The second tendency is evident in both interpreters' accentuation of the negative character of κόσμος in Paul. Bultmann downplays Paul's neutral and positive uses of κόσμος by pushing them into the background. For Sasse, as we have seen, the word κόσμος, not just for Paul but for the New Testament writers as a whole, is entirely bound up with a belief in the world as estranged, fallen and condemned. The question of whether and how far κόσμος is negatively and positively evaluated needs to be looked at very carefully before

⁴³Barr (218).

⁴⁴Barr (219).

such assumptions can be made.

More recent discussions of κόσμος in Paul have been much less prone to the excesses of the concept-oriented method of theological word-study. Even so, given the cursory nature of these lexicographical accounts and the wide influence which Bultmann's and Sasse's reviews still wield, the need remains for a detailed analysis of Paul's uses of this word based on careful exegesis of the texts in which the word occurs, highlighting the particular features of his usage in each letter,⁴⁵ and avoiding, so far as possible, preconceived judgements about the meaning of the term in any particular case. Several questions raised by Bultmann's and Sasse's analyses may be borne in mind in conducting such an exercise. To what extent and in what contexts is κόσμος used in a derogatory fashion by Paul? Where and how far is κόσμος used to denote a hostile realm or anti-godly power structure (as Bultmann emphasizes), and/or the stage on which the drama of God's salvation is played out (as Sasse emphasizes)? To what degree is Paul's focus anthropological when he employs κόσμος? Is κόσμος wholly consigned to the "plight" side of Paul's soteriology, so that as Bultmann claims, "Man...is indeed in the grip of the world and so to speak, embedded in it - but for his ruin, not for his salvation."⁴⁶ Does Paul, to test Sasse's claim, ever use κόσμος with reference to the future redeemed world? Only when the varieties and subtleties of Paul's uses of the word are taken into account can we determine where a theological definition of κόσμος in

⁴⁵Painter (1980-2) is one scholar who examines κόσμος in Paul on an epistle by epistle basis. His account, however, is extremely brief.

⁴⁶Bultmann (1955b: 78).

Paul is possible.

1.2. Issues in the Interpretation of κτίσις in Paul⁴⁷

κτίσις in Rom 8:19-22 has been the subject of intensive interpretive dispute. Through the centuries, numerous suggestions have been made as to the meaning of the word.⁴⁸ The main point at issue is the degree to which the focus of Paul's concern is anthropological and/or cosmological. Though the discussion is far from settled, there is an emerging consensus that κτίσις refers to the wider *non-human* creation.

The question of whether Paul's purview is anthropological or cosmological is the most debated interpretive issue in discussion of the phrase καὶ τὴν κτίσις in 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15.⁴⁹ The state of this question is much less settled than the meaning of κτίσις in Rom 8:19-22. Scholars are deeply divided over whether Paul has in view a new creation which

⁴⁷ For κτίσις in Paul/the New Testament see: Baumgarten (162-79); Bultmann (1952: 227-32); Esser; Foerster (1965); G.W.H.Lampe; Petzke; Stuhlmacher (1992: 269-73). On the general concept of creation in Paul see: Baumbach; J.Becker (402-9); Schwantes; Shields (1980, on the theme of creation in Romans); and in the New Testament in general, see Lindeskog.

⁴⁸ Cranfield (1975: 411) lists eight suggestions: 1) the whole creation including human beings and angels; 2) all humankind; 3) unbelieving humanity; 4) believers; 5) the angelic world; 6) sub-human creation together with angels; 7) sub-human creation together with humankind in general; 8) sub-human creation. The fullest history of interpretation of κτίσις in Rom 8:19-22 is given by Gieraths (20-87).

⁴⁹ For the history of interpretation see Mell (9-32) and Aymer (17-37).

embraces the entire universe or a new creation involving humanity, either individually (at conversion) or corporately.

Having reviewed Bultmann's analysis of κόσμος, it is appropriate to highlight his brief theological reflections on Paul's use of κτίσις. Again, his existentializing is apparent. He writes, "Paul's conception of the creation, as well as of the Creator, depends upon what it means for man's existence".⁵⁰ Human beings find themselves caught between God and creation and "must decide between the two".⁵¹ Also evident is his desire to mitigate cosmic elements in Paul's theology. In Rom 8:19-22, Bultmann admits a non-human reference to κτίσις, taking the word to mean "the earth and its creatures subordinate to man".⁵² However, he argues that the obscurity of Paul's words - the fact that the only thing that is clear from the text is that creation shares a history with humanity - "once again indicates how completely the cosmological point of view recedes for Paul behind that of his theology of history."⁵³

An interesting feature of Bultmann's analysis is his emphasis on the *ambiguity* of κτίσις/creation for Paul. Observing that in Rom 8:38, κτίσις occurs in a list of cosmic powers "at enmity with God", he writes that for Paul,

the creation has a peculiarly ambiguous character: On the one hand, it is the earth placed by God at man's disposal for his use and benefit...; on the other,⁵⁴ it is the field of activity for evil, demonic powers.

⁵⁰Bultmann (1952: 231).

⁵¹Bultmann (1952: 229).

⁵²Bultmann (1952: 230).

⁵³Bultmann (1952: 230).

⁵⁴Bultmann (1952: 230).

Reflecting on the use of κτίσις in Rom 1:25, he argues that "'creation' becomes a destructive power whenever man decides in favor of it instead of for God".⁵⁵ Bultmann concludes that as to what "creation" actually means for human existence, Paul is "ambivalent".⁵⁶

Whether or not κτίσις has an ambiguous theological meaning for Paul is clearly an issue worth exploring. Can Paul's uses of κτίσις in Rom 1:25 and (particularly) 8:39 sustain Bultmann's interpretation, or do Bultmann's comments reflect the contours of his own interpretive programme of filtering out those aspects of Paul's theology which have no direct meaning for human existence?

1.3. The Situational Context: A Neglected Issue

Discussions of both κόσμος and κτίσις in Paul have largely been inattentive to the question of how far situational factors might have impacted on Paul's usage. A significant advance in New Testament word-study was made by Jewett in his analysis of Paul's anthropological terminology.⁵⁷ Alert to the dangers of an exclusively theological analysis and the limitations of a purely lexicographical approach, he sought to account for fluctuations in Paul's uses of anthropological terms in terms of the literary context in which the words occur and, especially, the historical situation in which they were used.⁵⁸ Jewett was particularly concerned "to measure the impact of fresh historical circumstances upon his

⁵⁵Bultmann (1952: 230).

⁵⁶Bultmann (1952: 231).

⁵⁷Jewett (1971).

⁵⁸Jewett (1971: 6-7).

[Paul's] anthropological usage." He came to the conclusion that,

Each new connotation emerges in coherent relationship to a particular historical situation in the congregation Paul is addressing, is designed specifically to meet that situation, and tends to slip into disuse when the situation changes.⁵⁹

The present study draws upon Jewett's insight and attempts to offer an analysis of Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις in a given epistle, *in relation to the social situation to which these are being directed*. How does the historical situation being confronted by Paul influence the way in which he uses κόσμος and κτίσις in a particular epistle? What roles are Paul's uses of these terms meant to play in that situation? These are questions which have been unsatisfactorily dealt with in previous study. In this investigation, they form the focus of our concern.

2. Theoretical Perspective: Critical Linguistics

In seeking to examine Paul's usage of κόσμος and κτίσις as an instance of the phenomenon of world-construction, Berger's theoretical paradigm provides the broad framework for our investigation. Berger's model, however, is a general one; it needs to be filled out with a more precise account of the role of language in the social construction of reality. Such clarity is provided by the perspective of *critical linguistics*, as developed by R.Hodge, G.Kress, T.Trew and particularly, R.Fowler. The critical linguistic approach also gives more attention to the place of resistance,

⁵⁹Jewett (1971: 10).

conflict, critique and change in the process of world-construction than Berger's model,⁶⁰ and offers a more adequate consideration of the link between language and ideology.⁶¹

Fowler defines critical linguistics as follows:

its basic claims are that all linguistic usage encodes ideological patterns or discursive structures which *mediate* representations of the world in language; that different usages...encode different ideologies, resulting from their different situations and purposes; and that by these means language works as a social practice.⁶²

Critical linguistics builds on M.A.K.Halliday's functional theory of language. Halliday contends that language must be interpreted in terms of its place in the social system. His basic premise is that "Language is as it is because of the functions it has evolved to serve people's lives."⁶³ In Halliday's view, the very structure of language is determined by the social context and the functions which language performs in social life.

Halliday describes language as a "social semiotic". Culture is constructed out of a series of signs. Language is one such sign system, indeed it is the primary one, since it mediates most of the others.⁶⁴ Thus, according to Halliday, language must be viewed and interpreted within its socio-cultural context. By "the exchange of meanings", *i.e.*,

⁶⁰Berger and Luckmann deal with these issues only briefly (124-6).

⁶¹Note Horrell's (89-93) criticisms of Berger and Luckmann's approach.

⁶²Fowler (1986: 89). See also Fowler (1991a).

⁶³Halliday (4).

⁶⁴Halliday (2).

the use of language, in a social context, "people act out the social structure, affirming their own statuses and roles, and establishing and transmitting the shared systems of value and knowledge".⁶⁵ It is not simply, in Halliday's view, that language expresses the structures of society, rather it "actively symbolizes the social system"⁶⁶ reflecting in its variations the variety of social processes and the variations in the social order.

Halliday posits that language serves three main functions: *ideational*, *interpersonal*, and *textual*.⁶⁷ The ideational function is central to critical linguistics. It is the content function of linguistic communication - language as "about something", language as a means of expressing and reflecting on things in the world and human consciousness.

Halliday views the relation of language to the social system as a "complex natural dialectic"⁶⁸ in which language not only *reflects* the social system but also *influences* it. Fowler and Kress point out that sociolinguistics focuses on the influence of social structures on the use of language. Critical linguistics, on the other hand, they stress, focuses on the influence in the other direction:⁶⁹ the use of language to create, maintain and change social identity, roles and statuses, to confirm or manipulate social relations and structures and to effect social control.

⁶⁵Halliday (2).

⁶⁶Halliday (3).

⁶⁷Halliday (112-3).

⁶⁸Halliday (183).

⁶⁹Fowler and Kress (190).

In his book, *Linguistic Criticism*, Fowler highlights the way in which language categorizes reality, orders experience and helps us make sense of the world. Language enables people to analyze the world and to impose structures upon it. It therefore has an important role in the construction of cognitive categories; "it crystallizes and stabilizes ideas".⁷⁰ Yet, he claims, linguistic codes do not interpret reality neutrally; they embody world views and ideologies.⁷¹ Through the social practice of language, and by convention, the categorizations of language and the ideologies which they encode, are accepted as common sense.

The process of language practice, Fowler points out, has two negative effects: *legitimation* and *habitualization*.⁷² Firstly, there is legitimation. Fowler stresses that insofar as the language of a society evolves to suit the needs of the society, the needs are those of the privileged social groups. Language encodes social categorizations and structures authorized by controlling groups. In so doing, it inevitably legitimates the dominant interests of these groups.⁷³ Language thus becomes a tool for preserving the prevailing order.⁷⁴ Fowler writes, "It does this not only through propaganda, but also by inertia, the settlement towards

⁷⁰Fowler (1986: 18). Fowler at this juncture clearly stands in the Sapir-Whorf tradition, though he rejects the the extreme Whorfian position of "linguistic *determinism*" (1991b: 30).

⁷¹Fowler (1986: 27).

⁷²Fowler (1986: 29-34).

⁷³This is a feature of legitimation to which, as Horrell points out (92), Berger fails to give proper attention.

⁷⁴Fowler (1986: 31).

stability and resistance to change which...is a characteristic of codes."⁷⁵ Secondly, there is habitualization. Conventional codes simplify knowledge and action. Consequently, they have the effect of making our perceptions automatic, analytical and uncritical. We recognize and accept rather than really "see" and examine.

Language-use, therefore, through legitimation and habitualization, has a propensity to reinforce its categories, to consolidate the inequities of society, and in fact to become an instrument of coercion and social control. Fowler describes this process as "the degeneration of social semiotic".⁷⁶

There are, however, according to Fowler, linguistic practices which resist these tendencies: activities which promote "change and creativity rather than stagnation and repression".⁷⁷ At this point, Fowler takes up and develops the Formalist notion of *defamiliarization*.⁷⁸

Victor Schlovsky who coined the term defamiliarization (Russian, *ostraneniye*), contended that, "The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects 'unfamiliar'".⁷⁹ The principle of defamiliarization is stated by Boris Tomashevsky: "The old and habitual must be spoken of as if it were new and unusual. One must speak of

⁷⁵Fowler (1986: 31).

⁷⁶Fowler (1986: 8).

⁷⁷Fowler (1986: 40).

⁷⁸Defamiliarization as an analytical tool has been applied to the Gospels by Resseguie and to Galatians by Cronjé.

⁷⁹Schlovsky (1965a: 12).

the ordinary as if it were unfamiliar."⁸⁰ This, as the Formalists demonstrated, can be achieved by an unlimited range of linguistic and literary devices.

The Formalists applied the theory of estrangement to poetic art and "high" literary forms, and saw no connection with social processes. Fowler understands defamiliarization as a general linguistic practice (literature is, after all, a creative use of language⁸¹). He defines it as "the use of some strategy to force us to look, to be critical".⁸² In linguistic terms, the process involves:

uncoding - disestablishing the received tie between a sign and a cultural unit - and optionally *recoding* - tying a newly invented concept to a sign and so establishing its validity. The ultimate process...is the formation of a whole new code....⁸³

Defamiliarization, therefore, is not only a means of achieving a desired literary effect, it also functions to question existing conventions, challenge received perceptions of reality and legitimate resistance and social change.

The perspective of critical linguistics prompts us to look at the interrelation of Paul's language and its social context, since, as Halliday puts it, "The context plays a part in determining what we say; and what we say plays a part in determining the context"⁸⁴ The Pauline epistles are particularly amenable to this kind of linguistic analysis. Self-evidently, Paul's (undisputed) epistles are

⁸⁰Tomashevsky (85).

⁸¹Fowler (1986: 13).

⁸²Fowler (1986: 42).

⁸³Fowler (1986: 40).

⁸⁴Halliday (3).

situationally determined (though Romans is thought to be an exception). Whatever personal and theological reflections they contain, first and foremost, these are documents responding to and interacting with definite situations in the communities addressed. Paul's letters relate to an actual situation as both *influenced* and *influencer*. His writings have been called forth by the circumstances and needs of his readers: in this respect they are reactive and responsive. At the same time, they are clearly intended to affect the situation which they address. Paul writes with definite social aims in view, not only to *consolidate*, comfort and encourage his communities, but very often to effect a *change* in outlook and social behaviour.

The critical linguistic perspective not only views language, in general terms, as constructing the world. More precisely, it stresses that *particular* constructions of language construct reality in *particular* ways,⁸⁵ encoding *particular* social interests. The approach encourages us to ask, What *specific* social goals and concerns are Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις serving in the *particular* communities addressed? and provides the theoretical justification for doing so.

3. Methodological Assumptions

This study is built on the conviction that it remains a legitimate exercise to inquire into a New Testament author's intentions. Moreover, it assumes that by means of careful investigation of the Pauline texts, we may, to some extent, uncover the situational context which those texts presuppose.

⁸⁵Dant (157).

Since our investigation falls under the rubric of "word-study", having highlighted the weaknesses of Bultmann's and Sasse's analyses in the light of Barr's strictures of theological word-study, we must be especially careful to avoid such pitfalls. In order to evade Barr's sharpest criticisms, the following strategy is adopted. Firstly, the sentence, rather than the individual word, is taken as the primary unit of meaning. Secondly, care is taken not to overestimate the contribution of the individual word to the overall meaning of the sentence in which it occurs. Thirdly, an analytical distinction is drawn between what Paul *means* by κόσμος or κτίσις on the one hand, and what Paul *says*, or how Paul talks about κόσμος or κτίσις on the other. By the former is meant the sense with which Paul is using the word; with the latter what is in view is the relationship of κόσμος or κτίσις to other words and expressions in the sentence.⁸⁶ Thus, for example, in Rom 3:6, what Paul *means* by κόσμος is "humanity"; what he *says* about κόσμος=humanity is that it is subject to God's judgement. This working distinction enables us to comment about the way in Paul characterizes κόσμος or κτίσις in a particular utterance without creating the impression that the meaning-content of the sentence is being identified with the individual word itself. The term "use" or "usage" is employed in this study to cover *both* these aspects.

Because we are particularly interested in the *social functions* of Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις, some clarification needs to be given at the outset as to what is meant by "function" in this study. It should be made clear

⁸⁶ See Millar and Riches (33-4).

that our analysis eschews the treatment of the "meaning" and "function" of an utterance as separate and unconnected entities. Our investigation proceeds on the assumption that the "function" of a statement (within its "context of utterance", on which see below) does not stand apart from its "content" but is bound up with it and dependent on it.⁸⁷ For this reason, any inferences about the intended social function of Paul's uses of *κόσμος* and *κτίσις* will be made on the basis of careful contextual analysis. The term *social function* as employed in this study, may be defined as "the social consequences intended by Paul",⁸⁸ as determined by his social goals in writing, or the "social or practical implications"⁸⁹ of Paul's utterances, or even "the social effects" which Paul aims to bring about.⁹⁰

4. The Approach of this Study: "Contextual" Analysis

Having elaborated the general theoretical perspective and assumptions of this study, we now need to set out our specific method of approach.

In order to determine the meaning of Paul's uses of

⁸⁷ On the relation between the content and function of utterances, see Millar and Riches (esp. 29-32).

⁸⁸ Meeks (1983: 700). Hymes (62) distinguishes between "ends in view (goals) and ends as outcomes". Our concern is with the former, the specific social aims of the writer. It is a well nigh impossible task to determine, from our vantage point, the *actual* outcome of speech events.

⁸⁹ Cf. Riches and Millar who speak of the "implications [of beliefs] for human practice" (37), and the "experiential implications" (39) or "practical implications" of theological propositions (40).

⁹⁰ Cf. Millar and Riches (32): the "intended effects" of utterances "upon those addressed".

κόσμος and κτίσις and their function in specific socio-historical situations, it will be necessary to examine these uses in their proper contexts. There is of course the immediate context, *i.e.*, the sentences surrounding the utterance, the paragraph in which it is set.⁹¹ But there are other, larger contexts to consider. Fowler highlights three levels of context which are important in the process of linguistic communication: firstly, the *context of utterance*, which is "the situation within which discourse is conducted";⁹² secondly, the *context of culture* which is "the whole network of social and economic conventions and institutions constituting the culture at large, especially insofar as these bear on particular utterance contexts";⁹³ thirdly, the *context of reference*, which is "the topic or subject-matter of a text".⁹⁴

Fowler's classifications may be modified to suit the material with which we are dealing. For our purposes, the context of culture may taken as the ways in which κόσμος and κτίσις were used in the mid-first century CE, the links and connotations these words were likely to have had and the values and ideologies with which they were associated. Other aspects of the cultural context may also be drawn upon to shed light on the specifics of the context of utterance, *e.g.*, social conventions, values, attitudes, *etc.* The context of utterance may be understood, on the one hand, as the historical and situational context of the community

⁹¹ Cotterell and Turner (16) call this the *cotext*.

⁹² Fowler (1986: 86).

⁹³ Fowler (1986: 88).

⁹⁴ Fowler (1986: 89).

which the epistle is written to address, and on the other hand, as the role which Paul's epistle is designed to play in that situation. The context of reference may be taken as the overall content of the letter as a whole and in particular the broader theological perspectives, articulated or presupposed, which give at least some degree of coherence to Paul's teaching therein. Our approach to the two sides of the context of utterance requires a little more clarification.

4.1. The Situational Context

In assessing and reconstructing the community situations addressed by Paul (which is a somewhat precarious exercise since we are given a very partial picture of events) as well as using historical criticism application will also be made of insights from sociology. We need hardly spend time defending the legitimacy of drawing from sociology in order to interpret the New Testament, a task which has been skillfully handled elsewhere;⁹⁵ the validity of sociological interpretation is presupposed.

In recent years the sect model has been applied to Pauline Christianity. This model stimulates interest in "response to the world". The model is used by Meeks and M.Y.MacDonald as a means of explaining the tension between separation and continued association in the church's approach to the wider world, evident in the Pauline epistles.⁹⁶ The usual way to explain this tension has been in theological terms, seeing it as a consequence of the church's

⁹⁵ See e.g., Esler (1987: 6-16); M.Y.MacDonald (1988: 19-28).

⁹⁶ Meeks (1979; 1983a: 85-107) M.Y.MacDonald (1988: 32-45).

consciousness of itself as the eschatological congregation, caught in the situation between "no longer" and "not yet" - "now" delimited from the world, yet "still" belonging to the world.⁹⁷ The sectarian analysis focuses on social exigencies. If a sectarian group is to be successful, it must, on the one hand, have strong and fixed boundaries between itself and the rest of society, and it must, on the other hand, be able to maintain its links with society and exhibit openness toward it.

The sect model, as applied to New Testament communities, has been criticized as anachronistic and culturally inappropriate.⁹⁸ A more telling criticism is its limited explanatory potential.⁹⁹ B.R.Wilson's conversionist sect-type, as applied to Pauline Christianity by MacDonald, is a wide category which has "a very low degree of discriminatory power".¹⁰⁰ It hardly permits us to distinguish between Paul's views and those of his communities: as we shall see, Paul and the Corinthians have quite divergent

⁹⁷ e.g., Bultmann (1952: 100).

⁹⁸ Holmberg (86-117). The sect typology was originally derived by Troelstch (331-43) from the history of Christianity. As Holmberg (110) points out, there is thus "circular reasoning involved in using Christian sects of later ages to analyze and explain that very movement that they all wanted to imitate to the best of their capacity". The application of B.R.Wilson's (18-26) more refined sect-typology, insofar as it draws from non-Christian religions, escapes this criticism. Even so, it is still open to a charge of historical and cultural unsuitability, given that Wilson's sect-types derive from study of *recent* religious groups in the *modern* world.

⁹⁹ Holmberg (112-4).

¹⁰⁰ Holmberg (113). Meeks (1979; 1983a) does not commit himself to a specific sect-type.

interpretations of Christianity and its social implications. It also fails to account for the conflict between Paul and his churches who sometimes exhibited a hostile attitude toward him. Moreover, it obscures notable differences in social ethos and outlook between communities.¹⁰¹ The model of the conversionist sect certainly provides a useful and important starting-point for sociological analysis of the Pauline churches, but to gain a proper appreciation of the social dynamics at work we need to penetrate below the surface of this generalized outline.

For this reason limited and cautious appeal will be made to the category of the sect in our analysis of the community situations. Our study will have important implications for how far Paul himself can be described as sectarian. This is a question to which we shall return in the concluding chapter.

No attempt is made in this study to superimpose any sociological model on the data. Our procedure is more eclectic and utilitarian, drawing on sociological insights, processes and dynamics when and where appropriate in order to illuminate the historical and literary material.

4.2. The Roles of Paul's Letters in their Situational Contexts

This takes us to the other side of the context of utterance - Paul's motives and purposes in writing. As noted above, Paul's epistles are intended to act upon and manipulate the situational context. Most often Paul writes with clear social goals in view and adopts a rhetorical strategy to

¹⁰¹On the differences between the church in Thessalonica and the church at Corinth in this regard, see Barclay (1992).

achieve those aims. To express this aspect of Paul's epistolary activity the term *socio-rhetorical strategy* is adopted.¹⁰² By "rhetoric" here is not meant the forms, types and structures of Graeco-Roman rhetoric, which have been of interest to New Testament scholars of late. Rather, what is in view is rhetoric in the more general sense of "mode of persuasion", *i.e.*, the techniques, devices and arguments used by Paul to achieve his social goals.

A crucial part of our investigation, therefore, is to pinpoint the social goals Paul has in writing a given epistle, to pay attention to the way these goals shape the epistle's argument, and to observe how that argument works to persuade the readers and to bring about the desired effect. We must then carefully examine the place of Paul's uses of *κόσμος* and *κτίσις* in the goal-directed rhetoric of that epistle.

It would certainly be mistaken to assume that every item of vocabulary used by Paul impacts *directly* on the situation addressed. Some terms are more socio-rhetorically loaded than others. Clearly, it will be important for us to show that Paul's uses of *κόσμος* or *κτίσις* *do* make an appreciable contribution to his socio-rhetorical strategy in a particular epistle. A key index in this direction is a term's frequency of occurrence. On this basis we can dismiss the single occurrence of *κόσμος* in Philippians from the field of our investigation. At the other end of the scale the concentration of occurrences in 1 Corinthians sets up Paul's use of *κόσμος* here as particularly worthy of exploration. More than half the total occurrences of the word in Paul are

¹⁰²The term "socio-rhetorical" is derived from Robbins, though we are employing it here differently.

located in this epistle. There are several other features of Paul's use of κόσμος in 1 Corinthians which mark it out for special attention: 1) the fact that the word is almost consistently employed in a negative way; 2) that only in this letter does the expression ὁ κόσμος οὗτος (with its apocalyptic connotations) appear; 3) that in the majority of instances, κόσμος is used with reference to the world apart from, or, in contrast to, the church. In terms of its predominance and the highly charged way in which it is used, therefore, κόσμος would appear to play an important role in the rhetoric of this letter.

5. Procedure

To restate then, our aim in this study is to assess the extent to which Paul employs the words κόσμος and κτίσις to construct (or reconstruct) the social world of his readers. Our inquiry probes into the place of κόσμος and κτίσις in the goal-driven rhetoric of a particular epistle and seeks to uncover the *social functions* which Paul's uses of these terms are designed to perform in the community addressed.

Our first task will be to review the ways in which these words were used in the first century and to assess the links and associations they were likely to have carried. This will enable us to discern distinctives in Paul's usage and will provide a basis from which to judge the impact of Paul's particular uses on his audiences.

Having completed this exercise, we will examine the relevant epistles in order of concentration of occurrence of the terms, beginning with 1 Corinthians, moving to Romans (where instances of κτίσις are concentrated), and then to Galatians and 2 Corinthians. The concluding chapter will summarize the results of the investigation and draw some

wider implications of the study.

This inquiry attempts to explore the role of language in constructing reality. By asking not simply what utterances *mean*, but also what they *do* (or are intended to do), it is hoped that this study will demonstrate *language-in-use* - how language, in the process of reality-construction, works to shape and determine people's lives.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LINGUISTIC AND HISTORICAL SETTING OF ΚΟΣΜΟΣ AND ΚΤΙΣΙΣ

The purpose of this chapter is to survey the semantic and historical background of κόσμος and κτίσις. Before embarking on this task, some brief remarks on procedure and scope are in order.

Our attention is almost wholly taken up with κόσμος. This is unavoidable since we are dealing here with one of the most common words in Greek literature. κτίσις is relatively infrequent by comparison and, in pre-Christian Greek usage, exhibits a very narrow and stable line of usage; it can be treated briefly and incisively.

In conducting a linguistic survey the aim of which is to furnish a background against which to compare and contrast Paul's usage, a synchronic approach ordinarily would be given priority, since what we mainly need to know is the meanings of these words in contemporary language-use.¹ However, a good deal of our discussion of κόσμος is taken up with diachronic issues. This can be justified primarily on the basis of the historical significance of this term when used with reference to the world/universe: the view of the physical world which κόσμος came to evoke, as Jaeger has shown, represents one of the great ideals of Greek culture.²

¹On the priority of synchrony in linguistic study, see Cotterell and Turner (25-26; 131-5).

²Jaeger (150-184).

Secondly, a diachronic investigation is important for our larger thesis: we shall seek to demonstrate that some of Paul's uses of κόσμος constitute an important semantic change and, in some respects, a challenge to this longstanding cultural ideal.

It is not our intention in this chapter to provide a comprehensive review of κόσμος and κτίσις in Greek and Jewish usage. The profuseness of κόσμος in Greek writings renders such an investigation impossible, at least within our present confines. It is sufficient for our purposes that the survey is representative. Also, as we examine selected texts and fragments, we will restrict our comments and observations to leading themes and emphases and to issues which will be of particular interest and relevance when we come to look at Paul.

A. THE SETTING OF ΚΟΣΜΟΣ

1. κόσμος in Greek Usage

As with most words in any language, κόσμος is a polyseme, having a range of senses.³ The following lexical senses of

³A clarification of terms is appropriate at this point: the following definitions are drawn from Cotterell and Turner (45-7; 77-90; 164-7). By *sense* is meant "how that word...relates in meaning to other words or expressions in the language" (78); the *lexical sense* of a word is a "publicly established meaning" (164). *Denotation* is "the relationship which exists between words and the corresponding entities in the world" (83). *Reference* is narrower than denotation: the referent is that which is specifically and intentionally signified by the word (84). The referent of a word need not have actual existence in the real world; a word may have reference within a "universe of discourse" (87). *Connotation* relates to the associations that a word has above and beyond its sense and denotation.

κόσμος, arranged chronologically, are attested in Greek usage.⁴

- 1) building, construction,⁵
- 2) order, used of specific (mostly interpersonal) arrangements,⁶
- 3) order, in a general sense,⁷
- 4) decorum, good behaviour,⁸
- 5) form, fashion,
- 6) ornament, decoration, especially the adornment of women,⁹
- 7) honour, credit,¹¹
- 8) ruler, regulator,¹²

The connotations of words are very often "determined by society" (46): as Jackson (59) states, they "are part of the cultural package we inherit with the language itself."

⁴What follows is based primarily on LSJ 985. See also Balz (1991: 310); Cornfield (1934: 1-2); Guhrt (1975: 521-2); Kahn (219-224); Sasse (1965: 868-880). On the etymology of κόσμος, see Haebler; Puhvel.

⁵e.g., Homer, *Od.* 8.492; Herodotus 3.2.

⁶Here we find a number of applications, e.g., the seating order of the rowers, in Homer, *Od.* 13.73f; military order, in Homer, *Il.* 12.225; the Spartan system of government, in Herodotus 1.65; 1.76.

⁷e.g., Herodotus 9.66, οὐκέτι τὸν αὐτὸν κόσμον (no longer in the same order); Homer, *Od.* 13.77, κόσμῳ καθίξεν (to sit in order); cf. the common phrase κατὰ κόσμον (meaning "in accordance with right and proper order", "as is fitting"), e.g., Homer, *Il.* 2.214; 10.472; *Od.* 8.179.

⁸See references in LSJ.

⁹e.g., Homer, *Od.* 8.492; Herodotus 3.22.

¹⁰e.g., Homer, *Il.* 14.187; Herodotus 5.92; for κόσμος as ornament of speech see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1408a14; *Poet.* 1457b2; Pindar, *Ol.* 11.13 (of songs).

¹¹e.g., Herodotus 6.60; 6.142.

¹²This is the title given to the chief magistrate in Crete, *SIG* 527.74; 712.57; cf. Aristotle, *Pol.* 1277a6. This is clearly a specialized rather than a regular use of κόσμος: so Puhvel (155).

- 9) world-order₃ (the order by which the universe is held together),
- 10) world, universe,¹⁴
- 11) distinct regions of the universe,¹⁵
- 12) the earth and its inhabitants, inhabited world.¹⁶

The sense "inhabited world" is a late development in *koine* Greek and is rare, outside of the LXX, prior to the New Testament.¹⁷ We cannot confidently assume, therefore, that it would have been a standard lexical sense in normal Greek usage at the time Paul wrote.

As Puhval points out, there is a fairly clear common denomination of κόσμος: the word conveys "a notion of ordering, arraying, arranging, and structuring discrete units or parts into a whole which is 'proper' in either practical, moral, or aesthetic ways."¹⁸ The word expresses a positive evaluation of its referent; it is "a term of praise and even admiration".¹⁹

κόσμος retained its wide semantic field. Earlier senses did not become obsolete as the word developed in meaning but continued in language-use for some time alongside the later ones. This remained the case in the first century CE.²⁰

¹³ See below. Sometimes the word διακόσμος is used with this sense, e.g., Parmenides fr. 8.60; Leucippus fr. 1; Democritus fr. 5.

¹⁴ See below.

¹⁵ e.g., the sphere of the stars, in Isocrates, *Pan.* 179; Ps-Plato, *Epín.* 987b. See also on Aristotle below.

¹⁶ e.g., *SIG* 814.31.

¹⁷ So LSJ 985; Sasse (1965: 880). The New Testament use of κόσμος for "inhabited world", "humanity" derives from the LXX.

¹⁸ Puhval (154).

¹⁹ Jonas (241).

²⁰ This can be illustrated from the use of κόσμος in Dio

Jonas suggests that the continued co-existence of these senses would have "helped to keep alive the value-consciousness which had first prompted the choice of so qualitative a name" for the world, the "widest and in a sense remotest of all objects".²¹

We need not detain ourselves attempting to explore each of the above lexical senses; our interest lies in κόσμος as it is applied to the world/universe. This meaning is most frequently found in Greek literature in philosophical writings: κόσμος=world/universe is in fact one of the most important terms in Greek philosophical vocabulary. It is important, therefore, if we are to gain a proper appreciation of this line of linguistic usage to concentrate attention on this particular area.

2. κόσμος in Greek and Hellenistic Philosophy

Space does not permit an exhaustive or detailed account of the history of the use of κόσμος in Greek and Hellenistic philosophy. A brief outline, however, may be given highlighting the significant developments and emphases.

2.1. Early Philosophical Uses: The Presocratics²²

Chrysostom. As well as the sense of "world/universe", we find the senses, "order", e.g., *Disc.* 32.26; 32.37 (civic order); 36:13 (κατὰ κόσμον); "decorum", e.g., 32.45, 46; "adornment", e.g., 13.34; 31.163; "credit", e.g., 31.146. See also on Philo and Josephus, below.

²¹Jonas (242).

²²For a review of the early philosophical uses of κόσμος see W.K.C.Guthrie (1962: 208 n. 1); Kahn (219-30); Kerschesteiner; Kirk (311-15); Vlastos (1955: 363-5), and literature cited in these. Occurrences of κόσμος in the sources for Presocratic philosophy and the senses attaching

κόσμος is first applied in early Greek philosophy to the order which inheres in the physical universe.²³ At a later stage, it is used for the world itself as an ordered reality.

Precisely when the use of κόσμος for the world-order arose is uncertain. Quite likely, it goes back to the very beginnings of classical philosophy in Miletus in the sixth century BCE. The Milesian philosophers, Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes, laid the basis for the Greek world view by adducing that the material universe is an organized structure characterized by regularities, stability and equilibrium.²⁴ It is the order which the world evinces that makes it conducive to rational explanation.

Admittedly, there is no conclusive proof that the Milesians themselves used the word κόσμος to designate the world-order. In Anaximander fr. 9,²⁵ κόσμος does occur with this sense, but we cannot be sure that we have here the actual words of Anaximander.²⁶ Yet despite the lack of clear evidence, it would hardly be surprising that if having arrived at the idea of a world-order, the Milesian thinkers used the word κόσμος to describe it.

While the Milesians may well have applied κόσμος to the world-order, it is very doubtful that they used the word to designate "the world" itself, the totality that is bound

to the word are listed in D-K 3: 240-3. For wider reflections on the emergence of the Greek understanding of the physical universe as κόσμος, see Vlastos (1975: 3-22).

²³ e.g., Parmenides fr. 8.52; Anaxagoras fr. 8; Melissus fr. 7.

²⁴ Cf. Anaximander fr. 13 (for text and translation see K-R 134). On Anaximander's conception of a universe governed by law, see Kahn (166-96, esp. 188-93).

²⁵ D-K 1: 83.

²⁶ Authenticity is doubted, for example, by Kirk (312).

together by this order.²⁷ κόσμος does appear with the sense of "world" in Anaximenes fr. 2, but most scholars doubt the genuineness of the fragment at this point.²⁸

The exact origin of κόσμος=world/universe cannot easily be pinpointed. Plato (*Gorg.* 507e-8a) attributes it to the σοφός. Similarly, Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.1.11) refers it to the σοφισταί.²⁹

According to a doxographical tradition found in Diogenes Laertius 8.48, Pythagoras was the first to employ the term in this new way. But it is impossible to gauge the accuracy of this tradition. The actual teaching of Pythagoras is notoriously difficult to reconstruct. None of his writings (if he wrote at all) have survived. There was also a tendency among later Pythagoreans to refer later philosophical advances back to the founder.

The earliest instance of κόσμος with the sense "ordered universe" may well be Heraclitus fr. 30, though opinion is sharply divided on the meaning of the word here. The relevant part of the text reads:

This cosmos (κόσμος), the same for all, no god or man has made, but it was, is, and will be for ever: ever-living fire, kindling according to measure and being

²⁷ But see Kahn (219ff) and Vlastos (1955: 345-6 n. 19).

²⁸ e.g., W.K.C. Guthrie (1962: 131); Kahn (119); Kirk (312). For text see D-K 1: 95.

²⁹ According to Kirk (313) these testimonies imply that κόσμος=world is still, at this stage, a comparatively new usage. However, Vlastos (1955: 346) rightly points out that, "the point of both texts is that it is the philosophers who call the world κόσμος, not that they have started doing this fairly recently." That κόσμος=world/universe is a technical philosophical usage and not part of everyday speech is further indicated in Plato, *Phileb.* 29e; *Polit.* 269d.

extinguished according to measure.³⁰

Kirk argues for the meaning "things plus order" or "the natural world and the order in it" taking κόσμος as still having the primary sense of order.³¹ Vlastos, however, takes κόσμος to mean "world". He contends that since κόσμος stands in apposition to "ever-living fire" (πῦρ ἀείζωον) and since fire is the substance of the whole universe for Heraclitus, κόσμος must here denote the world itself (as an ordered structure).³²

An interesting feature of this text is Heraclitus' description of the κόσμος (whether "world-order" or "ordered world") as everlasting and ever-living,³³ which seems to anticipate Aristotle's view of the eternity of the ordered universe. Such an ascription of agelessness to the κόσμος appears difficult to reconcile with Heraclitus' talk of the cosmic fire being "kindled" and "extinguished", which has sometimes been taken as a precursor of the Stoic concept of conflagration. It is most unlikely, however, that Heraclitus accepted a conflagration theory.³⁴ In the Heraclitan system, the kindling and quenching occur simultaneously (rather than

³⁰ Vlastos' translation (1975: 4-5).

³¹ Kirk (1954: 314-17; cf. K-R 199). "World-order" is the sense accepted by W.K.C. Guthrie (1962: 454-5) and Marcovich (268-73).

³² Vlastos (1975: 4-7; cf. 1955: 346). This is also the conclusion of Burnet (134 n. 3). Similarly, Kahn (225) writes that κόσμος here must be "the world of nature taken in its widest sense".

³³ cf. Euripides fr. 910 (IGF 654).

³⁴ See W.K.C. Guthrie (1962: 454-9); Kahn (225-6); Kirk (317-24; 335-8); K-R 202 n. 1; Luce (43-5); Marcovich (272); Sandbach (79).

successively as with the Stoic theory), the balance of opposing forces securing cosmic equilibrium. Heraclitus, therefore, probably *did* believe in an ordered universe which was without beginning or end. Aristotle interprets him differently (*Cael.* 279b14ff), but it is generally accepted that he does so mistakenly.

κόσμος appears in other Heraclitan fragments, notably in fr. 89,³⁵ where Heraclitus speaks of the κόσμος as "one and common". Again κόσμος, if not actually denoting "world/universe", comes within a hair's breadth of doing so.³⁶

The first unambiguous attestation of κόσμος=world/universe is found in Empedocles fr. 134:5 (mid-fifth century BCE): the "holy, unspeakable mind" is described as "darting with swift thoughts over the whole world (κόσμος)".³⁷ The sense "orderly world" is also apparent in Diogenes of Apollonia fr. 2,³⁸ where "things that exist at present in the κόσμος" are identified as "earth and water and air and fire and all other things apparent in this κόσμος". In this text, according to Kahn, we have at last the "classic conception of the κόσμος".³⁹

The sense of "world/universe" is frequently attested in the fragments relating to the Atomists, Leucippus and his

³⁵D-K 1: 171.

³⁶The text, as Kirk (63-4) points out, shows signs of rewording. Kahn (226-7), Marcovich (99) and Vlastos (1975: 8), however, accept it as genuine.

³⁷W.K.C.Guthrie (1962: 208 n. 1); Kahn (227); K-R 159 n. 1. For text see D-K 1: 366.

³⁸Kirk (313) takes κόσμος here to mean "world-order". But see Vlastos's criticisms (1955: 345). For the text see D-K 2: 59-60.

³⁹Kahn (228).

more famous pupil, Democritus (c. 460-357 BCE).⁴⁰ These thinkers add what proves to be a controversial dimension to the philosophical use of κόσμος=world/universe: talk of innumerable κόσμοι (ἄπειροι κόσμοι),⁴¹ each of which is viewed as being of limited duration.⁴²

According to the Atomic hypothesis, minute and indivisible particles, "atoms", form the basis of all that exists. These atoms, which differ in size and shape, move randomly in infinite space. A κόσμος is formed when the atoms collide, recoil and become entangled.⁴³ Since there is no limit to the number of atoms and since space is boundless, the number of κόσμοι is infinite.⁴⁴

According to a late and disputed indirect citation (sixth century CE), fr. 34, Democritus described the human being as a μικρὸς κόσμος.⁴⁵ The writings of the Atomists, Leucippus

⁴⁰D-K 3: 241-3.

⁴¹D-K 2: 94.

⁴²Whether a theory of a plurality of worlds/κόσμοι can be credited to philosophers earlier than the Atomists is one of the most controversial and debated issues in the study of Presocratic philosophy. The doctrine of ἄπειροι κόσμοι is ascribed to Anaximander by the later doxographers, Simplicius and Aëtius. Though accepted by Kerschensteiner (36-40), the ascription is almost certainly mistaken: see Cornfield 1934; W.K.C.Guthrie (1962: 106ff); Kahn (46-51); K-R 121ff. The evidence for the theory prior to the Atomists is at best scanty and inconclusive. Leucippus and Democritus are the first to whom the concept can be unambiguously attributed: see Kahn (51-3); K-R 412 (cf. 123ff; 390).

⁴³D-K 2: 70-71; K-R 409-10.

⁴⁴On the Atomists' theory of innumerable worlds and how these come into being, see the discussions in W.K.C.Guthrie (1965: 404-13); K-R 409ff.

⁴⁵D-K 2: 153. The first recorded instance of μικρὸς κόσμος is

and Democritus, were entitled Μέγας διάκοσμος (Great World-system) and Μικρὸς διάκοσμος (Little World-system) respectively.⁴⁶ Though Democritus may have been the first to formulate it in this way, the concept of the microcosmic relation of humanity to the physical universe had been around for some time.⁴⁷

2.2. Plato

Unambiguously in Plato, κόσμος occurs with the sense of "world/universe"⁴⁸ (e.g., *Criti.* 121c; *Gorg.* 508a; *Leg.* 821a; 897c; 967c; *Phileb.* 28e; 29e; 59a; *Polit.* 269d; 269e; 271d; 272e; 272e-273a; 273e; 274a; 274d): κόσμος, for Plato, is the ordered unity in which heaven and earth, gods and human beings are bound together (*Gorg.* 507e-508).⁴⁹ κόσμος, though, does not displace other expressions in Plato's cosmological vocabulary: we also find the terms τὸ ὅλον (e.g., *Gorg.* 508a;

found in Aristotle, *Phys.* 252b26, where he applies it to animal life.

⁴⁶D-K 2: 90-91.

⁴⁷W.K.C.Guthrie (1965: 471-3).

⁴⁸We can still find a few examples of κόσμος with the older sense of "world-order" e.g., *Tim.* 24c. Plato also uses κόσμος with reference to regions of the universe, e.g., *Phaedr.* 246c.

⁴⁹Plato can also use κόσμος non-cosmologically. The following senses are found: "order" in general (e.g., *Gorg.* 504a; 504bc; 506e; *Phileb.* 64b; *Rep.* 430e; 500c; *Symp.* 223b); specific orders or orderings, e.g., the ordering of the market (*Leg.* 759a; 764b), the order/rhythmic structure of a song (*Phileb.* 66c; *Polit.* 288bc; 289b; *Rep.* 373c), the regulation of life in a city-state (*Prot.* 322c); the civic order (*Leg.* 628ab, 736e, 751a, 759a, 769de, 846d); "honour" (*Leg.* 717e; *Men.* 236de), "credit" (*Ep.* 312cd), and "adornment" or "ornament" (*Criti.* 115c, 117a; *Gorg.* 523e; *Lac.* 196b; 800e; *Phaed.* 114e; *Phaedr.* 239cd; *Symp.* 197e).

Phileb. 28d), τὸ πᾶν (e.g., *Polit.* 270b; 272e; *Tim.* 27a; 28c; 30b; 92b) and ὁ οὐρανός (e.g., *Polit.* 269d; *Tim.* 28b).

Plato's main cosmological treatise is the *Timaeus*. κόσμος=world/universe is found more frequently in this work than in any of his others.⁵⁰ The *Timaeus* is one of Plato's later writings and one on which his original philosophical thought is most emphatically stamped. In terms of its influence on Greek and Hellenistic philosophy and its widespread circulation in the Graeco-Roman world, both of which extended well into the common era, it is probably the single most important philosophical writing of the classical period.⁵¹

In *Timaeus*, Plato discusses the origin (γένεσις) and nature of the universe. The cosmology expounded here, like that of previous Greek cosmological thought, is dependent on the fundamental insight of Ionian natural philosophy that the physical world is an ordered system. Plato, however, departs from the Ionian tradition in a significant way: the order which the universe exhibits does not arise naturally;⁵² rather it is brought about by a divine intelligence.⁵³

The deity, who in himself remains mysterious and unknowable (28c), is set forth as a skilled craftsman

⁵⁰ It appears at 24bc; 27a; 28b; 29a; 29e; 30b; 30cd; 31b; 32bc; 32c; 40a; 42e-43a; 47e-48a; 55cd; 62d; 92c.

⁵¹ See Runia (1986: 38-57).

⁵² In *Leg.* 889b-c, Plato faults his predecessors for assuming that the universe and the order therein have come about naturally and by chance.

⁵³ Thus, what Heraclitus denied in his assertion that "this κόσμος...no man or god has made", is made the first principle of Plato's cosmology: so Vlastos (1975: 25).

(δημιουργός),⁵⁴ moulding his raw materials into a copy of a model (παράδειγμα) before him. The model on which the finished work, the visible world, is based is the eternal forms.⁵⁵ The divine formation of the κόσμος is not exactly "creation" in the traditional Judaeo-Christian sense: it chiefly consists in bringing order to a previous state of discord and chaos (30a).

The κόσμος is described as good/beautiful (καλός) and as the best of all things that have come into existence (κάλλιστος τῶν γεγονότων, 29a).⁵⁶ Mirroring the eternal and perfect form, it is fashioned with "body" and "soul" (cf. *Tim.* 32c).⁵⁷ It comes into existence as a "living creature", resembling as nearly as possible the original living creature, the comprehensive form embracing the eternal forms of all species of living creatures contained in the κόσμος (30cd).

The body of the world is spherical (33b);⁵⁸ the world soul is located at the centre of the sphere, and permeates the whole (34ab).

The body of the κόσμος consists of the four elements, earth, fire, water, air (32c). Since all the elements are completely used up in the construction of the universe, there

⁵⁴ The deity is also given the titles, συνιστάς (29d), ποιητήν καὶ πατέρα (28c), and ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ (37c).

⁵⁵ Later in the discourse, we learn that there is another factor in Plato's scheme, the receptacle of all becoming (48eff) or Space (52a).

⁵⁶ The goodness of the divine maker provides the motive for the existence and goodness of the κόσμος (29e).

⁵⁷ The universe is also described as σῶμα in *Phileb.* 29e.

⁵⁸ On the Presocratic background of the sphericity of the earth, see Kahn (115-8).

is nothing outside of the world which can act upon it to bring about its dissolution (33a). And since the elements which make up the world are linked together in perfect, geometric harmony, the universe is secure against dissolution caused by imbalance within its parts. The κόσμος is therefore indestructible, free from age and ailment (33ab), indissoluble by any agent save the one who bound the elements together (32c). And the demiurge, we can be sure, will not undo his handiwork; his will is that the bond should remain forever (41ab). The goodness and providential activity of the craftsman-deity thus guarantee the perpetuity of the world.

Plato affirms the oneness of the κόσμος, rejecting the Atomists' claim that there is a plurality of κόσμοι (31ab; 55cff).⁵⁹ The uniqueness of the κόσμος reflects the uniqueness of the eternal form (31b).

The perfect form is characterized by eternity. So that the copy could correspond as closely as possible to the ideal pattern, the deity bestowed on the universe time, which is "a moving image of eternity" (37d).⁶⁰

There is a limit as to how far the work can resemble the perfect model, given the materials at the craftsman's disposal. Consequently, an element of "bruteness" obtains in the construction, resistant to the imposition of order

⁵⁹ In *Tim.* 55cff, Plato makes the puzzling remark that it is questionable whether to speak of one κόσμος or five. Precisely what he means by this is unclear, confounding even ancient interpreters. Plutarch, *Mor.* 389f, thinks Plato is referring to the four elements plus an additional fifth element, οὐρανός. See Cornfield (1937: 220-1).

⁶⁰ On Plato's concept of time, see Cornfield (1937: 98-104).

(47e-48a).⁶¹ This however, does not take away from the noble quality of the object produced. This world is such a noble and praiseworthy work of art that it can be considered divine - a blessed god (34b, cf. 55d, 68e, 92c).⁶²

Plato gives a summary definition of κόσμος=world/universe in the closing words of *Timeaus*, drawing together the main themes of the cosmology expounded in the discourse. This κόσμος (ὅδε ὁ κόσμος) is,⁶³

a visible Living Creature embracing the visible creatures, a perceptible God made in the image of the Intelligible, most great and good and fair and perfect in its generation...one Heaven sole of its kind. (92c)⁶⁴

2.3. Aristotle

The use of κόσμος to designate the physical universe is

⁶¹Crombie (216). On the relation between "reason" and "necessity" in *Timaeus*, see Cornfield (1937: 162-177).

⁶²As Crombie (153) asserts, the "view which holds that Plato thought that the natural world is a deplorable place, and that the only proper way of treating it is to ignore it and study 'the ideal world' instead" is an "absurd" one.

⁶³The phrase ὅδε ὁ κόσμος (which also occurs in Heraclitus fr. 30; Diogenes of Apollonia fr. 2; Plato, *Tim.* 29a; 30cd; and frequently in Philo, e.g., *Cher.* 120; *Conf.* 98; *Decal.* 31; *Jos.* 29; *Leg. All.* 3:99; *Migr.* 220; *Opif.* 9; *Plant.* 3; *Sacr.* 97; *Somn.* 1.15; *Spec.* 2.151), does not imply "this κόσμος" over against another (or many others), the demonstrative functions as an emphatic form of the definite article.

⁶⁴Discussion of the κόσμος (= world/universe) is also found in *Polit.* 269d-74. In this passage, the "bruteness" of the κόσμος is much more a determining factor in the cosmology expounded herein than in *Timaeus*. Here the κόσμος, by virtue of its "bodily" nature, is seen to have a built-in propensity to return to its original chaotic condition. The god has to step in periodically to halt descent into chaos and disintegration. These periodic interventions ensure that the κόσμος remains indestructible.

commonplace in Aristotle.⁶⁵

In Aristotle's cosmology,⁶⁶ the universe is conceived of as spherical in shape⁶⁷ with a spherical earth at the centre, the sphere of the fixed stars at the circumference, and the revolving spheres of the planets in between. These heavenly spheres are viewed as successive layers enveloping the earth.⁶⁸ Aristotle can use κόσμος both with reference to the stars and their spheres, *i.e.*, the celestial region (*e.g.*, *Meteor.* 339b15ff; 340b10ff; 344a5ff; 344b10ff; 346b10ff), and to the region below the sphere of the moon, *i.e.*, the terrestrial region (*e.g.*, *Meteor.* 339a; 339b).⁶⁹ This application of κόσμος to portions of the universe as well as to the universe as a whole, corresponds to Aristotle's use of οὐρανός. In *Cael.* 278b10ff, Aristotle explains that οὐρανός, as it appears in this work, has three meanings: firstly, the outermost circumference of the universe; secondly, the region of the planetary spheres; thirdly, the universe as a whole. The interchangeability of κόσμος and οὐρανός for Aristotle, when referring to the whole universe, is apparent in *Cael.* 301a17-19 (συστῆσαι τὸν οὐρανόν...συνέστηκεν ὁ κόσμος).

⁶⁵ *e.g.*, *Cat.* 6a15; *Eth. Eud.* 1216a14; *Metaph.* 990a; *Meteor.* 352a; 356b5ff; *Phys.* 196a25ff; 203b5ff; 206b20ff; 216b15ff; 250b15ff; 252b25ff; *Probl.* 892a25ff; *Top.* 104b5ff; 105b25ff. The senses "order" (*e.g.*, *Cael.* 301a11; *Metaph.* 984b), and "ornament" (*e.g.*, *Eth. Eud.* 1233a35; *Poet.* 1457b; *Rhet.* 1408a; 1415b; *Top.* 157a5ff) are also attested.

⁶⁶ For comprehensive discussions of Aristotle's cosmological system, see Elders; Solmsen.

⁶⁷ *Cael.* 287b15.

⁶⁸ For Aristotle, it is not the planets and stars which rotate, but the spheres which hold them: see Elders (8).

⁶⁹ The terrestrial region is composed of the four elements, the celestial of a fifth element (*Meteor.* 339a11ff).

It is in *De Caelo*, where Aristotle gives his most detailed discussion of cosmology, that κόσμος most frequently occurs. Most instances of κόσμος in this work occur in connection with the polemical themes of the singularity⁷⁰ and eternity⁷¹ of the universe - key emphases of Aristotle's cosmology.

That there cannot be more than one κόσμος is the argument of *De Caelo* 1.8-9 (276a18-279b3). Aristotle asserts the unicity of the world in opposition to the Atomist notion of a plurality of worlds. Since there is no mass beyond the universe and since the world in its entirety (ὁ πᾶς κόσμος) is made up of all available matter, there can be no plurality of worlds: this universe (οὗτος οὐρανός) is one, solitary and complete (279a8ff).

Aristotle discusses whether the οὐρανός (universe) is ἀγένητος ἢ γενητὸς καὶ ἄφθαρτος ἢ φθαρτός in *De Caelo* 1.10-12 (279b4-283b24). Unlike Plato, Aristotle can find no place for a time πρὶν γενέσθαι τὸν κόσμον (*Cael.* 300b17). He defends his thesis by undermining the opposing views and by arguing that the terms ἀγένητον and ἄφθαρτον logically imply each other.

Aristotle considers himself the first to hold the doctrine of the eternity of the world (since all others, he claims, view it as having been generated). However, Heraclitus, as has been shown, was quite likely a predecessor

⁷⁰ 274a28; 276a21; 276a31; 276b4; 276b14ff; 276b21; 277a6; 277b13; 278a27; 279a8. The question of innumerable κόσμοι is raised again in *Phys.* 250b15ff.

⁷¹ 279b27; 280a23; 296a34 (in connection with the question of the motion of the earth); 300b17-20; 300b26. The use of κόσμος in connection with the eternity of the world also crops up in *Meteor.* 356b4ff; *Top.* 104b5ff, 105b25ff.

in this respect. Also, in *Met.* 986b14, Aristotle credits Xenophanes with the doctrine.

Aristotle apparently also defended the eternity of the world in his lost treatise, *De Philosophia*, only a few fragments of which remain. However, it is generally agreed that at least three of the arguments advanced in this work are preserved in Philo's *De Aeternitate Mundi*.⁷²

2.4. Epicureanism

Epicurus, with a few adjustments, makes the atomic theory of Democritus, repudiated by Plato and Aristotle, the basis for his cosmology.⁷³ In line with the atomic viewpoint, Epicurus can speak of a plurality of κόσμοι: since the number of atoms from which the κόσμος arises is infinite, the number of κόσμοι, both similar and dissimilar to the present one, must also be infinite.⁷⁴ For Epicurus, a κόσμος may be defined as,

a certain envelopment of a heaven (οὐρανός). It envelops celestial bodies, an earth, and the whole range of phenomena. It is cut off from the infinite, and terminates in a limit which is either rare or dense, on whose dissolution all its contents will undergo a collapse.⁷⁵

In contemplating the dissolution of the κόσμος, Epicurean

⁷²Philo, *Aet.* 20-44: see Mansfield (141-4). Runia (1986: 191-3) posits that all four arguments in *Aet.* 20-44 are derived from Aristotle.

⁷³Epicurus introduces the thought of the atoms as "weighted" (to account for their downward motion) and the notion of the spontaneous "swerve" (to explain how atoms collide and lock together).

⁷⁴L-S 1: 57, 2: 54 (no. 13A).

⁷⁵L-S 1: 57, 2: 54-5 (no. 13B).

cosmology again departs from the classical position. The Epicurean Vellius explicitly criticizes the Platonic thesis of a created and indestructible world.⁷⁶

Epicurus also scorns any idea of the formation and preservation of the world by a deity. He does not deny the existence of the gods, only their activity in the physical world. The existence of our world or indeed any world is due entirely to random and natural processes.⁷⁷

2.5. Stoicism

The doctrines of Epicurus were faithfully preserved and defended by the Epicurean School. Epicureanism, as a philosophical system, endured little change from its original formulation by Epicurus himself. Stoicism, however, underwent considerable development from the views of its founder, a fact which must be borne in mind in any attempt to represent the "Stoic view". The Stoic system of philosophy was established by Zeno (333-262 BCE)⁷⁸ and maintained by a long line of successors. Of the early successors to Zeno, Chrysippus (280-206 BCE) stands out in importance. Chrysippus defended Stoicism at a critical time; through his reputation as a philosopher and dialectician, the system gained respectability and increased its influence.⁷⁹ Chrysippus also added key refinements to Zeno's doctrines. Important modifications and shifts in

⁷⁶L-S 1: 60-1; 2: 59-60 (no. 13G).

⁷⁷The Epicurean physical theory is set out in Lucretius, *De rerum*.

⁷⁸Stoic dates are from Sandbach (7).

⁷⁹On the life and reputation of Chrysippus, see Gould (7-17).

emphasis were also made by Panaetius (185-110 BCE) and Posidonius (135-55 BCE), and by the Roman Stoics, Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius.

κόσμος, denoting the material universe, is a basic term for the Stoics. This is hardly surprising since, as Diogenes Laertius (one of our principal witnesses for Stoicism), tells us (7.132), the study of the κόσμος was one of the three main divisions of Stoic physics (along with the study of elements and the study of causes). The Stoics accepted the now well established tradition of the physical world as κόσμος; in Stoicism, the noble status of the κόσμος was raised even higher.

According to Diogenes Laertius (7.137),⁸⁰ the Stoics used the word κόσμος in three ways: firstly, for "god himself, the peculiarly qualified individual consisting of all substance, who is indestructible and ingenerate", and who "is the manufacturer of the world-order (διακόσμησις), at set periods of time consuming all substance into himself and reproducing it again from himself"; secondly, for the world-order (διακόσμησις); thirdly, for the combination of god and world-order.⁸¹

This definition of κόσμος highlights the monism which obtained in Stoic thought. The god of Stoicism is not thought of as independent to the world, rather as immanent in it.⁸² According to Stoic cosmology, god, also called

⁸⁰Text and translation is taken from L-S 1: 270, 2: 268 (no. 44F).

⁸¹These distinctions probably represent an attempt by Diogenes to clarify and systematize the Stoics' usage and perhaps even to reconcile the conflicting uses he found in his sources.

⁸²On the monism and pantheism of the Stoic physical system,

"nature", "reason", "soul", "mind", "creative fire", etc., is both present in the substance of the world, and is the rational, controlling and ordering principle of the world. The κόσμος can be described as god since it is both pervaded and directed by a divine element.⁸³

The existence and providence of god is open to rational perception by virtue of the kinship between the human mind and the cosmic mind.⁸⁴ In admitting a natural theology, the Stoics stand diametrically opposed to the Epicureans. A range of arguments, mainly teleological, can be found in Stoic texts aimed at proving the existence and providence of the deity.⁸⁵ In accordance with the monism of the Stoic system, arguing for the existence of god equates with demonstrating that the world is a living, rational creature, possessing the quality of perfection.⁸⁶

In the Stoic system, the κόσμος, even in the extended sense of "god himself...consisting of all substance", is not all there is. The Stoics also posited the existence of a void external to the κόσμος (into which the κόσμος expands prior to the conflagration).⁸⁷ In the light of this, a distinction is made between "the whole" (τὸ ὅλον) and "the

see Todd.

⁸³ See L-S 1: 280-1, 2: 278-9 (no. 47C); L-S 1: 323, 2: 321-2 (no. 54B); L-S 1: 326, 2: 325-6 (no. 54H).

⁸⁴ Gärtner (112).

⁸⁵ See texts and commentary in L-S 1: 323-33, 2: 321-32. For detailed discussion of the Stoic arguments see Dragona-Monachou.

⁸⁶ L-S 1: 323, 2: 321-2 (nos. 54A; 54B); L-S 1: 325, 2: 325 (no. 54C).

⁸⁷ On the Stoic conception of the void see L-S 1: 294-7, 2: 291-5.

all" (τὸ πᾶν): "the whole" is the κόσμος, but "the all" is the κόσμος and the void together; the whole, the κόσμος, is finite, but the all is infinite since the void is infinite.⁸⁸

At the heart of Stoic cosmology, at least in the early Stoa, lies the theory of conflagration (ἐκπύρωσις). According to this view, the history of the universe is cyclical. Each world-cycle begins in a state of pure fire. The primordial fire (to be distinguished from the element fire) cools to air then moisture, and condenses into the four elements of which the world is constituted.⁸⁹ Directed by the divine principle, the ordered universe is formed. At the end of a cycle, the world recedes again into its fiery state due to a gradual evaporation of moisture by fire causing air and earth to ignite.⁹⁰

The conflagration theory was most likely an innovation on the part of Zeno, but it certainly drew on earlier ideas, notably the ancient belief in periodically recurring natural disasters, mainly by fire and flood.⁹¹ Seneca (*Nat quaes.* 3.27-30) expressly connects the conflagration theory with this tradition. The theory also picks up the idea of the "Great Year" which first appears in Plato, *Tim.* 39d, though is probably much older.⁹² The Great Year is completed when

⁸⁸ L-S 1: 268, 2: 265 (no. 44A).

⁸⁹ L-S 1: 275, 2:273 (no. 46B).

⁹⁰ Cicero, *De nat.* 2.118.

⁹¹ Plato *Criti.* 111; *Leg.* 676-80; *Polit.* 269-274; *Tim.* 22a-23c; Aristotle, *Meteor.* 352a29ff; Ps-Arist., *Mund.* 400a23ff; Lucretius, *De rerum* 5.411-15; Dio Chrysostom, *Disc.* 36.39ff; Philo, *Aet.* 146ff; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.69-71.

⁹² Plato does not associate the Great Year with periodic destructions. Aristotle, however, in *Meteor* 352a29ff, does (if, as is probable, the "great period of time"

the sun, moon and planets come back to their original positions. Again, the Stoics explicitly combine the conflagration with this tradition.⁹³

In view of the conflagration, the Stoics could speak of the κόσμος as having a definite beginning: γίνεσθαι δὲ τὸν κόσμος ὅταν ἐκ πυρὸς ἢ οὐσίας τραπῆ δι' ἀέρος εἰς ὑγρόν.⁹⁴ And more controversially (at least on Aristotle's analysis, *Cael.* 279b12ff), they could describe the κόσμος as perishable (φθαρτὸς ἄρα ὁ κόσμος).⁹⁵

Affirmations of the destructibility of the κόσμος in Stoic writings, however, are offset by statements affirming or implying its immortality. Chrysippus insists that "the κόσμος must not be said to die" (οὐ ῥητέον ἀποθνήσκειν τὸν κόσμον). He continues,

The world alone (μόνος ὁ κόσμος) is said to be sufficient because it alone has within itself everything it needs, and gets its nourishment and growth from itself⁹⁶ since its different parts change into one another.

In this way, he remains true to the Platonic axiom that a providential deity would never destroy the world he had designed. In another recorded statement, he declares,

mentioned here is a reference to the Great Year).

⁹³ Seneca, *Nat. quaes.* 29:1; L-S 1: 309, 2: 306-7 (nos. 52C, 52D). See Lapidge (181). Mansfield (146-7 n. 52), however, is cautious about the relation between the concept of the Great Year and the Stoic theory of conflagration.

⁹⁴ L-S 1: 275, 2: 273 (no. 46C).

⁹⁵ L-S 1: 276, 2: 275 (no. 46J).

⁹⁶ L-S 1: 275, 2: 273 (no. 46E).

When the world (κόσμος) is fiery through and through, it is directly both its own soul and commanding-faculty. But when, having changed into moisture and the soul which remains therein, it has in a way changed into⁹⁷ a body and soul so as to be compounded out of these.

From this testimony, it emerges that what Chrysippus envisages as taking place at the conflagration is *change* rather than *destruction*.⁹⁸ In this connection, it is worth noting Eusebius' comment that, "'destruction' is not used in an unqualified sense" by the Stoics, "They use the term destruction in place of natural change".⁹⁹

The apparent conflict between affirmations of the mortality and the immortality of the κόσμος highlights the different senses accruing to κόσμος in Stoic usage, noted above. Insofar as κόσμος denotes a world-cycle, it can be described as destructible. But used in its broadest sense, denoting the endless sequence of world-cycles and conflagrations, the κόσμος can be affirmed as everlasting.¹⁰⁰

Another key aspect of Stoic cosmology is the concept of πνεῦμα.¹⁰¹ The cosmic "breath" is the sustaining principle of the universe.¹⁰² πνεῦμα permeates everything that exists; it makes the world a unified and integrated whole.¹⁰³ It is the vivifying element in the universe, animating the various

⁹⁷L-S 1: 275-6, 2: 274 (no. 46F).

⁹⁸See further Gould (123-5).

⁹⁹L-S 1: 267, 2: 275 (no. 46K).

¹⁰⁰cf. Philo, Aet. 4.

¹⁰¹L-S 1: 281-9, 2: 277-87.

¹⁰²L-S 1: 282, 2: 280 (no. 47F).

¹⁰³L-S 1: 283, 2: 283 (no. 47L).

forms of life.¹⁰⁴ The πνεῦμα is also the means by which the divine intelligence directs and protects the κόσμος.¹⁰⁵

Cosmology has a direct bearing on ethics in Stoicism. The order which characterizes the world constitutes the basis of morality. The providentially arranged structure of the world is the guiding principle for human conduct. Doing "the good" lies in conforming to the rational law which imbues the world. Chrysippus states,

There is no other or more appropriate way of approaching the theory of good or bad things or the virtues or happiness than from universal nature and from the administration of the world (κόσμος).¹⁰⁶

The Stoics, as noted above, laid particular stress on the macrocosmic-microcosmic relation of human beings to the external world. Human beings are fundamentally connected to the universe as parts to the whole. There is a correspondence between the world's soul and the human soul, the latter being an offshoot of the former.¹⁰⁷ Thus, according to Chrysippus,

our own natures are parts of the whole. Therefore, living in agreement with nature comes to be the end, which is in accordance with the nature of oneself and that of the whole, engaging in no activity wont to be forbidden by the universal law, which is the right reason pervading everything and identical to Zeus, who is this director of the administration of existing

¹⁰⁴ L-S 1: 284, 2: 284 (no. 47N).

¹⁰⁵ L-S 1: 284, 2: 284 (no. 47O).

¹⁰⁶ L-S 1: 268-9, 2: 364 (no. 60A). On the concept of natural law in Greek philosophy, see Köster (260-6); Horsley (1978).

¹⁰⁷ L-S 1: 319, 2: 321 (nos. 53X; 53Y).

things.¹⁰⁸

The determining ethical principle is that people should aim to live "in agreement with nature", honouring the order and law that pervades and directs the universe, as parts living in accordance with the whole.

The thought of the κόσμος as a city, an image significantly developed by the Stoics, also plays a part in the Stoic ethical system. Cicero writes,

The Stoics hold that the world is governed by divine will; it is as it were a city and state shared by men and gods, and each one of us is a part of this world.¹⁰⁹

The Stoic-influenced writer, Arias Didymus, comments,

The world (κόσμος) is also called the habitation of gods and men, and the structure consisting of gods and men and the things created for their sake. For just as there are two meanings of city, one as habitation and two as the structure of its inhabitants along with its citizens, so the world is like a city consisting of gods and men, with the gods serving as rulers and men as their subjects. They are members of a community because of their participation in reason, which is natural law; and everything else is created for their sake.¹¹⁰

Each individual is constituted as a "citizen of the world"¹¹¹ and as such has a duty toward the common good of society. According to Cicero, it is a "natural consequence" of each person's status as κοσμοπολίτης that s/he prefers the common

¹⁰⁸L-S 1: 395, 2: 390 (no. 63C).

¹⁰⁹L-S 1: 348, 2: 346-7 (no. 57F). On the Stoic conception of the cosmic city, see Schofield (57-92).

¹¹⁰L-S 1: 431, 2: 246 (no. 67L).

¹¹¹L-S 1: 364, 2: 363-4 (no. 59Q).

advantage to her/his own.¹¹²

In the Stoic κόσμος, all events are causally linked. Reporting the views of the Stoics, Alexander of Aphrodisias writes,

They...say that since the world (κόσμος) is a unity which includes all existing things in itself and is governed by a living, rational, intelligent nature, the government of existing things which it possesses is an everlasting one proceeding in a sequence and ordering...For nothing in the world (κόσμος) exists or happens causelessly, because none of the things in it is independent of, and insulated from, everything that has happened before. For the world (κόσμος) would be wrenched apart and divided and no longer remain a unity, for ever governed in accordance with a single ordering and management (οἰκονομία), if an uncaused process were introduced.¹¹³

The rational order of the κόσμος determines all events, past, present, and future. The ordered sequence of events, which includes every detail of the universal history, is, as it were, pre-programmed into the κόσμος at the beginning of every world-cycle. Thus the 1st century CE Peripatetic philosopher Aristocles reports (as quoted by Eusebius),

the primary fire is as it were a sperm which possesses the principles...of all things and the causes of past, present and future events. The nexus and succession of these is fate, knowledge, truth, and an inevitable and inescapable law of what exists. In this way everything in the world (κόσμος) is excellently organized as in a perfectly ordered society.¹¹⁴

The κόσμος of the Stoics is governed by a fate, according to

¹¹²L-S 1: 348, 2: 346-7 (no. 57F).

¹¹³L-S 1: 337-8, 2: 338 (no. 55N).

¹¹⁴L-S 1: 276, 2: 274 (no. 46G).

which all events are predetermined. Not even the smallest detail can happen other than in accordance with the plan of the universe.¹¹⁵

The determinism in the Stoic concept of the κόσμος is also apparent in the theory of endlessly recurring world-cycles. The universe generated out of the conflagration is conceived as identical or near-identical with the one which preceded it. This belief was expressed in a strong and in (marginally) less strong forms. The strong version was probably the original view and the one to which Chrysippus subscribed. According to this view, every detail of this world will be repeated in successive worlds. Thus,

again there will be Socrates and Plato and each one of mankind with the same friends and fellow citizens; they will suffer the same things and they will encounter the same things, and every city and village and piece of land return in the same way.¹¹⁶

On a less strong version, there are very slight differences from world to world, e.g., a man who in one world has a mole on his face, in another world might not.¹¹⁷

The highly deterministic perspective in Stoic cosmology inevitably introduces an extremely passive and necessitarian element into the area of ethics. Every event in a person's life is fixed, and no one cannot stand in the way of providence.¹¹⁸ Since people cannot resist their destinies,

¹¹⁵ Plutarch, *Mor.* 1049f.

¹¹⁶ L-S 1: 309, 2: 306-7 (no. 52C).

¹¹⁷ L-S 1: 309-10, 2: 308 (no. 52F).

¹¹⁸ This is well illustrated in the famous Stoic analogy of the dog tied to the cart: L-S 1: 386, 2: 382 (no. 62A).

"virtue" lies in attuning one's mind to the cosmic mind and in willingly conforming to the course of life which destiny has mapped out.

This determinism appears to leave little place for free will and moral responsibility: Can human beings be held accountable for their decisions and actions, if they were destined to happen in the first place? The Stoics attempted to answer this problem in different ways.¹¹⁹ One way was to emphasize the conjunction of fate and human conduct: the plans of providence are worked out by means of human decisions and actions. Another was to distinguish between causes. But the difficulty was never entirely and satisfactorily resolved.

2.6. Philo

To complete our review of κόσμος in Greek philosophy, we turn to a Jewish writer. In Philo we find, to a degree that is unprecedented and unparalleled in the ancient world, a weaving together of Jewish tradition and Greek philosophy. The intermingling is such that it has been, and continues to be, a much debated subject whether we should think of Philo as a Hellenistic Jew or as a Jewish Hellenist.¹²⁰

κόσμος occurs far more frequently in Philo than in any

¹¹⁹ See texts and commentary in L-S 1: 386-94, 2: 382-9. On fate and the problem of fate and free will/moral responsibility in Stoicism, see Sandbach (101-8); Gould (148-53); Stough.

¹²⁰ For the recent discussion, see Borgen (139-154). Borgen's conclusion (154) is that Philo fundamentally remained a Jew, though he "was on the point of ending up in a universalism where Jewish distinctiveness was in danger of being lost".

other ancient writer.¹²¹ Philo unreservedly accepts the Greek tradition of the world as κόσμος, which is an indication of how important and how widely disseminated that tradition had become. At the same time, Philo uses the term in some distinctive ways, but our main interest here lies in Philo's handling of κόσμος= world/universe insofar as it is representative of Greek and Hellenistic philosophy.¹²²

In *Aet.* 4, Philo gives a definition of κόσμος=world/universe, representing the classical view: κόσμος is "the whole system of heaven and the stars including the earth and the plants and animals thereon", "the world which consists of heaven and earth and life on them". Although this statement of meaning is intended to serve no more than for the discussion on hand, unquestionably it specifies what he regularly means by the word.¹²³

For his work as a whole, Philo draws heavily on Platonic

¹²¹The noun in its various forms, according to *TLC* (which contains most of the Philonic corpus), occurs around 640 times.

¹²²In the vast majority of instances in Philo, the word means world/universe. The following senses also appear: "adornment" (e.g., *Abr.* 267; *Jos.* 150; *Migr.* 97; 98; *Mut.* 111; 246; *Opif.* 53; 139; *Prov.* 2.17; *Sacr.* 25; *Somn.* 1.102), "ornament" (e.g., *Cher.* 104; *Mos.* 2.243; *Opif.* 21), "order" (e.g., *Somn.* 1.241; *Spec.* 4.210), "honour" (e.g., *Mos.* 2.146), the "host of heaven" (the celestial bodies, *Spec.* 1.15, a standard LXX use). Several times he refers to the heavenly realm as a κόσμος ἐν κόσμῳ (*Abr.* 159; *Flacc.* 169).

¹²³Philo often uses the phrase ὁ σύμπας οὐρανός τε καὶ κόσμος (e.g., *Abr.* 57; *Mos.* 2.15; *Spec.* 1.44; *Virt.* 212; cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Disc.* 12.34). No distinction in meaning between οὐρανός and κόσμος is implied; the terms serve to reinforce each other.

ideas, particularly the doctrines of the *Timaeus*,¹²⁴ and to a much lesser extent, on Stoicism. These influences, to the same degree, can be seen in his statements on the κόσμος.

The κόσμος, by definition, is characterized by order.¹²⁵ The act of creation consists primarily in bringing a state of order (τάξις) from one of disorder (ἀταξία), e.g., *Opif.* 21-23; 28; 33; *Spec.* 4.187. Creation, for Philo, as with Plato, involves the shaping and ordering of pre-existent matter, ὕλη.¹²⁶ The sequential nature of the biblical account of creation (six days, *Opif.* 13-14) illustrates the principle of order. As an ordered structure, the created universe is an object of beauty, since, as Philo states, where there is order, there is beauty, καλός, (*Opif.* 28).

Philo acclaims the goodness, beauty and perfection of the κόσμος with no less vigour and enthusiasm than Plato. He describes the κόσμος as the most perfect thing to have come into existence (*Opif.* 14; *Plant.* 131), the most beautiful and varied work of God (*Somn.* 1.207), the fairest, greatest and most perfect work of all (το κάλλιστον καὶ μέγιστον καὶ τελεώτατον ἔργον, *Abr.* 74; cf. *Aet.* 26, 50, 73; *Her.* 199;), a complete work, wholly worthy of its architect (*Cher.* 113; cf. *Spec.* 58).¹²⁷ The κόσμος may even be regarded as νεώτερος υἱὸς θεοῦ (*Deus* 31; cf. *Aet.* 10, 20, where the

¹²⁴ On Philo's utilization of Plato's *Timaeus*, see Runia (1986).

¹²⁵ *Spec.* 4.237: the universe is most properly called κόσμος, because of its due order; cf. *Aet.* 54.

¹²⁶ On this see Runia (1986: 146-7; 453ff).

¹²⁷ The exalted status of the κόσμος is also framed in biblical language: the κόσμος is most true temple of God (*Spec.* 1.661, cf. *Somn.* 1.215); it is an offering dedicated to God (*Somn.* 1.243).

κόσμος is described as a ὁρατὸς θεός). There are numerous passages in Philo's writings, where he waxes eloquent on the splendour and beauty of the various parts of the natural world, both in the terrestrial realm and the celestial realm.¹²⁸ Philo's discursiveness on the majesty of the universe in fact contrasts with Plato's restraint.¹²⁹

Philo, following Plato and the majority of Greek thinkers, emphasizes the unicity of the κόσμος,¹³⁰ though unlike Plato, Philo derives it from the oneness of God (*Opif.* 171-2).

Philo maintains with Plato that the κόσμος is indestructible (ἄφθαρτος). Following Plato on both counts, Philo recognizes that what has been created is liable to destruction (*Decal.* 58)¹³¹ but believes that the indestructibility of the κόσμος is assured on the basis of the preserving will (βούλησις)¹³² and providential activity (πρόνοια)¹³³ of the God. The Aristotelian viewpoint, that the κόσμος is ἀγένητος καὶ ἀίδιος, though preferred to the Stoic theory, he complains, attributes a vast inactivity to God (*Opif.* 7), credits God with no superiority (*Opif.* 171),

¹²⁸ e.g., *Opif.* 54, 78; *Praem.* 41-2; *Spec.* 1.210; 3.187-8; 2.150-4; 4.232-6.

¹²⁹ Runia (1986: 458).

¹³⁰ *Aet.* 8; *Migr.* 180; *Opif.* 172; *Spec.* 3.189. See Runia (1986: 174-6).

¹³¹ In *Prov.* 1.6-23, Philo affirms that the κόσμος could indeed be destroyed, employing Stoic arguments and quoting from *Tim.* 38b to make the point. The emphasis which he lays here on the fundamental perishability of the κόσμος is unparalleled in his writings: see Runia (1986: 396-8).

¹³² e.g., *Her.* 246; *Spec.* 2.5.

¹³³ e.g., *Decal.* 58; *Migr.* 181.

and assigns anarchy to the κόσμος (*Opif.* 11).

Perplexingly, in *De Aeternitate Mundi*, Philo presents a series of arguments in favour of the Aristotelian position: that the κόσμος is uncreated and indestructible. The relation of Philo to this document has been variously explained, e.g., as wrongly attributed to him, as a youthful work. The introductory section at least (*Aet.* 1-19), is in all probability authentic, since here Philo unequivocally aligns himself with the Platonic doctrine.

A plausible solution to the problem of *De Aeternitate Mundi* has recently been proposed by D.T. Runia. He argues that the whole dialogue is genuinely Philonic.¹³⁴ Runia contends that its structure corresponds to the conventions of the genre of θέσις, albeit in an adapted form to suit Philo's purpose. The subject of the θέσις is εἰ ἄφθαρτος ὁ κόσμος. But instead of setting out two positions, where the second defeats the first, the usual procedure in a θέσις, Philo has three positions:

- 1) that the κόσμος is γενητὸς καὶ φθαρτός,¹³⁵
- 2) that the κόσμος is ἀγενητὸς and ἄφθαρτος,¹³⁶
- 3) that the κόσμος is γενητὸς καὶ ἄφθαρτος.¹³⁷

Runia claims that Philo's aim was to use the second position to defeat the first, and the third to overthrow the second. The final section, however, in which Philo would have presented arguments favouring the view that the κόσμος is γενητὸς καὶ ἄφθαρτος is missing, and herein lies the cause of

¹³⁴Runia (1981: 139).

¹³⁵The Atomists, the Epicureans and the Stoics.

¹³⁶Aristotle and the Peripatetics.

¹³⁷Plato.

its confusion to interpreters.

Aet. 1-19, in any case, makes abundantly clear where Philo's loyalties lie. He subscribes wholeheartedly to the Platonic doctrine, quoting word for word, *Tim.* 41ab (the demiurge's address to the assembled gods). Interestingly, Philo argues, making good use of the principle of *maior ex longinquo reverentia*, that this position was maintained by Moses, long before Plato (*Aet.* 19; cf. *Opif.* 12).¹³⁸

Occasionally, Philo can speak of the κόσμος as an intelligent living creature (*Aet.* 94, 95), though the κόσμος as a ζῷον is not a prominent theme in Philo's writings.¹³⁹ Philo also downplays the Platonic concept of the cosmic soul.¹⁴⁰

Another interesting departure from Plato is Philo's application of κόσμος to the eternal forms: he distinguishes between ὁ κόσμος νοητός (e.g., *Migr.* 103; *Mos.* 1.186; 2.127 *Opif.* 16; 19; 35) or ὁ ἐκ τῶν ἰδεῶν συνθεστώτα κόσμος (e.g., *Opif.* 17; 20) or ὁ ἀσώματος κόσμος (e.g., *Opif.* 36; 55), on the one hand, and ὁ κόσμος αἰσθητός (e.g., *Congr.* 21; *Mut.* 4; *Opif.* 25; *Somn.* 1.185), or ὁ κόσμος ὀρατός (e.g., *Abr.* 88; *Opif.* 16), or ὁ φαινόμενος κόσμος (e.g., *Migr.* 105; 179) or ὁ κόσμος οὐτός (e.g., *Her.* 75), on the other, referring to the world of ideas and the visible world, respectively.

¹³⁸ Philo locates the doctrine in Gen 8:22. The Genesis text does not actually affirm that the earth is everlasting, but rather that as long as the earth lasts (πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς γῆς, LXX), the times and the seasons are guaranteed.

¹³⁹ Runia (1986: 157-8).

¹⁴⁰ Runia (1986: 204). Runia (1986: 200-8; 446-51) points out that the λόγος, among its several functions in Philo's system, in certain respects fulfills the role of Plato's cosmic soul.

The term κόσμος νοητός becomes a regular designation for the realm of ideas among the Middle Platonists. In Philo's writings we are afforded the earliest extant examples of its use.¹⁴¹ A unique emphasis of Philo is his presentation of the κόσμος νοητός as created (*Opif.* 16ff).¹⁴²

Philo takes up the metaphor of the κόσμος as a city. In *Opif.* 17-18, the creation of the κόσμος is likened to the founding of a city: the κόσμος νοητός is the plan, in accordance with which the divine architect/craftsman (both are combined in the one individual) constructs the city (cf. *Cher.* 1.127). In *Spec.* 1.13-14, the κόσμος is compared to a μεγαλόπολις, whose rulers (ἄρχοντες) are the stars and planets and whose subjects are all living beings which dwell on the earth.¹⁴³

Philo adopts themes of Stoic natural theology. By observing the κόσμος, we can deduce its maker. As one arrives at a comprehension of the artist through his works, proof of the existence and providence of God can be derived from contemplation of the κόσμος (*Leg.* 3.98-9). The image of the κόσμος as a city reinforces the argument. Human beings, coming into the κόσμος, encounter it as a great city (μεγαλόπολις), well ordered, regulated by admirable laws, and exhibiting design and superintendence. This leads them to infer that God exists (*Spec.* 1.34-5) and that he cares

¹⁴¹ It would be presumptuous, however, to see this as an innovation on Philo's part, since this would overvalue his influence as a philosopher and accord to him a greater importance in the development of Platonism than he is probably due; so Runia (1986: 262).

¹⁴² The generation of the κόσμος νοητός is assigned by Philo to the first day of creation.

¹⁴³ Cf. *Cher.* 2.120; *Prov.* 2-3.

for all that he has created (*Praem.* 41-2).

Like the Stoics, Philo lays stress on the microcosmic/macrocosmic relation of the human being to the κόσμος.¹⁴⁴ The human being is a κοσμοπολίτης,¹⁴⁵ a βραχὺς οὐρανός (*Opif.* 82), and such has a special place in the κόσμος (*Opif.* 143-4, 151).

Philo also adopts the Stoic concept of universal law, by which the κόσμος, the mega-city is regulated. The universal law of nature, Philo equates with the Mosaic law.

The world (κόσμος) is in harmony with the Law, and the Law with the world, and...the man who observes the law is constituted thereby a loyal citizen of the world (κοσμοπολίτης), regulating his doings by the purpose and will of Nature, in accordance with which the entire world itself also is administered. (*Opif.* 3)¹⁴⁶

Guidance for a moral life can be obtained by contemplation of the κόσμος:

For anyone who contemplates the order in nature and the constitution enjoyed by the world-city whose excellence no word can describe, needs no spectator to teach him to practise a law-abiding and peaceful life and to aim at assimilating himself to its beauties. (*Abr.* 61)

The world-city, the μεγαλόπολις, has a single law commanding what should be done and forbidding what should not be done (*Jos.* 29).¹⁴⁷

The high regard for the κόσμος typical of the Greek and

¹⁴⁴ On the microcosm/macrocosm scheme in Philo, see Runia (1986: 465-6).

¹⁴⁵ Adam is κοσμοπολίτης in a special sense, in that he was the first man and the forefather of the race, *Opif.* 142.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. *Mos.* 2.49-51.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *Praem.* 23.

Hellenistic world view is thus well represented in Philo. But an important caveat must be entered: Philo's admiration for the κόσμος is tempered by his praise for the creator.¹⁴⁸ Philo insists that the κόσμος must not be assigned a disproportionate majesty (*Opif.* 7; cf. *Migr.* 194). The end for which the κόσμος was made was to display the goodness of its creator (*Cher.* 127). Though Philo can apply the word θεός to κόσμος, clearly it is not "God" in an unqualified sense. Philo constantly attacks the way in which the celestial bodies are identified as gods. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the teleological argument has a double function with Philo: not only does it serve to demonstrate God's existence and providence, it is also used to denounce astral worship.

The subordination of the κόσμος to the creator, for Philo, is made clear in *Conf.* 98, where Philo discusses why Scripture speaks of the κόσμος as God's footstool. He gives two reasons: firstly, that it may be shown that the efficient cause of the κόσμος is not to be found within creation; secondly, to emphasize that God is its sovereign ruler and regulator. It is this emphasis in his talk of κόσμος that most clearly indicates Philo's Jewishness and sets him apart from the mainstream of Greek philosophical thought.

3. The View of the World Evoked by κόσμος

Despite the variety of beliefs and viewpoints which, as our survey has shown, existed in Greek and Hellenistic cosmological speculation, we can detect certain shared and fixed assumptions about the nature and character of the

¹⁴⁸Runia (1986: 458-61).

material world upon which Greek cosmological discussion was built. These assumptions formed a core understanding of the physical universe for Greek thinkers which the word κόσμος tended to evoke.

The leading features of the Greek and Hellenistic view of the world connoted by κόσμος, as outlined below, can all be found in Plato's *Timaeus*, the historical importance and widespread influence of which we have already underlined. This treatise by the New Testament period had long since achieved the status of literary classic, and was widely read and studied, not only by philosophers and students of the philosophical schools but by the educated classes in general. As Runia states,

The very fact that it was regarded as the "Platonists' Bible" meant that its influence inevitable filtered down to men of letters and even those who had received a smattering of learning. Indeed the *Timaeus* was the only Greek prose work that up to the third century¹⁴⁹ A.D. every educated man could be assumed to have read.

3.1. The κόσμος is Characterized by Order

First and foremost, the designation of the world as κόσμος suggested an *ordered* reality - a universe which is regulated according to basic norms and which is harmonious, and purposeful. This fundamental philosophical and scientific tenet was the legacy of the Milesian philosophers and is the fundamental notion in the Greek world view. As Jaeger states, it was "spiritual discovery of the cosmos" that facilitated philosophical speculation on the nature of the universe among the Greeks.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹Runia (1986: 57).

¹⁵⁰Jaeger (160).

When Plato comes to describe the generation of the world he depicts it as a fashioning of order out of a state of disorder (*Tim.* 29e-30a). This basic scheme is repeated in Philo and in the middle Platonists, e.g., Plutarch (*Mor.* 1014bff).¹⁵¹

The idea of an *ordered* universe is entailed in the very word κόσμος. This is recognized by the frequent word-plays employed in this direction (e.g., Philo, *Aet.* 54; Ps-Arist., *Mund.* 397a5ff).

3.2. The Unity of the κόσμος

The word κόσμος further connotes the ordering of distinctive parts into a cohesive whole. Insofar as the universe is κόσμος, it is conceived of as a unity, with its varied and constituent elements, both animate and inanimate, integrated into a perfect whole. One of the main concerns of the Presocratic attempt to define reality was the relation between oneness and multiplicity: the appellation of κόσμος conveniently functioned to highlight the essential unity of all that exists. It is significant in this respect that the first application of κόσμος to the universe was with regard to the order which binds everything in the universe together. Plato, commenting on the use of κόσμος for the universe, says that it is called a κόσμος because heaven and earth, gods and human beings are held together by κοινωνία and κοσμιότης (*Gorg.* 507ff).

As observed, in *Timaeus*, Plato lays great stress on the unity and harmony of the κόσμος: the κόσμος contains within itself all living creatures (*Tim.* 30d); the constituent

¹⁵¹ The majority of Middle Platonists, however, rejected Plato's account as a literal cosmogony: Runia (1986: 54).

elements of the κόσμος are bound together in perfect harmony (32b-c); all the elements were used up in the making of the κόσμος, so that it might be perfect and whole and one (32d-33a). The unity of the κόσμος is lauded in Pseudo-Aristotle's *De Mundo*. The harmony of the κόσμος is compared to that of a city (396blff): "out of plurality and diversity it achieves a homogeneous unity capable of admitting every variation of nature and degree".

The thought of unity applies even where, with the Atomists and Epicureans, there is a plurality of κόσμοι, since each κόσμος, through the cohesion of atoms, is conceived of as a unity in its own right. Even so, the idea of the unity of the κόσμος more obviously implies its uniqueness and singularity, and this was by far the dominant view in the Greek philosophy. The stress on the unicity of the κόσμος appears early in Greek philosophical discussion.¹⁵²

3.3. The κόσμος is an Object of Beauty

For the Greeks, order was a thing of beauty. In the earliest uses of κόσμος - for specific arrangements - as Vlastos writes, what is implied "is not just any sort of arranging, but one that strikes the eye or the mind as pleasingly fitting: as setting, or keeping, or putting back, things in their proper order."¹⁵³ It is these aesthetic overtones of κόσμος which lead to its derivative use for "adornment", "ornament". When applied to the material world, therefore, κόσμος not only emphasized that the universe is an ordered structure but also that the order

¹⁵²Anaxagoras fr. 8; Heraclitus fr. 89; Philolaus fr. 17.

¹⁵³Vlastos (1975: 3).

inherent or displayed in it is of an aesthetically pleasing character; the connotation was indeed that of "a crafted, composed, beauty-enhancing order."¹⁵⁴

The κόσμος is by very nature καλός. It is the quintessence, the perfect exemplar, of beauty. Plato uses the superlative κάλλιστος (*Tim.* 29a; 92c). For Plato, the beauty and perfection of the κόσμος are to be seen in its completeness (32c-33a), its freedom from age and sickness (33a), its sphericity (the sphere being the most perfect shape, 33b-c), its self-sufficiency (33d) and its circular motion (34a). Plato makes a deliberate play on κόσμος=adornment and κόσμος=world/universe at *Tim.* 40a.

The beauty of the κόσμος continues to be extolled in the first century CE, e.g. Pseudo-Arist. *Mund.* 397a5ff; Dio Chrysostom, *Disc.* 30.28; 36.60; 40.35-36; 48.14.

3.4. Human Beings are Related to the κόσμος as Microcosm to Macrocosm

Since the κόσμος is the sum of all its parts, human beings are connected to the κόσμος as parts to the whole. Humanity's relationship to the κόσμος, however, is a special instance of the general rule, as it shares in the highest qualities of the κόσμος, e.g., life, intelligence, body, soul, etc.

While Democritus may have been the first to articulate the notion of the human individual as the μικρὸς κόσμος, the idea is much earlier. The microcosmic/macrocosmic relation of the human being to the κόσμος runs through Plato's *Timaeus*, e.g., the inhabitants of the κόσμος are "by nature"

¹⁵⁴Vlastos (1975: 3).

(κατὰ φύσιν) akin to it (30d); the κόσμος is analogous to the human being and *vice versa* (44d-45b).

The implications of the human being as the microcosm are most fully worked out by the Stoics. From the Stoic point of view, men and women find their fulfillment in incorporating themselves into the unity of the κόσμος. Thus Cicero can say, the human being was born to contemplate the world and to imitate it in his/her own conduct (*De nat.* 2.11-14).¹⁵⁵

3.5. The κόσμος is Held in the Highest Regard

Classical Greek thought, without doubt, engendered an exceptionally high view of the world as κόσμος. *Timaeus* was pivotal in this respect: Plotinus can regard the dialogue as a hymn of praise to the κόσμος (*Enn.* 4.8.1.41). The common ascriptions to the κόσμος of immortality and divinity are indicative of this revered status.

For Plato the κόσμος is indestructible.¹⁵⁶ It is unassailable to any physical cause of dissolution (*Tim.* 33a); the divine craftsman alone has power to undo his handiwork. But he will never do so, since only an evil will would dissolve such an excellent and skillfully-made construction (*Tim.* 41a). The κόσμος, therefore, is destined to last forever.

Aristotle reinforced the Platonic view of the perpetuity

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Ps-Arist., *Mund.* 391a14.

¹⁵⁶ The view that the material universe, though having a beginning, is nevertheless everlasting in duration, had already been expressed by Hesiod (*Theog.* 105-6; 116; 128), the father of Greek theology, in c. 700 BCE. It was probably also held by Pythagoras: so W.K.C.Guthrie (1962: 281-282).

of the κόσμος, going a step further than Plato, by maintaining, as Heraclitus had done, the eternity of the κόσμος. The Epicurean revival of Atomism notwithstanding, the Stoic theory of cosmic conflagration represented the most serious challenge to this belief: in the days of the early Stoa, the debate between Stoics and Peripatetics on the issue was, by all accounts, very lively.¹⁵⁷ But while many Stoic ideas gained wide currency, the doctrine of cosmic regeneration was always a highly controversial one. Some later Stoics (Boethus of Sidon, Zeno of Tarsus, Diogenes of Babylon and Panaetius), under the weight of the Peripatetic counter-attack, rejected the doctrine.¹⁵⁸ The Roman Stoics showed little or no interest in it.¹⁵⁹ The status of the conflagration theory as a cardinal Stoic belief thus seems to have diminished with the passage of time.¹⁶⁰ In contrast to Stoic reticence, belief in the indestructibility of the κόσμος was vigorously defended and reasserted. As well as *De Aeternitate Mundi*, two other extant documents of the Hellenistic period argue for the indestructibility of the κόσμος: *De Universi Natura* attributed (wrongly) to Ocellus of Lucania¹⁶¹ and Pseudo-Aristotle's *De Mundo*.

It is revealing that the Stoic advocates of the conflagration theory were at pains to qualify κόσμος and

¹⁵⁷ See Mansfield.

¹⁵⁸ Philo, *Aet.* 77-78; Sandbach (79).

¹⁵⁹ Lapidge (184-5).

¹⁶⁰ Even so, Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 7.2.2 (c. CE 95), can still regard the duration of the world as a theme for philosophical debate.

¹⁶¹ This work was known and read by Philo, *Aet.* 12.

φθαρτός in such a way as would permit them to speak of the perpetuity and immortality of the κόσμος. This is undoubtedly a concession to the classic belief in the indestructibility of the κόσμος.

The crediting of divinity to the κόσμος is an even clearer indicator of the high esteem in which it was held. Plato described the κόσμος as a "blessed god" (34b), a "self-sufficient and perfect god" (68e), a "perceptible god" (92c). The divinity of the κόσμος became increasingly stressed through the Hellenistic era. The Stoics, in their monist and pantheist cosmology, explicitly identified god and the κόσμος. Remarkably, even a Jewish writer like Philo, can apply the term θεός to the κόσμος.

With such a high view of the κόσμος obtaining in the Hellenistic period, the impulse was inevitably toward adoration and veneration of the κόσμος; hence Jonas speaks of "late-classical cosmos-piety".¹⁶²

This is not to suggest that the world view associated with κόσμος necessarily promoted an optimistic outlook on the world and the individual's place in it; especially in the light of Hellenistic fatalism, it could equally produce a position of resignation and retreat,¹⁶³ or indeed of anxiety.¹⁶⁴ Neither is it to argue that there were no dissenting voices to the consensus view. Dio Chrysostom, the Stoic-Cynic popular philosopher, for example, represents the view that

This place which we call the universe (κόσμος)...is a

¹⁶²Jonas (247 n. 7).

¹⁶³Jonas (247-9).

¹⁶⁴Schweizer (1963).

prison prepared by the gods, a grievous and ill-ventilated one, which never keeps the same temperature and condition of its air, but at one time is cold and frosty, and infected with wind, mud, snow and water, and at another time again is hot and stifling; for just a very little time of year it is endurable; it is visited by cyclones, typhoons occur, and sometimes the whole of it quakes to the very bottom. Now all these are terrible punishments. For men are invariably dismayed and terrified by them whenever they occur.¹⁶⁵

Quite clearly this a highly pessimistic view of the κόσμος and a gloomy outlook on life in it, at variance with the traditional Greek viewpoint. One suspects that such an alternative viewpoint may well have commanded wide popular assent. It is not, however, characteristic of the *literati* of the classical and Hellenistic era.¹⁶⁶ Dio himself (under the guise of Charidemus) favours the standard position:

the universe (κόσμος) is a house very beautiful and divine, constructed by the gods; that just as we see houses built by men who are called prosperous and wealthy, with portals and columns, and the roof, walls and doors adorned with gold and with paintings, in the same way the universe has been made to give entertainment and good cheer to mankind, beauteous and bespangled with stars, sun, moon, land, sea, and plants, all these being indeed, portions of the wealth of the gods and specimens of their handiwork. Into this universe comes mankind to hold high festival, having been invited by the kindness of the gods to a most splendid feast and banquet that they may enjoy all blessings.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Dio Chrysostom, *Disc.* 30.11-12.

¹⁶⁶ Epictetus, *Ench.* 27, affirms that as a mark is not set up to be missed, neither does the nature of evil arise in the κόσμος.

¹⁶⁷ Dio Chrysostom, *Disc.* 30.28-29.

A negative and nihilistic view of κόσμος does not fully emerge in the literate classes until the later dualism of Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism.¹⁶⁸

4. The Social Implications of the Designation of the World as κόσμος

The description of the world as κόσμος in Greek and Hellenistic philosophy has patent social consequences, illustrating the tendencies toward legitimation and habitualization in language-use, discussed in Chapter One.

κόσμος was a word with unmistakable social connotations. As we have seen, among the earliest uses of κόσμος were its applications to the Greek city-state, the political constitution, and the social order in general. Kahn suggests that from the beginning κόσμος was applied to the world-order "by conscious analogy with the good order of society".¹⁶⁹ It is revealing that when Plato introduces the term κόσμος=world/universe, in *Gorg.* 508a, he explains it by reference to κοσμιότης καὶ σωφροσύνη καὶ δικαιοσύνη.¹⁷⁰

The application of κόσμος to the universe pointed to an analogy between civic law and the law governing nature.¹⁷¹ The projection of the structure of the city-state on to the natural world is found already in Anaximander.¹⁷² The connection of ideas is fostered and reinforced by the frequent conjunction of κόσμος=world/universe and πόλις and

¹⁶⁸ See Jonas (250-65).

¹⁶⁹ Kahn (223).

¹⁷⁰ Kahn (223).

¹⁷¹ Ehrhardt (206).

¹⁷² Jaeger (161).

the widespread use of the image of the city with reference to the ordered universe. One effect of this analogy was to suggest the fixity and permanence of the civic order. The unfailing regularity and constancy of the processes constituting the κόσμος, particularly the movements of the heavenly bodies, intimated the stability and endurance of the city and its institutions.¹⁷³

As noted above, it is a key feature of the world view evoked by κόσμος that human beings, individually and societally, are microcosmically related to the universe as parts to the whole.¹⁷⁴ The whole has primacy over the parts; the parts act toward the preservation of the whole. It was by such thinking that the Greek πόλις was legitimated and maintained. As Jonas writes, the citizens of the πόλις,

had a share in the whole and could affirm its superior status in the knowledge that they the parts, however passing and exchangeable, not only were *dependent* on the whole *for* their being but also *maintained* that whole *with* their being; just as the condition of the whole made a difference to the being and possible perfection of the parts, so their conduct made a difference to the being and perfection of the whole.¹⁷⁵

The Greek city collapsed, but the idea survived, transferring its point of reference from the πόλις to the κόσμος.

Berger points out that the concept of the prevailing social order as a reflection of the structure of the universe - the notion of the relation between society and cosmos as

¹⁷³ Ehrhardt (206).

¹⁷⁴ The microcosm/macrocosm scheme would have been effectively implied in the continued application of the word κόσμος to a wide area of situations in private and public life.

¹⁷⁵ Jonas (248).

one of microcosm to macrocosm - is one of the oldest and most effective forms of legitimation known to humanity.¹⁷⁶ On this kind of scheme, the order of society is objectively grounded in the all-inclusive order of the universe. By participating in the established order, men and women participate in the divinely established order of things. Social norms and conventions, sanctions and punishments are interpreted as concretizations of the cosmic structure; as Berger states, "humanly constructed nomoi are given a cosmic status".¹⁷⁷

The scope of this type of legitimation is very wide indeed. Berger writes,

This cosmization...refers not only to the over-all nomic structures, but to specific institutions and roles within a given society. The cosmic status assigned to these is objectivated, that is, it becomes part of the objectively available reality of the institutions and roles in question.¹⁷⁸

The microcosmic/macrocosmic scheme validates the whole institutional order of a society from the state to the institutions of kinship and family. It provides the ultimate sanction for the political and power structures of the day. As Berger points out, the governing authority is conceived of as an agent of the gods; to obey the ruler is to be in "a right relationship with the world of the gods".¹⁷⁹ And it integrates the institutions of kinship into the life of the universe. Berger observes, "Every human family reflects the structure of the cosmos, not only in terms of representing

¹⁷⁶Berger (1969: 34).

¹⁷⁷Berger (1969: 36).

¹⁷⁸Berger (1969: 36).

¹⁷⁹Berger (1969: 34).

but of embodying it."¹⁸⁰ Moreover, "cosmization" grounds in ultimate reality, the stratifications of a society. Socio-economic divisions and social positions are conceived as part of the rational ordering of the world, the very divine arrangement of things.

The effectiveness of this kind of legitimation, according to Berger, is seen, firstly, in the degree to which societal structures can be objectified. The institutions of a society are accorded "a semblance of inevitability, firmness and durability"¹⁸¹. Social structures are raised above the level of historical contingency and are secured a place in the reality of the universe. Secondly, it is evident in the extent to which a human being can appropriate and identify with the role ascribed to her/him. When the role s/he is expected to play in society is accorded a cosmic significance, her/his identification with the role is reinforced:

He is whatever society has identified him as by virtue of a cosmic truth, as it were, and his social being becomes rooted in the sacred reality of the universe.¹⁸²

But perhaps most of all, the strength of cosmic legitimation is apparent insofar as it bears a powerful built-in sanction against deviance. To challenge the social order and to resist one's prescribed role is to go against nature and the divine arrangement of things. Again Berger states,

When the socially defined reality has come to be identified with the ultimate reality of the universe,

¹⁸⁰ Berger (1969: 34).

¹⁸¹ Berger (1969: 36).

¹⁸² Berger (1969: 37).

then its denial takes on the quality of evil as well as madness.¹⁸³

The world view evoked by κόσμος, therefore, by implication served as a powerful and comprehensive legitimating tool.

The legitimating potential of the designation of the world as κόσμος is most fully realized with the Stoics. This is not surprising given that the goal of Stoic ethics is integration into the cosmic order. It also readily follows from the deterministic strain which runs through the whole Stoic system. In the Stoic κόσμος, all events are causally related and governed by πρόνοια. This means that the events and circumstances of a person's life have been pre-set. One must accept the place and situation to which one has been allotted by destiny.¹⁸⁴ The doctrine of everlasting recurrence which accompanied the doctrine of conflagration, further reinforced the need to resign oneself to the lot to which one has been assigned.¹⁸⁵

The social implications of the Stoic concept of the κόσμος are made explicit by several Stoic or Stoic-influenced writers. Cicero, commenting on the fact that the world is a city and each person a part of it, writes,

¹⁸³Berger (1969: 39).

¹⁸⁴Long (1986: 198): "The external circumstances of his whole life are an episode in the life of universal Nature, and they are 'in his power' only to the extent that he can choose to accept them or not when they occur."

¹⁸⁵On the political and social theory of the Stoics, see texts and commentary in L-S 1: 429-437, 2: 423-31. The mild radicalism of the earlier Stoics gave way to political and social conservatism among the middle Stoics, a tendency which became more pronounced with the Roman Stoics.

From this it is a natural consequence that we prefer the common advantage to our own...This explains the fact that someone who dies for the state is praiseworthy, because our country should be dearer to us than ourselves.¹⁸⁶

Because the whole, the state, has prominence over the part, the citizen, and gives meaning to her/him, citizens find their fulfillment in the maintenance and preservation of the state. Within a perfectly ordered world-city, every person has his/her proper place. As the place which a person occupies at the theatre is rightly his/her's, Cicero continues, so too the place which one occupies in the city and the world. This even extends to one's socio-economic position, since "no right is infringed by each man's possessing what belongs to him".¹⁸⁷

It is particularly revealing in the light of Berger's observations that Cicero, following Panaetius and other Stoics, adopts the analogy of role-play in explaining the goal of human existence. In Cicero's view, each person is like an actor on a cosmic stage. His/her responsibility is to perform the role which s/he been accredited, and to play that part well.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶L-S 1: 348-9, 2: 346-7 (no. 57F = Cicero, *Fin.* 3.62-8).

¹⁸⁷L-S 1: 348-9, 2: 346-7 (no. 57F = Cicero, *Fin.* 3.62-8).

¹⁸⁸L-S 1: 424-52, 2: 419-20 (no. 66E = Cicero, *Off.* 1.107-117). According to Cicero, each person is assigned "four roles". The first relates to the rationality with which every human being is endowed and which places humanity above the animals, the second to differences in intellect and temperament which mark out the individual. The third is imposed by "chance and circumstance", over which people have no say, e.g., noble birth, headship of state, public office, wealth and material conditions. The fourth, which admits a measure of human freedom, is the lifestyle and career which human beings choose for

Cicero equates civic law with universal law. In his judgement, whoever does not obey the true law - "is fleeing from himself and treating his human nature with contempt".¹⁸⁹

According to Dio Chrysostom, *Disc.* 30.28ff (noted above), one comes into the κόσμος as to a banquet held by a King. Each person is assigned a place. Some get better places and some are given inferior positions: "different persons have different things in greater abundance according to the tables at which they have severally reclined" (*Disc.* 30.30).

Epictetus exhorts us to contemplate and learn the administration of the κόσμος (ἡ τοῦ κόσμου διοίκησις, *Disc.* 1.9.4; 1.10.10). God directs and governs the κόσμος in such a way that the parts serve the whole (4.7.6). As a general stations a soldier to a post, so god has stationed us in some place and manner of life (1.9.24-26). We ought not to desert our post (cf. 3.1.19-20).

In Book 2.10, Epictetus discusses how a person's duties are entailed in the title which s/he bears. First of all, a person must learn that s/he is a citizen of the world (2.10.3; cf. 1.9.6). The title πολίτης τοῦ κόσμου is the most fundamental. It is the duty of the citizen, as a part of the whole, not to act like a detached unit and never to "exercise choice or desire in any other way but by reference to the whole" (2.10.4). Even if s/he were to know the future in advance, the good citizen would continue to go down the path to which s/he had been assigned, even though that meant injury, disease or death. S/he does so realizing that his/her lot in the world comes from the orderly arrangement

themselves.

¹⁸⁹L-S 1: 432-3, 2: 428 (no. 67S = Cicero, *Rep.* 3.33).

of the whole (2.10.5-6). Within this ordered world, each person is assigned a further title (e.g., son, brother, elder, father, town councilor). That title implies the actions which are appropriate to it.

According to Epictetus, one must not aspire to a higher place in this world than that to which one has been ascribed. In a well-ordered house, no one can assume the role of the lord of the mansion, except the one who bears this title. Anyone who attempts to do so will soon be brought down to his proper level. In this great city, the world, there is a Lord of the mansion who assigns to each and every thing a fit place (3.22.5).

Even death is to be viewed from the perspective of the part and the whole, and the viewpoint of the greater good of the κόσμος. Death is just a reconstitution of matter. Nothing that makes up the κόσμος is lost in the process, simply re-organized (4.7.15-16). What is born must die, so that the κόσμος does not stand still or become hampered (4.7.27).

The philosophical world view evinced by κόσμος thus in various ways affirmed the prevailing institutional order, by placing it within a cosmological frame of reference. The appreciation of the world as κόσμος thus had a legitimating social function: it acted to preserve and reinforce the existing social structure and effectively to serve the interests of dominant and privileged groups.

5. Septuagintal Uses and Josephus

κόσμος is used in three ways in Septuagintal and

Intertestamental texts:¹⁹⁰ 1) with reference to the host (עֲבָא) of heaven, *i.e.*, the celestial bodies, *e.g.*, Gen 2:1; Deut 4:19; Isa 24:21; 40:26; 2) with the sense of "adornment": a) translating Hebrew terms which may be understood in this way, *e.g.*, צָדִיָּה in Jer 2:32; 4:30; Ezek 7:20; 16:11; תְּפֹאֲרֹת in Prov 20:29; כְּלִי in Isa 61:10; b) in texts where there is no corresponding Hebrew word, *e.g.*, Isa 49:18; Prov 18:17; Jdt 1:14; 10:4; 12:15; Sir 6:30; 21:21; 22:17; 26:16; 32:5; 43:9; 50:19; 1 Macc 1:22; 2 Macc 2:2; 5:3; 3) referring to "the universe" (*e.g.*, Wis 9:9; 2 Macc 7:9, 23; 8:18; 13:14; 4 Macc 5:25), "the earth, the habitation of humanity" (*e.g.*, Wis 9:3; 2 Macc 3:12; 4 Macc 16:18) and "humanity", human world" (*e.g.*, Wis 10:1; 14:6).¹⁹¹

It is of course this third category of usage, which is of interest to us, providing important backgrounds and precedents for the main New Testament uses.

κόσμος with reference to the universe, inhabited world, *etc.*, is especially found in the later writings of the LXX, which are also those whose original language is Greek. The word appears 19 times in *Wisdom of Solomon*. In this writing, we find some interesting uses of κόσμος.

God made the κόσμος=universe (ἐποίησεν τὸν κόσμον), and wisdom was present when he did so (9:1). Echoing the Greek concept of creation, the writer states that God by his mighty hand created the world from pre-existent matter (κτίσασα τὸν κόσμον ἐξ ἀμόρφου ὕλης, 11:17). God is sovereign over the universe; before him ὅλος ὁ κόσμος is as a speck of dust (11:22). Human beings when they contemplate the universe,

¹⁹⁰ See Bytomski; Guhrt (1975: 522); Sasse (1965: 880-2).

¹⁹¹ An interesting, though unrepresentative, use of κόσμος for the totality of spiritual beings is found in 4 Macc 17:14.

fail to recognize the divine artificer, and in their folly they believe the heavenly bodies to be the gods governing the κόσμος (13:2). Wisdom, however, grants men and women a true understanding of the workings of the κόσμος. Through wisdom we may know the structure of the κόσμος (εἰδέναί σύστασιν κόσμου) and the properties of the elements (7:17). The κόσμος is on the side of the godly: it fights for the righteous (ὑπέρμαχος ὁ κόσμος ἐστὶν δικαίων, 16:17); it marches with God against the unrighteous (5:20).

In the garment of Moses the whole universe (ὅλος ὁ κόσμος) is symbolically represented (18:24; cf. 2 Macc 8:18; Philo, *Mos.* 133-5).

As for κόσμος=earth/inhabited world, we are told that God has fitted it to be governed by human beings (9:2). Idols are an aberration in God's earth; they have not existed from the beginning. They came into the κόσμος through human vanity (14:13). In describing the plague of darkness that fell on Egypt, the writer states that the darkness remained on the Egyptians alone; as for the rest of the κόσμος=earth, it was shining with brilliant light (17:18).

Where κόσμος denotes humanity, Adam is said to be the father of the κόσμος (10:1). Death has entered into the κόσμος (2:24, through the devil's envy, cf. 7:6). The hope (*i.e.*, the remnant) of κόσμος=humanity, the seed of the new generation to come, took refuge in the ark (14:6). The salvation (σωτηρία) of κόσμος=humanity lies with wisdom and those in whom wisdom is embodied (6:23,24).

κόσμος appears over a hundred times in Josephus. In the vast majority of instances, it has a non-cosmological application. It occurs with the senses "ornament" (*e.g.* *Ant.* 1.249; 3.103; 3.167; 12.249; 13.20; 14.45; 15.61; *War* 6.242; 6.391; military ornaments, *i.e.*, military gear, in *Ant.*

13.308, 15.5); "adornment" (e.g. *Ant.* 3.167; 8.135; 9.237; 15.51; *War* 7.137), "order" in general (e.g., *Ant.* 1.81; 14.2); specific orders: order of government (*Ant.* 3.84), order of market (*Ant.* 3.289); military order (*Ant.* 4.90; *War* 5.50, 79), the order of the constitution (*Ant.* 5.132), the order of the law (*Ant.* 19.230); honour (*Life* 274).

The meaning "universe" is attested in *Ant.* 1.21, 26, 33; 10.278, 281; *Ap.* 2.284; *War* 5.459. In the latter, the κόσμος is described as a temple of God. κόσμος as the world inhabited by human beings is the meaning in *Ant.* 9.242; 10.205; 19.290; *Ap.* 2.138-9.

6. The Depreciatory Use of κόσμος in the New Testament, Outside Paul

κόσμος occurs 149 times in the New Testament outside the undisputed Pauline epistles. The established senses, "adornment",¹⁹² "universe",¹⁹³ "the earth, the habitation of humanity",¹⁹⁴ and "the world of human beings, humanity"¹⁹⁵ are attested, along with a metaphorical use "sum, epitome".¹⁹⁶ The most striking feature of the employment of κόσμος in the

¹⁹² 1 Pet 3:3.

¹⁹³ Matt 24:21; 25:24; Luke 11:50; Acts 17:24; John 17:5, 24; Eph 1:4; Heb 4:3; 9:26; 1 Pet 1:20; 1 John 2:17; Rev 13:8; 17:8.

¹⁹⁴ Mat 4:8; 13:38; 26:13; Mark 8:36; 14:9; 16:14; Luke 9:25; John 1:9-10; 3:17, 19; 6:14; 8:26; 9:5; 10:36; 11:27; 12:46-47; 13:1; 16:21, 28, 33; 17:15, 18; 18:37; 21:25; Col 1:6; Eph 2:12; 1 Tim 1:15; 6:7; Heb 10:5; 2 Pet 2:5; 1 John 4:1, 3, 9; 2 John 7.

¹⁹⁵ Matt 5:14; 18:7; John 1:29; 3:16, 17; 4:42; 6:33, 51; 7:4; 8:12; 9:5; 12:19, 47; 14:27; 16:8; 18:20; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 John 2:2; 4:14; Rev 11:15.

¹⁹⁶ Jas 3:6.

New Testament, in the light of the positive value which is placed on the word in the Graeco-Roman world, is the negative and critical use of the term. This category of usage is evidenced across the spectrum of New Testament writings.

The depreciatory use of κόσμος may be classified under two broad headings:¹⁹⁷ 1) a relative disparagement of κόσμος; 2) a radical devaluation of κόσμος as a realm of opposition to God.

6.1. The Relative Depreciation of κόσμος

A negative shading is apparent in Mark 8:36 (par. Matt 16:26; Luke 9:25): one may gain the κόσμος, yet lose one's life.¹⁹⁸

Palpably this is not a good bargain. In Matthew's account of the parable of the wheat and tares, the field in which the sowing takes place is identified as the κόσμος (13:38): this marks the κόσμος out not just as the abode of human beings but as the place where good coexists with evil until the end of the age (vv. 37-39). In Matt 18:7, Jesus pronounces a woe on the κόσμος. Here the κόσμος is seen to be a stumbling-block which prompts to sin.¹⁹⁹ In a number of texts in the Fourth Gospel where κόσμος is used to denote the dwelling-place of humankind, the scene of human activity, it is clear that the κόσμος is no morally neutral place (1:10; 3:17, 19; 9:5; 10:36; 12:46-47; 13:1; 16:33; cf. 1 John 3:17). A somewhat disparaging judgement is implied in Heb

¹⁹⁷ Even within these categories, there are varying degrees of negativity, as we shall see more closely with Paul.

¹⁹⁸ Jesus may have been taking up a common proverb here: so Cranfield (1959: 283).

¹⁹⁹ Carson (398-9).

11:7: the κόσμος stands condemned by the faith of Noah. The Hebrew writer goes on to draw the conclusion that the κόσμος is not worthy of the suffering faithful (11:38). In 1 Pet 5:9 the suffering readers are reminded of their "brethren" who are in the κόσμος. While κόσμος here may have a quite neutral sense, more likely it has the connotation of the ethically corrupt world. In 2 Pet 2:5, the ancient κόσμος destroyed by the flood is declared to have been filled with ungodly men and women.

6.2. The Radical Depreciation of κόσμος

That the κόσμος stands in opposition to God is implied in Col 2:20 (τί ὡς ζῶντες ἐν κόσμῳ δογματίζεσθε;). The thought is made explicit in Eph 2:2: κόσμος here is used to designate a demonically controlled realm. The portrayal of κόσμος as a morally corrupt sphere is particularly evident in the epistle of James: true piety involves keeping oneself from being polluted by the κόσμος (1:27); those who are poor in the eyes of the κόσμος are rich in faith and inheritors of the kingdom (2:5). The κόσμος and the church are diametrically opposed; friendship with the κόσμος is enmity with God (4:4). The use of κόσμος for the earthly scene of moral corruption is also apparent in 2 Pet 1:4.

The strongly pessimistic perspective on κόσμος, however, is most fully evident in the Johannine writings.²⁰⁰ The κόσμος does not know God (John 17:25; cf. 1 John 4:4-5) or Jesus (John 1:10; cf. 1 John 3:1); it is not able to receive the Spirit (John 14:17). It lies under judgement (John 12:31). It is ruled by the ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου (τούτου), opposed to God

²⁰⁰ On the Johannine use of κόσμος, see Bultmann (1955a: 15-32); E.v.Schrenk.

(John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; cf. 1 John 4:4; 5:19). Jesus is not of the κόσμος (John 8:23; 17:14, 16), neither is his kingdom of this κόσμος (John 18:36). The κόσμος is deliberately excluded from Christ's intercession (John 17:19). The divide between the church and the κόσμος is stressed: believers are delivered from the κόσμος (John 15:19; 17:6); they are no longer determined by it (John 15:19; 17:14-16); they are hated by the κόσμος, just as Jesus was hated by it (John 7:7; 15:18-19; 16:33; 17:14; 1 John 3:13); believers must shun the κόσμος - love of God and love of κόσμος are mutually exclusive (1 John 2:15-16); the κόσμος must be overcome by believers (1 John 5:4-5; cf. John 16:33).

6.3. The Influence of the Two Age Scheme

The major theological impulse behind the radical depreciation of κόσμος in the New Testament was the Jewish apocalyptic scheme of two ages, העולם הזה and העולם הבא.²⁰¹ The Hebrew word for age, עולם, underwent a development of meaning, whereby it increasingly came to designate "world".²⁰² Hence talk of two ages shaded easily into talk of two worlds or world-orders. The fluctuation between "age", "world-age", "world" is particularly evident in the articulation of the two age schema in 4 Ezra.²⁰³

The belief in a glorious future age, a coming time of

²⁰¹ On the two-age schema see G.H.Box (190-91); Burton (427-9); Dalman (147-54); Guhrt (1978: 829); Holtz (45-6); Sasse (1964b: 205-7); Schürer (495); Str-B 4:799f.

²⁰² See esp. Jenni (1952; 1953); also, Guhrt (1978: 827-9); Holtz (45-6); Stone (1989: 149-80; summarized in 1990: 218-9).

²⁰³ See Stone (1989: 179). In 4 Ezra the Latin terms *saeculum* and *tempus* are used.

blessedness was a well established feature of OT prophetic hope. The dualism of two world-ages represents a crystallization of that belief. A key feature of the two age scheme is the radical discontinuity between ages. Also, as the schema is developed, there is a stress on the ethical contrast between the ages: the present age is viewed pessimistically as dominated by evil. The bleak characterization of the existing order is reflected in Qumran talk of the present "epoch of wickedness" (CD 6:10, 14; 12:23; 15:7; 1QpHab. 5:7-8).

Prior to the late first century CE, the formal distinction between "the present age" and "the age to come" in Jewish writings is found only in the *Book of Similitudes* (*1 Enoch* 37-71, if dated pre-CE 70): *1 Enoch* 48:7 speaks of "this age of unrighteousness", and 71:15 speaks of "the age that is become".²⁰⁴ The scheme finds its classic expression in the apocalyptic writings, *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*.

4 Ezra 7:50 states: "the Most High has made not one world but two".²⁰⁵ The present world-age is characterized by sadness and infirmities (4:27), sorrows and hardships (7:12) and the evil heart (4:28-30); it lacks the full glory of the age to

²⁰⁴Tob 14:5 mentions the "time of that age", when the Jews return to Jerusalem, but there is no explicit contrast with the present age. The later Syrian text of Sirach 18:10 distinguishes between "this age" and "the age of the pious", but the Greek simply reads ἐν ἡμέρᾳ αἰῶνος. *T. Is.* 4:6 talks of "this world's error", but again there is no reference to a world to come. In *1 Enoch* 16:1, the phrase "great age", ὁ αἰὼν ὁ μέγας, appears, referring to the duration of the world's history; this probably reflects the influence of the Platonic "Great Year" rather than the two age scheme: so Sasse (1964b: 203).

²⁰⁵See further Stone's extensive study of the two age scheme in *4 Ezra* (1989: 48-62; 65-70; 76-80).

come (7:113). This age is of fixed duration; its end is imminent (4:26; cf. 4:42; 6:20). The future age, on the other hand, brings immortality (7:13), liberation from corruption (7:31, 113-4; 8:53-54), righteousness and truth (7:113-4). The blessings stored up for the righteous few (8:1) in the coming age are recounted in 8:52ff.²⁰⁶

2 *Baruch* characterizes this world-age as a place of struggle (15:8), a scene polluted by evil and wickedness (16:1; 21:19; 44:9), by affliction (51:14), corruption (40:3) and transitoriness (48:50 cf. 40:3; 54:21). The future world-age, by contrast, is marked by glory (15:8), agelessness (51:16; cf. 51:9), lack of corruption (44:12) and unlimited duration (48:50; cf. 16:1). It is made for the benefit of the righteous (15:7; cf. 14:13; 76:2).²⁰⁷

The earliest Rabbinic attestation of the belief in two ages is found in *'Abot* 2:7, in a saying attributed to Hillel, the contemporary of Herod the Great (and in whose scholastic line Paul may have stood²⁰⁸). According to the tradition, Hillel speaks of "the life of the age to come". With a greater degree of probability, the expression is attested for Johanan ben Zakkai: according to *Gen. Rab.* 44, God revealed to Abraham "this age", but did not reveal to him "the age to come".²⁰⁹

The two age scheme using αἰών is reflected in the New

²⁰⁶ Stone (1989: 97-215) discusses in detail the various motifs in descriptions of the new world in *4 Ezra*.

²⁰⁷ An explicit two age schema is also present in *Apoc. Abr.* 17:17; *Bib. Ant.* 3:10; 19:7; 34:3; *2 Enoch* 42:1 43:3; 50:2; 61:2; 65:1, 3-4, 8; 66:6, 8.

²⁰⁸ Hengel (1991: 27-29).

²⁰⁹ See further Dalman (150-51); Sasse (1964b: 206-7).

Testament. It is found in the traditions of the sayings of Jesus. In Mark 10:30 (par. Luke 18:30), ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ is contrasted with ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ.²¹⁰ In Matt 12:32, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, it is said, will not be forgiven οὔτε ἐν τούτῳ τῷ αἰῶνι οὔτε ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι.²¹¹ The qualitative distinction between the ages is implied in Luke 20:34-35: Jesus contrasts οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου who marry and are given in marriage with οἱ καταξιωθέντες τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐκείνου who neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels. An ethical distinction between the ages is evident in Luke 16:8, where οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου are placed in contrast with οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ φωτός. Here "this age" has unmistakable morally negative overtones.²¹²

In the undisputed Paulines we find the phrases ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος and ὁ αἰὼν ὁ ἐνεστώς (Rom 12:2; 1 Cor 1:20; 2:6-8; 3:16; 2 Cor 4:4; Gal 1:4; cf. 1 Cor 10:11, τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων). Eph 1:21 speaks of Christ's reigning οὐ μόνον ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ ἀλλὰ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι.²¹³ Eph 2:7 refers to a disclosure of God's grace ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσιν τοῖς ἐπερχομένοις, the future being conceived of in terms of succession of coming ages.²¹⁴ Eph 2:2 has the unusual phrase: κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, αἰὼν and κόσμος together denoting the

²¹⁰ In the Matthean parallel, Matt 19:29 neither phrase is found.

²¹¹ Mark 3:29 uses the simpler form εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, which carries no two age implications.

²¹² The two age scheme also seems to be implied in Jesus' talk of the συντέλεια αἰῶνος/τοῦ αἰῶνος in Matthew's Gospel (13:39, 40, 49; 28:20; cf. 24:3, where the expression is used by the disciples).

²¹³ On this text, see Lincoln (1990: 65).

²¹⁴ Lincoln (1990: 110-1).

whole spatio-temporal system standing in opposition to God. The phrase ὁ νῦν αἰὼν is found in the Pastorals (1 Tim 6:17; 2 Tim 4:10; Tit 2:12). 2 Tim 4:10 clearly implies the evil and beguiling character of this age. Finally, Heb 6:5 speaks of the "powers of the age to come" which have already become the experience of believers.

There can be little doubt then that the two age scheme, insofar as the sharp distinction between the world-ages often involves a negative and pessimistic characterization of the present world-age, is the main influence on the radical depreciatory use of κόσμος in the New Testament. The influence is sufficiently clear from the phrase, ὁ κόσμος οὗτος (John 8:23; 9:39; 11:9; 12:25, 31; 13:1; 16:11; 18:36; 1 Cor 3:19; 5:10; 7:31; 1 John 4:17). The expression as it appears in these texts implies the existence of *another* αἰὼν/κόσμος to which the present stands in stark contrast.²¹⁵

B. THE SETTING OF ΚΤΙΣΙΣ

1. κτίσις in Pre-Christian Greek Usage

κτίσις is a substantive, derived from κτίζω. It is found early on in Greek usage, occurring in Pindar, Isocrates, Thucydides and Aeschines. In Pindar it has the sense "achievement", "accomplishment".²¹⁶ Pindar's use, however, is non-typical. Elsewhere in Greek literature, κτίσις has a highly specialized and restricted meaning, referring to the

²¹⁵ It is noteworthy that in the Johannine literature, ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος is never used. The words αἰὼν and αἰώνιος are always used in positive contexts in these writings.

²¹⁶ Pindar, *OI.* 13.87: κοῦφα κτίσις, light achievement.

founding or settlement of cities, countries, etc.²¹⁷ Not surprisingly, it is found most often in works of history. There is also a comparatively high frequency of occurrences in the writings of the geographer, Strabo. Plutarch tells us that Trisimachus and Dercyllus both wrote series of books bearing the title, *Κτίσεων*, i.e., *On the foundation of Cities*:²¹⁸ this is an indication of the degree to which *κτίσις* had a very specific nuance in non-biblical Greek usage.

Quite clearly the standard Greek use of the word has little direct bearing on the employment of *κτίσις* in Paul. For the most immediate semantic background to Paul's usage we must turn to the Septuagint.

2. κτίσις in the Septuagint

The most significant feature of the use of *κτίζω* and its derivatives in the LXX is the application of this word group to the creative work of God.²¹⁹ This seems to be a linguistic innovation on the part of the LXX translators.

Interestingly, the *δημιουργέω* word group, which figured so prominently in the Greek cosmogonical tradition is completely absent from the LXX. Foerster argues that the

²¹⁷ e.g., Isocrates, *Panath.* 190.1; Thucydides 1.18.1; 6.5.3; Aeschines, *falsa* 115.2; Diodorus Siculus 1.15.2; 1.73.3; 2.3.1; 2.4.1; 2.5.3; 3.55.6; 7.5.4; 12.35.2; 14.58.4; 40.3.1; Dion. Halic., *Ant.* 1.6.2; 1.66.1; 1.74.1; 1.75.4; 1.85.1; 3.11.9; 6.34.1; Strabo, *Geog.* 1.3.15.3; 3.5.5.1; 5.3.2.2; 5.2.2.20; 5.3.2.67; Plutarch *Rom.* 8.9; 12.1; 12.2; 14.1; *Comp. Lyc. Num.* 3.7; *Pub.* 6.6.4; Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 46.21.4.4; Diogenes Laertius 9.20.

²¹⁸ Plutarch, *Mor.* 307a11; 309f3.

²¹⁹ Nevertheless, *κτίζω* is not the main term for the divine creative activity: *ποιέω*, *πλάσσω*, *θεμελιόω* figure more often: Foerster (1965: 1023).

choice of κτίζω over δημιουργέω reflects the distinctive Hebrew understanding of creation:

δημιουργεῖν suggests the craftsman and his work in the strict sense, whereas κτίζειν reminds us of the ruler at whose command a city arises out of nothing,²²⁰ because the power of the ruler stands behind his word.

But this is probably reading too much into the LXX choice of the κτίζω word group. As Barr points out, κτίζω was already well established in the sense, "make", "create": it is therefore reasonable to conclude that its LXX use simply followed from that lexical sense.²²¹ Even so, it is not impossible that a theological interest played some part in the LXX selection of κτίζω over δημιουργέω, especially in the light of Philo's comment in *Somn.* 1.76.

God when He gave birth to all things, not only brought them into sight, but also made things which before were not, not just handling material as an artificer (δημιουργός), but being Himself its creator (κτίστης).²²²

The word κτίσις is found 16 times in the LXX.²²³ In all but one of these (Ps 104(103):24), there is no equivalent Hebrew term in the MT which it translates. It is noteworthy that occurrences of the word are particularly concentrated in prayers extolling the creatorhood and sovereignty of God (Ps 74:(73):18; Tob 8:5, 15; Jdt 9:12; 16:14; 3 Macc 2:2, 7;

²²⁰ Foerster (1965: 1026).

²²¹ Barr (225).

²²² Cf. *Opif.* 17. κτίζω, however, is less important in Philo than δημιουργέω.

²²³ In Ps 105(104):21, Prov 1:13, and 10:15, on textual grounds, κτήσις should be read instead of κτίσις: Foerster (1965: 1028).

On several occasions κτίσις has the sense of "creature", "created thing". In Tob 8:5, 15, all God's creatures (αἱ κτίσεις σου) are exhorted to bless him. In Jdt 9:12, God is set forth as the king of all creatures (βασιλεῦ πάσης κτίσεώς σου). Sir 16:17 asks the question, "what is my soul among the infinite number of creatures (ἐν ἀμετρήτῳ κτίσει)?" Sir 43:26, reflecting on the wonders of the natural world, uses κτίσις with reference to creatures of the sea (κτίσις κητῶν).

The wider sense of "creation", "the created world", is in view in a number of passages. This is probably the case in Jdt 16:14, with the declaration, "let the whole creation serve you (σοὶ δουλευσάτω πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις σου)", though "every creature" is also a possible rendering of πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις. Ps 104(103):24 speaks of the the earth as filled with God's creation (ἐπληρώθη ἡ γῆ τῆς κτίσεώς σου). κτίσις here stands in parallel to "your works", i.e., God's creative works, in the previous line. In Ps 74(73):18, the psalmist implores God to remember his creation (μνήσθητι ταύτης τῆς κτίσεώς σου). In Sir 49:16, Adam is said to be honoured above every living thing in the creation (ὑπὲρ πᾶν ζῶον ἐν τῇ κτίσει). 3 Macc 2:2 describes God as the ruler of the whole creation (δέσποτα πάσης κτίσεως). In similar manner in 2:7 and 6:2 of the same work, God is portrayed as regulating his creation, κτίσις.

In *Wisdom of Solomon*, κτίσις occurs four times (2:6; 5:17; 16:24; 19:6). In this work we find an intriguing use of the word: κτίσις as denoting creation apart from

²²⁴ Esser (381).

humanity, or at least, with a special emphasis on the non-human parts of creation. The meaning "non-human creation" seems to be implied in 2:6. In 1:16-2:20 the author parodies the godless person's view of life. Since there is no afterlife and since this life is brief, the godless man/woman reasons "let us enjoy what good things there are, and use this creation (χρησώμεθα τῇ κτίσει) with the zest of youth". In 5:17, the writer speaks of God arming the creation to punish his enemies (καὶ ὀπλοποιήσει τὴν κτίσιν εἰς ἀμυναν ἐχθρῶν). The following verses 5:18-24, make clear that κτίσις refers to non-human creation: the arming of creation is specified in terms of the effecting of judgement through natural phenomena - lightning, hailstones, waters of the sea. The non-human referent of κτίσις is even clearer in 16:24 and 19:6. 16:24 occurs in the context of a passage reflecting on (and considerably reworking) the story of the plagues sent upon Egypt. Here we read that ἡ κτίσις, in obedience to its maker, exerts itself to punish the wicked and slackens its fury for the benefit of those who trust in God. The creation, ἡ κτίσις, here is firmly distinguished from righteous and unrighteous humanity. The subject of 19:6 is the miracle at the Sea of Reeds. The writer explains this miracle as a re-fashioning of the whole creation in its nature (γὰρ ἡ κτίσις ἐν ἰδίῳ γένει πάλιν ἄνωθεν διετυποῦτο).²²⁵ Again ἡ κτίσις is clearly set apart from God's children for whose sake it is transformed.

3. Philo and Josephus

²²⁵ On the theory of miracles in *Wisdom of Solomon*, see Sweet.

κτίσις is not a favourite term for either of these Jewish writers. Philo only uses it in *Mos.* 2.51, with respect to the foundation of the great city, the world. Here it has the regular non-biblical sense of "founding/foundation". Similarly Josephus uses it with the regular senses, "founding", "settling", attaching to it in non-biblical Greek usage.²²⁶ But this is not unexpected since his works belong to the historical genre and attempt to correspond to the conventions of Graeco-Roman historiography. In *War* 4.534, however, we find the expression ἀπὸ τῆς κτίσεως, which serves to indicate the antiquity of the "Oak" of Abraham.²²⁷ κτίσις here denotes the act or moment in creation.

4. κτίσις in the New Testament, Outside Paul

Outside the undisputed Paulines, it occurs ten times. The phrase ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως, "from the beginning of creation", occurs in Mark 10:6; 13:19. In Mark 16:15, from the longer and inauthentic ending, Jesus commands his disciples to proclaim the gospel πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει. The words πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις probably mean "every creature" (i.e., every human being), rather than "the whole creation".²²⁸ The phrase πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως in Col 1.15, as the context makes clear, should be translated "firstborn of all creation" and not "firstborn of every creature". Less certain is the meaning of κτίσις in Col 1:23. The text declares that the gospel is

²²⁶ e.g., *War* 6.269 (of the temple), 408, 437, 441; *Ant.* 18.373.

²²⁷ Cf. Gen 13:18; 14:13; 18:1. A similar expression is found in *Pss. Sol.* 8:6, ἀπὸ κτίσεως οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς (1st century BCE).

²²⁸ Cranfield (1959: 473).

to be proclaimed ἐν πάσῃ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν. Most take πάσῃ κτίσει to mean every creature, i.e., all humanity, as in Mark 16:15. However, the cosmic perspective of Colossians and the close proximity of this verse to the cosmic-oriented Christ-hymn of 1:15-20 may suggest the wider denotation, "all creation".²²⁹

κτίσις has the sense of "creature" in Heb 4:13 (no creature, i.e., human being, is hidden from God's sight). In Heb 9:11, the writer speaks of the tabernacle which is "not of this creation", οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως (implying that there is another κτίσις, cf. 1:10-12). The meaning of κτίσις in 1 Pet 2:13 is much disputed. In the context of a passage on the duty of believers toward the State, readers are here exhorted to submit to πάσῃ ἀνθρωπίνῃ κτίσει. κτίσις could mean "(human) creature", "ordinance", "government", "ruling body" or "authority". Ruling out the first of these as the least likely, we are left here with a highly irregular use of κτίσις whose meaning remains ambiguous. Lastly, κτίσις is found in Rev 3:14, where Christ is described as the ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ (cf. Col 1:15). The wider meaning "creation" is clearly in view.

C. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In closing this chapter, we may summarize the main findings of our survey.

A brief review of κτίσις has shown that the background to the New Testament employment of κτίσις is LXX and

²²⁹Wright (1986: 85)

subsequent Jewish usage. The standard Graeco-Roman usage is of little relevance except insofar as the use of κτίσις for the act of creation (of the world) may be viewed as an extension of the regular Greek use, the *founding* of cities. The senses "creature/created thing", "creation", "act of creation" are attested in Jewish usage. Interestingly (from the point of view of the interpretation of Rom 8:19-22), the contextual sense, "the *non-human* creation" is apparent in *Wisdom of Solomon*.

- Several conclusions emerge from our survey of κόσμος:
1. Though κόσμος is a term with a wide range of meaning and application in Greek usage, the word unvaryingly expresses a positive evaluation of its referent. It is a complimentary term signifying approval and even praise of the object to which it is appended.
 2. κόσμος with the sense of world/universe is particularly significant in Greek philosophical discussion, hence our concentration on this area. In philosophical usage, κόσμος comes to evoke a particular understanding of the physical world. Five features of the world view connoted by κόσμος were highlighted: 1) the world as ordered, 2) as unified, 3) as an object of beauty, 4) as that to which humans being are microcosmically related, 5) as held in the highest regard.
 3. The designation of the world/universe as κόσμος, by virtue of the world view which it encoded, was orientated toward maintaining and reinforcing the status-quo. We noted its potential to serve as an instrument of wide-ranging legitimation. The social implications of the description of the world as κόσμος were most comprehensively worked out by the Stoics.
 4. The pejorative use of κόσμος in the New Testament

reflects the influence of apocalyptic two age dualism which often carried a dismal analysis of the present world-age, as corrupt, evil and hostile to God.

To a first century Greek who had had some exposure to Greek education, κόσμος with reference to the world/universe would have been a word with positive associations, and this as part of the legacy inherited from language and culture, a legacy which remained constant from generation to generation. As Guthrie writes,

no Greek could have described the world by this term without having somewhere in his mind the consciousness that it exemplified the combination of order, fitness and beauty. These associations κόσμος never lost.²³⁰

One may in fact describe κόσμος as a word of "emotive meaning" insofar as it stood for values judged as positive by Graeco-Roman culture.²³¹ This makes all the more stark and worthy of note the negative use of κόσμος in the New Testament.

In this chapter we have examined the linguistic and historical setting of κόσμος and κτίσις, unavoidably doing so with broad brush-strokes. We now have a background against which to place Paul's uses of these words. We are in a position to assess more accurately what the words might have meant and what connotations they were likely to have carried to the original readers of Paul's letters. And we

²³⁰ W.K.C.Guthrie (1962: 208 n. 1).

²³¹ On emotive meaning, see Jackson (59-60). One may compare "freedom", "democracy" "justice", "rights", etc. in 20th century English-speaking societies.

can better appreciate what new linguistic links Paul himself may have created. This necessary part of our investigation complete, a detailed and more analytical study of Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις can now begin.

CHAPTER THREE

1 CORINTHIANS

In Chapter One we noted the high concentration of occurrences of κόσμος in 1 Corinthians in comparison with the other Pauline epistles.¹ We observed that the majority of these occurrences are negative uses, and we highlighted the fact that only in this letter do we find the apocalyptically charged expression ὁ κόσμος οὗτος. Given the highly context-specific nature of 1 Corinthians, it seems reasonable to suppose that these aspects of Paul's usage have been drawn out by and are re-directed at the situation which Paul (perceives he) is addressing in Corinth. This supposition now needs to be put to the test.

A. SOCIO-RHETORICAL FACTORS

1. The Situational Context

1 Corinthians of all Paul's epistles is most clearly an *ad hoc* writing.² Paul drafts this document in response to oral

¹ κόσμος appears at 1:20, 21, 27 (twice), 28; 2:12; 3:19, 22; 4:9, 13; 5:10 (twice); 6:2 (twice); 7:31 (twice), 33, 34; 8:4; 11:32; 14:10.

² This study proceeds on the assumption that the letter is a unity; the argument in support of the integrity of 1 Corinthians is overwhelming. See the discussions in Conzelmann (3-4); Hurd (43-7); Kümmel (1982: 275-8); Schrage

reports he had received about the church (1:10-6:20) and to a letter which the Corinthians sent to him asking for his "advice" (their motives were not quite *that* innocent) on various matters (7:1-16:18).³

Paul visited Corinth during the so-called "second missionary journey" recorded in Acts 16-18 and stayed there, according to Acts 18:11, for a year and a half. When he moved on, he left behind in Corinth a flourishing Christian community.

1 Corinthians is at least the third in the line of correspondence between Paul and the church. Paul had written a previous letter (mentioned in 5:9), which was prior also to their letter to him.⁴

Paul writes to instruct and inform his readers, to answer their questions, but above all, to correct what Paul perceives as false developments in the church since its foundation. There had emerged in Corinth an interpretation of Christianity which differed markedly from his own.⁵ On a range of issues of belief and conduct, the Corinthians were at odds with Paul. His purpose in writing this epistle,

(1991: 63-71).

³ Paul uses the prepositional phrase *περὶ δέ* when answering questions raised in their communication: 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1. Cf. 1 Thess 4:9, 13; 5:1.

⁴ On the interchange between Paul and the Corinthians, see Hurd (50-58).

⁵ These aberrations are not the result of the propagating efforts of opponents who have infiltrated the church from outside, but have arisen from within the church itself (4:18; 15:12). This epistle gives no hint of the presence of intruding agitators, though it is quite likely that the ministry of Apollos provided the catalyst for a wisdom-oriented expression of the Christian faith.

therefore, is to put right these Corinthian misconceptions and to get the wayward church, as he sees it, back on the right rails.

His ability to do so, however, is seriously hindered by an emerging crisis of authority between Paul and his readers, a state of affairs which comes to a head in the situation lying behind 2 Corinthians. Paul is constrained, then, to defend his apostleship (4:1-21; 15:8-11), his actions during his ministry among them (9:1-23) and his position of authority in the community. Effectively, Paul has to defend his right to guide their affairs.⁶

1.1. Corinthian Theology

It would probably be foolhardy to assume that there is in Corinth a single coherent theological position held by the church as a whole. It is better to think in terms of a variety of viewpoints maintained within the congregation. Indeed, what is striking about the Corinthian community is its ability to tolerate different opinions and types of behaviour in its midst.⁷ Nevertheless, as J.M.G. Barclay writes,

it is still possible to talk of a dominant ethos in the Corinthian church, a consistent theological pattern which is the target of Paul's critical comments in most sections of the letter.⁸

⁶On this, see N.A.Dahl (1977a); Fee (1987: 7-10).

⁷This feature of Corinthian church life has not gone unnoticed nor uncriticized by Paul: at several points the church comes under heavier fire than those actually at fault (5:1-13; 6:1-11).

⁸Barclay (1992: 61).

We may note, very briefly, four significant features of the Corinthian theological perspective.⁹ Firstly, the Corinthians seem to have interpreted their Christian faith in terms of the category "wisdom", σοφία (1:18-3:23), on which we will say more below. By the standards of "wisdom", Paul's gospel did not fare well; it was "mere milk" in comparison with the "solid food" the Corinthians were presently enjoying (3:2). Secondly, they were interested in "knowledge", γνῶσις, though as to the content of this "knowledge" we are given very little information. It certainly embraced an awareness of the oneness of God and the non-reality of idols (8:1, 4) and apparently too an apprehension of μυστήρια (13:2; cf. 2:7; 4:1; 14:2). This knowledge gave some of them authority and freedom, ἐξουσία, over matters of food (8:9; cf. 6:12; 10:23) and perhaps over conduct in general. Thirdly, they placed a great deal of emphasis on their experience of the Spirit manifested above all in a setting of worship (chapters 11-14). They considered themselves πνευματικοί (2:13-15; 3:1); the rest of humankind were merely ψυχικοί. And fourthly, as is indicated by Paul's sustained defence of resurrection, the Corinthians seem to have had little appreciation of the apocalyptic or eschatological dimensions of the gospel, apparently believing that they had already attained to the highest echelons of spiritual existence (4:7, 8; cf. τελείοι, 2:6).¹⁰

⁹ For more comprehensive accounts, see Fee (1987: 10-15); Schrage (1991: 38-63); Wedderburn (1987: 6-37); Wire.

¹⁰ It is often argued that the Corinthians had an "over-realized eschatology" (esp. Thiselton). But as Fee (1987: 12) writes, "It is doubtful, whether they...have a Jewish apocalyptic view of the End; rather, they have probably translated such a view into their framework of

1.2. Unclear Group Boundaries: A Problem in Corinth

There is good evidence to suggest that the boundary lines between the church and the wider society are too flexible and too imprecisely defined in Corinth for Paul's liking. A fluidity of group boundaries is indicated by the following:

- 1) the extent of the Corinthians' *interaction* with the outside world, and the level of their *integration* into the larger society;
- 2) the high degree of cultural *influence* which the surrounding society is able to exert on the church;
- 3) the lack of *internal cohesion* in the community.¹¹

1.2.1. Interaction and Integration

Barclay points out that there exists in Corinth, to a remarkable degree, a situation of social harmony between

"spirituality," in which they regarded their present spiritual existence as an assumption of that which is to be, minus the physical body. From their point of view it would not so much be the "time" of the future that has become a present reality for them, as the "existence" of the future. They are now experiencing a kind of ultimate spirituality in which they live *above* the merely material existence of the present age."

¹¹To this extent, the Corinthian community conforms to the social category of the *weak group* as outlined by Malina (drawing on Douglas' group-grid classification: Douglas (77-92)). The weak group is marked by "fuzzy lines of distinction between ingroup and outgroup and highly porous boundaries between interfacing and interacting groups": so Malina (18). According to Malina, a weak group with *high grid*, i.e., showing "a high degree of fit or match between the individual's experience and societal patterns of perception and evaluation" (18), has "tolerance as its hallmark" (51) and is "socially and intellectually open" (52). On group boundaries in Pauline Christianity, see Meeks (1979); (1983: 84-107).

Christians and the larger society.¹² Barclay notes that in contrast to the church at Thessalonica, founded during the same period of Paul's missionary activity, the Christians in Corinth neither feel hostility toward nor experience hostility from "outsiders".¹³ In his classic study of social conflict and its various functions (or effects), L.Coser observes that conflict with outsiders helps to affirm a group's sense of identity and serves to establish and maintain that group's boundaries against the larger society.¹⁴ The absence of conflict can lead to the lowering of the group's boundaries and the blurring of the division between the group and the surrounding society. 1 Corinthians certainly reveals a church, or a segment of it at least, which mingles easily and openly with non-group members and which merges surprisingly well into its social environment.

Group members appear to interact quite freely with the "outside world". There is contact for the purposes of trade and commerce (7:30). Friendships with non-Christians are maintained: Christians are invited to meals in the homes of non-believers (10:27); non-believing friends may be present at church meetings (14:23-25). Some, not surprisingly, have unbelieving spouses (7:12-16). Several members of the church make use of the pagan court system to settle their disputes (6:1-11). Some even attend feasts held in the dining-rooms of the temples (8:10; 10:14-22).

1 Cor 1:26 (οὐ πολλοὶ σοφοί... οὐ πολλοὶ δυνατοί, οὐ πολλοὶ εὐγενεῖς) suggests that there were some in the church

¹² Barclay (1992: 56-72).

¹³ Barclay (1992: 57).

¹⁴ Coser (38).

who belonged to the higher echelons of Corinthian society:¹⁵ the presence of members of the social élite within the congregation is further indicated at various points in the epistle.¹⁶ Theissen has convincingly shown that these few church members of fairly high social status were in fact the most influential members of the congregation and the ones who held the key leadership positions.¹⁷ These key church figures, prior to converting to Christianity, must have been fairly well integrated into the wider society. Their espousal of Christianity does not appear to have had a detrimental effect on their social standing, nor does it seem to have significantly lessened their involvement in Corinthian society. Those who participate in temple feasts most likely belong to this more highly placed group. As Theissen has argued, their actions are probably partly motivated by a desire to retain their standing in the wider community and perhaps even to climb the social ladder.¹⁸ One of the Corinthian believers, Erastus, described by Paul as the οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως (Rom 16:23), even if he is not to be identified with Erastus the *aedile* known from an inscription,

¹⁵ Cf. Moule (1962: 157) writes, "In the first place, the passage in 1 Cor 1 would probably never have been written had there not been educated Christians in that congregation who were contemptuous about the crudities of others. To some extent, then, it bears witness to the very reverse of the conditions it is often used to illustrate." On the origin of the σοφός, δυνατός, εὐγενής triad and the social implications of 1 Cor 1:26, see Clarke (1993: 41-5); Wüllner (1973; 1982).

¹⁶ See Gill (1993). Some of this evidence is cited below.

¹⁷ Theissen (1982: 73-96).

¹⁸ Theissen (1982: 130-1).

clearly has a prominent place in Corinthian society¹⁹ involved as he is in the public life of the city.

1 Corinthians, therefore, shows us a church the key members of which are at ease in society, participating in the social, public and even cultic side of Corinthian city life. The Corinthian church (or at least its leadership) is evidently not guided by a sectarian outlook and a strong sense of separation from the wider social world.

We pause here to ask, what does Paul make of the Corinthian believers' interaction with and integration into the larger society? He is certainly not totally disapproving. He emphatically rejects the idea that the church should be a ghetto, divorced from the wider world (5:10). He affirms that contact with non-Christians is necessary and is to be encouraged (7:14-16; 10:27; 14:23), not least for the purpose of evangelism. Indeed, Paul sets himself up as an example to the Corinthians of one who will go to great lengths to identify with people in his efforts to bring them to Christ (9:19-23).

The social acceptability of the Christian faith in Corinth, then, is not unwelcomed by Paul insofar as it sets up favourable conditions for witness; at several points he even criticizes his readers for exceeding cultural norms and the wider society's bounds of acceptable behaviour (5:1; 11:13,14; 14:23). And he advises those who have unbelieving spouses not to separate from them (7:12-13, though he insists that those now contemplating marriage must only marry

¹⁹ Why else, we may ask, would Paul have mentioned his position if it were not worthy of note? On the evidence for identifying the Erastus of Rom 16:23 with the Erastus of the inscription, see Theissen (1982: 75-83); and more recently, Gill (1989); Clarke (1993: 46-56).

other believers, 7:39).

At the same time, he is clearly disturbed by the extent of their interaction and integration, as is shown particularly by his reaction to the problem of litigation in the church (6:1-11) and the continued attendance of some at the pagan temples (10:1-22). Here, in Paul's view, the dividing lines between the church and the wider community have not been drawn sharply enough. If Hurd's reconstruction at this point is accurate, Paul had already expressed his concern about the relaxed attitude of the Corinthians toward dealings with the outside society in his previous letter.²⁰

1.2.2. Influence: Attitudes and Patterns of Behaviour

The strength of a group's boundaries can be measured by the extent to which the group's beliefs, attitudes and patterns of behaviour are influenced by the dominant culture. Applying this criterion, there is substantial evidence of a lack of sufficiently clear ideological boundaries in Corinth.

In some of the areas of Corinthian life criticized by Paul we can detect the carrying over into the community of certain practices and patterns of behaviour which prevailed in the macrosociety.²¹

²⁰ Hurd (221-2).

²¹ The situation confronting Paul in Corinth is a complex one. We are not attempting to offer here anything like a comprehensive explanation of the problems in the Corinthian church but simply highlighting one aspect of a many-faceted reality. At this point, we draw quite extensively on the insights of a number of recent socio-historical studies of Corinthian Christianity which have shown that certain Graeco-Roman social conventions have a direct bearing on Corinthian "aberrations".

a) *Grouping around Names*: There is little indication that the groups referred to in 1:10-12 and 3:3-5 are divided on the basis of theological differences.²² Rather they are centred on personalities: Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and apparently also Christ.²³ A plausible background to such a grouping around names is, as Clarke has show, "the secular practice of aligning oneself with someone of established status and reputation in order to advance one's own status."²⁴

b) *Enmity*: Paul tells us that the dispute over leaders has brought ἔρις and ζήλος into the church (3:3). Clarke argues that this too can be connected with Graeco-Roman socio-political conventions. He points out that the creation of enmity was a means of self-advancement in Roman politics and that "A client would go to great lengths to defend the name of his patron even whilst his patron was away."²⁵ For Paul, the Corinthians' actions are indicative of "fleshly" and "human" behaviour, suggesting that he himself views it as behaviour characteristic of the wider society.

c) *Toleration of Incest (5:1-13)*: According to 5:1, immorality is being practised in the church - a man has his father's wife. What outrages Paul most about the situation is the toleration of this man's actions by others in the church and their refusal to do anything about it (5:2). The man, it seems, is living with his stepmother (so technically, this is not actually incest), and such a situation was

²²Clarke (1993: 91-2); Munck (135-67).

²³Cf. 4:6, where Paul reprimands his readers for "boasting in men".

²⁴Clarke (1993: 107). The practice is found in the realms of politics (Welborn) and patronage (Clarke (1993: 31-6; 93)).

²⁵Clarke (1993: 100).

forbidden by Roman law.²⁶ Paul speaks in v. 2 of the Corinthians' being proud, when they should have been mourning; this may suggest that the church is exalting this man's behaviour as an expression of their new found liberty (6:12), allowing them to flout the standards of the day. However, it is unclear whether Paul is talking of the arrogance which characterizes the church generally (4:6-7) or of a particular pride taken by the community in the sin itself.

To a certain extent, the Corinthians' toleration of the incest in their midst was probably connected with the sway which the conventions of the wider society held over them, in this case, the conventions of patronage. Clarke suggests that the man involved was of some social status, and therefore a leading figure in the Christian community.²⁷ Indeed, according to Clarke, he was probably a patron of the church.²⁸ Were this so, the dynamics of the client-patron relationship may have led others in the church to overlook his actions or at least have disinclined them to take any disciplinary measures against him.

d) Litigation (6:1-11): It has been argued to reasonable satisfaction, that the men involved in the litigation very likely were of fairly high social standing.²⁹ Whatever the

²⁶ See Clarke (1993: 77-80).

²⁷ Clarke (1993: 80-8). Clarke suggests a financial motivation to the man's course of behaviour (84): "he may have wanted to avoid a situation where his step-mother remarried, and thus he would lose his father's inheritance."

²⁸ Clarke (1993: 80-5); see also Chow (130-41).

²⁹ Chow (127-30); Theissen (1982: 97). Civil cases could only be brought by those of some financial means and social status.

origin and precise nature of the dispute, in resorting to litigation to settle their disputes the men may have been simply following the conventions of the larger community. Engaging in legal proceedings was often used in Graeco-Roman society both to protect one's interests and social standing and to increase one's reputation at the expense of another. Clarke contends that the superiority gained in litigation may have been used for establishing greater personal influence in the church, thus gaining an advantage in the divisions over leaders brought to the fore in 1:10ff.³⁰

e) *Going to Prostitutes* (6:12-20): Quite obviously in patronizing prostitutes, the men involved were engaging in a widespread practice in the Graeco-Roman world, one which was totally unacceptable to Paul.

f) *Abuses at the Lord's Supper* (11:17-22): It is generally recognized that the misconduct at the celebration of the Lord's Supper stems from the carrying over of attitudes and conventions of the surrounding society.³¹ R.A.Campbell suggests that 11:19 ought to be translated as follows: "For there actually has to be discriminations in your meetings, so that if you please, the elite may stand out from the rest."³² In other words, Paul seems to perceive that the divisions at the Lord's Supper take place precisely so that the social élite (δοκιμοὶ) may be recognized within the group to have the prominent place over those of lower rank which they are accorded in the macrosociety.

h) *Glossolalia* (14:1-33): The background of Hellenistic

³⁰ Clarke (1993: 69).

³¹ See the argument of Theissen (1992: 145-68).

³² R.A.Campbell (70).

culture at least partly explains the high premium placed by the Corinthians on the gift of tongues. In the Hellenistic world ecstatic speech was often taken as a sign of divine possession and associated with prophetic ability.³³ In such a context, its attraction to the Corinthian believers is plain to see.

It is noteworthy that in 6:9-11 and 12:1-3 Paul explicitly refers to the Corinthians' former life in paganism, emphasizing that conversion to Christ necessarily involves a decisive break with the ways of the past. This tends to suggest that Paul himself, to some extent, perceives his readers as being unduly determined by the practices and perspectives of the outside world.

1.2.3. Influence: Beliefs

Various suggestions have been advanced as to the cause/s of their "deviant" (as Paul sees it) views.³⁴ The view that the source is to be found in Gnosticism³⁵ ought probably to be considered the least likely. To label Corinthian theology "Gnostic" would be anachronistic, given that Gnostic dualism is a second century phenomenon. Gnosticism, thus, hardly qualifies as a source of Corinthian theology. It is

³³ Wedderburn (1987: 249-68). At first glance, 14:23 might seem to suggest that the gift of tongues would have appeared strange to the outsider. But as far as Paul is concerned, it is not the exercise of ecstatic speech which would shock; in a cultic setting this would not have been out of the ordinary. It is the sight of the whole congregation, gathered together in a house, engaged in such an activity which would have seemed so outrageous (14:22).

³⁴ These are set out by Schrage (1991: 47-63).

³⁵ e.g., Jewett (1971: 23-40); Schmithals; Wilckens (1971).

certainly legitimate to claim some of the tendencies we find in Corinth (e.g., the use of the term γνῶσις, the ψυχικός/πνευματικός distinction, the νήπιος/τέλειος distinction) represent an incipient and undeveloped form of Gnosticism or a stage on the way to Gnosticism.³⁶ But caution must still be exercised: while the Corinthians seem to have placed "spiritual" existence on a higher level than physical existence, there is no indication that they held to the belief, fundamental to Gnosticism, that the material world is *inherently evil*.

Several scholars argue that the distinctive features of Corinthian theology derive from Hellenistic Judaism.³⁷ Again there are interesting parallels between the two, but as Fee states, "What is less certain is that the parallels reflect what is essential to Judaism in this tradition rather than its hellenization."³⁸ Certain aspects of Corinthian belief and practice simply do not fit with Hellenistic Judaism, e.g., the sexual immorality highlighted in 5:1-13 and 6:15-20, eating food sacrificed to idols (8:1-13; 10:23-30), the continuing attendance of some at pagan feasts (10:1-22). At best the theory may account for the emphasis on σοφία, but even the attempt to place the sapiential elements in Corinthian Christianity against a Jewish background inevitably founders on the fact that Paul links wisdom with Greeks and not Jews (1:22).³⁹

³⁶ Wedderburn (1987: 34-5); R. McL. Wilson. Wilson (112) concludes that "What we have at Corinth...is not yet Gnosticism, but a kind of *gnosis*."

³⁷ Davis; Horsley (1976; 1977; 1980); Pearson.

³⁸ Fee (1987: 13).

³⁹ Munck (148-50).

Hurd suggests that Paul's earlier preaching in Corinth is to blame for the defects in the Corinthian perspective.⁴⁰ Hurd's thesis, however, attracts little support due to the highly improbable chronology and historical reconstruction on which it is based. Nevertheless, certain themes and emphases in Paul's gospel may have given rise to some of the Corinthian views in that they were seized upon and taken in false (from Paul's point of view) directions. This possibility best explains the attitude and actions of the Corinthian women in chapter 7 and 11:2-16 - their emancipated behaviour stemming from the Pauline conviction that all distinctions, including gender and sexual distinctions, are transcended in Christ⁴¹ - and perhaps also explains, to some extent, the actions of the "strong".⁴²

Another factor affecting Corinthian beliefs, and the one which interests us, is the wider intellectual climate.

It seems that Paul himself detects the influence of the surrounding society on the beliefs of the Corinthians at several points.⁴³

As noted, the Corinthians placed great emphasis on "wisdom". But what exactly did they mean by "wisdom"? On this question, there is much dispute among scholars. Paul uses the words σοφία and σοφός in such a variety of ways in these chapters, it is very difficult to pinpoint the precise

⁴⁰Hurd (esp. 273-96).

⁴¹See M.Y.MacDonald (1990); Wire (esp. 184-8).

⁴²See Section B. 7 of this chapter.

⁴³Since there were probably a number of factors influencing Corinthian theology, in highlighting one of these we are not thereby ruling out others.

target of his critique.⁴⁴ However, to the extent that he connects it with Greek culture (1:22-23), regards it as a *human* endeavour (1:25, 2:5) and sees it as involving rhetorical skill (1:17, 2:1, 4), it seems likely that, *in his perception*, the wisdom being held in such high esteem in Corinth is Greek and Hellenistic wisdom - the cultural and philosophical milieu of the day.⁴⁵

Though it is far from easy to determine the actual position of the Corinthians who denied the resurrection (15:12), it remains highly likely, especially if Paul's discussion of the $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ in resurrection in 15:35-50 is not completely wide of the mark, that in his view, what they particularly objected to was the idea of a future existence which involved the body. Paul seems to discern the influence of the prevailing anthropological dualism of the Hellenistic world upon the Corinthian viewpoint. According to such thinking the human being is composed of body and soul, with the body being accorded the lower status.

Judging from his stress on the importance of the $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ (6:13, 19, 20), it seems that Paul perceives an indifference toward *bodily* behaviour lying behind the actions of the

⁴⁴ For a helpful analysis of σοφία and σοφός in chapters 1-3, see Barrett (1964: 277-85).

⁴⁵ Contra Goulder (1991) who argues that the σοφία which Paul opposes in Corinth has a Jewish source. See further Clarke (1993: 101-5); Fee (1987: 64-5); Litfin (137-228, who views σοφία as specifically Graeco-Roman rhetoric); Munck (152-4). The attachment of τοῦ κόσμου, τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, etc. to σοφία might also support our conclusion, but as we shall argue, the connection of "wisdom" with "this world-age" is Paul's means of critiquing "wisdom" not identifying its source.

Corinthian men who go to the prostitutes.⁴⁶ They may well have argued for their "right" (6:12) to engage in such activity on the grounds that having now entered a new plane of spiritual existence, what is done with the body ceases to have the same significance. The dualistic perspective may perhaps also be related to the ascetic tendencies of some in the church of which we get a glimpse in chapter 7. It can be argued that when Paul speaks of virgins striving to be holy in σῶμα as well as πνεῦμα (7:34), he is identifying a specific motivation for celibacy, cited by some of the Corinthian women.⁴⁷ Underlying their reasoning thus seems to be a hierarchical dualism of body and soul (or body and spirit).

The Corinthians' continued responsiveness to these cultural influences correlates well with the high degree of social integration which they continued to enjoy. It is just possible that Paul surmises a connection between close contacts with pagans and the over-influence of Graeco-Roman culture in the case of the denial of the resurrection. In 15:33, in the midst of his defence of resurrection, he cites the epigram of Menander, "bad company corrupts good character". Its intrusion into the argument is abrupt, and it seems strangely out of place even in the immediate context. Commentators labour at explaining its relevance to the polemic as a whole. But we should hardly doubt that is a very carefully chosen saying, in Paul's opinion entirely apposite to the situation in Corinth. He may well have

⁴⁶ Cf. Wedderburn (1987: 31).

⁴⁷ M.Y. MacDonald (1990: 171).

suspected, therefore, that the Corinthians' antipathy toward resurrection was in some measure related to the company they were keeping and its influence upon them.

1.2.4. Internal Divisions

A further indication of unclear group boundaries at Corinth is the lack of internal cohesion in the church.⁴⁸ According to Malina, a weak group with loose boundaries is characterized by individualism and shallow group identity.⁴⁹

A strong sense of group identity and cohesiveness seems to be missing in Corinth. 1 Corinthians exhibits evidence of internal divisions of various kinds: the quarrelling over leaders (1:10-12; 3:3-5); the disputes which have ended up in litigation; the sharp difference between the "weak" and the "strong" (8:1-13); above all, the socioeconomic division (1:26) which manifests itself most clearly in the celebration of the Eucharist (11:17ff), and is probably also to be seen in the division between the "weak" and the "strong". We do not gain the impression from 1 Corinthians that the church is a close-knit community. The censured practice of dining at the temples shows that the "strong" have a higher regard for the approval of their non-Christians associates than they do for the sensitivities of their "weaker" fellow believers.

Paul recognizes the divisiveness of Corinthian church life to be a significant problem. He is aware that a keen sense of "belonging" is lacking in the community. The unity of the church is one of his major concerns in this epistle. He lays heavy emphasis on group solidarity (3:16-17;

⁴⁸On this whole aspect of church life at Corinth and Paul's response to it, see Mitchell.

⁴⁹Malina (18-19).

10:16-17; 11:29; 12:12-27) and "brotherhood" (1:10. 26; 5:11; 6:5-8; 8:11-13), asserts the right of the community to govern the lives of its members (5:1-13; 6:1-11), and exhorts his readers to place concern for fellow-members above concern for themselves (8:10-13; 10:24). The church is to be the primary network of relational ties for its members.

1.2.5. Unclear Boundaries and Paul's Use of κόσμος

There are thus reasonable grounds for concluding that there exists in Corinth an ambiguity as to boundaries between the church and the surrounding society. Paul seems to perceive lack of clear boundaries to be a problem. He is uneasy about the extent to which the distinctions between "church" and "world" have become blurred: the Corinthians are too involved in the larger society for Paul's liking and too much determined by its norms and values.

It may be suggested, therefore, that Paul's statements on κόσμος in 1 Corinthians are, to a large extent, framed specifically with this situation in mind, the lack of clear-cut boundaries between the church and the wider community accounting well for his dominant emphasis in many of these statements - *the contrast between the world and the church.*

2. The Socio-Rhetorical Strategy: Defamiliarization

Paul of course has various aims in view as he writes, and he adopts a range of argumentative ploys and techniques of persuasion in their service.⁵⁰ In the light of our comments

⁵⁰ An excellent analysis of the various types of argument employed by Paul in 1 Corinthians and the uses to which they are put is given by Wire (12-38).

above, it may be proposed that one of his social goals in writing is the strengthening of the group's boundaries. The sharpening of the distinction between the Christian community and the surrounding society, it may be posited, is the goal which governs his use of κόσμος in the epistle.

The rhetorical strategy which Paul deploys to achieve his aim, we suggest, can be understood in terms of a strategy of *defamiliarization*, as described in Chapter One: Paul pulls the word κόσμος away from its normal orbit of meaning and its conventional cultural and social values, and lodges it within another context of reference, drawing out quite different social implications.

2.1. The Corinthian Evaluation of κόσμος

As noted, in 1 Corinthians the word κόσμος is predominantly used in a negative connection. But almost certainly, Paul would have been aware that to a Greek mind, κόσμος would have had other, quite different connotations - order, beauty, unity, etc.

It is likely, indeed highly probable, that for the leading members of the Corinthian church, κόσμος=world/universe would have had predominantly positive connotations, conventional linguistic usage dictating how they would have understood the word and the kind of associations it was likely to have triggered in their minds. The social élite in the congregation quite probably would have had some exposure to Greek education. A primary education would have acquainted them with the Greek philosophical tradition of the world as κόσμος, one of the most basic elements of Greek and Hellenistic culture; an awareness of this tradition would certainly have increased the lofty resonances of the word in their ears.

In this regard, it is noteworthy that the most positive use of κόσμος in the whole epistle, denoting "the ordered universe" is found in 8:4, in a quotation of a Corinthian slogan.⁵¹ The twin affirmations, οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ, and οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς, were advanced by the "strong" as the theological grounds for their freedom to eat meat sacrificed to idols and to dine in the temples.

It is possible that another glimpse of the Corinthian evaluation of κόσμος may be found in 5:10b, where the word has the neutral sense of "the inhabited world". Here Paul corrects a misunderstanding with regard to a charge given in his previous letter, namely, that they should dissociate themselves from sexually immoral people. Paul insists that he was referring then to immoral *Christians* and not to sexually immoral people in general, since that would lead to a *reductio ad absurdum*, withdrawing from the κόσμος. As Fee points out, it seems likely that the Corinthians themselves had exploited the ambiguity of Paul's words in his earlier letter, highlighting the absurd consequences of his advice if taken at face value. If this is the case, then Paul could well be repeating here a Corinthian rejoinder from their letter to him: "it is as you say, if I had meant that, you 'would have to leave the κόσμος'".⁵² Admittedly, as noted in the last chapter, it is difficult to gauge how far κόσμος=inhabited world would have been an established lexical sense in normal Greek usage at this stage and thus be attributable to the Corinthians. It would not be stretching matters, however, to suggest that in its original context in

⁵¹This is indicated by the structure οἶδαμεν ὅτι...καὶ ὅτι...

⁵²Fee (1987: 222-3).

the Corinthians' letter κόσμος might have had the sense of "world/universe". In a strikingly similar statement, Philo emphasizes the impossibility of leaving the κόσμος=universe (*Leg. All.* 3.5).

On the basis of 8:4-6, we may conjecture that they combined a high view of the world as κόσμος, in line with Greek and Hellenistic tradition, with Jewish and Christian ideas. One may perhaps draw a parallel with Philo. Very clearly, as we have seen, Philo develops a Greek philosophical view of the κόσμος, heavily indebted to Platonism. Yet he endeavours to harmonize this with the tenets, traditions, and Scriptures of his Jewish faith. Within a Christian context, one can imagine a similar *modus operandi* in Corinth.

The leading members of Corinthian church, therefore, probably saw the whole κόσμος as worthy of positive engagement (with even fewer barriers than Philo, judging from 1 Cor 8-10) and integration into the κόσμος as a laudable endeavour.⁵³

2.2. Paul's Defamiliarizing Use of κόσμος: the Theological Context of Reference

Most scholars agree that in 1:18-3:23, Paul is involved in a terminological battle, taking up and redefining Corinthian watchwords: σοφία, σοφός, πνευματικός, ψυχικός, τέλειος,

⁵³ It is worth emphasizing that the denotation κόσμος=world/universe covers both the "natural world" and the "social world" in Greek usage. Human society is part of the unified, ordered κόσμος (cf. Plato, *Gorg.* 507ff; L-S 1: 348, 2: 346-7 (no. 57F) L-S 1: 431, 2: 246 (67L)). As we see with the Stoics, a high view of the κόσμος tended to go hand in hand with a high view of the ordering of life in society.

νήπιοι. κόσμος occurs eight times in the section. Frequency of occurrence indicates "foregrounding".⁵⁴ On the basis of this repetition, we may presume that κόσμος is not only rhetorically important, but indeed is at stake in that battle.⁵⁵

The context of reference into which the word κόσμος is cast is for the most part the symbolic world of apocalyptic. Since the word "apocalyptic" is employed in a host of ways in New Testament Study, at this point in our investigation, the definition with which we are working needs to be made explicit.

It is helpful to distinguish between apocalyptic as a literary genre and apocalyptic as a mode of thought or theological outlook. In speaking of Paul's apocalyptic perspective, we clearly have in mind the latter. The main features of the apocalyptic world view are listed by W.Meeks:⁵⁶

1. Secrets have been revealed to the author or prophet.
2. These secrets have to do with a cosmic transformation that will happen very soon. Time moves toward that climax, which separates "this age" from "the age to come."
3. Central among the events to happen "at the end of days" is *judgment*: The rectification of the world order, the separation of the good from the wicked, and assigning the appropriate reward or punishment.
4. Consequently the apocalyptic universe is characterized by three corresponding dualities: (a) the cosmic duality heaven/earth, (b) the temporal duality this age/the age to come, and (c) a social duality: the sons of light/the sons of darkness, the righteous/the unrighteous, the elect/the world.

⁵⁴ So Fowler (1986: 71).

⁵⁵ As our discussion above of 5:10 and 8:4 implies, κόσμος may have been one of *their* terms.

⁵⁶ Meeks (1983b: 689).

Meeks aims not at an exhaustive definition, but at one on which there can be a large measure of scholarly agreement, and thus it is particularly suitable for our purposes.

The futurist aspect of Paul's eschatology,⁵⁷ which largely falls under the rubric of apocalyptic, so defined above, dominates this epistle: we may note the references to the Parousia (1:7-8; 11:26; 15:23; 16:22), future judgement (3:10-15; 4:5; 5:5; 6:2,3; 11:32), the eschatological schema (15:23-24), resurrection (6:13-14; 15:12-57) and the kingdom of God (4:20; 6:10-11; 15:50).

In 1:18-3:23, where, as noted, occurrences of κόσμος are particularly concentrated, ὁ κόσμος and ὁ κόσμος οὗτος are used interchangeably with ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος. As this interchange shows, clearly in view is the radical apocalyptic dualism of the present world-age, characterized by evil, and the future world-age of blessedness to come. For Paul, the new age has dawned, as a result of Christ's death and resurrection (cf. 10:11). This conviction serves to sharpen the division between the world-ages: since for Paul, the age to come has already broken in, ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος is a sphere from which Christians have been delivered and to which they no longer belong (cf. Gal 1:4). Within this apocalyptic frame, κόσμος denotes the world-order which has been judged and is in decline, in contrast to the new age God is bringing in and to which the Christian community belongs: this use of κόσμος functions to legitimate a basic social duality between the macrosociety and the church.

⁵⁷ "Eschatology", as Marshall (1977/78) points out, is a slippery term. Here we have in mind the events associated with the End, which from Paul's point of view lie in the future.

As we saw in Chapter Two, the *terminological* distinction between the two world-ages does not properly come to the fore in Jewish writings until the late first century CE. Paul's letters remain the earliest written witnesses of the use of κόσμος to designate "this world-age" (conceived as evil in orientation, and, by implication, as standing in stark antithesis to the future world-age). That such a usage was not, so far as we can gather, well established at the time Paul wrote underscores how striking and "defamiliarizing" it would have been for Gentile readers.

B. ANALYSIS OF TEXTS

Having considered the situational context, the socio-rhetorical strategy and the theological context of reference in which Paul's usage of κόσμος is placed, we can now engage in a more detailed analysis of the various texts in which κόσμος occurs.⁵⁸

1. 1 Cor 1:18-3:23: The World's Wisdom

The first major section of the epistle extends from 1:10 to 4:21. Two main concerns dominate this unit: the Corinthians' regard for wisdom and the problem of internal strife. Though it is notoriously difficult to define the

⁵⁸We will not look at the occurrence of κόσμος in 14:10 where the word bears the sense "inhabited world". In 14:10, Paul notes that there are many tongues in the κόσμος. This is a simple statement of fact on Paul's part. It is clear that the word κόσμος is not at all in the foreground and has no rhetorical significance in Paul's discussion of glossolalia in chapter 14.

precise relationship between the discussion of wisdom and the discussion of divisiveness, it is generally agreed that the two themes are inter-connected, in Paul's mind at least:⁵⁹ it is the church's attitude/s toward wisdom which Paul sees as lying behind the dissensions and divisions referred to in chapters 1-4.

The critique of wisdom rests partly upon the epistemological divide between humankind and God: the ways of human beings are not the ways of God (1:25; 2:5, 9, 11, 14: 3:3, 21).⁶⁰ But there is another prong to Paul's attack - the consigning of wisdom to the sphere of "this world/this age". Here wisdom is viewed not so much as a *human* endeavour (though it is at least this since, as is clear from the passage, "culture" and "society" fall within the embrace of ὁ αἰὼν/κόσμος οὗτος), but as the preserve of a world-order which stands in opposition to God, which God has judged and cast aside in the cross.

1.1. 1:18-25: The Wisdom of the World "Made Foolish"

The apocalyptic framework in which Paul's argument is set is immediately revealed in v. 18, where he sets out a basic division between "those who are being saved" (τοῖς σωζομένοις) and "those who are perishing" (τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις). The event of Christ's death and resurrection creates this distinction, though it is in the proclamation of the cross that the division becomes apparent: the σωζόμενοι see the message of the cross as the power of God, whereas to the ἀπολλυμένοι it is mere foolishness. In the

⁵⁹ For recent discussions of this issue, see Kuck (150-61); Clarke (1993: 101-4).

⁶⁰ Gooch (35-8).

cross God has effected the change of the ages; he has pronounced his judgement on the present world-age (it is now heading toward eschatological destruction) and with it, his corresponding judgement on those who belong to it.

Paul is careful to identify "those who are being saved" as "us" (ἡμῶν), *i.e.*, Paul and his readers. In so doing he underlines the category to which the Corinthians belong and the consequent attitude toward the gospel which they ought to display (*i.e.*, they should not undervalue the gospel as "mere milk" in comparison with the "solid food" which presently attracts them, 3:2).

The folly of the gospel to the "perishing" is developed in vv. 22-23. Paul accentuates the fact that the gospel and its central theme of a crucified saviour run counter to the religious ethos of both the Graeco-Roman and the Jewish world:⁶¹ to the Jews who seek for "signs" (σημεῖα), the message of a crucified messiah is a scandal (cf. Deut 21:23), and to the Greeks who seek for σοφία, it is "madness"⁶² (μωρία). Wisdom, rather than signs, is the fixation of the Corinthians, the contrast with σοφία dominating the section as a whole. But the rhetorical aim of vv. 22-23 is to show just how far-reaching the counter-cultural impact of the Christian message is: the gospel is diametrically opposed to *all* culturally defined religious expectations, whether Greek or Jewish.

Not only is the cross folly by worldly or human standards (the point of vv. 18, 22-23), but also, as vv. 19-21 declare, the world's wisdom is folly in the light of

⁶¹ See Hengel (1977).

⁶² Hengel (1977: 1). On the folly of this idea to the Greek mind, see Origen, *Cels.* 6:34.

the cross. The basis of Paul's argument in these verses is again the conviction, already implicit in v. 18, that Christ's death represents the eschatological judgement of ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος,⁶³ a judgement which is already at work in the present. In the event of the cross, God has rendered the wisdom of ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος foolishness. Paul finds in this apocalyptic occurrence the fulfillment of Isa 29:14:⁶⁴

I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
I will bring to nothing the cleverness of the clever.

It is possible to take the three questions introduced by ποῦ in v. 20 as issuing a challenge to debate, in which case, the wise ones, etc. are called upon to take note of what God has done and offer a defence. More likely, however, these questions represent prophet-like announcements of the deposition of the world's wise.⁶⁵ Thus the sense of the question is: In view of God's eschatological act in the cross, what has become of the wise ones, the teachers, and debaters of this age? The implied answer is (on the basis of the preceding quotation): They have been brought to nothing. It could be, as Fee suggests, that the term σοφός refers to the Greek philosopher and γραμματεὺς to the Jewish scribe, thus preparing the way for the Greek-Jew distinction

⁶³Conzelmann (43). See further Müller.

⁶⁴The quotation corresponds to the LXX, except that Paul has altered κρύψω to ἀθετήσω, most likely under the influence of Ps 33:10. Davis (71-2) argues that the verb ἀθετήσω should be taken in its basic sense of "set aside", but the eschatological context and the preceding ἀπολῶ give the nuance "bring to nothing", "thwart", or "frustrate", as in *KJV*, *RSV* and *NIV* respectively, some credibility.

⁶⁵So Fee (1987: 70). Cf. Isa 19:12.

of vv. 22-23.⁶⁶ But it is better to see the three terms σοφός, γραμματεύς, and συζητητής,⁶⁷ as referring generally to all who are regarded as wise, learned, and as rhetorically skilled, by the standards of contemporary culture. The τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου which is attached to συζητητής is probably meant to qualify all three terms.⁶⁸

In v. 20, the word κόσμος comes into play for the first time. The expression τοῦ κόσμου carries the same connotations as τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου in the previous line. κόσμος is clearly marked off at the outset as the world apart from the church, insofar as κόσμος here denotes the present world-age which has been deposed, whereas the church is part of the new world-order which God has installed through Christ. κόσμος here, if we are looking for a modern dynamic equivalent, represents something like "society" or "culture".⁶⁹ But within Paul's apocalyptic mode of discourse, it denotes the whole sphere of cosmic opposition of God which probably embraces hostile spiritual beings as well.⁷⁰ As we have suggested, it is quite likely that such a use of κόσμος was not part of the Corinthians' repertoire. Conzelmann rightly points out that τοῦ κόσμου is not here a qualitative genitive, but a subjective genitive: κόσμος appears as subject, the bearer of "its" wisdom.⁷¹ Paul thus personifies κόσμος. The effect of this rhetorical tactic,

⁶⁶Fee (1987: 71).

⁶⁷συζητητής, "debater". The word is found elsewhere in Greek literature only in Ignatius, *Eph* 18:1.

⁶⁸Conzelmann (43).

⁶⁹Meeks (1993: 62).

⁷⁰See below on 1 Cor 2:6-8.

⁷¹Conzelmann (43).

which becomes clearer in the next verse, is to portray κόσμος as an apocalyptic, anti-godly "power" ignorant of and inimical to God's purposes.⁷²

As Conzelmann emphasizes, it is not that ἡ σοφία τοῦ κόσμου is revealed to be foolishness, but that God has actively "made foolish" this wisdom.⁷³ God has turned upside down the σοφία τοῦ κόσμου changing it into its very antithesis. This obviously means more than simply that the world's wisdom has been superseded, as is argued by Héring and Davis. For Héring, the wisdom of the world is human philosophy insofar as it is equipped for recognizing the revelation of God in nature.⁷⁴ Davis understands it to be the prior revelation of God in the Torah.⁷⁵ As we have already seen, it is extremely unlikely that the target of Paul's polemic is Jewish wisdom, and neither here nor in v. 21 does Paul draw a distinction between a natural and a revealed knowledge of God.⁷⁶ Paul is not just saying that the world's wisdom is transcended in the cross of Christ; much more, it has been completely overthrown.

In v. 21, ὁ κόσμος, which again embraces the world of humanity outside of and apart from Christ (note the contrast

⁷²Cf. Bultmann (1952: 257).

⁷³Conzelmann (1975: 43). Cf. Godet (1886: 94): "He has, as it were, *befooled* wisdom."

⁷⁴Héring (1962: 11).

⁷⁵Davis (73).

⁷⁶Héring (10) interprets the phrase ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ in v. 21 as "by means of the wisdom which God has manifested in the created order". But this is to be rejected on the basis of word order and the unlikelihood that σοφία has the sense of "that which *manifests* wisdom". See Wedderburn (1973: 132). See also Morris 1958 (44).

with τοὺς πιστεύοντας), is more explicitly personified. Paul states that through its wisdom, the κόσμος has singularly failed to know God. γινώσκω is used here with the Hebraic sense of acknowledging and obeying.⁷⁷ The knowledge of God that Paul has in view is what might be described as a "saving" knowledge (confirmed by the use of σώζω and πιστεύω in the following clause). The phrase ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ and particularly the ἐν has been variously explained: as causal, as indicating source, as temporal, as spatial, etc.⁷⁸ It is best understood, however, as Wedderburn argues, as giving the "attendant circumstances" under which the failure of the κόσμος to know God occurs.⁷⁹ Paul's point, it seems, is that God in his sovereign wisdom has so arranged things that the κόσμος *could* not come to know him by its own wisdom.⁸⁰

In contrast to the "perishing" Jews and Gentiles, for whom the gospel is an affront to their religious and cultural sensibilities (vv. 19, 22-23), Paul asserts in v. 24 that for those called by God, Christ is the very δύναμις and σοφία of God.⁸¹ Then in v. 25, he brings this part of the argument to a close by stating a general theological principle which both undergirds and evolves out of his

⁷⁷ Zerwick and Grosvenor (499); Schmitz (395-7).

⁷⁸ Wedderburn (1973: 132-3).

⁷⁹ Wedderburn (1973: 134); cf. Moule (1959: 79); Turner (252).

⁸⁰ Barrett (1968: 54); Fee (1987: 73); Robertson and Plummer (16).

⁸¹ By identifying Christ with "wisdom" Paul is making a soteriological rather than a Christological statement, pointing to Christ as the agent and expression of God's power and wisdom in redemption (cf. v. 30). See further Dunn (1980: 176-9).

discussion up to this point: even in his foolishness and weakness God is both wiser and stronger than human beings.

1.2. 1:26-31: The World's Standards Overturned in the Church

In this sub-section, Paul demonstrates that God's working to overturn the expectations and presumptions of the κόσμος can also be seen in the very make-up of the Corinthian church itself. He invites his readers to consider their social status at the time of their "calling" (κλησίς). "Not many" (οὐ πολλοί) of their number, he reminds them, were wise, influential and high-born, "according to the flesh", κατὰ σάρκα - the perspective of "the flesh" being the perspective of ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος. Those in the upper echelons of society, those holding positions revered in the macrosociety are in a minority in God's chosen community. In drawing mainly from the lower strata in society God has shown how differently his criteria for "choosing" are from those of the contemporary world.

Vv. 27-28 form a rhetorically impressive unit, the argumentative point of which is that God chooses what the κόσμος despises, in order to bring shame upon it. Paul places the following in contrast:

τὰ μωρὰ τοῦ κόσμου	οἱ σοφοί
τὰ ἀσθενῆ τοῦ κόσμου	τὰ ἰσχυρά
τὰ ἀγενῆ τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὰ ἐξουθενημένα	
τὰ μὴ ὄντα	τὰ ὄντα

All the contrasting plural nouns are neuter, except for the first, σοφοί, which is masculine plural (wise men), but we should not see anything of consequence in this (we can hardly speak of wise things, after all). Neither should we see the use of the neuter "things" in contrast to the

classes of people mentioned in v. 26, as significant: Paul's point is that God selects what the κόσμος regards as foolish, weak, base, and despised,⁸² whether people (v. 26) or the terms of the message (v. 18-25).

With the threefold ἵνα, Paul indicates the immediate purpose of God's way of working: it is *in order* to abase and bring disgrace upon (κατασχύνη) and indeed destroy (καταργήση) the world's standards of evaluation.

The word κατασχύνη is here imbued with eschatological overtones. In the OT, the judgement of Yahweh on his enemies is often expressed in terms of putting to "shame".⁸³ "Shame" in this connection is less a subjective feeling and more an objective condition: it is the state of disgrace into which a person or group is brought, and can, as Link points out, refer to "the objective ruin of the evildoer, or of the whole nation".⁸⁴ The eschatological note is also sounded in the final line, where Paul declares that God has chosen τὰ μὴ ὄντα, ἵνα τὰ ὄντα καταργήσῃ. The verb καταργέω appears here for the first time in the epistle. It is used nine times in I Corinthians, including this instance,⁸⁵ and each time its meaning is eschatological, signifying a "bringing to nothing", or a rendering

⁸² Cf. Barrett (1968: 58), who takes the genitive to mean "in the world's estimation", rather than "the foolish element in the world", which, he states, would imply "a world partly foolish and partly wise, and it is doubtful whether Paul intended to be as complementary as this."

⁸³ Ps 6:10; 31:17; 35:4, 26; 40:15; Isa 1:29; 41:11; Jer 2:26. See Bultmann (1964); Link.

⁸⁴ Link (562). Cf. Ps 69:4-7, 19-20.

⁸⁵ The others are: 2:6; 6:13; 13:8 (twice), 10, 11; 15:24, 26.

inactive.⁸⁶

The expression τὰ μὴ ὄντα is drawn from Greek and Hellenistic philosophical terminology. In Hellenistic Jewish writings, it is used with regard to God's *creatio ex nihilo*.⁸⁷ Paul uses it in such a way in Rom 4:17, when he compares God's ability to raise from the dead with his power to create "out of nothing". It is unlikely, however, that he is using the phrase τὰ μὴ ὄντα in any physical sense here.⁸⁸ His meaning is rather that God has chosen the "nothings" and "have-nots" in the eyes of the κόσμος to nullify what the κόσμος counts as "somethings", and that this is an instance of God's re-creative power.⁸⁹

Having highlighted the immediate purpose of God's acting in this way, in vv. 29-31, Paul focuses on God's overall aim in doing so: it is to remove all grounds for human boasting, so that the only room for glorying is in the Lord.

As we observed in Chapter Two, the designation of the world as κόσμος, through the process of *legitimation*, could operate as a way of preserving the prevailing order and standards of Graeco-Roman society. This hierarchical order,

⁸⁶Delling (1964b); Packer.

⁸⁷For the Jewish belief in *creatio ex nihilo*, see, e.g., 2 Macc 7:28 (the *locus classicus* for the view); 2 Apoc. Bar. 21:4; 48:8; 2 Enoch 24:2; Jas. As. 8:15. Philo uses the formulation, τὰ μὴ ὄντα (*Her.* 36; *Leg. All.* 3.10; *Migr.* 183; *Mos.* 2.100; *Opif.* 81; *Spec.* 4.187; cf. *Mos.* 2.267; *Somn.* 1.76). On the development of the concept of *creatio ex nihilo* in Jewish thought and the degree of philosophical sophistication with which *creatio ex nihilo* language is used in the early stages, see Ehrhardt; Goldstein (1984; 1986); Schmuttermayr; Weiss (9-180); Winston.

⁸⁸Conzelmann (51 n. 23).

⁸⁹On the eschatological implications of this statement, see Schrage (1991: 212).

the social conventions which attended it, and the drive for social status which it engendered, as we have seen, had crept into the life of the church. The claim that Paul makes in 1 Cor 1:26-28 is that in its composition and character God's eschatological community completely overturns the values and standards of the κόσμος: the ἐκκλησία is in fact the very inversion of the social categorizations, discriminations and attitudes which κόσμος had come to encode.

1.3. 2:6-8: The Rulers of "This Age"

Although these verses do not contain the word κόσμος itself, the interchangeability of κόσμος and the expression ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος in chapters 1-3 render 2:6-8 of some importance for the way in which Paul casts κόσμος in 1 Corinthians. It is necessary, therefore, to give this unit due attention.

In 1 Cor 2:6-8, Paul contrasts God's wisdom with the wisdom of this age. God's wisdom here is the design of salvation, centring on a crucified messiah. This wisdom, Paul states, is contained in a mystery (ἐν μυστηρίῳ)⁹⁰ destined by God before the ages for the future glory of believers. Paul's line of thought here is informed by Jewish apocalyptic,⁹¹ the word "mystery" referring to God's eschatological plan which was previously concealed but is now revealed. It was formerly hidden, and remains hidden (ἀποκεκρυμμένην) to those who belong to the old age, but is now made known "to us" by the Spirit (v. 10a).

⁹⁰ ἐν μυστηρίῳ should be connected with σοφία rather than with λαλοῦμεν.

⁹¹ On the apocalyptic contours of Paul's thought in the passage, see Kovacs; Pearson (30-4); Scroggs (1967/68).

In vv. 6-8, Paul talks of οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου who are being brought to nothing (καταργουμένων); they failed to comprehend God's wisdom and as a result crucified the Lord of glory. Who are these ἄρχοντες? Their identity has been the subject of a seemingly endless debate. Three main views have been put forward: a) hostile spiritual powers;⁹² b) human rulers, especially those responsible for Jesus' crucifixion, i.e., Pilate, Herod, Annas and Caiaphas;⁹³ c) both the human rulers and the supernatural powers who stand behind them.⁹⁴

The most cogent defence of ἄρχοντες as human rulers in recent study is given by Carr. He offers three main arguments. First, the linguistic argument:⁹⁵ Carr points out that while in the New Testament the singular ὁ ἄρχων is used with reference to Satan,⁹⁶ the plural ἄρχοντες only occurs in a human sense;⁹⁷ it is never used of demons. Secondly, the argument from context:⁹⁸ following Schniewind, he stresses

⁹² e.g., Barrett (1968: 70); Bultmann (1952: 259); Conzelmann (61); Dunn (1980: 166-7); Héring (1962: 16-17); Lietzmann (1969: 12); Moffat (29); Schoeps (20-21).

⁹³ e.g., Carr (1976/77); Clarke (1993: 114-17); Fee (1987: 103-4); Grosheide (63); G.Millar; Morris (1958: 54-5); Parry (52); Robertson and Plummer (36-7); Schniewind; N.M.Watson (1992: 23).

⁹⁴ Bockmuehl (163, with the emphasis on the human side), Boyd; Bruce (1971: 38); Caird (1956: 80ff); Cullmann (1963: 51); Kovacs; MacGregor; Morrison (30; 114-17); Scroggs (1967/68: 43); Theissen (1987: 374-8); Whiteley (26); Wink (1984: 44-5); Wright (1990: 14).

⁹⁵ Carr (1976/77: 23-4). For Fee (1987: 104 n. 24), the linguistic evidence settles the matter.

⁹⁶ e.g., Matt 11:34; John 12:31, etc.

⁹⁷ Luke 23:14, 35; 24:20; John 7:26, 48; 12:42; Acts 3:17; 4:8, 25; 8:27; Rom 13:3.

⁹⁸ Carr (1976/77: 24-5).

that the essential contrast in 1:20-2:16 is between the wisdom of God and human wisdom; since the wise person, the scribe and the debater of 1:20 are clearly *human*, he argues, it is reasonable to deduce that the "rulers of this world" in 2:6-8, are also human rulers.⁹⁹ Thirdly, he observes that 1 Cor 2:2-6 seems to pick up a leading theme in early Christian preaching - that the human political rulers responsible for the death of Jesus acted in ignorance (Acts 3:17; 13:27; cf. Luke 23:13, 35; 24:20).¹⁰⁰

These arguments, however, are not as weighty as they might first appear. First, the linguistic argument. A use of ἄρχοντες for evil spiritual powers would not have been as innovative for a New Testament writer as Carr makes out. The word ἄρχων had long been part of the Jewish vocabulary for evil angels and spirits,¹⁰¹ and it quickly established itself in early Christian terminology for the demonic realm.¹⁰² Second, the contextual argument. That ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος and κόσμος are used in 1 Cor 1-2 with reference to the human world, thus pointing up a contrast between divine and human wisdom, is only partly the case. The terms denote the *non-Christian* world, viewed from an *apocalyptic* perspective. Since for Paul "this present evil age" is determined by powers opposed to God (whether Satan, powers, lordships and dominions or the structures of death, sin, law, the flesh) it

⁹⁹ This is also Clarke's main argument (1993: 114-17).

¹⁰⁰ Carr (1976/77: 27).

¹⁰¹ Wink (151-6).

¹⁰² Ignatius, writing in the early part of the second century, uses ἄρχοντες with reference to angels, both good and evil: *Smyrn.* 6:1. On the interpretation of this text, see Carr (1976/77: 28) and Wink's response (42 n. 8).

is reasonable to conclude that οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου at least partly refers to demonic rulers.¹⁰³ Thirdly, while the kerygmatic motif of the ignorance of the human leaders in crucifying Jesus may be relevant here, equally so is the theme in Gospel tradition that spiritual opposition stood behind the human opposition to Jesus (Luke 22:3, 53).

A point specifically in favour of the demonic interpretation is the fact that the verb καταργέω in 2:6 is more naturally applied to supernatural rulers than human rulers. Carr belittles the force of the verb, arguing that it means simply "to decline into unimportance",¹⁰⁴ but as has been pointed out, its primary sense in Paul is "to abolish", or "to bring to nothing". This is its meaning in 15:24-6, where it is used with reference to Christ's doing away with the dominions, authorities and powers in opposition to God, and the last enemy, death. καταργέω is never used by Paul with reference to the fate of non-believers.¹⁰⁵

A reference to spiritual powers in the use of ἄρχοντες, therefore, seems quite likely. A good solution is to opt for a joint interpretation (option c) - a reference to both human political powers and supernatural rulers. A dual reference is in fact quite in line with the apocalyptic world view Paul espouses, in which a cosmic struggle between God and spiritual powers is seen to lie behind human history (e.g., Dan 10:20-21).

¹⁰³ It is noteworthy that in 4:9, κόσμος denotes the world of humanity and angels, though Paul probably here has in view good as well as bad angels: see Section B. 2.

¹⁰⁴ Carr (1976/77: 32).

¹⁰⁵ It is applied to the destruction of the "lawless one" in 2 Thess 2:8

1 Cor 2:6-8 thus sharpens the apocalyptic focus of "this world-age": it is depicted as under the control of hostile spiritual beings.¹⁰⁶ This corresponds to the Johannine portrayal of κόσμος as lying in the power of the ὁ ἔρχων τοῦ κόσμου (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; cf. 1 John 4:4; 5:19). Another important implication of these verses is that Paul sets up a quite sectarian view of the political authorities. This perspective is one which he will pick up and build on in 6:1-11.

1.4. 2:12: The Spirit of the World

At 2:10b the attention shifts from God's saving wisdom as a mystery revealed to believers to the divine Spirit as the agent of that revelation. Because believers have received the Spirit of God (who is able to search the deep things of God, vv. 10b-11), they can, through the Spirit's enablement, understand the things which God has freely given¹⁰⁷ to them.

In v. 12, Paul contrasts τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου with τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. The words τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου might be taken as referring to a demonic counterpart of the Spirit of God, especially in the light of 2:6-8.¹⁰⁸ This is how Ellis understands the phrase.¹⁰⁹ But rather than depicting

¹⁰⁶The genitive should be interpreted as objective, and not qualitative, as Carr (1976/77: 24) suggests, *i.e.*, it is "those who rule over this age", rather than "the rulers who belong to this age".

¹⁰⁷The emphasis here on the graciousness of God is probably intended to contrast with Corinthian boastful claims of special insight into the deep things of God.

¹⁰⁸Cf. Eph 2:2, where the "spirit" is effectively identified with Satan. Cf. also 2 Cor 4:2, "the god of this age".

¹⁰⁹Ellis (1978: 29-30).

two different spirits, it is more likely that Paul is speaking of the one Spirit which, he insists, is not connected with the κόσμος but with God.¹¹⁰ On this understanding, Paul's rhetorical point is that the Spirit of God possessed by the Corinthians is unconnected with the κόσμος=this world-age.

Paul's dissociation of the πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ from the κόσμος contrasts markedly with Stoic cosmology, where as we have seen, πνεῦμα is very closely related to κόσμος, the cosmic πνεῦμα being the vital principle permeating and sustaining the whole κόσμος.

Perhaps the Corinthians regarded their "wisdom" and their experience of the Spirit as giving them a greater "knowledge" of and insight into the nature of the κόσμος (cf. 8:4). We may compare *Wisdom of Solomon*. According to Wis 7:17 wisdom gives a knowledge (γνώσις) of the things that exist, namely the structure of the κόσμος (σύστασιν κόσμου) and the operation of the elements.¹¹¹ Whatever the case, Paul firmly disconnects any link between positively valued, divine wisdom and the κόσμος: God's wisdom is revealed by his Spirit. As Theissen states, "In Paul, the higher wisdom does not belong to this world, it is radically opposed to the 'spirit of the world'. It points to a new world."¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Fee (1987: 113); Grosheide (1953: 70). Or it may be, as Theissen (1987: 368 n. 1) suggests, that Paul is simply forming a rhetorical analogy with the Spirit of God.

¹¹¹ See further Theissen (1987: 358).

¹¹² Theissen (1987: 358).

1.5. 3:18-21a: The Wisdom of the World is Foolishness with God

3:18-23 forms a summary conclusion to the argument so far.¹¹³

In 3:18-21a, taking up the paradoxes which dominated the first two chapters, Paul addresses directly the twin problems of the Corinthians' preoccupation with wisdom and their grouping around the names of the apostles. The way that he does so shows how closely Paul perceives these problems to be intertwined.

In v. 18, Paul makes the application of the foregoing discussion of wisdom to the Corinthian situation entirely clear. Those who think of themselves as wise ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ are to become fools ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, so that they may become truly wise. The ἐν here has the sense "by", "with reference to". Thus the phrase takes the meaning, "according to the standards of this age". The Corinthians had indeed considered themselves to be wise (the formula used by Paul here, εἴ τις, is generally taken as pointing to claims actually being made by the Corinthians; cf. 8:2; 11:16; 14:37). But, says Paul, they are deluded (ἐξαπατάτω), because they are judging "wisdom" by the wrong criteria. The wisdom which they have latched on to belongs to the old, out-going age (1:20, 27-29; 2:6-8). Paul urges his readers to adopt a stance which is a complete reversal of the standards which currently condition their outlook, a perspective consonant with God's new age. Paul's words accentuate the personal cost which this involves: one must actively become foolish (γενέσθω) in the estimation of the wider world.

¹¹³Schrage (1991: 311) describes the section as *peroratio*.

In vv. 19-20, Paul gives the reason (γάρ) for this injunction. It is that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. Here Paul speaks of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος. As Paul has shown in 1:18-25, it is not just that the gospel is folly to the κόσμος, but much more, the wisdom of the κόσμος is folly in the sight of God, and God has ostensibly made it so in the judgement declared in the cross. Paul cites two OT scriptures to reinforce his point. Using the introductory formula, γέγραπται γάρ, Paul quotes first from Job 5:13, "He [God] catches the wise in their craftiness". The image is that of the hunter and his prey. God, the hunter, uses the cunning of the wise as the means of their entrapment. The second text he quotes, Ps 94:11, emphasizes the futility of the wise. Harking back to 1:10-12 and picking up his remarks on "boasting" in 1:29-31, Paul draws the practical conclusion (ὥστε), "Let no one boast in human beings".

1.6. 3:21b-23: The World belongs to You

3:21b-23 gives further reason for the injunction of 3:21a. There is to be no more boasting about human beings because "all things are yours", πάντα ὑμῶν ἐστίν. There then follows a list of the "all things". The list begins with the apostles mentioned in 1:12, Paul, Cephas and Apollos, the names which were at the centre of the internal wrangling (3:3). The Corinthian slogans "I belong to Paul", etc. are inverted into "they belong to you". The sudden enlargement of the list is somewhat surprising, appearing unrelated to the immediate context. The five items which follow are: κόσμος, ζωή, θάνατος, ἐνεστῶτα and μέλλοντα. The way in which these things "belong" to the Corinthians is obviously different to the way in which the apostles "belong" to them

(presumably as servants of the church). It becomes clear, as Barrett states, that Paul's thought has moved on to the general sovereignty of the church (through Christ, v. 23) as the people of God.¹¹⁴

Within the context of an affirmation of believers' sharing in the universal reign of Christ, κόσμος may well denote the whole universe as God's creation and possession, the sense which it most clearly has in this epistle in 8:4. This is how most interpreters take the word.¹¹⁵ However, given that κόσμος in its previous seven occurrences has been consistently used in a pejorative manner - denoting the present world-order hostile to God and at odds with believers - and that this use, particularly in this section of the epistle, seems to be part of a deliberate policy of defamiliarization, a negative meaning should perhaps be considered likely here, especially since three of the other four items on the list have negative connotations: θάνατος, ἐνεστώτα and μέλλοντα (the pair ἐνεστώτα and μέλλοντα are found in Rom 8:38, in a context very similar to this one, where they form part of a list of entities which might attempt to thwart the purposes of God and threaten the believer).

To take κόσμος here as the present evil world-order, certainly, entails an interpretive difficulty: how could Paul say that the hostile world-age, the enemy of God and the church, and which, as he will declare in 7:31, is

¹¹⁴ Barrett (1968: 95). The Stoics too could speak of their possession of "all things": Cicero, *Fin.* 3.22. Diogenes Laertius 7.125; Seneca, *Ben.* 7.8.1. See Sevenster (119).

¹¹⁵ e.g., BAG 446; Barrett (1968: 95-6); Bruce (1971: 46); Fee (1987: 154); Godet (1886: 200); Morris (1958: 73); Robertson and Plummer (73).

destined to pass away, "belongs" to the believer? But this kind of problem is present in the text anyway, being entailed in Paul's inclusion of θάνατος in the list of possessions: "death", is "the last enemy" (1 Cor 15:25); it is destined to be abolished (καταργήσῃ) and swallowed up (καταπόθη) in victory (15:54).

The difficulty may at least partially be resolved when the following facts are borne in mind. Firstly, Paul's language is highly metaphorical and is self-evidently shaped by rhetorical factors. Secondly, as we shall see in Rom 8:38-39, Paul can extend the thought of God's sovereignty over creation even to forces and elements which apparently stand outside his purposes and are inimical to his will. To the extent that believers are made to share in Christ's mediated lordship, that lordship presumably may extend to elements which at present constitute "evils" in the created order. Thirdly, the eschatological participation of believers in the judgement of the κόσμος, which as we will see is intimated at 6:1-2, implies a possession of the κόσμος of sorts, in the sense that they are given the right to judge it.

Vv. 21b-23, then, constitute a rhetorically framed affirmation of the eschatological lordship of believers over "all things" in Christ. The leaders in whom they boast, and all the things which currently determine their lives belong to the Corinthians, not the Corinthians to them. The rhetorical effect of including κόσμος in this list is to say "With all its menacing and tempting possibilities", the κόσμος, "lies...beneath their feet; they have mastered it."¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶Bultmann (1952: 257).

1.7. Summary

Let us summarize the use of κόσμος in 1 Cor 1-3:

1. In its first appearance in this epistle, κόσμος is placed in an apocalyptic setting, denoting "this world" which is under God's judgement. The church is at once distanced from the κόσμος, insofar as it is the community of the new age, which has dawned in Christ. In 1:20-21 and 3:19 (and possibly 3:22), κόσμος is personified as a threatening power.
2. Paul declares that in the cross God has upturned the standards of the κόσμος. God's way of working is the reversal of the expectations of the κόσμος. This is seen both in the message of the gospel and in God's choice of those who are to be its recipients. The cross, therefore, functions to defamiliarize the κόσμος.
3. The σοφία τοῦ κόσμου is declared to be folly in the light of God's judgement upon it in the cross. The κόσμος has not and cannot attain to God's wisdom by means of its wisdom. Even the "rulers of this age", who are being brought to nothing, failed to understand it. The πνεῦμα which believers have received and the κόσμος are mutually exclusive.
4. The Corinthians (if we are reading Paul's polemic correctly) have completely reversed their eschatological standing to the κόσμος: they are the eschatological lords of the κόσμος, yet they are allowing themselves to be mastered by it.

The wisdom, therefore, on which the Corinthians have prided themselves is the antithesis of God's wisdom because it belongs to the κόσμος which is at odds with God. True

wisdom, for Paul, belongs not to this world-age but to the new creation.

2. 1 Cor 4:9, 13: The Apostles' Relation to the World: A Paradigm for the Corinthians

In 4:7-13 an ironical and sarcastic contrast is drawn between the Corinthians with their high views of themselves and the apostles whose social experience is characterized by trials and hardships.¹¹⁷ Paul's aim in this section is twofold: firstly, to attack the Corinthians' false view of the apostles and their ministry (and defend his style of apostleship); secondly, to deflate their exalted opinions of themselves. As vv. 14-16 make clear, Paul's setting forth of the apostolic lot (or more, Paul's own experience) has a paradigmatic intent: in describing the experience of the apostles, he is setting out the parameters of Christian existence as a whole.¹¹⁸

Fiore points out that in 1 Cor 1-4, Paul makes use of the rhetorical model, covert allusion.¹¹⁹ This is especially evident in 4:6-13, where Paul employs hyperbole, contrast, irony and metaphor to arrest his readers' attention and to challenge some of their assumptions. The Formalists identified such devices with the techniques of defamiliarization.¹²⁰

Paul first of all describes the Corinthians in v. 8, in terms of their own perception of their new, elevated,

¹¹⁷ On the structure of 4:7-13, see Fitzgerald (129-32).

¹¹⁸ Paul's hardships are presented as "counter-examples": Fitzgerald (122).

¹¹⁹ Fiore (89).

¹²⁰ Schlovsky (1965a; 1965b).

spiritual status: already they are filled; already they have become rich; already they have become kings. These notions of theirs, however, are illusory and fundamentally misguided, as the final sentence makes apparent: "How I wish you had begun to reign, that we (apostles) might reign with you".

That the apostles had definitely not yet "begun to reign" is shown in the illustration of v. 9. Paul explains that the apostles have been apportioned the very reverse of the position that the Corinthians are claiming for themselves. He asserts that "God has shown forth us apostles last, doomed to die, because we became a spectacle to the κόσμος." There are two ways of understanding this metaphor. Most interpret Paul's words as referring to the events of the arena, and specifically to those who are brought on at the end of the show, either as gladiators fighting for their lives, or as those, such as criminals and captives, who are condemned to die there. But Fee sees the metaphor as that of the Roman triumph, the parade of the conquering army with their captives:¹²¹ the apostles are thus likened to the prisoners at the end of the procession, headed for the arena where they are condemned to die. Either is possible, but the former remains the better option, the latter being read into the passage somewhat from Paul's subsequent use of that image in 2 Cor 2:14. In any case, what is apparent is that the apostles are set forth in humiliating fashion as a spectacle to the rest of the κόσμος.

The denotation of κόσμος here is specified for us. Paul

¹²¹Fee (1987: 174-5).

adds the qualification: καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις.¹²² It may be that he is still thinking of the κόσμος as the antithesis to the realm of God, in which case κόσμος could be defined more narrowly: unbelievers and the evil powers/angels who rule "this age", thus continuing the apocalyptically conditioned use of κόσμος which has figured so far. ἀγγέλοις would at least seem to include bad angels.

κόσμος, as "the intelligent universe",¹²³ however, (without any specific inference about its moral character) embracing the whole world of human beings and angels, is the most obvious meaning. Paul's emphasis is without question on the grandness of the stage on which this spectacle is played out - and what could be a grander audience than the whole population of the universe, not only human beings but angels as well?¹²⁴

What is significant here and what would have been most striking to the reader is his depiction of the relation of apostles (and by extension, all believers) to the κόσμος. This is where the negative aspect of Paul's use of κόσμος here comes out. The apostles have become a spectacle (θέατρον) with the κόσμος watching on. They are objects of humiliation for the κόσμος to behold. As Fee states, his words "must have aimed at their discomfort".¹²⁵ Although the metaphor Paul takes up here is also found among the Stoics, there is a striking difference between their use of it and

¹²²Cf. 4 Macc 17:14.

¹²³Robertson and Plummer (85).

¹²⁴ἀγγέλοι, coming first, has the greater emphasis.

¹²⁵Fee (1987: 175).

his. For Seneca,¹²⁶ the struggle of the Stoic against destiny is a universal spectacle of fortitude and strength;¹²⁷ there is no sense of the indignity and shame of it all.

The difference between the apostles' life-experience and that of the Corinthians is further laid out in the antitheses of v. 10. The Corinthians, on the one hand, are prudent (φρόνιμοι), strong (ἰσχυροί) and held in high regard (ἔνδοξοι). The apostles, on the other, are fools on account of Christ (μωροὶ διὰ Χριστοῦ), weak (ἀσθενεῖς), and without honour (ἄτιμοι). Vv. 11-13 form a single sentence presenting a catalogue of hardships and privations, elucidating the abasement which characterizes the ministry of the apostles and intensifying the contrast between the Corinthians and their Christian leaders.¹²⁸ The fact that such dishonour surrounds the apostle "to this very moment" is emphasized at the beginning and end of the list (ἄχρι τῆς ἄρτι ὥρας... ἕως ἄρτι) no doubt in contrast to the ἤδη which characterizes the Corinthian outlook (4:8). The first six items on the list express the physical hardships endured: hunger, thirst, lack of clothing, ill-treatment, homelessness. The sixth item - working with one's own hands - though not a hardship as such, was something that the Corinthians found particularly objectionable in Paul's missionary practice (it was generally considered undignified for a moralist or philosopher to support himself in such a

¹²⁶ Seneca, *De Prov.* 2.9.11.

¹²⁷ Barrett (1968: 110); Sevenster (115f). Several Latin writers - Pliny the Younger, *Panegy.* 33.3, Sallust, *Iug.* 14:23 - however, are closer to Paul: so Fee (1987: 175).

¹²⁸ Such lists were common in the ancient world. See particularly Fitzgerald.

manner¹²⁹).

The next three antitheses (vv. 12b-13a) set out the contrast between the ill-treatment which the apostles receive and their reaction to it: λοιδοούμενοι εὐλογοῦμεν, διωκόμενοι ἀνεχόμεθα, δυσφημούμενοι παρακαλοῦμεν.

Paul rounds off the catalogue with a picture akin to that painted in v. 9. He declares that the apostles have become as περικαθάρματα τοῦ κόσμου...πάντων περίψημα. Although different Greek words are used in the LXX, there is a very close correspondence between the metaphor here and the words of Lam 3:45 ("You have treated us a refuse and offscouring among the nations").¹³⁰ κόσμος here apparently denotes the world of human beings as a whole, of which the apostles are regarded (by the unbelieving part of it, presumably) as the περικαθάρματα. In the parallel clause, πάντα may either refer to the human world (if masculine, though πάντες would have been more appropriate) or more generally to the earth as a whole (if neuter).¹³¹

The words περικαθάρματα (filth) and περίψημα (offscouring) are near synonyms.¹³² Both refer to the dirt removed in the process of cleansing,¹³³ and both by extension became terms of contempt.¹³⁴ Both words (though περικαθάρματα

¹²⁹ Everts (295).

¹³⁰ Hanson (1982).

¹³¹ Cf. Robertson and Plummer (88), "τοῦ κόσμου...πάντων. Whatever the meaning of the two words, these genitives give them the widest sweep."

¹³² Stählin (90).

¹³³ Godet (1886: 228) distinguishes between the two words in this way: περικαθάρμα is the dust swept from the floor and περίψημα is the dirt that is scraped off an object.

¹³⁴ For περικαθάρματα, see Epictetus, *Disc.* 3.22.78; Philo,

more so than περίψημα) could be used with a sacrificial sense, i.e., with reference to the human sacrifices which were offered to make expiation for the community,¹³⁵ and a number of interpreters see an expiatory reference as also involved in 1 Cor 4:13.¹³⁶ In this case, the terms would have a double-meaning: the apostles are the refuse of the world but are nevertheless performing a vicarious function on its behalf. But this is probably reading too much into Paul's words; there is nothing in the context which demands or suggests a sacrificial interpretation.¹³⁷

The portrait of the apostles' relation to the world in 4:13 is even more ignominious than that in 4:9. Both images are obviously intended to call into question how the Corinthians view their place in the κόσμος. Whereas they may have seen acceptance by and advancement in Corinthian society as a goal worthy of pursuit, Paul sets up a model of Christian living in terms of social alienation. Paul's language is aimed at startling, if not shocking, his readers. Quite clearly, we see Paul using κόσμος in a defamiliarizing way to significantly remap the social world of the Corinthians.

3. 1 Cor 5:10: The Impossibility of Leaving the World

We have already discussed this text in connection with the Corinthians' use of κόσμος. Our comments may be kept brief

Virt. 174. For περίψημα in this connection, see Stählin (84-5).

¹³⁵ See Hauck; Stählin. Prov 21:8 uses περικαθάρματα with a sacrificial sense.

¹³⁶ See references in Fee (1987: 180 n. 78).

¹³⁷ Fitzgerald (143 n. 86).

here.

κόσμος appears twice in 5:10. In 5:10a, Paul speaks of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος, harking back to the previous use of κόσμος and ὁ αἶὼν οὗτος in chapters 1-3, κόσμος denoting the realm of opposition to God. In 5:10b, he uses κόσμος with the neutral sense "the inhabited world". Earlier, we suggested that the neutral meaning of κόσμος at this point may well have been dictated by the Corinthians, if Paul is here repeating the Corinthians' words in their letter to him.

In 5:1-13, Paul treats the problem of the church's toleration of incestuous behaviour. Vv. 9-13 attempts to settle a misunderstanding arising from an instruction in his previous letter: ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι πόρνοις.¹³⁸ We suggested that the Corinthians' misunderstanding of this piece of advice could have been deliberate, accentuating the vagueness of Paul's words (his meaning may have been quite clear in its original context) in order to ridicule and reject his counsel.¹³⁹ Such a reconstruction in fact makes better sense than either of the two main alternatives: that the Corinthians were making a polite request for clarification, or simply that an unintentional misunderstanding arose.

That Paul admits, with the Corinthians, the

¹³⁸ Vv. 9-13 do not represent a digression from the main argument, but are directly related to the matter in hand, as the closing line, a citation from Deut 17:7, makes plain: "Expel the wicked man from among you."

¹³⁹ Fee (1987: 222) conjectures how their ridicule of Paul might have gone: "How can he possibly mean that we are not to associate with the sexually immoral? Does that mean we can no longer go even to the marketplace? How can one live in Corinth and not rub shoulders with some who are like this?"

impossibility of leaving the κόσμος is certainly no softening or modification of his stance on the relation of Christians to the κόσμος marked out in chapters 1-4. The social duality of believers and unbelievers encoded in his previous talk of κόσμος is presupposed, as is made plain not only by the use of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος in v. 10a but by the explicit demarcation of the church from *outsiders* in v. 12. Moreover, while the lexical sense of κόσμος is neutral, the context nevertheless recasts κόσμος, the dwelling-place of humanity, somewhat negatively: the inhabited world is populated by immoral and corrupt people: τοῖς πόρνοις τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἢ τοῖς πλεονέκταις καὶ ἄρπαξιν ἢ εἰδωλολάτραις (5:10a, cf. κόσμος in 2 Pet 2:5). The qualification which 5:10b introduces into Paul's social dualism of church and world is that that duality is not to be expressed in ghetto-like separation from the wider society. Though Christians cannot do otherwise than live side by side with unbelievers, Paul effectively insists that the sharp social and ideological boundary between them remains.

4. 1 Cor 6:1-4: The Saints Shall Judge the World

Paul responds to the problem of litigation in the church in various ways.¹⁴⁰ He vents his sense of scandal at the state of affairs (τολμῶ). What is being allowed to happen is, for Paul, an affront and a shame to the church (v. 5). With stinging sarcasm, perhaps expecting the Corinthians still to be reeling from his earlier offensive against their claims to be "wise", he asks, οὕτως οὐκ ἔνι ἐν ὑμῖν οὐδεὶς σοφός, ὃς δυνήσεται διακρίνειν ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ; (v. 5).

¹⁴⁰ On the problem of litigation, see above Section A. 1.2.2.

He finds it incredible that the church should have permitted such a thing to take place before unbelievers, thus "airing its dirty linen"¹⁴¹ in public (v. 6). He argues that, whatever the eventual outcome of the litigation, whoever wins the case, to have lawsuits at all is already a defeat (ἥττημα) for the church. He asks, "Why not rather be wronged (ἀδικεῖσθε) and cheated (ἀποστερεῖσθε)?" (v. 7). But in fact, it is *they* (ὁμεῖς), Paul's remarks are aimed at the whole community, in that they are just as much to blame in allowing the situation to get of hand) who do wrong (ἀδικεῖτε) and who defraud (ἀποστερεῖτε, v. 8). Picking up the language of "wrongdoing", he declares that the unrighteous (ἄδικοι) will not inherit the kingdom of God (v. 9a), and proceeds to give examples, in the manner of Jewish and Graeco-Roman vice lists, of such "excluding" behaviour (vv. 9b-10). He reminds his readers that they have broken away from such a lifestyle, and have been cleansed, sanctified and justified (v. 11). Their behaviour ought to be different from the pagans around them.

Paul's main objection to the Corinthians' recourse to the civil courts, however, is on the grounds of a fundamental division of the sphere of the outside world and the sphere of the church.

In v. 1, Paul draws a sharp contrast between the ἅγιοι and the ἄδικοι. The outrage, for Paul, lies primarily in the fact the case was brought ἐπὶ τῶν ἀδίκων καὶ οὐχὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἁγίων. The word ἄδικοι is not being used with a moral sense here, as if to question the ethics and slight the

¹⁴¹ Fee (1987: 237).

character of the judges of the pagan courts.¹⁴² New Testament writers characteristically use ἄδικοι with reference to those who are unrighteous *before God* (ἄδικοι is the antonym of δίκαιος), *i.e.*, "the ungodly".¹⁴³ The substitution of ἀπίστοι in v. 6 makes Paul's meaning clear: the reference is to unbelievers. As Robertson and Plummer remark, "The term reflects, not on Roman tribunals, but on the pagan world to which they belong."¹⁴⁴ The distinction between "saints" and "unrighteous" here is thus a distinction between Christians and non-Christians.

In v. 4, Paul speaks of "those despised in the church" (τοὺς ἐξουθενημένους ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ).¹⁴⁵ It is true that Paul could be referring to Christians who were "despised" (or held in low regard) within the congregation, in which case the construction should be taken as a command. The grammar, however, favours taking the "despised" as outsiders who have no standing in the church, the Greek being rendered as a question.¹⁴⁶ Also, it is difficult to imagine Paul speaking in a slighting, even if ironical, way of the lowlier members of the church given the situation in Corinth and his attempts throughout the epistle to disavow precisely this

¹⁴² *Contra* Winter (1991: 562-4). The non-moral sense of ἄδικοι is emphasized by Ayles; Barrett (1968: 135); Conzelmann (104 n. 12); Fee (1987: 232); Fuller (98); Grosheide (133); Héring (1962: 49 n. 1); Robertson and Plummer (110-111); D.W. Robinson (3); Ruef (46); N.M. Watson (1992: 55).

¹⁴³ ἄδικος is often used interchangeably with ἀσεβής in the LXX and Jewish literature: G. Schrenk (1964: 150-1).

¹⁴⁴ Robertson and Plummer (110).

¹⁴⁵ The same verb is used in 1:28.

¹⁴⁶ Fee (1987: 235-6).

kind of attitude on the part of the Corinthians.¹⁴⁷

In vv. 9-11, Paul speaks of those who are excluded from the kingdom of God and makes a contrast between the Corinthians' former paganism with their new position in Christ.

All this points to a very clear delimitation of the church from the rest of society which the contrast between the "saints" and the κόσμος in v. 2 is obviously intended to reinforce.

By "judging" (κρινούσιν...κρίνεται) Paul may mean either "executing judgements" or, more generally, judging in the OT sense of "ruling".¹⁴⁸ In Jewish and Christian tradition the eschatological judgement in which the saints assist, generally recognized to be the background to Paul's thought here, is expressed both in terms of rulership over the nations¹⁴⁹ and in the execution of judgement over the enemies of God.¹⁵⁰

How we define the meaning of the word κρίνω and the specific aspect of eschatological judgement which is in view bears upon the sense in which κόσμος should be taken. If Paul has in mind the eschatological rule of the saints, κόσμος would denote here the created universe, or at least

¹⁴⁷ Barrett (1968: 173).

¹⁴⁸ e.g., Judg 3:10; 10:2, 3; 12: 9,11, etc.

¹⁴⁹ Dan 7:22-27; Wis 3:8; 1 Enoch 108:12; Matt. 19:28 (par); Eph 2:6; 2 Tim 2:12; Rev 2:26,27; 3:21; 20:4.

¹⁵⁰ Dan 7:22: here God is most likely Judge executing judgement on behalf of his saints, but even so, their close association is implied (cf. vv. 9,10). The LXX text of Dan 7:22 is less ambiguous: καὶ τὴν κρίσιν ἔδωκε τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῦ ὑψίστου. Cf. Jub 24:29; 1 Enoch 1:9; 38:5; 48:9; 95:3; 98:12; 1 QpHab 5:4; Rev 20:4.

the earth, over which the saints shall reign.¹⁵¹ If, on the other hand, Paul is thinking of the saints as involved in the execution of judgement at the last day, κόσμος would refer to the unrighteous, the enemies of God upon whom judgement is meted out.

Of the two possibilities, the latter is the most likely: κρίνω would more readily denote the passing and carrying out of judgement since this is the sense with which the word is used in 5:3, 12, 13; 6:1, 2, 3, 6. The thought of "rulership" is quite remote from the immediate context. This being so, κόσμος most likely denotes the ungodly world destined for eschatological wrath. The parallel with ἄδικοι in v. 1, and Paul's concern in the passage as a whole to stress the boundary between the Christian congregation and the outside world, in any case, points strongly in this direction.

The distinction between believers and the κόσμος and the parts to be played by each at the last judgement is used to repudiate the actions of the litigants. By appealing to the belief that the saints will be involved with God in the judgement at the end, Paul develops an *a fortiori* argument: in using the pagan court system, the Corinthians are allowing the respective roles of (ungodly) world and church on the greater occasion of the final judgement to be completely reversed in the present, lesser (ἐλαχίστων) situation.¹⁵² The depth of feeling which Paul evinces here

¹⁵¹This is the view of Robertson and Plummer (111) and Grosheide (134).

¹⁵²The word κριτήριο can either mean law court or legal action. Hence, the apodosis can read either, "are you unworthy to sit in the lowest courts?" (so Barrett (1968: 136)) or "are you not competent to judge trivial cases?"

indicates for him the absurdity of the whole affair - the κόσμος which will stand condemned on judgement day is, in the shape of its judges and arbitrators, being permitted to settle petty disputes among several of those who will stand with God as its future assessors.

In v. 3, a second eschatological premiss is utilized to consolidate the first: the fact that believers shall judge angels. Paul here alludes to the motif of the judgement of the fallen angels, found in intertestamental Judaism and in the New Testament.¹⁵³ As Fee writes, "So inclusive will be...participation in God's eschatological judgment that not only the world but even the angels will be judged by the newly formed eschatological people of God."¹⁵⁴ This second premiss aims at intensifying the previous point: "if even angels are to be judged by you, how much more the affairs of the present life". The reference to angels (which must at least include bad angels) may further indicate that Paul sees spiritual powers as standing behind the authority of the state.¹⁵⁵

The heart of the problem of litigation at Corinth is that, as far as Paul is concerned, the Corinthians have failed to discern the fundamental distinction between the outside society - its practices and procedures - and the church, where a very different code of behaviour and set of relationships obtain. Yet again, Paul uses κόσμος to reconstruct the social world of his readers in such a way as

(so Fee 1987: 233)).

¹⁵³ 1 Enoch 67-69; 91:15; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6.

¹⁵⁴ Fee (1987: 234).

¹⁵⁵ Barrett (1968: 136).

to emphasize this distinction.

5. 1 Cor 7:29-31: The Shape of "This World" is Passing Away

1 Cor 7:29-31 gives us one of Paul's most important pieces of ethical teaching on the relation of believers to the urban society around them.¹⁵⁶ Paul attempts here to clarify for his readers the attitude which ought to determine their dealings with the wider world. As Wimbush states, these verses,

not only describe the *model* of Christian existence in the world Paul deems appropriate, but also the *rationale* behind this model. In no other passage does Paul *directly* address these matters.¹⁵⁷

The passage repays especially close attention because here Paul argues for a particular approach to living as Christians in the social world based on a belief about the fate of the κόσμος.

5.1. The Immediate Context

In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul deals with questions of marriage and other related issues, as raised by the Corinthians (7:1). Having counselled the married, the unmarried and the widows, at v. 25 he turns his attention to the παρθένοι.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Several studies dealing with the question of Paul's view of how Christians relate to the wider world concentrate on this passage: Hierzenberger; Schrage (1964); Schulz; Wimbush.

¹⁵⁷ Wimbush (83).

¹⁵⁸ The view that Paul is referring to those who were committed to each other in a spiritual marriage should be discounted; the παρθένοι are best viewed as engaged couples: Fee (1987: 325-8).

His instructions in vv. 25-28, revolve around the general maxim given and applied in vv. 17-24, namely, that they should remain in the position in which they were found when "called". At v. 26, he gives the reason for this advice: *διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην*.

The principle that one should stay as one was when called is reiterated in v. 27. To the married (or the betrothed), Paul advises, "do not seek to be released from your commitment"; to the unmarried men, he writes, "do not look for a wife". If they reject his preference for singleness and do in fact get married, Paul assures them in v. 28, then they have not sinned. But they will have *θλίψις* in this life, and Paul's concern is that they should be spared this.

In vv. 29-31, Paul makes explicit the eschatological perspective which determines his views on these matters and which by extension ought to determine the Corinthians' approach.

5.2. The Present Distress: 7:26

Before dealing directly with 7:29-31, consideration needs to be given to the question, what does Paul mean in v. 26 by "the present distress"? The best explanation,¹⁵⁹ and the one which most commentators adopt is that Paul is alluding to

¹⁵⁹ It does not appear to be a reference to the anxieties and troubles which attend marriage (cf. vv. 32-35), nor to the inner desires that drive people into marriage (cf. v. 37), which as Barrett (1968: 175) states, operate in the opposite direction to the *ἀνάγκη* in this verse. Grosheide's suggestion (175) that *ἀνάγκη* refers generally to the need which arises due to sin depends on the translation of *ἀνάγκη* as "compulsion", which is possible, but unlikely here.

the sufferings which, according to various strands of Jewish tradition, immediately precede the end of the world.¹⁶⁰

ἐνεστώσαν can either be translated "impending" or "present". The former implies that the crisis is soon to occur, the latter that it is already being experienced. That ἐνεστώσαν has the meaning "impending", "approaching" is argued by Héring and Conzelmann.¹⁶¹ The meaning "present" is to be preferred. This is the sense with which the word is used elsewhere in Paul's writings (1 Cor 3:22; Rom 8:38; Gal 1:4).¹⁶² It also accords with Paul's conviction that Christians have already been experiencing the suffering and distress which heralds the end since Christ's death and resurrection.¹⁶³

It is possible that Paul is thinking of a particular crisis which has befallen the Corinthian church and this as a specific expression of the eschatological distress. Though, as noted at the outset, there is no sign of persecution against the Christians in Corinth, there is at least the internal crisis of suffering to which Paul refers in 11:30, where he says that many of their number are ill and some have in fact died. But this crisis is explicitly interpreted by Paul as divine punishment on the church for their excesses at the Lord's Supper, which makes it unlikely that he would have viewed it as at the same time betokening

¹⁶⁰ For ἀνάγκη in this regard, see Luke 21:23. In Paul's letters, ἀνάγκη and θλίψις are linked in 1 Thess 3:7 and 2 Cor 6:4: in both texts the reference is to the sufferings which are endured for the sake of Christ.

¹⁶¹ Conzelmann (132 n. 14); Héring (1962: 58 n. 26).

¹⁶² Cf. Fee (1987: 329); Grosheide (175); Winter (1989: 93).

¹⁶³ Cf. 1 Thess 3:4. See Witherington (1992: 138-9).

their future glory. An interesting suggestion made by Winter is that the distress was an economic crisis caused by a local famine and its attendant social dislocation.¹⁶⁴

Drawing on epigraphic and literary evidence, Winter argues that several such famines quite likely took place in and around Corinth in the early fifties of the first century. Such events, he suggests, could well have had eschatological resonances for Paul.¹⁶⁵

5.3. The Eschatological Perspective of 7:29-31

Braun highlights the similarities between Paul's words here and the Stoic concept of detachment, in particular, the concept as expressed in the teaching of Epictetus.¹⁶⁶ On their own, the ὡς μὴ statements of these verses may point in the direction of Stoic influence. But fundamentally at odds with the Stoic conception is the eschatological grounding of Paul's counsel in vv. 29a and 31b. The main background to Paul's thought must therefore be found elsewhere.¹⁶⁷ Most interpreters agree that the key influence behind Paul's words is that of Jewish apocalyptic.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ Winter (1989).

¹⁶⁵ Winter (1989: 93). Cf. Mark 13:8.

¹⁶⁶ See Braun. Epictetus, *Disc.* 2.21.6; 3.17 24; 3.22.67-76; 3.24.60; 4.7.5. The similarities between Paul and Epictetus are also noted by Chadwick (267).

¹⁶⁷ Conzelmann (133); Wimbush (38-40).

¹⁶⁸ So Conzelmann (133); Doughty; Gager (1970: 332-3); Hierzenberger; Schrage (1964); Wimbush. Schrage points to a parallel with 6 Ezra 16:40ff, but this text is too late to be of any influence on Paul (so Furnish (1968: 37)), though Wimbush (46) argues that they both reflect the same tradition. Doughty (68-9), Schrage (1964: 148) and Wimbush (47) see Paul as *modifying* the apocalyptic tradition which

The eschatological perspective which determines Paul's advice in these verses is more that of "inaugurated eschatology" than "future eschatology".¹⁶⁹ In v. 29a, Paul states, ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος ἐστίν: the time has been "shortened".¹⁷⁰ As Doughty writes, "The issue has to do with the understanding of the "time" (καιρός) in which the Christian community already exists as the time which is already determined by God's eschatological intervention (συνεσταλμένος)." ¹⁷¹ Fee states,

The picture is that of one for whom the future was either nonexistent, as for most Greeks, or off in the vague distance; but the event of Christ has now compressed time in such a way that the future has been brought forward so as to be clearly visible.¹⁷²

The use of the present tense of παράγω in v. 31b points to an eschatological process which has already been set in motion.

In 7:29-31, therefore, it is the belief in the coming doom of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος rather than the expectation of the end in the very near future to which Paul appeals in order to prompt Christians to sit loose to their social environment and its ties on their lives. This is not to say that a note of imminence is not a factor in these verses since Paul, at least in the early stages of his epistolary ministry, seems

he takes over.

¹⁶⁹ Héring (1962: 59) points out that the recommendations of vv. 30-31 have a much wider bearing and are independent of the date of the parousia. So also Gager (1970: 333).

¹⁷⁰ Fee (1987: 339 n. 14); Grosheide (177). Cf. Mark 13:30.

¹⁷¹ Doughty (69).

¹⁷² Fee (1987: 339 n. 14).

to have believed that the parousia would occur within his own lifetime (1 Thess 4:15-17): the "Naherwartung" of the end may at least provide the urgency for his imperatives of vv. 29b-31a.¹⁷³

5.4. The Argument of 7:29-31

The introductory words τοῦτο δέ φημι, ἀδελφοί, as Fee notes, seem to broaden the appeal so as to address the community as a whole.¹⁷⁴ The widened scope of the challenge is also indicated by the broad application of the ὡς μή principle. While he is certainly concerned to undergird what he just said, Paul has, for the moment, moved beyond the immediate question of marriage and singleness and is now making an appeal to the Corinthian church at large. He is taking the opportunity, it seems, to challenge his readers as to their current approach to life in their social environment and their lack of an apocalyptic perspective on it. As we have shown, this is an important concern of Paul's throughout this epistle. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that it should surface as it does at this point.

The wider appeal of vv. 29-31 is one feature which distinguishes the argument of these verses from that of vv. 32-35. Vv. 32-35 are clearly directed to those who are unmarried within the church.

Vv. 29-31 constitute one sentence in Greek. Its structure is set out by Fee. He views it as representing a logical argument. He takes v. 29a as the basic premise, vv. 29b-31a as the purpose or result, and v. 31b as the reason

¹⁷³Witherington (1988: 35).

¹⁷⁴Fee (1987: 337).

(indicated by γάρ).¹⁷⁵

The basic premiss is that the time is shortened. In view of this fact, from this point onward (that is, from now until the parousia),¹⁷⁶ they are to adopt a different attitude toward the world. The attitude which ought to characterize them is expressed in the five ὡς μή clauses.

καὶ οἱ ἔχοντες γυναῖκας ὡς μή ἔχοντες ὣσιν
καὶ οἱ κλαίοντες ὡς μή κλαίοντες
καὶ οἱ χαίροντες ὡς μή χαίροντες
καὶ οἱ ἀγοράζοντες ὡς μή κατέχοντες,
καὶ οἱ χρώμενοι τὸν κόσμον ὡς μή καταχρώμενοι.

The first four clauses represent three aspects of life in the world which could dominate the attention of believers: relationships, emotions, possessions. In the final clause of the ὡς μή series, Paul speaks of those "using" the κόσμος. κόσμος here designates the world as the habitation of humanity, but it also has the particular nuance of the world as the place of human existence and activity. As Barrett writes, the final clause seems to be a general statement covering both social relations and commerce.¹⁷⁷ It is probably intended to cover all kinds of human interactions with the wider society.

What Paul is calling for is certainly not disengagement from the structures and institutions of society, nor is it exactly Stoic detachment or aloofness from the world. It is rather a change in outlook toward it: his readers are not to be determined or absorbed by any of the things which of

¹⁷⁵ Fee (1987: 338).

¹⁷⁶ For τὸ λοιπὸν as an adverb of time, see Zerwick and Grosvenor (511).

¹⁷⁷ Barrett (1968: 178).

necessity constitute life in the world. Paul's advice to his readers is "to maintain freedom in the midst of involvement."¹⁷⁸ Nevertheless, if the final participle καταχρώμενοι has any force, Paul must also be cautioning his addressees against over-involvement in the affairs and structures of the world.¹⁷⁹ As we have seen, Paul certainly feels that the Corinthians are at fault in this regard, so such an emphasis should not strike us as out of place. Paul, then, is writing not only to effect a change in their mental attitude toward the world (though this is the main thrust of his argument), but also to actively restrain their practical dealings with it.¹⁸⁰

The final clause, v. 31b, provides the justification for these exhortations. As the theological basis for the "response to the world" which Paul is endeavouring to promote, this statement needs to be carefully examined.

5.5. The Meaning of 7:31b¹⁸¹

Paul declares: παράγει γὰρ τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.

According to a number of interpreters, what Paul is speaking

¹⁷⁸Conzelmann (133).

¹⁷⁹καταχράομαι means "use to the full" and not "abuse" as *KJV*. See the discussion in Doughty (71 n. 47); also Barrett (1968: 178); Héring (1962: 59).

¹⁸⁰Kuck (248) completely misses the point of vv. 29-31 when he states that Paul is drawing on apocalyptic eschatology in order to counsel openness to the world outside the group.

¹⁸¹There are several parallels to Paul's phrase τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου in Greek writings: Euripides, *Ba.* 832: τὸ δεύτερον δὲ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τί μοι; (κόσμος here meaning "adornment"); *PGM* 1: 4.1139, σχῆμα κόσμου; Philostratus, *Vit. Ap.* 8.7: καὶ τί τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τοῦδε; None are of direct relevance to 1 Cor 7:31b.

of here is the transient character of the "outward form", the σχῆμα, of the κόσμος. Thus, Robertson and Plummer argue that the "outward appearance" of the world "may change and does change, season by season, although the world itself abides."¹⁸² For Harrisville too, it is not the world as such which is passing away but its outward expression.¹⁸³ For Barrett, Paul's meaning is that "the outward show" of this world is passing away, *i.e.*, "its outward pattern, in social and mercantile institutions, for example, has no permanence."¹⁸⁴ And Wimbush asserts that what is of passing character is not the κόσμος but its institutions, morals and ideals.¹⁸⁵

Such interpretations, however, rest on two questionable assumptions: first, that Paul by employing the word σχῆμα is implicitly drawing a distinction between the "outward form" of the κόσμος and its inner or essential reality;¹⁸⁶ second, that the verb παράγω simply denotes here transience or impermanence. We will return to these interpretive issues in a moment, but first we need to establish the religio-historical background of 1 Cor 7:31b.

The fact that Paul speaks of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος should make clear he is at this point firmly standing in the tradition of apocalyptic two age-world dualism. Once again, Paul has

¹⁸²Robertson and Plummer (156).

¹⁸³Harrisville (125-6). Cf. Godet (1886: 379); Morris (1958: 118); Rief (64).

¹⁸⁴Barrett (1968: 178).

¹⁸⁵Wimbush (34). Cf. Kuck (248).

¹⁸⁶For the various ways in which scholars have interpreted σχῆμα, see Hierzenberger (62). On σχῆμα see BAG 797; Schneider (1971).

in view "this world-age", apocalyptically defined, standing in contrast to "the world to come".¹⁸⁷ This is often missed by scholars as a result of their over-concentration on $\sigma\chi\eta\mu\alpha$. 1 Cor 7:31b must therefore be understood against its apocalyptic background. By speaking of the "passing away" of \acute{o} $\kappa\acute{o}\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omicron\varsigma$, almost certainly, Paul reflects the Jewish apocalyptic expectation of an impending and catastrophic cosmic change as the present world-age gives way to the future world-age.¹⁸⁸

The apocalyptic expectation has its origin in the OT belief in a coming transformation of the physical world. In the OT hope there are several main emphases: the abundant fruitfulness of the land (e.g., Hos 2:21-22), the promise of peace in the animal world and between animals and humans (e.g., Isa 11:6-9), and the transformation of the wilderness (e.g., Isa 32:15-16; 35:1-2, 6-10; 40:3-2; 43:20; 55:12-13; Ezek 47:1-12). In Isa 65:17 (cf. 66:22), for the first time, the promise of "new heavens and a new earth" appears. The imagery with which the new world is described in vv. 20-25, - longevity, safety in the land, fruitful work, absence of threat and misfortune, harmony in the animal world - indicates that what is in view is a *renewed* creation, rather than a completely new creation.¹⁸⁹

In Jewish apocalyptic literature, the expectation of a

¹⁸⁷Héring (1962: 59); Hierzenberger (58).

¹⁸⁸On this apocalyptic motif see Gowan (1985; 1986: 97-120); Mell (33-178); Volz (338-40).

¹⁸⁹Westermann (408). There are a few OT texts which appear to envisage the dissolution of the present creation: Isa 51:6; 34:4; Ps 102:26-28. It is probably best to interpret the language in these passages as poetic in nature, though some scholars take it as intended literally.

new or renewed creation is incorporated into the the two-age scheme, the present creation being equated with this world-age, and the renewed or new creation, with the coming world-age. There is divergence, though, both between and within these writings, on whether the present creation is to be transformed (*1 Enoch* 45:2-5; *Jub* 1:29; 4:26; *4 Ezra* 7:29-31; *2 Apoc. Bar.* 29:1-8, 32:6 and 57:2; *Bib. Ant.* 3:10; 19:13) or dissolved and replaced by a completely new creation (*1 Enoch* 72:1; 80:2-7; 91:16; *2 Enoch* 65:5ff; *4 Ezra* 7:39-43; *2 Apoc. Bar.* 40:3; 51:8ff; *Bib. Ant.* 16:3; 32:17).

1 Cor 7:31b probably alludes to the apocalyptic notion of the cataclysmic end of the present world-age and the appearance of a new world-age. In the light of this background, ὁ κόσμος οὗτος in 7:31b must be accorded its broadest spatial meaning - the whole world-order, non-human as well as human, which stands or has been been caught up in opposition to God.¹⁹⁰

The apocalyptic background almost compels us to take the word παράγω as having eschatological significance.¹⁹¹ Schmidt argues that the verb, which occurs nowhere else in the Pauline corpus, points to an "apocalyptic commonplace",¹⁹² παράγω corresponding to παρέρχομαι in *Matt* 5:18, 24:34-35

¹⁹⁰ *Contra* Doughty (69); Hierzenberger (58-60, 63, 65). Hierzenberger (63, 65) rejects *a priori* the possibility that Paul in this clause could be referring to the "Welteruntergang in kosmologischem...Sinn".

¹⁹¹ A similar expression ὁ κόσμος παράγει is found in *1 John* 2:17. The eschatological meaning of παράγω here is affirmed by Brown (1982: 313-4); the word clearly has an eschatological sense in *1 John* 2:8.

¹⁹² Schmidt (130).

and 2 Pet 3:10 (which is used with reference to the passing away of the present heaven and earth) and *pertransire* in 4 Ezra 4:26 (used with reference to the soon departure of this world-age). Wimbush thinks that the present tense of the verb *παράγω* rules out an eschatological sense. He claims that in contrast to the usual apocalyptic conception of the coming kingdom, according to which the "age to come" comes about by cataclysmic change, a change which is expected in the near future, Paul employs the present tense to *de-eschatologize* this idea, and to emphasize instead "the *perennial* state of affairs in the present order".¹⁹³ But we have already noted the inaugurationist strain in the eschatology of these verses: what the use of the present tense does is indicate that the eschatological process has already been set in motion.¹⁹⁴

That Paul is speaking of *ὁ κόσμος οὗτος*, conceived of in accordance with apocalyptic dualism, also tells against a distinction, on the basis of *σχῆμα*, between the "outward expression" of *ὁ κόσμος οὗτος* which disappears and the essential reality of *ὁ κόσμος οὗτος* which endures. As Héring writes, "When 'this world' is mentioned, what is always meant is our present world as something which must perish, over against '*ho kosmos ho mellon*' = 'the world to come'."¹⁹⁵ Moreover, had Paul wanted to make a distinction between *σχῆμα* and *κόσμος* he is much more likely to have said *τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου* (without *τούτου*), or *τούτο τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου*. *σχῆμα*, therefore, we must conclude, in this context

¹⁹³Wimbush (34; cf. 47).

¹⁹⁴Cf. Schmidt (130).

¹⁹⁵Héring (1962: 59).

is both a "Formbegriff" and a "Wesensbegriff":¹⁹⁶ it denotes not only the *form* of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος but also its *essence*.¹⁹⁷ The σχῆμα of "this world" is its whole state of existence. The rhetorical function of the insertion of σχῆμα, thus, is not to emphasize how discriminating the "passing away" will be, but rather to stress how extensive it will be.

To summarize, then, 1 Cor 7:31b is an eschatological statement setting forth the fact that ὁ κόσμος οὗτος has a strictly limited future. It will come to an end and *is now coming* to an end.¹⁹⁸ This world as we know and experience it is doomed to pass away.

We have seen that the Jewish apocalypticists could speak of the future of the world both in terms of transformation and annihilation. If Paul's words point in any direction, it is to the more radical belief - the physical dissolution of the present world (as in 2 Pet 3:10-13), and (presumably) its replacement by a completely new world.

Indirect support for this interpretation may be found in Paul's discussion of resurrection in 1 Cor 15:35-50. In Intertestamental Jewish thought, belief about the degree of continuity there would be between the present physical world and the new world-order often corresponded to views of the

¹⁹⁶The terminology is Hierzenberger's (65).

¹⁹⁷So Conzelmann (134); Orr and Walther (219). Both aspects are embraced in the only other occurrence of the word in the New Testament, in Phil 2:7: see Hawthorne (87-88); O'Brien (226); Schneider (1971: 956).

¹⁹⁸Observing that σχῆμα can bear the sense of a "part played in a theatre", Héring (1962: 59-60) suggests that the image in view is that of an actor passing across the stage: so also Schmidt (130). On this analogy, Paul might be saying that the part played by "this world" in the drama of salvation is almost over; it is soon to leave the stage.

degree of physical continuity there would be between present bodily existence and resurrection life.¹⁹⁹ A similar correlative pattern is thought to be present in Paul.²⁰⁰ Interestingly in 1 Cor 15:35-50, we find a stress on the discontinuity between present and future bodily existence.²⁰¹ In this passage, while Paul speaks of a resurrection body, he makes clear that it is not a resurrection of the same body.²⁰² In resurrection there is another body, a *different* body - a σῶμα πνευματικόν as opposed to the present σῶμα ψυχικόν. These two σώματα are *qualitatively* distinct. The σῶμα ψυχικόν is marked by φθορά, ἀτιμία and ἀσθένεια, while the σῶμα πνευματικόν is distinguished by ἀφθαρσία, δόξα and δύναμις (15:42-43). The σῶμα ψυχικόν, the body given to Adam at creation, is *inherently* susceptible to death and decay (as Beker states, "Paul seems to claim here that the created order itself is an order of death by divine design").²⁰³ The

¹⁹⁹ Cooper (86) writes, "The correlation between mode of existence and location of existence is a highly regular pattern in intertestamental literature." On the variety of concepts of resurrection and future existence in Jewish thinking, see Cavallin; Nickelsberg.

²⁰⁰ Cf. Harris (1983: 165-71).

²⁰¹ The relation of the σῶμα πνευματικόν to the σῶμα ψυχικόν in 1 Cor 15:44ff is much debated. Those who stress material continuity include: Ellis (1990); M.E.Dahl (94-5); Fee (1987: 777); Gillman; Sider. Those who stress discontinuity include: Conzelmann (36-8); Dunn (1977: 290); Harris (1983:126); Witherington (1992: 196).

²⁰² Witherington (1992: 197).

²⁰³ Beker (1980: 222). There is no reference here to the fall of Adam: Barrett (1968: 374). The mortality of the σῶμα ψυχικόν is a consequence of its *createdness* not its *fallenness*: this is clear from the quotation of Gen 2:7 in 15:45. Several scholars dispute the point, e.g., Clavier (351); Kim (264 n. 1); Sider 433-4. Kim argues that the

σῶμα πνευματικόν is by nature immortal, bearing the stamp of eschatological glory. The σῶμα ψυχικόν and the σῶμα πνευματικόν are also, quite evidently, *quantitatively* distinct.

The material discontinuity between the two types of somatic existence is highlighted in v. 50, where Paul insists that flesh and blood cannot (οὐ δύναται) inherit the kingdom of God.²⁰⁴ The eschewal of physical continuity is also apparent in 6:13, where Paul qualifies the Corinthian slogan, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food" by stating, "God will destroy them both" (ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ ταύτην

idea of Adam's fall is implicit. He states, "The reason why Paul contrasts Christ and Adam nevertheless without making an explicit reference to the latter's fall in 1 Cor 15:44-49, is because for Paul Adam is always a sinner...What Adam was before his fall does not interest him." What Kim fails to recognize, however, is that even an *implicit* reference to the fall of Adam would undermine Paul's argument at this point. As Lincoln (1987: 43) emphasizes, Paul is not arguing a *fortiori* that if there is a physical body subject to corruption then much more there must be a body of glory. Rather Paul is saying that from the beginning a different kind of body has been in view. Lincoln draws attention to Vos' observations. Vos (169) comments, "the Apostle was intent in showing that in the plan of God from the outset provision was made for a higher kind of body...From the abnormal body of sin no inference could be drawn to that effect. The abnormal and the eschatological are not so logically correlated that one can be postulated from the other. But the world of creation and the world to come are thus correlated, the one pointing forward to the other...." Cf. Ridderbos (1975: 524 n. 152).

²⁰⁴ Jeremias (1955/56) argues implausibly that by "flesh and blood" Paul means "the living", in contrast to "the dead". For a critique of Jeremias, see Witherington (1992: 199-200).

καὶ ταῦτα καταργήσει).²⁰⁵

If resurrection and the renewal/re-creation of the world universe are correlated in Paul's mind (as microcosm to macrocosm), his depiction of resurrection in 15:35-50 as involving the dissolution of the present body and its replacement by another certainly resonates with belief in the annihilation of the present world-order and its succession by another.²⁰⁶ 1 Cor 15:35-50 thus provides some endorsement of our understanding of 1 Cor 7:31b.

Such a declaration of anticipated destruction of the present κόσμος, as we have in 1 Cor 7:31b, to those acquainted with Greek culture could have been perceived as a challenge to the traditional Greek view of the world evoked by κόσμος: the κόσμος, which according to the tenets of classical Greek philosophy could not be said to die, Paul

²⁰⁵ The statement of 6:13b has provoked much discussion. The issue at stake is its relation to the preceding slogan of v. 13a. Is v. 13b agreeing with v. 13a (and if so, is v. 13b a statement made by the Corinthians or is it Paul's own comment?), qualifying it, or contradicting it? The question is discussed in detail by Fee (1987: 254-7) and Wedderburn (1987: 28-32). Fee understands v. 13b as the continuation of the Corinthian slogan in v. 13a, and Wedderburn sees it as Paul's own comment, but one to which the Corinthians would have assented. The view taken here is that v. 13b is Paul's statement and is intended to support the Corinthians' slogan of v. 13a - but from Paul's own apocalyptic perspective (which the Corinthians did not share). The Corinthians themselves may have argued for a libertine position on the basis of the transitoriness of bodily existence in comparison with the lasting quality of their spiritual existence.

²⁰⁶ Admittedly, a greater sense of the continuity between present and future modes of existence emerges in 1 Cor 15:51-54, where Paul speaks of "change" and employs the metaphor of clothing, connoting transformation, rather than exchange and replacement: Harris (1983: 127).

says, is actually destined for abolition and dissolution. As Héring perceives, this is a statement which undoubtedly would have scandalized Greek intellectuals.²⁰⁷ In this statement, therefore, Paul's strategy of defamiliarization of κόσμος in 1 Corinthians reaches its ideological climax.

5.6. Summary and Conclusions

We pause here to draw a few brief conclusions from these verses.

1. Paul here sets up a model of relationship to the wider society, its structures and institutions, legitimated by a particular understanding of the future of the κόσμος.
2. Specifically, 1 Cor 7:29-31 establishes a connection between the fate of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος and believers' attitude to life in the world. In view of its future demise, the Corinthians are encouraged to adopt a sense of indifference to the world, guided by the ὡς μή principle. Paul's presentation of ὁ κόσμος οὗτος as heading for eschatological destruction, therefore, has a definite social goal: it is designed to encourage a view of Christian existence as *involvement in the world without commitment to the world*. The words ὡς μή καταχρώμενοι in v. 31 function as a disincentive to *over-involvement* and enmeshment in the world and its structures.
3. 1 Cor 7:31b ought to be understood against the background of Jewish apocalyptic dualism. Paul's words are consonant with the more radical of the two options in apocalyptic writings - the final dissolution of the present κόσμος and its replacement by a new world-age.

²⁰⁷ Héring (1962: 60).

4. When viewed in the light of the Greek view of the world connoted by κόσμος, this is one of Paul's most radical statements on κόσμος, one pregnant with defamiliarizing effect.

6. 1 Cor 7:32-35: The Things of the World and the Things of God

At v. 32, the argument takes a new turn, θέλω δέ signaling the transition. Structurally, v. 32a has a twofold function: to mark the connection with vv. 29-31,²⁰⁸ and to lead into vv. 32b-35. What Paul says in vv. 32-35 is directed more toward the unmarried within the church, than, as are his words in vv. 29-31, to the community as whole. Nevertheless, he seems to have the whole congregation in view in v. 32a, in expressing his wish that *all* should be ἀμερίμνους (without anxiety).²⁰⁹

The eschatological perspective of the previous subsection is much less in evidence in 7:32-35. Paul justifies his preference for singleness on the basis of his concern that they should be free from anxiety. Nevertheless, it is highly likely that the fact that *this* κόσμος is an entity which is on its way out does have some

²⁰⁸The δέ should be understood as a simple connective, rather than as having adversative force: Fee (1987: 342). *Contra* Conzelmann (130); Wimbush (49 n. 2).

²⁰⁹Though usually taken as a noun (meaning "cares"), the word should perhaps be taken, as Fee (1987: 343) suggests, as an adjective describing a state of being - "without anxiety". The word ἀμερίμνος is found at Wis 6:15; 7:23; *T. Jud.* 3:9. In the New Testament, it appears elsewhere only at Matt 28:14. For other examples, see Bultmann (1967: 593). Balch (435) observes its occurrence in Hierocles (Stoic philosopher of the early second century CE), in a discussion on whether the wise man should marry.

bearing on Paul's instructions in these verses.

In vv. 32b-34, Paul talks about concern for *the things of the world* (τὰ τοῦ κόσμου) and concern for *the things of the Lord* (τὰ τοῦ κυρίου). The former, he states, is more characteristic of the married and the latter, of the unmarried. The structure and symmetry of vv. 32b-34 becomes clear when the text is set out as follows:²¹⁰

- a. ὁ ἄγαμος μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κυρίου, πῶς ἄρῃ τῷ κυρίῳ.
- b. ὁ δὲ γαμήσας μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου, πῶς ἄρῃ τῇ γυναικί, καὶ μεμέρισται. καὶ
- c. ἡ γυνὴ ἢ ἄγαμος καὶ ἡ παρθένος μεριμνᾷ τὰ του κυρίου, ἵνα ἡ ἀγία καὶ τῷ σώματι καὶ τῷ πνεύματι.
- d. ἡ δὲ γαμήσασα μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου, πῶς ἄρῃ τῷ ἀνδρί.

The precise meaning of Paul's words has proved less than straightforward for scholars to interpret. Two exegetical issues in particular, have to be resolved: firstly, the meaning of the verb μεριμνάω in each of its four occurrences, and secondly, the force of δέ in clauses b and d.

On the first question, three main views have been proposed; none is without its difficulties. According to the traditional interpretation, Paul uses μεριμνάω in both a positive and a negative way. Thus, as Robertson and Plummer state, "there is a right kind of μερίμνα as well as a wrong."²¹¹ The problem with this view is that it gives the verb two different senses in parallel clauses. Another approach, favoured by Barrett, takes the verb as having a

²¹⁰ On the textual variations, see the commentaries and Metzger (555-6).

²¹¹ Robertson and Plummer (157).

uniformly negative meaning.²¹² On this view, Paul is desirous that married and unmarried should be free from anxiety, *both* anxiety about the things of the world *and* about the things of the Lord. The difficulty with this view, however, is that Paul in v. 32 equates the anxiety about the things of the Lord with the desire to please the Lord, and elsewhere in Paul "pleasing the Lord" is a thoroughly laudable endeavour.²¹³ A third approach is that taken by Fee. He reads the verb as having a positive sense throughout. Thus, caring for the things of the world and caring for the things of the Lord are both presented by Paul as legitimate activities.²¹⁴ However, a uniformly positive use of *μεριμνάω* would seem to fly in the face of Paul's desire expressed in v. 32a, that all should be *ἀμερίμνους*.

Regarding the function of *δέ*, the question is whether the connective is to be understood as having its full adversative force, setting up an antithesis between concern for *τὰ τοῦ κόσμου* and concern for *τὰ τοῦ κυρίου*, or as indicating a simple contrast between two different but equally proper (as Fee argues), or equally improper, areas of interest.

Both issues, we submit, can best be resolved by focusing on the phrases *τὰ τοῦ κυρίου* and *τὰ τοῦ κόσμου*.

Too often it has been the case that interpreters have homed in on the verb *μεριμνάω* alone, forgetting that its meaning cannot be determined in isolation from other parts of the sentence. The sense with which the verb is used is,

²¹² Barrett (1968: 179-80); so also Balch (434-5).

²¹³ Rom 8:8; 1 Thess 2:15; 4:1; 2 Cor 5:9.

²¹⁴ Fee (1987: 344-5).

as Wimbush rightly insists,²¹⁵ dependent on its object: in lines a and c the object is τὰ τοῦ κυρίου, and in b and d, τὰ τοῦ κόσμου. τὰ τοῦ κυρίου, the Lord's business, is incontestably something positive. It ought to follow then that μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κυρίου is understood by Paul as a valid and commendable activity. This is confirmed by the qualifying clause of line a, πῶς ἀρέσῃ τῷ κυρίῳ. What then of τὰ τοῦ κόσμου? Up to this point in the epistle, κόσμος has carried pejorative connotations in its various occurrences: the negative use of the word seems to be a deliberate and sustained policy on the part of Paul. Moreover, Paul's words here in vv. 32b-34 follow closely on vv. 29-31 (to which, as has been pointed out, vv. 32-34 are structurally connected), where as we have seen Paul discourages over-involvement in the world on the grounds that the σχῆμα of the κόσμος is "passing away". In the light of these facts, it is difficult to accept that τὰ τοῦ κόσμου bears a positive meaning.

It seems likely that κόσμος in vv. 33-34 is used with a sense close to "the world as the scene of earthly joys, possessions, cares, sufferings",²¹⁶ rather than the world sharply at odds with God. This denotation accords more with the qualifying clauses in lines b and d, πῶς ἀρέσῃ τη γυναικί and πῶς ἀρέσῃ τῷ ἀνδρί. κόσμος here is the world as it distracts believers from the Lord's business and places obstacles in way of their personal holiness (ἵνα ἡ ἀγία καὶ τῷ σώματι καὶ τῷ πνεύματι).²¹⁷ μεριμνᾷ τὰ τοῦ κόσμου, on this

²¹⁵Wimbush (51-2; 64).

²¹⁶BAG 447.

²¹⁷Here, then, we have a relative rather than a radical devaluation of κόσμος.

basis can hardly be viewed, in the way that Fee suggests, as a legitimate activity.

Thus, the traditional view on the verb μεριμνάω remains the most plausible: the verb has a positive meaning when used in connection with the things of the Lord and a negative meaning when used with reference to the things of the world. The contrariety of τὰ τοῦ κυρίου and τὰ τοῦ κόσμου also means that the δέ in lines b and d is signalling a strong contrast between the two types of concern.

The point that Paul is making in vv. 32b-34 is that the married state for both men and women entails a greater exposure to and engagement in the affairs of the world - which is bad, or at least not desirable - whereas being single means having more opportunity for attending to the things of the Lord - which is good. Thus singleness is preferable to marriage. It is not marriage in itself which is bad or undesirable, but the type of concern which, in Paul's mind, it inevitably occasions.

In spite of the way in which Paul lays down his point, by setting out two stark and seemingly exclusive possibilities, the thrust of his argument is that marriage brings a more weighty concern for the things of the world than does singleness. The real problem for the married believer is not that his/her sole concern is for the world's affairs, but that s/he has a conflict of interests: καὶ μεμέρισται. This phrase can only reasonably mean that the married man is divided between pleasing the Lord and pleasing his wife, between having a concern for the things of the Lord and having a concern for the things of world. That such a division of interests is Paul's real reservation about marriage in this passage is made clear in v. 35, where Paul states the purpose of what he has been saying: that

they might live before the Lord in an unhindered way.

In 1 Cor 7:32-35, then, Paul, again draws a distinction between the sphere of the Lord and the sphere of the world, though not, it seems, in as sharply dualistic a manner as in most of the previous instances of κόσμος in this epistle (κόσμος is not the apocalyptic realm of hostility to Christ and the church but the world insofar as it embroils a person into its activities, diverting the attention of believers away from devotion to their Lord). He brings this distinction to bear directly on the discussion of the pros and cons of marriage and singleness. Building on his immediately preceding word to the whole community cautioning them against over-involvement in the world's structures (7:29-31), he justifies his preference for singleness by arguing that the married state entails an inordinate and disproportionate concern for *the things of the world*.

7. 1 Cor 8:4-6: "No Idol in the World"

We return now to 1 Cor 8:4-6. We have already noted the light (albeit the rather dim light) 8:4 sheds on how the Corinthians might themselves have used and understood the word κόσμος. We must now consider how this positive use of κόσμος fits with Paul's negative talk of κόσμος in the rest of the epistle. To do so we will have to address two subsidiary questions: 1) To what extent does 8:4-6 and the world view it betokens represent the theoretical justification of the ethical stance of the Corinthian "strong"? 2) How does Paul respond to their theological rationale for their actions? Before addressing these questions, we must first look at 8:4-6 a little more closely.

7.1. Examination of 8:4-6

As noted above, 8:4 represents a quotation from the Corinthian letter to Paul. It is likely that Paul's quotation from their letter extends into vv. 5-6, in which case the whole unit, 1 Cor 8:4-6, represents the Corinthian γνῶσις (cf. 8:1), to which appeal was made in favour of eating idol-meat and attending meals in the temple dining-rooms.²¹⁸

The first assertion, οὐδὲν εἰδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ, is slightly ambiguous: the οὐδέεν can either be understood as an attribute ("no idol exists in the world") or as a predicate ("an idol is nothing in the world"). Though an interesting case for the second option is made by Murphy-O'Connor,²¹⁹ most scholars favour the first, in view of the apparent parallelism with the following clause. The Corinthian claim, then, is that an εἰδωλον has no genuine reality. εἰδωλον here seems to denote not so much the statue representing the deity, but more the deity represented by the image. This reflects a standard Jewish use of the term εἰδωλον.²²⁰

The second assertion gives the reason for the first: οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς. The fact that there is no God except the one God renders the gods of paganism nonentities.

Vv. 5-6 constitute a complete sentence in Greek. The

²¹⁸ The view that Paul's quotation of the Corinthian letter continues into vv. 5-6 is taken by a number of interpreters: e.g., Grosheide (192); Parry (87); Willis (83-7); Winter (1990: 220-1). For further references see Hurd (121). Willis makes a persuasive case in favour of this interpretation.

²¹⁹ Murphy-O'Connor (1978b).

²²⁰ Bûschel (377).

γάρ of v. 5 indicates a link with the preceding affirmations. As stated, these verses make good sense as further representing the argument of the Corinthian strong. It is likely, as Willis has argued, that the parenthetical "as there are many gods (θεοί) and many lords (κύριοι)" is Paul's own qualification.²²¹ This being the case, it would follow, as Horsley contends, that Paul is taking issue, to some extent, with the previous assertion, οὐδὲν εἰδωλὸν ἐν κόσμῳ.²²² That Paul is in fact doing so becomes clear as the argument of 1 Corinthians 8-10 proceeds.

V. 6 is quite likely a creedal formulation which existed prior to the writing of 1 Corinthians and which may well have been put together by Paul himself for use in his churches. The confession begins with the fundamental monotheistic claim of Judaism: there is one God, the Father. To this is appended the clause, ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα; this is Stoic terminology.²²³ There is, however, no thought of Stoic pantheism here; God is understood as standing apart from the universe as its creator and source. Interestingly, where we might have expected it to say next, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα (as in Rom 11:36), the confession continues, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν, ("and we for him", or "and for whom we are"): the emphasis is thus placed, more personally, on God as the goal of human (or perhaps, more specifically, Christian) existence.

The second part of the confession focuses on Christ, as

²²¹ Willis (86).

²²² Horsley (1980: 50).

²²³ Marcus Aurelius, *Medit.* 4:23; Ps-Arist., *Mund.* 6; Seneca, *Ep.* 65:8. Cf. Philo, *Cher.* 127; *Det.* 54; *Leg. All.* 3.96; *Opif.* 24-5; *Sacr.* 8. See further Conzelmann (144-5).

mediator in God's creative and redemptive purposes: there is one Lord Jesus Christ, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα, "through whom are all things".²²⁴ In parallel to the καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν, used with regard to ὁ πατήρ in v. 6a, the confession closes with the words, καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ.

As already noted, κόσμος here denotes the physical universe in its entirety.²²⁵ This is clear from the corresponding words, ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ, and τὰ πάντα. The whole κόσμος is viewed as God's good creation,²²⁶ flowing from God, and as dependent on him (with Christ as the divine agent).

7.2. The Crisis in Corinth and the Position of the "Strong"

The Corinthian believers had to cope with "the complexities of daily life which was presided over by Corinth's deities"²²⁷. Two issues had pressed in on the Corinthians: 1) whether or not it was permissible to eat the meat which was bought after being sacrificed to idols (most of the meat available for

²²⁴As Dunn (1980: 180) observes, what is striking about these two assertions is that the *Shema*, the Jewish statement of monotheism is thereby split between God the Father and Christ the Lord, and that the more familiar Stoic formulation, "from him - through him" is split between the one God and the one Lord.

²²⁵Murphy O'Connor's (1978a) suggestion that 1 Cor 8:6 has to do with soteriology and not at all with cosmology is quite implausible. As Dunn (1980: 329 n. 69) states, "The issue at Corinth...was precisely that of the correct attitude to and use of created things". Dunn rightly asks, "How could a first-century reader have failed to understand 'the all' when described as 'from' the 'one God' and 'through' the 'one Lord' as other than a reference to creation?"

²²⁶Conzelmann (144).

²²⁷Winter (1990: 209).

purchase had passed through such rites); 2) whether Christians could attend temple banquets (even as social occasions these still had an avowedly religious character).²²⁸ Two different responses to these issues emerged within the church. Some (most likely some of the church's leading and most influential members), implicitly dubbed the "strong" by Paul, felt no scruples about either activity, judging themselves to be free to engage in both. The "weak" did not have the $\gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ of the "strong" (8:7), taking the view that it is wrong for a Christian either to go to the temples or to eat idol-meat.

The problem was raised by the Corinthians in their letter to Paul, quite possibly in response to advice that Paul had already given them in his previous letter to them. It appears that the Corinthians had taken exception to this earlier advice.²²⁹ It was perhaps also the case that in the eyes of both the "strong" and the "weak", Paul's authority to advise on the matter was seriously weakened by his own apparent inconsistency on eating idol-meat sold in the market (9:19-23).

It is clear from 8:4-6 that the behaviour of the "strong" is justified primarily on the $\gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ of the oneness of God and the consequent non-reality of pagan gods. This fundamental knowledge renders eating idol-meat and attending the temples of the pagan deities matters of indifference. Quite possibly, the belief about the $\kappa\acute{o}\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ =universe

²²⁸ These issues also presented themselves to Diaspora Jews. Ordinarily Jews took a conservative line: see Winter (1991: 218-9). On some other issues, however they were sometimes forced to compromise: Winter (1991: 217-8).

²²⁹ N.M.Watson (1992: 83).

entailed in 8:4-6 also informed their stance. If the κόσμος derives from God, is sustained (through Christ) and ruled over by him, then believers have the freedom to enjoy *all* that God has made, including presumably *all* the food which the earth produces under his providence.

To a large extent the γνῶσις which constituted the theoretical defence of the Corinthian "strong", in all probability derived from Paul's own teaching.²³⁰

On the basis of their γνῶσις, the strong believed themselves to have ἐξουσία - the "right" and the "freedom"²³¹ - to eat meat regardless of where it is bought or eaten (8:9).²³² Since food is a matter of irrelevance to God (8:8), the question of what and where one eats does not affect the believer's relationship with God nor does it make the believer any better or any worse off. Apparently, they even claimed that their insistence in exercising their right to eat idol meat actually served to embolden the weaker believers who felt restrained on this matter (8:10)!

7.3. Paul's Response

Paul's critique of the position of the "strong" focuses more on the brazen and inconsiderate attitude they have displayed, both in their conduct and in their justification of it, than on the theological basis of their stance. He objects to the way the "strong" had asserted their freedom in these matters. Love, not γνῶσις, he stresses, ought to govern the actions of believers toward each other, since

²³⁰ And this is perhaps why Paul needed to give such a lengthy reply: so Winter (1991: 221).

²³¹ Both ideas are probably present: Willis (111).

²³² Cf 6:12; 10:23.

γνώσις inflates and leads to pride, while love builds up (8:1-3). Love also places limits on the exercise of ἐξουσία, even if that ἐξουσία has legitimate grounds (8:7-13). Reminding the "strong" of their responsibility toward the less enlightened within the congregation, Paul insists that concern for the spiritual well-being of a fellow Christian must take precedence over the right to exercise one's own liberty. Paul appeals to his own conduct in this regard (9:1-23).²³³ The primary ethical consideration in this whole matter is the priority of love (10:24; 10:32-11:1).

Given the emphasis on the primacy of love in Paul's response to the "strong", are we to conclude that he is largely in agreement with their theological position? Paul aligns himself in principle with the "strong" on the question of the private eating of idol meat. Moreover, he argues his case from the belief that the world is God's good creation, as we suspect the "strong" might have done: in 10:25-26, Paul declares that anything may be eaten that is bought in the marketplace, citing as justification Ps 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything that is in it" (cf. 1 Tim 4:4).²³⁴ Even so, Paul has significant reservations as

²³³The primary argumentative purpose of 9:1-27 is apologetic: Paul is conducting a trenchant defence of his apostolic authority: see Fee (1987: 392-4). Nevertheless, a secondary admonitory purpose, in accordance with which Paul offers himself as an example of one who is willing to forego his rights for the sake of others, is probably also in view as he writes.

²³⁴Orr and Walther (255) write, "The Psalmist has declared the proprietary control of the Lord over *the earth and that which fills it*; therefore all food belongs to God, and the right to eat it cannot be refused when it is sold merely as food." The rabbis of a later period cited Ps 24:1 in

to the Corinthians' theological stance, and in particular to their claim, οὐδὲν εἰδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ.

Those reservations are made clear in 8:7-8 and 10:19-21. In 8:7-8 Paul points out that there are those who do not have the γνῶσις that "an idol is nothing in the world": they are still "accustomed to idols", and, with their conscience being weak, see sacrificial meat as defiled. Paul recognizes, and bids the "strong" to recognize that for these weaker believers, "their former [pagan] way of life is woven into their consciousness and emotions in such a way that the old associations cannot thus be lightly disregarded."²³⁵ More significantly, at the climax of his extended warning and argument against idolatry in 10:1-22, Paul declares that the sacrifices of pagans are in fact sacrifices to demons.²³⁶ This is an important departure from the Corinthian position. While the "strong" had rightly (in Paul's view) asserted that the idols do not represent deities - since "there is no God but one" - what they had failed to realize was that standing behind the false pagan gods were supernatural powers. It is true, Paul acknowledges, that pagans *do not* offer sacrifices to a god,²³⁷

support of their claim that a blessing should be said before every meal. The application of the text to this end may have been in place in Paul's day: see Fee (1987: 482).

²³⁵ Fee (1987: 379).

²³⁶ The word δαιμόνιον in Greek and Hellenistic usage is used for divine intermediary beings with no necessary connotations of evil: Foerster (1964: 8-9). Paul, however, clearly enough refers to hostile spiritual powers.

²³⁷ Fee (1987: 472 n. 47) rightly argues, in our view, that to take "God" in the allusion to Deut 32:17 in 10:20 as a reference to the God of Christianity "would be irrelevant

but, he insists, they *do* sacrifice to demons (10:20).²³⁸ Thus a believer "cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons" (10:21).

7.4. Conclusions

To return to our primary question, How does the positive use of κόσμος in 8:4 square with Paul's negative and defamiliarizing usage that has figured in the letter so far?

1. The use of κόσμος in 8:4 is first and foremost a Corinthian use. Paul is repeating *their* slogan.
2. The assertion οὐδέν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ does not reflect Paul's views. As we have seen, Paul takes up the slogan precisely in order to qualify and criticize it.
3. The affirmations of the physical world as God's good creation in 8:5-6 (a confessional statement) and 10:25-26 (a scriptural citation) use terms other than κόσμος.

There is therefore nothing in 8:4-6 to damage our contention that κόσμος in 1 Corinthians is almost entirely confined to a negative and polemical line of usage and this as part of a conscious strategy by Paul.

8. 1 Cor 11:32: Condemned with the World

The last occurrence of κόσμος in 1 Corinthians which we will

at best." He translates the words οὐ θεῶν, "not to a being who might rightly be termed God" (471-2).

²³⁸ In this, Paul reiterates an established line of polemic against the gods within Judaism. The idea that idols represent evil spirits is already present in the OT. As well as Deut 32:17, see Ps 106:37; Is 65:3, 11; Bar 4:7. For examples in other Jewish writings of the second temple period, see Jub 11:4-6; 22:16-22; *1 Enoch* 19; 99:6-10; *T. Naph* 3:3-4.

will look at very briefly now is in 11:32, at the conclusion of Paul's reply to the problem of abuses at the Lord's Supper in chapter 11.

Paul ends his response on the note of judgement (11:29-32). He asserts that anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the Lord's body, that is, without appreciating the communal significance of the meal (their failure in this respect being evidenced by their treatment of the lowlier members of the congregation), brings God's judgement upon him/herself. Judgement on the community is in fact already taking place - in the illness and death of some members of the community. This judgement, however, Paul explains is disciplinary, even in the case of those who have died. Its aim is to ensure their salvation at the final judgement. It has been meted out upon them expressly in order to prevent them from being *condemned with the world* (ἵνα μὴ σὺν τῷ κόσμῳ κατακριθῶμεν).

κόσμος in 11:32 clearly denotes the unrighteous who stand condemned at the last assize. Here, then, we have another instance of the use of κόσμος with reference to the world apart from the church. And while the primary purpose of Paul's statement in the final clause is to defend the idea of God punishing believers, by contrasting the judgement of believers with that of the unrighteous, at a deeper rhetorical level it effectively functions to reinforce the distinction between the non-believing world and the church, which Paul has been pressing throughout.

C. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Corinthian community's boundaries seem to have been too

loosely defined for Paul. Paul uses κόσμος, we have argued, to reconstruct the symbolic universe of his readers in such a way as to condition a sharpening of the group's boundaries with the macrosociety.

We have suggested that Paul's use of κόσμος in this epistle may be understood in terms of a socio-rhetorical strategy of defamiliarization: Paul extricates the word from its network of conventional links (and ensuing social consequences) and creates for his readers a whole new range of associations. The primary context of reference into which κόσμος is now placed is the dominant apocalyptic framework of the letter. In this context κόσμος denotes the antithesis to the realm of Christ and believers, shown to be under the judgement of God as declared in the cross, and on its way to eschatological destruction.

By placing Paul's use of κόσμος in 1 Corinthians within its situational context, socio-rhetorical strategy, theological frame of reference and the more general context of culture (*i.e.*, κόσμος in Greek usage and the Greek concept of the world as κόσμος, as outlined in Chapter Two), we have been able to bring out with greater clarity, what is distinctive about Paul's usage, what Paul is challenging, and what he aims to achieve in doing so.

In the process of defamiliarization, the world view recoded (to use Fowler's terminology)²³⁹ is radically different from the world view *uncoded*. The former is in fact an inversion of the latter. Whereas the Corinthians, from their Hellenistic perspective, would have quite possibly thought of themselves as integrated into the κόσμος or at least viewed

²³⁹ See Chapter One, Section 2.

this as desirable, they are now to see themselves as fundamentally distinct from the κόσμος, and even in opposition to it. This recoding also has a bearing on the inner life of the church - with respect to the problem of socio-economic divisions. Paul emphasizes that the social categorizations legitimated and encoded by κόσμος are completely overturned in the church (1:26-30).

On a few occasions, Paul does use κόσμος neutrally or positively (5:10; 8:4; 14:10). But Paul's usage in 1 Corinthians is overwhelmingly negative and critical. There are varying degrees of negativity: in 4:9, 13, it is the *relation* of believers to the κόσμος, rather than the κόσμος itself which is portrayed negatively; in 7:32ff, the κόσμος is *relatively* devalued as an impediment to holiness. For the most part, κόσμος is disparaged in radical terms as the old world-age at enmity with God which has fallen under the sway of evil forces and which is doomed to pass away. κόσμος when used with this sense is seen as the enemy of believers: this is especially clear when the κόσμος is depicted as an apocalyptic, anti-godly power (1:21; 3:19).

In socio-rhetorical terms, κόσμος primarily functions to emphasize the social duality between believers and the rest of the society. Such social dualism is particularly pronounced in 1 Corinthians: the contrast between the "saved" and the "perishing" (1:18-21), believers and unbelievers (14:22-24), insiders and outsiders (5:12). Strikingly, there is little evidence of a universalist perspective in this epistle which, as Meeks points out, tends to encourage a degree of openness to the wider society.²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Meeks (1983a: 107). 1 Cor 15:22 states that as in Adam, all die (ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν), so in Christ

Paul's utterances on κόσμος have different individual rhetorical and social functions which vary according to the matter on hand: to disparage wisdom (1:18-3:23); to change attitudes toward social status (1:26-30); to emphasize the contrast between Paul's experience of alienation and deprivation with the Corinthians' experience of comfort and ease, and to set out his "relation to the world" as the paradigm of all believers (4:9-13); to affirm that maintaining boundaries between the church and the world does not mean withdrawing from the world (5:10); to restrain litigation (6:1-2); to counsel non-determination by the world and to caution against over-involvement in the world (7:29-31); to endorse Paul's preference for the single life (7:32-34); to justify God's present judgement upon the community by viewing it in the light of the final judgement (11:32). But the *overall effect and larger aim* of Paul's statements is the establishment of a clear boundary between the church and the rest of society, so as to impede what Paul perceives as a situation of social and ideological compromise in the Corinthian congregation.

all shall be made alive (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται). The parallelism might seem to imply that just as *all* human beings die, *all* will likewise be raised. However, in both clauses, πάντες is qualified: in the first by ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ, and in the second by ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ. There is thus a distinction between humanity in Adam and those who are in Christ, *i.e.*, believers. So Conzelmann (269); Boring (279); Barrett (1968: 352). Boring (280) suggests that the words τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν in 1 Cor 15:28 imply that all will ultimately be saved. But this is a dubious inference. At no other point in 15:20-28 does Paul talk about unbelievers; it would be unwise therefore to draw any conclusions here about their final destiny (since we could equally counter-claim that unbelievers are included in the destruction of Christ's enemies in 15:24-26).

CHAPTER FOUR

ROMANS

In comparison with Paul's talk of κόσμος in 1 Corinthians, his use of κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans is much less accessible to socio-rhetorical analysis. In the case of 1 Corinthians, our task was facilitated by the comparatively large amount of information in that epistle about the social context of the readers and the clarity with which Paul's motives and goals in writing can be identified. When we come to Romans our path is not so smooth.

In recent years, there has been a lively debate over Paul's purpose(s) in writing Romans: Ought the epistle to be viewed as arising out of Paul's own concerns or as a response to the particular needs of the Roman churches? A consensus has emerged that no one single purpose can account for Paul's writing to Rome and that due attention must be paid to both Paul's concerns and the circumstances of the readers.¹ Moreover, as a result of the rehabilitation of chapter 16,² it is now more readily recognized that Paul had a fair knowledge of the character and structure of the Roman Christian community.³ Yet in spite of these advances, it

¹See Donfried (1991b).

²Following Gamble's exhaustive text-critical analysis, Romans 16, once commonly regarded as a later addition, is now viewed by the majority as an integral part of the original epistle.

³On the evidence which can be gleaned about Roman

remains an unsettled question how far the theological arguments of Romans 1:18-11:36, where with one exception (Rom 1:8) occurrences of κόσμος and κτίσις are located, bear upon the concrete needs of the readers.⁴

In view of this uncertainty, in investigating Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις in this letter, we will reverse the approach adopted in the previous chapter. We will first conduct an exegesis of the texts in which κόσμος and κτίσις occur, noting the senses with which the terms are used and their place and significance in Paul's theological formulations. Then, exercising due caution, we will consider the question of what social functions these uses might have been intended to serve in the situation of his readers.

A. THE THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF REFERENCE

The sustained exposition of Romans 1:18-11:36 is the closest Paul comes to a systematic account of his theology. The treatise begins in 1:18-3:20 with a description of the human plight, culminating in a charge of universal sinfulness (3:9-20),⁵ the bleak analysis providing the foil for the

Christianity from Romans 16, see esp. P.Lampe (1987: 124-53; 1991).

⁴F.Watson's study (88-176) is the most ambitious attempt to date to relate the theological discussion of Romans 1-11 to the actual situation of the Roman Christians.

⁵That Romans 1:18-3:20 aims at demonstrating that every human being has sinned has been questioned recently by several scholars: Bassler (1982; 1984); G.N.Davies; Ziesler (1989: 41-2). The weight of evidence for the traditional viewpoint, however, remains overwhelming. 3:9 indicates that Paul clearly regards the previous part of his argument as laying down the charge that all (πάντας) are under sin;

explication of God's redemptive work in Christ to follow. The heart and basis of that salvation is set forth in 3:21-31. Paul's thesis of justification by faith is defended in 4:1-25, Abraham providing an important test case.⁶ A description of justified and reconciled life follows in 5:1-11. Summarizing the development so far and paving the way for the next main stage of the argument,⁷ 5:12-21 presents a comprehensive review of human history under the headships of Adam and Christ. Chapters 6-7 elucidate the deliverance from the tyrannies of sin, death and the law which Christ has accomplished for believers. 8:1-17 deals with life in the power of the Spirit. The discussion is brought to a climax in 8:18-30 with a focus on the future hope that outweighs present sufferings; 8:31-39 celebrates the victory of God's love in Christ. Romans 9-11 picks up several loose threads left dangling from the argumentation of chapters 1-8 as Paul grapples with the problem of Israel's large-scale rejection of the messiah and the theological

that there are no exceptions to this charge is hammered home in the catena of 3:10-18.

The purpose of 1:18-3:20, however, is not exhausted as an argument for universal guilt: the cutting edge of 1:18-3:20, made clear in chapter 2, is that Jews and Gentiles stand on equal footing before God (and equally in need), therefore Jews have no special and automatic claim on God's righteousness (Dunn 1988: 156-60, cf. 152, 154-5; Moo (89-90). On the rhetorical coherence of Rom 1:18-3:20, see Aletti.

⁶ Dunn (1988: 196); F. Watson (135-42).

⁷ So de Boer (148-9); Dunn (1988: 271); Wilckens (1978: 307); Wright (1991: 36). N.A. Dahl (1977b: 82, 90-91), whose analysis of the argument of Romans has been quite influential, views the whole of chapter 5, but particularly vv. 1-11, as the bridge between the preceding argument and the treatment which follows.

questions this raises.

Whether there is a single theme around which Paul's thought is organized or a number of inter-connected ones (a focus of attention in recent discussion⁸) is a matter of unresolved controversy in which we need not get embroiled here. But if one is looking for unifying elements in the theology of Romans, the prominence of creation terminology and motifs ought not to be neglected. Though seldom appreciated, creation categories occupy an important place in Paul's theological development in Romans.⁹

Heavy emphasis is laid in this epistle on the understanding of God as creator (1:19, 20, 25; 4:17; 9:19-24; 11:23-24, 36). Concern is shown to correlate God's redeeming activity very closely with his role and activity as creator. The divine designation of 4:17b indicates that God's ability to give life to the dead, manifested supremely in the resurrection of Christ (4:24-25), is consonant with his power to create *ex nihilo*.¹⁰ The discussion of the place of Israel in God's plans in Romans 9-11 closes with a doxology affirming God as the source (ἐξ αὐτοῦ), mediator (δι' αὐτοῦ)

⁸ See Beker (1991); Stuhlmacher (1991).

⁹ See Achtemeier (15-26); Byrne (1990); Garlington; Kraftchick; Stuhlmacher (1987: 9-11), and esp. Shields (1980).

¹⁰ See the reflections of Käsemann (1971b: 90-3; 1980: 121-4); Shields (1980: 51-4). The description of God combines three characteristic themes of Jewish theology: resurrection, the act of creation as an effectual "call", and *creatio ex nihilo*: Dunn (1988: 217-8). The first part of the designation corresponds to the second of the Eighteen Benedictions (cf. *Jos. As.* 8:9-10; 20:7), on which see Moxnes (1980: 233-9). Hofius highlights the similarity of Rom 4:17b with 2 Macc 7:28: in both texts, God's *creatio ex nihilo* is linked with his power to raise from the dead.

and goal (εἰς αὐτόν) of the material creation (τὰ πάντα),¹¹ thus showing that the sweep of God's purposes in the course of salvation history is encompassed within an all-embracing purpose for creation.

There is good reason for believing that the creational dimension of God's saving activity is implied in the key expression, the "righteousness of God", widely regarded as the dominant theme of the epistle.¹² Käsemann circumvented the impasse in the traditional debate as to whether δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ denotes *God's own* righteousness (taking θεοῦ as a subjective genitive) or the righteousness which *comes from God* (taking θεοῦ as an objective genitive), by asserting that δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ has both a "power" and a "gift" character.¹³ Interpreting Paul's view against the OT and Jewish apocalyptic background, Käsemann argued that God's righteousness for Paul is a broad concept with cosmic significance. The phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, for Käsemann, speaks of God's covenant faithfulness toward the whole of creation. He writes, "God's power reaches out for the world, and the world's salvation lies in its being recaptured for the sovereignty of God".¹⁴ Although Käsemann's views are by no means uncontroversial, his emphasis both on the OT and Jewish background of Paul's usage and on the

¹¹ Cf. 1 Cor 8:6. The absence of a reference to Christ in Rom 11:36 is indicative of the theocentricity of Romans.

¹² Stuhlmacher's (1991) essay is a recent re-statement of this point of view.

¹³ He writes (1969b: 174), "the gift which is being bestowed here is never at any time separable from its Giver. It partakes of the character of power, in so far as God himself enters the arena and remains in the arena with it."

¹⁴ Käsemann (1969b: 182).

comprehensiveness of the conception has won large support.¹⁵ The wide perspective on God's righteousness, which can be borne out by an analysis of the texts in Romans,¹⁶ underscores the unity of God's creative and redemptive activity.

Creation motifs figure at significant points in the argument of chapters 1-8. First, in chapters 1-3: Gentile wickedness in Rom 1:18-32 is depicted as a radical and paradoxical departure from God's creatorial intentions for men and women.¹⁷ In 2:7 Paul declares that those who do good works in pursuit of δόξα, τιμή and ἀφθαρσία, will be rewarded with eternal life on judgement day: the goal to be sought after is specifically defined in terms of the end which God had in view in creating humanity.¹⁸ Paul argues in 2:14-15

¹⁵ See the review of the discussion in Brauch; Onseti and Brauch.

¹⁶ See Kertelge; Stuhlmacher (1966).

¹⁷ The following echoes of Genesis 1-2 in Rom 1:18-32 may be detected: 1) the reference to the act of creation in Rom 1:20 (ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου) pointing back to Gen 1:1; 2) the list of animals (πετεινόν, τετράπους, ἑρπετόν) and the order in which they occur closely following Gen 1:20-25 (see Hyldahl); 3) the use of θῆλυς and ἄρσεν in Rom 1:26 alluding to the statement of Gen 1:27 that God created human beings male and female; 4) the use of εἰκόν in Rom 1:23 perhaps hinting at the creation of humanity in the image of God (Wedderburn 1980, 416); 5) the words οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες ἄξιοι θανάτου εἰσὶν in Rom 1:32 suggesting the prohibition and the threat of death in Gen 2:17 (Dunn 1988: 69).

Following Hooker (1959/60) and Jervell (312-31), a number of scholars believe that Paul is modeling the critique of Rom 1:18-32 on the story of Adam's fall in Genesis 3 (see e.g., Allen (14-15); Bruce (1985: 80); Dunn (1988: 53); Milne (1980: 10-12); Ziesler (1989: 75). Close scrutiny, however, shows the evidence for this view to be less than convincing: see Scroggs (1966: 75-6 n. 3); Wedderburn (1980: 413-9).

¹⁸ Dunn (1988: 85-6, 168). Cf. Ps 8:5. For the restoration or

that the Gentiles, as a result of God's creative act,¹⁹ have a law within their hearts, an instinctual moral awareness, which functions as an equivalent to the Jewish law. Paul's summary charge in 3:23 that all have fallen short τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ suggests a replication of the sin of Adam by all human beings and a consequent sharing in his fate.²⁰

Secondly, in chapter 4. Highlighting the relation between the divine predicates of 4:5, 17, 24, Stuhlmacher argues that Paul appears to present God's justification of the ungodly as a new act of creation.²¹ In 4:20, Abraham's faith is depicted as the reversal of the failure of the Gentiles in 1:21 (δοῦς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ; cf. 1:21, γνόντες τὸν θεὸν οὐχ ὡς θεὸν ἐδόξασαν): Abraham renders the proper response to the creator.²²

Thirdly, in chapters 5-8. Paul in 5:12-21 develops the Adam/Christ parallelism: Christ, the new Adam, has reversed the calamitous effects of the disobedience of the old. Much of the discussion that follows in chapters 6-8 operates within that Adam/Christ framework. Christians have been liberated from the regimes of sin and death introduced by

intensification of glory as a future hope, see *1 Enoch* 50:1 (in conjunction with "honour"); *2 Apoc. Bar.* 15:8; 51:1-3; 54:15, 21; CD 3:20 IQS 4:23. That God created human beings for ἀφθαρσία is stated in *Wis* 2:23.

¹⁹Cf. Shields (1980: 9-19).

²⁰Scroggs (1966: 73-4); Dunn (1980: 102-3; 1988: 168); D.A.Campbell (172). Adam's transgression was frequently thought to have resulted in a loss or distortion of glory, e.g., *Sir* 49:16, *2 Enoch* 30:11-18; *Apoc. Mos.* 21:6. See further Scroggs (1966: 26, 48-9). For rabbinic references, see Str-B 4:887.

²¹Stuhlmacher (1966: 386); cf. Käsemann (1980: 112-13, 123).

²²Dunn (1988: 221).

Adam, and have been transferred to the realm of righteousness. The eternal life forfeited by Adam (Gen 2:9, 17; 3:22), the hallmark of the new creation order (5:21), is the present possession of believers (6:4, 11, 13, 22-23). Paul declares in 6:6 that the "old man" (ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος) has been crucified, signaling believers' disengagement from solidarity with Adam.²³ The Adamic background of 7:7-13, where Paul discusses the relation of law to sin, is widely recognized.²⁴ It is quite possible that the allusion to Adam carries over into 7:14-25,²⁵ where Paul describes the debilitating experience of living under the law without the aid of the Spirit.²⁶ An allusion to Adam's fall, it is generally accepted, is present in 8:18-23. Adamic Christology and soteriology are to the fore in the climactic

²³ Moo (390).

²⁴ Allusions to the story of Adam and Eve in this sub-section are listed by Theissen (1987: 202-8) and F.Watson (152). The link Paul makes between the commandment given to Adam and the giving of the law at Sinai is paralleled in other Jewish texts (4 Ezra 7:11; Tg. Neof. Gen 2:15; Gen. Rab. 16:5-6; 24:5; b. Sanh. 56). So too, his depiction in 7:7 of the sin of Adam and Eve as an infringement of the tenth commandment (Apoc. Mos 19:3; Apoc. Abr. 24:10); lust or covetousness was frequently seen as the root of all lawlessness and sin (e.g., Apoc. Mos. 19:3; Philo, Decal. 142; 150; 173; Opif. 152; Jas 1:15). See further, Wedderburn (1980: 420-2); Dunn (1988: 379-80).

²⁵ Cf. Longenecker (1964: 114). F.Watson (155) writes, "7:14-25...is to be linked v. 13 and thus with the passage as a whole. The present tense merely indicates that Paul is discussing the enduring effects of the primal event described in vv. 7-12."

²⁶ For a detailed defence of this view of Rom 7:14-25, see Kümmel (1974). The case for interpreting the passage in terms of Christian experience is put forward by Dunn (1975), and more recently, Garlington. For bibliography, see Dunn (1988: 374-5); Fitzmyer (1993a: 477-9).

verses, Rom 8:29-30: Christ is the founder of a new eschatological humanity (πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς); through Christ, God's original creative purposes for human beings, bearing God's εἰκόν and reflecting his δόξα, are now being brought to fulfillment (συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνας, ἐδόξασεν).²⁷

The proliferation of creation motifs in 1:18-32 and 8:18-30, the opening section and the climax of the main discussion, indicates their key position in the structure of his argument. The whole exposition of 1:18-11:36 begins and ends with a focus on God the creator.

In the light of the above, it is difficult to disagree with Achtemeier's conclusion that the sweep of Paul's thought in Romans concerns "the course of the history of God's dealings with his creation, from its rebellion against him to its final redemption."²⁸

The strong emphasis on God as creator and providential ruler and the world as his creation, which, as we shall see, tempers the dualistic aspects of Paul's apocalyptic outlook in this epistle, is the dominant perspective out of which Paul's use of κόσμος and κτίσις emerges, and indeed is the perspective which his usage serves to articulate.

B. ANALYSIS OF TEXTS

We begin our analysis with Rom 1:19-21. We may glide over the instance of κόσμος in 1:8, where, as we noted in our

²⁷ Dunn (1988: 482-6).

²⁸ Achtemeier (13).

Introduction, the word has the sense of "inhabited world".²⁹ Appearing in the epistolary thanksgiving, κόσμος here is of no significance for the argument/s of the main body of the epistle. Yet such an innocuous occurrence at the beginning of the letter could be taken as an early signal that the use of κόσμος in Romans is not going to be as ideologically and negatively charged as it was in 1 Corinthians.

1. Rom 1:18-32: God Has Revealed Himself through the Created κόσμος

Rom 1:18-32 is an indictment against pagan society.³⁰ It is true that Paul never actually specifies "Gentiles" or "Greeks" in the subsection. His appeal to God's creational revelation as the standard of judgement, however, makes it highly likely that they form the exclusive target of his polemic (Jews are held responsible firmly on the basis of their possession of the law, 2:12-13; 2:17-28).³¹ Moreover, the passage strongly echoes standard Jewish polemic against the Gentiles, especially that as found in *Wisdom of Solomon* (particularly Wis 13:1-19; 14:22-31). It is widely held that

²⁹ Paul's statement that the Roman believers' faith is being declared (καταγγέλεται) throughout the whole κόσμος (ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ) is clearly rhetorical exaggeration: BAG 447; Cranfield (1975: 75 n. 2).

³⁰ Bassler (1982: 128-133) challenges the traditional division of the text at 1:18 and 2:1, arguing for the unity 1:16-2:11. Note Moo's (117-8) criticisms of her approach.

³¹ *Contra* Cranfield (1975: 105-6), Bassler (1982: 122), Jervell (316-9) and others who argue that Jews are also included. That Paul in 1:23 picks up the language of Ps 106:20 and Jer 2:11, texts which refer to Israel's fall into idolatry, does not imply that he intends thereby to implicate the Jews. Rather, he is simply using traditional language which conveys, from a Jewish perspective, the essential folly of idolatry.

Paul made direct use of this document at various points in the formulation of his argument. The parallels, both linguistic and conceptual are striking, and as Dunn states, are "too close to be accidental".³²

The section develops the initial declaration of v. 18: that God's wrath is being revealed against human beings who in their wickedness (ἐν ἀδικίᾳ) suppress (κατεχόντων) the truth of God.³³ Paul argues that as a consequence of their rejection of a knowledge of God via creation, Gentiles have been abandoned (παρέδωκεν, vv. 24, 26, 28) by God to their own sinfulness.

In 1:20, we find the expression ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου. κόσμος has the sense of "the orderly universe", with κτίσις referring to the "act of creation". In view of the preceding κτίσεως and the following τοῖς ποιήμασιν, κόσμος has the particular nuance here of the universe as *created by God*.

In 1:25, Paul contrasts κτίσις with κτίσαντα. Here κτίσις is used with the sense of "created thing/creature". For Paul, this is precisely the error of idolatry: worshiping

³²Dunn (1988: 56-7); Romanuk (505-8); Sanday and Headlam (51-2); Wilckens (1978: 96-7).

³³The suggestion that God's wrath, like his righteousness, is revealed *in the gospel*, advanced e.g., by Bockmuehl (138-41); Cranfield (1975: 109-110); Leenhardt (61-2) Wilckens (1978: 102), should be rejected. In view in vv. 17-18 are two *contrasting* revelations: ἐν αὐτῷ/ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ; ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν/ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν ἀνθρώπων. See Travis (36). Paul goes on to describe God's wrath in 1:24-32 in terms of sin and its consequences, which, in comparison with the gospel, he could hardly have thought of as something new. Nevertheless, the repetition of ἀποκαλύπτεται in v.18, which implies that the two revelations are eschatologically linked (so Bornkamm (1969: 62-3)) indicates that the wrath of God, though always operational, is somehow brought into a sharper focus by the gospel.

(σεβάζομαι) and serving (λατρεύω) the κτίσις rather than the κτίσας, in so doing, exchanging the truth (ἀλήθεια) of God for the lie (τὸ ψεῦδος). Paul does not specify whether by κτίσις he has in mind the lifeless idols or the living creatures of which they are copies and representations (*i.e.*, the ἄνθρωπος, πτερινόν, τετράπους, and ἕρπετόν of v. 23). The reference to κτίσις is probably intentionally broad, since Paul is articulating here a general truth (as he sees it) about the nature of idolatry: that it consists in an essential confusion of creator and created things.³⁴

As noted in Chapter One, Bultmann observes that Rom 1:25 casts κτίσις in an ambiguous light - "'creation' becomes a destructive power whenever man decides in favor of it instead of for God."³⁵ An important qualification must be added to this observation. The equivocacy is not inherent in κτίσις itself. As the context makes clear, it is not the κτίσις which tempts human beings away from God. If human beings stand in ambiguous relation to creation, it is due to their misperception and misappropriation of it, *their* distortion of its true character.

1.1. 1:19-21: The Revelation through the κόσμος

In Rom 1:19-21, the κόσμος, the material creation, is set forth as the instrument of God's revelation, the agency through which a fundamental knowledge of God is mediated to all people.³⁶

³⁴ This is a standard Jewish theme: *e.g.*, Ep Jer 59ff; Ep. Arist. 132ff; Jub. 12:1ff; T. Naph. 3:1ff; Josephus, Ap. 2:190ff; Philo, Abr. 75, 88; Ebr. 108ff; Decal. 53ff, 66-7; Spec. 1:15ff; Wis 13:1-10.

³⁵ Bultmann (1952: 230).

³⁶ As Dunn (1988: 57) writes, what Paul has in view is "a

The knowledge of God³⁷ made accessible through the κόσμος is not merely *possible* for human beings to attain, according to Paul; it is *actually* possessed by them. This is clear from v. 21, where Paul states that the Gentiles "knew God" (γινόντες τὸν θεὸν; cf. τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιγινόντες, v. 32). Paul's charge is not that they have missed the truth of God (though they could have apprehended more, v. 21) but rather that they have deliberately suppressed it.³⁸ As Gärtner writes, "The compassing of the natural revelation is not only a positive but unrealisable potentiality in man - he has realised it."³⁹

The question is raised: To what extent is Paul articulating in these verses a "natural theology"?⁴⁰ According to the classic definition in Christian thought, natural theology is truth about God which can be discovered by the unaided faculty of human reason, in contrast to a

revelation of God through the cosmos, to humankind as a whole, and operative since the creation of the cosmos."

³⁷ τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ can be translated "what is known about God" or, "what can be known about God". Most commentators favour the latter. To translate τὸ γνωστὸν "what is known", as Moo (99), points out, results in a tautology: what is known is made known (φανερὸν ἔστιν). γνωστὸν with the sense of "what can be known" is found in the LXX of Gen 2:9 and Sir 21:7.

³⁸ Barth (46) comments, "When we rebel, we are in rebellion not against what is foreign to us but against that which is most intimately ours, not against what is removed from us but against that which lies at our hands."

³⁹ Gärtner (79).

⁴⁰ For treatments of this issue, see among others, Bockmuehl (138-42); Demarest (140-2); Gärtner (73-144); S.L. Johnson; Käsemann (1980: 39ff); Moo (121-3); Nygren (101-7); O'Rourke; Owen; Shields (1977). For a brief but useful history of interpretation, see Wilckens (1978: 116-21).

knowledge of God which is "revealed". Such a distinction certainly cannot be maintained here. The knowledge of God is the result of a definite self-revelation of God. This is made clear in the statement, ὁ θεὸς γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἐφάνερωσεν (v.19). As Hooker states, ἐφάνερωσεν "guards against any notion that people have access to knowledge of God through their natural capacities."⁴¹ If the category "natural theology" is to be admitted here, therefore, it must be used in connection with the term "revelation": the term "natural revelation" probably best captures what is in view.⁴²

While Paul is thinking of an objective revelation made known through the external κόσμος, rather than an inner revelation to the mind or conscience (cf. τοῖς ποιήμασιν, φανερόν), in the apprehension of the disclosed knowledge, intuitive grasp is blended with sensory perception and critical reasoning.⁴³ The visual and rational aspects are indicated by the words νοούμενα καθορᾶται in v. 20. The verb καθορᾶω usually denotes physical sight, and νοούμενα as Demarest writes, "connotes the acquisition of knowledge by the discursive reason".⁴⁴ An intuitive awareness of God's moral order in the world is suggested by Paul's statement in v. 32 that Gentiles "know" (ἐπιγινόντες) the righteous decree of God (cf. 2:14).

The juxtaposition of these elements as we have seen is a mark of Stoic natural theology.⁴⁵ According to the Stoics,

⁴¹ Hooker (1959/60: 299).

⁴² Gärtner (73). Cf. Bockmuehl (141-2).

⁴³ Demarest (140-1).

⁴⁴ Demarest (141).

⁴⁵ See Chapter Two, Section A. 2.5. Longenecker (1964: 54) states that Greek natural theology has "partially

there is both a knowledge of God which is innate and a knowledge which results from contemplation of and rational reflection on the κόσμος. These sources of knowledge are reciprocally related since there is an affinity between the rationality of the human mind (νοῦς) and the rationality manifest in the κόσμος. The use of νοούμενα in Rom 1:20 suggests Paul's acknowledgement of such an affinity.⁴⁶ Paul, it seems, is consciously reworking a Stoic line of thought, though he is doing so within a thoroughly Jewish framework.⁴⁷

It is clear that the natural revelation has a definite and positive content: Barth's reading of Rom 1:19ff, that what nature reveals is the fact that God cannot be known, simply cannot be sustained.⁴⁸ What is revealed is God's "invisible qualities", τὰ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ, clarified as his "eternal power" and his "divinity", ἡ τε ἀίδιος αὐτοῦ δύναμις καὶ θεϊότης. ἀίδιος and θεϊότης are Hellenistic philosophical terms.⁴⁹ θεϊότης, which occurs in the New

penetrated" Rom 1:19-20.

⁴⁶ ἐν αὐτοῖς in 1:19 might also point in this direction. See Dunn (1988: 57).

⁴⁷ As we might expect, there are marked differences between Rom 1:18-32 and Stoic thought; these are highlighted by Gärtner (133-144). Gärtner, however, in his concern to emphasize the *Jewishness* of Paul's thought, refuses to allow even a discriminating use of Stoic ideas.

⁴⁸ According to Barth (46), what is made manifest is "the indisputable reality of the invisibility of God". He continues (47), "And what does this mean but that we can know nothing of God, that we are not of God, that the Lord is to be feared?"

⁴⁹ For ἀίδιος, see Sasse (1964a); for θεϊότης, see Kleinknecht (122-3). ἀίδιος occurs in the LXX only at Wis 7:26 and 4 Macc 10:15, but often in Philo (*Decal.* 41, 60, 64; *Spec.* 1.20, 28; 4.73; *Virt.* 204). ἀίδιος, δύναμις and θεϊότης all occur in *Wisdom of Solomon* (δύναμις at 13:14 and θεϊότης at

Testament only here, denotes the divine nature.⁵⁰ Sanday and Headlam suggest that θεϊότης here is a summary term for attributes which constitute divinity.⁵¹ Owen observes that Paul in this verse is defining τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ in terms of his polemic against idolatry emphasizing those characteristics which distinguish God from idols.⁵²

Though not explicitly stated, the revelation in creation is a revelation of God as creator. Owen disputes this point.⁵³ But that God is revealed as creator is implied by 1) ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου, and 2) ποιήματα, which quite obviously means, the things created by God. Also, in v. 25, Paul specifically refers to God as κτίστης. The accusation that Gentiles have confused creation with the creator could hardly have stood if Paul had not thought such a distinction were apparent from the creational revelation.

The effect of the natural revelation is to leave Gentiles "without excuse", ἀναπολογήτους. The construction, εἰς τό, can be taken either as causative or final, *i.e.*, as expressing result or purpose. The evidence is inconclusive.⁵⁴ But the difference is not as significant as has sometimes been assumed. Lenski states, if it were purposive, *i.e.*, if God's aim in revealing himself was to condemn, "the purpose would really be monstrous".⁵⁵ But even if taken purposively, it need not indicate a primary purpose, but an indirect or

18:9).

⁵⁰ Kleinknecht (122-3).

⁵¹ Sanday and Headlam (43); cf. Owen (134).

⁵² Owen (134); see also Gärtner (142).

⁵³ Owen (141, 134).

⁵⁴ See the discussion in Moo (118).

⁵⁵ Lenski (102).

conditional purpose. Thus, for example, Sanday and Headlam explain, "God did not design that man should sin; but He did design that if they sinned they should be without excuse".⁵⁶

While the revelation via the κόσμος has a negative outcome - establishing Gentiles' guilt - in v. 21, Paul implies that God's intent in revealing himself was to lead people to obedient faith in him. This implication is to be discerned in his description of what the Gentiles *failed* to do when confronted with God's revelation: they did not glorify God as God nor give him thanks (οὐχ ὡς θεὸν ἐδόξασαν ἢ ἠύχαριστοί εἰσαν). Barrett correctly perceives the significance of these words. He comments,

As God's creature, man was bound to render glory and thanksgiving to his creator; this means not merely to acknowledge his existence, and to employ the words and rites of religion, but to recognize his lordship and live in grateful obedience - ⁵⁷ in fact (in the Pauline sense) to believe, to have faith".

As we have seen, in 4:20, Abraham's faithful response to the creator is expressed as his giving δόξα to God. Moreover, in 15:6, 9, δοξάζω is specifically used with reference to the obedient and worshipful response of Christians toward God.

That the creational revelation, in Paul's understanding, aims at bringing people into a proper standing with God is denied by many interpreters. Moo, for instance, writes, "This limited knowledge falls far short of what is necessary to establish a relationship with Him."⁵⁸ Such an approach,

⁵⁶ Sanday and Headlam (44). Cf. Morris (1988: 83). Demarest (142) writes, "The effect of General revelation, not God's purpose in it, is to render sinners judicially guilty."

⁵⁷ Barrett (1957: 36).

⁵⁸ Moo (102).

however, leaves Paul with a seemingly intractable logical problem: people are condemned for rejecting the possibility of a right relationship with God, but that relationship was never on offer in the first place. As Paul sees it, it is not that the revelation through the created order is limited - that it cannot lead to a true relationship with God; it is rather that men and women deliberately distort the truth they have received and never reach the goal for which that truth was intended. The inadequacy of the natural revelation, as Calvin noted, lies not in the revelation itself, but in its misappropriation due to sin.⁵⁹ Moo's objection is therefore misconceived. It lays the emphasis on an inadequate revelation rather than on an inadequate response. It is because Gentiles have failed to give God the thanks and glory which his revelation demands, that that revelation, which should have led them to blessing, has instead brought condemnation.⁶⁰

In Rom 1:19-21, therefore, the κόσμος, the created universe, is accorded a crucial role in the history of God's relations with humankind. As the vehicle of divine revelation, it is the basic and universal means by which God makes himself known to humanity. When people reject that revelation (and the relationship with God to which it should have brought them), in the purposes of God, it takes on an incriminatory function, securing guilt and condemnation.

⁵⁹ According to Calvin (71), God's manifestation in creation is "sufficiently clear" in itself, but because of "our blindness" it is insufficient: we are prevented by our blindness, "so that we reach not to the end in view".

⁶⁰ This incriminatory application of God's natural revelation is found in Wis 13:8, 9; cf. 2 Apoc. Bar. 54:17ff; T.Mos. 1:12-13.

1.2. 1:22-32: The Outworking of God's Wrath in a Morally Ordered World

The idea of an ordered and structured world with human existence incorporated into that order, connoted by κόσμος, comes further to expression in vv. 22-32.

Paul conceives of a universally known guide to right behaviour, by which men and women ought to live. That the Gentiles have access to moral guidance - what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour - is made plain at three points in the section.

Firstly, the knowledge of God which pagans have by virtue of the natural revelation (vv. 19-21) secures their culpability for falling into the sin of idolatry (vv. 23, 25). Gentiles know enough of God to prevent them from worshiping idols.

Secondly, in vv. 26-27, Paul appeals to "nature", φύσις, in his denunciation of homosexual activity.⁶¹ He describes lesbian conduct as the changing of the natural function into that which is contrary to nature (μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν εἰς παρὰ φύσιν), and male homosexual activity, in a somewhat awkward construction, as the abandoning of the natural function of the female (ἀφέντες τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας). Thus, Paul presumes there to be a natural order, at least in the area of sexual relations, in accordance with which one is expected to live.⁶² Quite obviously, Paul borrows from Stoic thought the notion of living in harmony with the natural arrangement of things, though for Paul the

⁶¹ On the meaning of φύσις here, see DeYoung.

⁶² An appeal to a natural order in connection with aberrant sexual behaviour is found in *T. Naph.* 3:2-5; cf. 2:8-9.

natural order is specifically the order intended by the creator.

Thirdly, in vv. 28-32, Paul assumes that there is a universally perceived moral order which might not unreasonably be described as a moral law, since the flouting of it carries a penalty (v. 32).⁶³ The vices listed in vv. 29-30 are described in v.28 as τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα. τὸ καθήκον is a Stoic term; it denotes that which is fitting or suitable: "the demands and actions which arise out of the claims of environment and which critical reason sees to be in harmony with...nature."⁶⁴ According to Schlier, what Paul means by the phrase is "that which is offensive to man even according to the popular moral sense of the Gentiles, i.e., what even natural human judgment regards as vicious and wrong."⁶⁵ Underlying is the idea of one's sense of a good and proper order, to which the vices mentioned run counter.

That the world is designed to display a moral order is further intimated in Paul's description of the manifestation of God's wrath in vv. 24ff. C.H.Dodd observed that the progress of evil in society is depicted in 1:18-32 as a natural process of cause and effect.⁶⁶ Dodd mistakenly

⁶³ Some detect here an allusion to the notion of the "Noahic" or "Adamic" commandments, notably W.D.Davies (1962: 113-17), but the best evidence for this post-dates Paul: Str-B 3.36-38.

⁶⁴ Schlier (1965: 438). On the Stoic idea of "Proper Functions", see L-S 1: 359-68, 2: 355-64. The negative form in Rom 1:28, which also occurs in 2 Macc 6:4, 3 Macc 4:16, Philo, *Cher.* 14, differs from the more usual Stoic expression, τὸ παρὰ τὸ καθήκον.

⁶⁵ Schlier (1965: 440).

⁶⁶ Dodd (29). The belief that the world exhibits "inherent" laws of act and consequence is the presupposition of the Jewish Wisdom tradition: see Von Rad (124-43).

dissociated the retributive process from the direct activity of God - the words, παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεός, in vv. 24, 26, 28 clearly point to the deliberate act of God.⁶⁷ Even so, it is clear that God's action simply amounts to giving the Gentiles over to the inevitable consequences of their actions.⁶⁸ As Robinson states, God's wrath is

the process of inevitable retribution which comes into operation when God's laws are broken...he leaves pagan society to stew in its own juice. The retribution which overtakes it, resulting in automatic moral degradation, is what "comes on" almost like a thermostat when, as it were, the moral temperature drops below a certain point.⁶⁹ This is part of God's order and it works automatically.

In his description of the outworking of the divine wrath, Paul places emphasis on the "fitting" nature of God's response to human sin (the notion of appropriate punishment in extensively developed in *Wisdom of Solomon* (11:15ff; 16:1-19:17)). In each subsection, vv. 22-24, vv. 25-27, vv. 28-32, a deliberate suppression of the truth is matched with a corresponding and appropriate response by God.⁷⁰ The

⁶⁷ Cranfield (1975: 120). It may also be that the passives ἐματαιώθησαν, ἐσκοτίσθη and ἐμωράνθησαν in vv. 21, 22 are to be understood as references to God's action: Michel (1966: 65); Dunn (1988: 62).

⁶⁸ God's judgement is to let them drift into further involvement in sin. This line of thought may be compared with the dictum of Wis 11:16, "the instruments of sin are instruments of punishment".

⁶⁹ J.A.T. Robinson (18); cf. Travis (38). Paul reflects a standard Jewish belief that there is an inevitable regression from idolatry to sinful conduct more generally (Deut 28:13-14; Hos 5:15-6:11; Ezek 36:25ff; Wis 14:22-29; 2 Apoc. Bar. 54:17ff; 1 Enoch 99:7-9; 2 Enoch 10:1ff; T. Naph 3:1ff).

⁷⁰ Klostermann. Cf. Bussmann (119-20); Hooker (1966/67); Jeremias (1954); Popkes.

exchange of the glory (δόξα) of God for idols (v. 23) results in their being given over to the dishonour (ἀτιμάζεσθαι) of their bodies (v. 24).⁷¹ The exchange (μετήλλαξαν) of the truth of God for a lie (v. 25) leads to an exchange (μετήλλαξαν) of natural sexual relations for unnatural ones (vv. 26-27). The failure to give due recognition to God (οὐκ ἔδοκίμασαν) leads to an unfit mind (ἄδόκιμον νοῦν, v. 28).

Thus, in vv. 22-32, Paul draws a picture of a morally ordered world maintained by a universal natural law and a in-built retributive process.

1.3. Conclusions

Before moving on, it may be useful to summarize our main findings here.

1. κόσμος in 1:20 is used positively, having the contextual sense "created universe".
2. In developing the concept of a divine revelation through the κόσμος, Paul, though he maintains a fundamentally Jewish line of thought, takes up elements of Stoic natural theology.⁷²
3. Paul points up key aspects of the Hellenistic world view as signified by κόσμος - the physical universe as ordered, unified, beautiful (we may suppose), humanity as intimately related to the κόσμος. These themes were by no means inconsistent with a Jewish outlook on the material world as God's creation.
4. Paul attributes to the κόσμος a constructive role in

⁷¹ Paul uses ἀτιμία as the opposite of δόξα in 1 Cor 11:14-15; 15:43; 2 Cor 6:8.

⁷² On the OT seeds of the concept of creational revelation see Gärtner (86-97).

God's redemptive plans. It is a medium of divine self-disclosure effected by God that people may come into relation with him. When Gentiles reject that revelation, the testimony of the κόσμος, in God's purposes, then functions to secure their guilt.

5. The idea of a divinely ordered world further unfolds in 1:22-32: the world displays both a moral order and an integral judgemental process which comes into play when that order is contravened.

2. Rom 3:6, 19: The World Liable to Judgement, the World Condemned

The diatribe style directs the flow of argument in 3:1-8, in which Paul raises and attempts to meet two objections.⁷³ The first, considered in vv. 1-4, concerns the covenantal advantage of the Jew over the pagan, an advantage which Paul appears to have completely eradicated in chapter 2. The second is taken up in vv. 5-8 and deals with an inference which could follow from vv. 3-4, where Paul argues that failure on the part of Jews does not nullify God's faithfulness. Attempting to advance the logic of Paul's claim, the interlocutor asks in v. 5: If human unrighteousness draws out God's righteousness, does this not mean then, that God is unjust when he inflicts his wrath?⁷⁴ Paul simply and decisively rejects this suggestion (μὴ γένοιτο). If that were so, he states, how then could God judge the κόσμος (ἐπεὶ πῶς κρινεῖ ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον)? Paul

⁷³The precise structure and thrust of Paul's argument in these verses has proved difficult to uncover. For discussion, see W.S.Campbell; Hall; Stowers; F.Watson (124-8).

⁷⁴ὅργη here probably embraces both the present (1:18-32) and future (2:5) aspects of the divine wrath.

appeals to a standard of Jewish theology: God as the eschatological judge of the world;⁷⁵ that God exercises judgement justly and righteously was axiomatic.⁷⁶

Paul's line of reasoning in refuting this objection is clear enough, even though we may question the adequacy of his response. His procedure is to dismiss the initial suggestion - that human sin intensifies God's faithfulness - by showing that it leads to an impossible conclusion.⁷⁷

In 3:6, κόσμος stands for humankind in general, all human beings.⁷⁸ There is no question of Christians being exempted from its embrace since believers too, in Paul's view, must pass under future judgement by God (or Christ).⁷⁹ κόσμος here has no pejorative reverberations: it is reading too much into the text, to claim, as Bultmann does, that the word denotes people "in their sinfulness and enmity toward God".⁸⁰ The κόσμος is certainly placed over against God, but this does not in itself imply the existence of *enmity* between the two parties. Neither does the theme of judgement insinuate the sinfulness or wickedness of the κόσμος, since God's future judgement brings deliverance as well as doom, vindication as well as accusation (Rom 2:5-11). 3:6 represents a "neutral" use of κόσμος. Paul's evaluation of κόσμος is left unstated,

⁷⁵ e.g., Ps 94:2; 96:13; Joel 3:12; Isa 66:16.

⁷⁶ e.g., Gen 18:25; Deut 32:4; Job 8:3; 34:10-12; Ps 9:8; 97:2; Isa 30:18; 41:1; Jer 12:1; Ezek 7:27; Mal 2:17.

⁷⁷ The same objection is reformulated in v. 7 in terms of human untruthfulness and divine truthfulness.

⁷⁸ BAG 447; Cranfield (1975: 185); Dunn (1988: 135); Fitzmyer (1993a: 329); Wilckens (1978: 166).

⁷⁹ Rom 14:10-12; 1 Cor 3:12-15; 2 Cor 5:10; Phil 2:16.

⁸⁰ Bultmann (1952: 255).

since the plain emphasis in this verse is on the character of the God who exercises judgement and not on those who undergo judgement.

3:9-20 forms the climax of the epistle's opening argument, focusing on the universality of human sinfulness. The fact of universal sin is driven home in a series of quotations in vv. 10-18.⁸¹

In 3:19, Paul asserts that the law speaks above all to those who are under it, his point being that the scriptural indictments just cited, which were originally aimed at non-Jews, apply just as much to Jews as to Gentiles.⁸² *No one* can claim to be righteous, *not even one*. The upshot is that *every* protest is silenced and πᾶς ὁ κόσμος is held accountable (ὑπόδικος).

κόσμος in 3:19, as in 3:6, carries the sense "humanity".⁸³ πᾶς underscores the inclusion of every human being. But unlike 3:6, unambiguously in this text there is the thought of the sinfulness of the κόσμος and its alienation from God - a thought which is evident from the immediate context and which is not, as Bultmann suggests, "a definite *theological judgement*" contained in the term κόσμος itself.⁸⁴ 3:19 in fact gives us Paul's least positive comment about κόσμος in the whole epistle. Even so, it is clear that there is a

⁸¹ On this section, see Keck.

⁸² Dunn (1988: 150-1).

⁸³ BAG 447; Cranfield (1975: 197); Dunn (1988: 152); Fitzmyer (1993a: 337).

⁸⁴ Bultmann (1952: 255). Our distinction in Chapter One, Section 3, between "what Paul *means* by κόσμος" and "what Paul *says* about κόσμος" may be invoked here. In this text, the negative aspect of Paul's usage is found in the latter, not the former.

lesser degree of negativity attaching to κόσμος here than the pejorative uses of the term in 1 Corinthians. κόσμος is not the apocalyptic realm of 1 Cor 1:20-21, 27, 28, etc. The sense of alienation between God and the κόσμος in Rom 3:19 is much less sharply expressed than in the texts in which κόσμος occurs in 1 Corinthians. Moreover, there is no hint here of the social dualism between believers and the κόσμος that so dominates that epistle. The contrast is not that of two conflicting spheres of domination but simply of humanity over against God (τῷ θεῷ). It hardly needs pointing out that Paul's negative evaluation of κόσμος=humanity here is deeply rooted in his development of a human predicament to which salvation in Christ provides the solution. Yet, it would be imprudent to overestimate the contribution of the term κόσμος to Paul's exposé. In all probability πᾶς is the key word in the phrase πᾶς ὁ κόσμος in view of its significance in the section 3:9-20. ὁ κόσμος, it would seem, is added to πᾶς in 3:19 for stylistic variation (cf. Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἑλλήνας πάντας, v. 9; πάντας, v. 10; πᾶν στόμα, v. 19; πᾶσα σὰρξ, v. 20).

The phrase πᾶς ὁ κόσμος in 3:19 is not without a polemical edge. Paul's critique in the opening section of the epistle has been substantially directed against Jewish presumptions of privileged status on the basis of Israel's election and possession of the law. The formulation of the universal charge in 3:19 indicates that this target has not receded from view. Dunn writes,

That *every* mouth (πᾶν στόμα) and *all* the world (πᾶς ὁ κόσμος) are thus left defenseless (3:9) before the indictment of the *Jewish* scriptures, confirms that Paul pens his *universal* indictment with a view to denying *Jewish* claims to a special defense at the final judgment...his object is...to show that their own

scriptures place his own people just as firmly "in the dock" along with everyone else.⁸⁵

The force of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma \acute{\omicron} \kappa\acute{\omicron}\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ is thus "the *whole* of humanity, even Jews" (cf. 3:9). This explains how Paul can go on to draw the conclusion in v. 20, that by "the works of the law" no flesh shall be justified before God.

3. Rom 4:13: The Future World, the Inheritance of Believers
Paul's purpose in the section, 4:13-17a, is twofold: negatively, to break the association, current in Jewish theology, of the law and the covenant promise to Abraham (vv. 14-15); positively, to show that just as inclusion into Abraham's fatherhood is defined by faith (vv. 11-12), so faith determines who are the heirs to the Abrahamic promise (vv. 13, 16-17a).

The promise is encapsulated in the phrase $\tau\acute{\omicron} \kappa\lambda\eta\rho\nu\acute{\omicron}\mu\omicron\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu \epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota \kappa\acute{\omicron}\sigma\mu\omicron\upsilon$ (v.13). But God's promise to Abraham is put neither in this way nor in comparable terms in Genesis. As Cranfield points out, what is promised in the Genesis accounts is: numberless progeny (Gen 12:2; 13:6; 15:5; 18:18); possession of Canaan (Gen 12:7; 13:14-15, 17; 15:7,18-21; 17:8); blessing upon all the nations of the earth either through Abraham (Gen 12:3; 18:18) or his descendants (Gen 22:18).⁸⁶

In later Jewish tradition, however, the promise of land evolved to cosmic proportions, and it is generally agreed by modern commentators that Paul's wording reveals the influence of this tradition.⁸⁷ The re-interpretation of the promise was

⁸⁵ Dunn (1988: 152).

⁸⁶ Cranfield (1975: 239).

⁸⁷ e.g., Cranfield (1975: 239); Dunn (1988: 213); Edwards

already well under way by Paul's time:

Therefore he assured him by an oath, that he would bless the nations in his seed, and that he would multiply him as the dust of the earth, and exalt his seed to the stars, and cause them to inherit from sea to sea, and from the river to the utmost part of the land. (Sir 44:21)

And he [Abraham] remembered the words which he had spoken to him on the day on which Lot had parted from him, and he rejoiced because the Lord had given him seed upon the earth to inherit the earth, and he blessed with all his mouth the creator of all things. (*Jub.* 17:3)

And may He strengthen thee,
And bless thee.

And mayest thou inherit the whole earth (*Jub.* 22:14)

And I will give to thy seed all the earth which is under heaven, and they shall judge all the nations according to their desires, and after that they shall get possession of the whole earth and inherit it for ever. (*Jub.* 32:19)

But to the elect there shall be light, joy and peace and they shall inherit the earth. (*1 Enoch* 5:7)

And this, in accordance with the divine promise, is broadening out to the very bounds of the universe (*κόσμος*), and renders it inheritor of the four quarters of the world, reaching to them all.... (Philo, *Somn.* 1.175)

And so as he abjured the accumulation of lucre, and the wealth whose influence is mighty among men, God rewarded him by giving him instead the greatest and most perfect wealth. That is the wealth of the whole earth and sea and rivers, and of all the other elements and the combinations which they form...He gave into his hands the whole world (*κόσμος*) as a portion well fitted for His

(122); Fitzmyer (1993a: 384); Käsemann (1980: 119-20); Leenhardt (120); Nygren (176); Wilckens (1978: 269); Ziesler (1989: 129).

heir. (Philo, *Mos.* 1.155)⁸⁸

The tradition of the extended promise is also found in 4 *Ezra*.

If the world has indeed been created for us, why do we not possess our world as an inheritance? (4 *Ezra* 6:59)

In 2 *Baruch*, the inheritance of the righteous is the world to come. The eschatological, cosmic inheritance is a prominent theme in this document.⁸⁹

Therefore they leave this world without fear and are confident of the world which you have promised to them with an expectation full of joy. (2 *Apoc. Bar.* 14:13)

those who proved to be righteous on account of my law...their splendor will then be glorified by transformations, and the shape of their face will be changed into the light of their beauty so that they may acquire and receive the undying world which is promised to them. (2 *Apoc. Bar.* 51:3)

The wider promise is also attested in the later rabbinic tradition. The saying of R.Nehemiah (*Mek. Exod.* 14:31) may be cited as an example:

Thus wilt thou find of Abraham that he has taken possession of this and the future world as a reward of faith, as it is written, He believed יְיָ Yahweh and he reckoned it to him for righteousness.

Almost certainly, then, the phrase τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν

⁸⁸ For Philo, of course, the land represents a "spiritual reality".

⁸⁹ See also 2 *Apoc. Bar.* 14:17-19; 15:7; 21:24-25; 44:13.

⁹⁰ Quoted from Käsemann (1980: 120). For further rabbinic references, see Str-B, 3.209.

εἶναι κόσμου in Rom 4:13 reflects the tradition of the enlarged promise, which Paul has apparently appropriated.⁹¹

This observation is highly significant with regard to Paul's use of κόσμος, though the implication goes virtually unnoticed. Moxnes is one scholar to realize the importance:⁹² he points out that if Paul has indeed taken over the extended promise, this would give κόσμος at 4:13 the connotation of the future eschatological world, thus contradicting Sasse's claim that κόσμος "is reserved for the world which lies under sin and death...When the κόσμος is redeemed, it ceases to be κοσμος".⁹³

Since Moxnes' own understanding of κόσμος in Paul is decisively shaped by Sasse's analysis, this is an awkward conclusion for him; he finds it difficult to allow that Paul would use the word to signify an object of eschatological hope. He attempts to resolve the difficulty by engaging in a kind of *Sachkritik*, implicitly drawing a distinction between what Paul *means* and what he *says*. He stresses that Paul's focus in the phrase τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου, is on the word κληρονόμος, not κόσμος: the content of the promise, the future hope, is not developed in any way in the following verses. He writes, "It is the structure and identity of the community of the "heirs to the world" with which he is concerned".⁹⁴ The community emphasis, he points out, is clear in Paul's use of κληρονόμος and application of the Abrahamic

⁹¹ Cf. Matt 5:5, "the meek...will inherit the earth".

⁹² Moxnes (1980: 247).

⁹³ Sasse (1965: 893).

⁹⁴ Moxnes (1980: 249).

promise in Gal 3-4 and Rom 8:12-17.⁹⁵ Paul's utilizes the extended promise in Rom 4:13, Moxnes argues, to stress the universality of the promise (*i.e.*, that Gentiles are also included), as vv. 11-12 and 16-18 show. He concludes that in Paul's re-interpretation, the formulation τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου refers to "the charismatic community, viewed from an eschatological perspective".⁹⁶

Moxnes is right to insist that Paul's main interest in the subsection lies in the question, Who are the heirs? not What do the heirs inherit? This does not mean, however, that the substance of the promise is of no concern to Paul, nor that the formulation of 4:13 gives us no clue as to his understanding of it. It is difficult to imagine how Paul could take up the wider form of the promise without wishing to associate himself with it in some way. The fact that Paul offers no elaboration or correction of it more obviously suggests that he accepts rather than discards or is ambivalent toward the view of the future inheritance which it entails. It is true, as Moxnes insists, that vv. 11-12 and 16-18 focus on the universality of the promise, but Paul draws out this theme from the promise of fatherhood to many nations (citing Gen 17:5 in v. 17a) not from the motif of cosmic inheritance.

The choice of the embellished promise over its original form does seem to have been a deliberate one on Paul's part: in this way he avoids a narrow focus on the land of Palestine and a more nationalistic understanding of the Abrahamic promise which would have been counter-productive to his

⁹⁵ Moxnes (1980: 248).

⁹⁶ Moxnes (1980: 249).

argumentative purposes in Romans. The very use of κόσμος is probably significant in this respect: κόσμος, as opposed to γῆ,⁹⁷ eliminates any suggestion of a reference to Palestine.⁹⁸

It is also likely that Paul takes up the widened form of the promise because he sees in it "the promise of the ultimate restoration to Abraham and his spiritual seed of man's inheritance (cf. Gen 1.27f) which was lost through sin".⁹⁹ What God promises to Abraham and Abraham's spiritual heirs is, as Dunn states, "the restoration of God's created order, of man to his Adamic status as steward of the rest of God's creation."¹⁰⁰

In his study of Paul's concept of inheritance, J.D.Hester points out that the geographical reality of the land does not cease to play a part in Paul's theology: "He simply makes the Land the eschatological world".¹⁰¹ This is clear, he argues, from Rom 8:17-23, where Paul is concerned to show that creation will be a suitable inheritance for the people of God.¹⁰² Hester concludes:

when Paul speaks of "heirs of the world", he looks back to the promise of Abraham and summarizes it as this, and looks forward to the fulfillment of Abrahams's Promise in the Kingdom of God. The Inheritance is everything that God promised and gave to Abraham - justification, formation of the people of God, a Land in the form of the New Creation, and the future blessed existence that is

⁹⁷ γῆ is used in Matt 5:5.

⁹⁸ Hester (80 n. 3).

⁹⁹ Cranfield (1975: 240).

¹⁰⁰ Dunn (1988: 213). Cf. Byrne (1990: 54); Wilckens (1978: 269).

¹⁰¹ Hester (81).

¹⁰² Hester (82).

It is precisely the question which Paul passes over in 4:13-17a that is taken up in his development of the heirship theme in 8:17ff: namely, the content of the promised inheritance. Christians are declared to be heirs (κληρονόμοι) of God and joint-heirs (συγκληρονόμοι) with Christ (8:17). They are destined for "glory" - a glory which is to be revealed in the midst of a liberated κτίσις (8:21). Without pre-empting our discussion of 8:19-23, the association of ideas in 8:17ff strongly suggests that the inherited κόσμος of 4:13 is to be equated with the emancipated κτίσις (whatever the exact meaning of κτίσις) of 8:21. If this interpretation is sufficiently accurate, Rom 8:18-23 may, on one level, be understood as an explication of the phrase τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου.

The wider promise with its cosmic focus, therefore, is not at all inconsistent with Paul's polemical purposes or with his theological development in Romans. The indications are that Paul has taken over the tradition not at all unthinkingly, but approvingly, lending significant weight to it.

This leads us back to Moxnes' initial observation: on the basis of the tradition of the enlarged promise and Paul's acceptance of it, κόσμος must in 4:13 denote the future

¹⁰³Hester (89). W.D.Davies in his extensive treatment of New Testament views of the land (1974) fails to take adequate account of Hester's observations, when he argues that Paul interprets the promise in "a-territorial" terms. Davies contends that in Romans "Paul ignores completely the territorial aspect of the promise" (1974: 178). Tellingly, he does not directly discuss the phrase τὸ κληρομόνον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου in Rom 4:13.

eschatological world. It is Moxnes' assumption that the meaning of κόσμος is fixed by pre-set theological coordinates that prevents him from following through this important insight.

Rom 4:13 thus indicates how positively Paul can use κόσμος in this epistle, in marked contrast to 1 Corinthians. Our brief discussion has also further highlighted the weakness of an analysis which aims at a theological definition of κόσμος in Paul: almost inevitably it leads to the imposition of a framework which permits some senses and excludes others, forcing Paul's uses to be read in certain ways, like forcing a foot into a badly fitting shoe. This verse is a clear instance of κόσμος having the contextual sense ruled out by Sasse - the future, redeemed world.

4. Rom 5:12-13: The World Invaded by the Forces of Sin and Death

In 5:12-21, Paul launches into a comparison and contrast of Adam and Christ, the purpose of which is to demonstrate that Christ's redeeming work has undone the fateful effects of Adam's rebellious act and has provided a comprehensive solution to the universal plight.¹⁰⁴

In 1 Cor 15:21-22, 45-49, Adam and Christ are largely *representative* or *corporate* figures, typifying two qualitatively different modes of existence. Here, Adam and Christ are *determinative* figures - individuals whose actions

¹⁰⁴ On the structure of 5:12-21, see de Boer (1988: 158ff); Dunn (1988: 271); Gibbs (48-9). The ὡσαύτως of v.12 introduces a protasis which has no immediate apodosis, Paul interrupting the parallelism to develop parenthetical lines of thought (vv. 12c-14, 15-17); the comparison is not actually completed until vv. 18,19, or on de Boer's chiastic analysis, v. 21.

have affected the destiny of all/many.¹⁰⁵ A basic similarity between the two individuals is assumed (v. 14); the contrast is on the basis of the nature and consequence of their deeds: Adam's disobedience bringing in sin, death and condemnation for all, Christ's obedient act bringing life, grace and righteousness. There is clear emphasis on the superiority of Christ's deed over Adam's (indicated by the formula πολλῶ μᾶλλον in vv. 15, 17 and the words περισσεύω, περισσεῖα and ὑπερπερισσεύω in vv. 15, 17, and 20, respectively); Christ has "more than counterbalanced the sin of Adam".¹⁰⁶

The lines of continuity Paul traces from Adam to Christ and the historical overview of vv. 13-14, indicate that to some degree a salvation-historical perspective is operative in this passage (*i.e.*, the belief in a progressive unfolding of God's saving purposes in a chain of historical events).¹⁰⁷ But this outlook is heavily qualified by an apocalyptic frame of thought, which builds on radical contrasts, antitheses and opposites and utilizes "power" language. The "cosmological-apocalyptic" character of Paul's exposition in 5:12-21 has been emphasized by M.C.de Boer in a recent monograph. He points particularly to the personification of sin and death, on the one hand, and grace on the other; these, he argues, are presented as "cosmological rulers in conflict".¹⁰⁸

κόσμος appears in vv. 12 and 13. The majority of

¹⁰⁵ *Contra* Ziesler (1989: 143ff; 1990: 52-7). Note Dunn (1988: 272-3).

¹⁰⁶ Barrett (1962: 93).

¹⁰⁷ See the definition of salvation-history in Cullmann (1967: 74-8).

¹⁰⁸ de Boer (160).

commentators take κόσμος in both instances to mean the world of humankind. However, alternative views have been expressed. Gibbs suggests the meaning, "the dwelling place of humanity".¹⁰⁹ And Shields, questioning the distinction between a human κόσμος and a general κόσμος, understands the word "as referring generally to the created world as the context of life - human and otherwise."¹¹⁰ But neither of these readings is likely. The parallel phrase in 5:12c, πάντας ἀνθρώπους, makes it quite clear that Paul's focus is on the *human* world, and this is confirmed by the fact that as the exposition proceeds, the determinative events, Adam's sin and Christ's act of obedience, are only ever conceived of as affecting human beings.

The words εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος διήλθεν in v. 12c point to the spread of death through the whole history of humankind. This suggests that the meaning of κόσμος in 5:12-13 may be further clarified as "human history".¹¹¹ This more specific contextual sense may also be inferred from the panoramic historical perspective of v. 13, where Paul says that sin was in the κόσμος before the law (cf. v. 14, "death reigned from Adam until Moses").

That the κόσμος, the world of human history, is at the same time God's creation is plain from the context.

4.1. 5:12: Sin Entered the κόσμος and Death through Sin

Paul's teaching here on the origin of sin and death is based on Genesis 3 and the tradition in Jewish theology which grew

¹⁰⁹Gibbs (51 n. 2).

¹¹⁰Shields (1980: 63). So too, Wilckens (1978: 315 n. 1037).

¹¹¹Cf. Fitzmyer (1993a: 411).

out of it.¹¹² Though sin, in this presentation, is assumed to exist prior to the transgression of Adam, quite clearly neither sin nor death are deemed to be part of God's original creatorial intention for the κόσμος; their existence in the κόσμος constitutes a distortion and contradiction of God's creative aims. Death¹¹³ arrives in the κόσμος as a consequence of sin (διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας), following in its train as it were.¹¹⁴ As noted above, in quite striking fashion, Paul personifies sin and death, characterizing them as "reigning" cosmological powers (the terminology of "reigning", βασιλεύω, is used of sin in 5:21, cf. 6:12, and of death in 5:14, 17).¹¹⁵

The κόσμος, to take up the imagery of apocalyptic conflict in this passage highlighted by de Boer, is the scene of an invasion: it has been raided and placed under occupation by enemy forces. The intruding cosmological powers, sin and death, secured the bridgehead by virtue of Adam's sin; from there they swept through the entire κόσμος, subjugating it and establishing their kingly reign over it. It is important to note that in contrast to 1 Cor 1-3, κόσμος is not here portrayed as a hostile power in the apocalyptic war; rather it is the terrain on which that battle is fought, the territory over which the war rages and whose sovereignty

¹¹² See Levison; Scroggs (1966: 17-20).

¹¹³ Death is here both a "physical fact" and a "present judgment": so Wedderburn (1972/73: 347-8).

¹¹⁴ Sin and death are closely connected in 5:12-21 (vv. 12-13, 21) and elsewhere in chapters 6-8 (6:16, 23, 7:5, 13, 8:2). That death is the corollary of sin is heavily emphasized in Jewish theology. See Wedderburn (1972/73: 339-42).

¹¹⁵ As Moo (331) points out, the personification of sin extends into chapters 6-7: sin can be obeyed (6:16-17), pays wages (6:23), seizes opportunity (7:8, 11), deceives and kills (7:11, 13).

it ultimately decides.

The words ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος call to mind Wis 2:24, where we read that death entered the world (θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον), by the devil's envy. As we have seen, it is quite likely that Paul was familiar with *Wisdom of Solomon*, and it may well be that he is picking up its language here, though highlighting the role of Adam in the introduction of death rather than that of the devil.¹¹⁶

Sin, as a cosmic power, is a compelling influence from without (v. 12a), and a contagion which spreads within (v. 13); Adam is responsible for unleashing this destructive power into the κόσμος, and people are powerless to resist it. In the earlier chapters of Romans, sin is much more a freely committed act; this is why Paul can speak in 3:19 of the *accountability* of the whole κόσμος for sin.¹¹⁷ However, the thought of individual guilt and responsibility for sin is not absent from 5:12: Paul goes on to highlight this aspect in

¹¹⁶ In *Sirach*, as in the wisdom tradition generally, physical death is viewed as a natural phenomenon, e.g., Sir 15:7-13; 17: 1-2; 40:11; 41:3-4. Sir 25:24, though, links death with the primal sin but places the blame on Eve rather than on Adam. Eve is again the cause in *Apoc. Mos.* 14:2. For Philo, in *Opif.* 151-52, the source of mortality is the mutual desire between man and woman. In *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, it is clearly Adam who bears the responsibility for the introduction of death, e.g., *4 Ezra* 3:7; *2 Apoc. Bar.* 17:3; 19:8; 23:4-5. *2 Apoc. Bar.* also exhibits the view that Adam's sin did not so much bring about death as a shortening of the human lifespan (54:15; 56:6). The onset of death is attributed to Adam's sin in *Bib. Ant.* 13:3.

¹¹⁷ On the twin aspects of Paul's view of sin - sin as a compelling power and sin as voluntary action - see Ziesler (1990: 75-7).

5:12d, with the words ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον.¹¹⁸ It is noteworthy that the Jewish sources which adopt some sort of explanation of human sinfulness based on the story of Adam and Eve, like Paul in this verse, also maintain an emphasis on individual responsibility.¹¹⁹

4.2. 5:13: Prior to the Law, Sin was in the κόσμος

In v. 13a, Paul emphasizes the presence of sin in the κόσμος (ἁμαρτία ἦν ἐν κόσμῳ) in the pre-Mosaic period (ἄχρι νόμου). His motivation for doing so is not exactly clear. Quite likely, he is at least partly responding to an objection which could be made on the basis of 4:15, that there can be

¹¹⁸ It is generally accepted that πάντες ἥμαρτον refers to the actual sins of individual human beings: see Wedderburn (1972/73: 351). ἐφ' ᾧ, which Augustine translated "in whom", is usually taken as an idiomatic expression meaning "because" "in that", or "in view of the fact that"; Fitzmyer has recently argued for the sense "with the result that". For a comprehensive review and critique of the possible meanings, see Fitzmyer (1993a: 413-7; 1993b).

On the combination of guilt and fate in the dissemination of sin through the race according to Rom 5:12-21, see Byrne (1988). A more deterministic understanding of the relation between Adam's sin and human sinfulness is evident at v. 19 (ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν οἱ πολλοί), though note Wedderburn's caution (1972/73: 352-3).

¹¹⁹ ⁴ Ezra synthesizes the Adamic fall tradition with the idea of the evil yetzer (3:21-22; 4:31). In this work, it is also stressed that Adam's offspring have brought death upon themselves because of their deeds (7:116-18; 119-26), and that each person is responsible for choosing his or her ultimate destiny (7:127-31). According to 2 Apoc. Bar. each individual becomes his or her own Adam (17:1-18:2; 48:42-47; 54:19). *Apocalypse of Moses* and *Life of Adam and Eve* connect human sinfulness with the primal sin (Apoc. Mos. 32:1-3; *Adam and Eve* 44:2). Yet as Levison (189) points out, in both writings, the determinism is leavened by a stress on individual responsibility.

no sin (and hence no death) where the law is absent. Sin, Paul stresses, has always been in the world, even during that time when there was no law against which to define and measure it. In v. 13b, Paul acknowledges that in the absence of the law sin could not be credited. But by this he can hardly mean that personal sin was overlooked in this period. The fact that, as v. 14 makes clear, people died then too, shows clearly enough that they must have been held responsible for their sin (on the logic of 5:12cd). It is rather that the *nature* of sin was different in the interim between Adam and Moses: it was not παράβασις, a deliberate transgression of a given and recognized commandment (v. 14), as it was in the case of Adam (who broke the divine command) and as it is where the law is present.

It is worth highlighting the distinction in meaning between ἁμαρτία in the first clause of v. 13 and ἁμαρτία in the second.¹²⁰ In v. 13a sin, as in v. 12, is the cosmological power which has laid hold of the κόσμος and whose dominion none can escape. In v. 13 b, ἁμαρτία is an act for which human beings are held individually accountable (παράβασις); it is something which can be "charged" to them. Again we see how easily Paul's mind moves from the inescapability of sin as a result of Adam's transgression to the thought of each member of the human race as personally and individually responsible for his/her own sin.

4.3. Conclusions

1. κόσμος in 5:12-13 denotes "the world of human history"
2. As the *created* human world, κόσμος is not inherently or

¹²⁰Dunn (1988: 275).

originally sinful or mortal: sin and death enter upon the stage of the κόσμος, as it were, from the wings.

3. κόσμος is not the alien and hostile apocalyptic power of 1 Cor 1:20, 21; 3:19, 22, but the battleground, the scene of the apocalyptic conflict.¹²¹ The κόσμος has been invaded by forces of sin and death (though as Paul goes on to show, it is now in the process of being liberated by Christ).

5. Rom 8:19-22: Creation Groaning, Awaiting Liberation

We come now to Rom 8:19-22, a seminal text for our investigation.¹²² Stuhlmacher has described Rom 8:18ff as "der eigentlich paulinische Kommentar zum Begriff der κοινῆ κτίσις";¹²³ Kehnscherper, calls it "the climax of Pauline soteriology",¹²⁴ since for him it brings into view the "intricate nexus between mankind and the whole created universe on their way to salvation."¹²⁵

Rom 8:18-30 (which, as previously noted, brings the argument of the epistle so far to its climax), develops the

¹²¹ de Boer (173).

¹²² The literature on this passage is extensive: Eareckson (1977: 12) identifies 18 articles and monographs on Rom 8:18-25 prior to 1960. Aside from the commentaries, reference may be made to the following articles and studies among others: Balz (1971: 36-54); Baumgarten (170-8); Bindemann; Cranfield (1974); Christoffersson; Eareckson; Forde; Gager (1970); Gerber; Gibbs (37-47); Hommel; Kehnscherper; G.W.H.Lampe; E.Lewis; Lyonnet; May; Osten-Sacken (263-6); Paulsen (107-32); G.Philip; Schwantes (43-52); Shields (1980: 125-48); Stacey; Thomas; Viard; Vögtle (1970a: 183-208; 1970b); Vollenweider (275-96); Walter; Zahn.

¹²³ Stuhlmacher (1967: 9).

¹²⁴ Kehnscherper (1978: 236).

¹²⁵ Kehnscherper (233).

theme of suffering in hope, expanding the train of thought in 5:2-4.¹²⁶ v. 17 marks the transition to the new topic with the assertion that "we suffer with Christ in order that we may be glorified with him" (συνπάσχομεν ἵνα καὶ συνδοξασθῶμεν).¹²⁷ v. 18 states the main thesis - the glory which awaits completely outweighs the sufferings of the present time¹²⁸ - for which the following subsections provide a threefold evidence: the expectation of creation, vv. 19-22, the groaning of believers, vv. 23-25, the help of the Spirit, vv. 26-27.¹²⁹ The final subsection, vv. 28-30 is either a further testimony,¹³⁰ or, more likely, a conclusion.¹³¹ The passage is shot through with the "already"/"not yet"

¹²⁶ N.A.Dahl (1977b: 88-91); Nygren (343); Osten-Sacken (124-8); Wilckens (1980: 151); Ziesler (1989: 218). For the connections between Rom 8:18-30 and 1:18-32, see Hommel; Walter.

¹²⁷ The theme of the suffering of the righteous as a preliminary to the coming glory was well in place by Paul's time, e.g., Dan 7:17-27; 12:1-3; Wis 2-5; 2 Macc 7; 1 Enoch 91:3-4; 94:1-5; 95:7; 102-4. For later texts, see Wilckens (1980: 148-9).

¹²⁸ Cf. 2 Cor 4:17; Phil 1:20.

¹²⁹ This analysis of the text goes back to Zahn and is accepted by many interpreters, e.g., Balz (33-4); Bindemann (67); Fitzmyer (1993a: 505); Käsemann (1980: 231); Michel (1966: 200-1); Nygren (330-1); Schlier (1977: 258); Shields (1980: 126); Wilckens (1980: 147); Zeller (150-1). Criticisms of Zahn's structuring have been made and alternative suggestions advanced, e.g., by Christoffersson (141-3). Luz (370, 377); Paulsen (107-8); Zahn's structuring, though, remains the simplest and most convenient. The division ought to be made, however, not on the basis of the threefold groaning motif (as Zahn suggested), but according to the main subject of each subsection: creation, vv. 19-22, Christians, vv. 23-25, the Spirit, vv. 26-27.

¹³⁰ e.g., Kuss (1963: 620).

¹³¹ Shields (1980: 126).

tension - the frustration of having received a foretaste of the inheritance to come (v. 23), yet having to wait to enter into that inheritance in its fullness (v. 24-25).

In his elaboration of the longing of creation in 8:19-22, Paul draws on pre-existing texts and traditions.¹³² It is almost universally agreed that Paul alludes to Gen 3:17-19, where God curses the earth because of Adam's sin. In so doing, he stands in the line of a developing trend in Jewish theology which speculates on the effects of Adam's transgression on the natural world,¹³³ and which finds in the Adamic fall an explanation for the miseries and afflictions of life.¹³⁴ At the same time, as is again widely recognized, he has recourse to the OT and Intertestamental tradition of the future transfiguration of the material world, highlighted in our discussion of 1 Cor 7:29-31.

Mention ought to be made of Christoffersson's dissent to

¹³² We may dismiss as improbable Bultmann's contention that Paul is using material from Gnostic mythology (1952: 174) and Hanson's claim that the passage "is...a sort of Christian midrash on Ps 89:46-8" (1974: 32-5).

¹³³ e.g., Jub 3:29: the animals cease to speak, and the course of nature is altered; the idea that all the animals originally possessed the power of speech is reflected in Josephus, *Ant.* 1.1.4, and Philo, *Conf.* 3, *Qu. Gen.* 1.32. In *Apoc. Mos.* 10-11, the original harmony between human beings and the animals is disrupted: see esp. 10:1-3; 11:1-3, cf. 21; 24:4; Levison (166-7). *Gen. Rab.* 11:2-4; 12:6 mentions changes in the cosmic order. On the Adamic fall as affecting nature in Jewish writings, see Tennant (127, 150f, 193, 197, 203, 215). For rabbinic references, see Str-B 3: 249-55.

¹³⁴ e.g., 4 Ezra 7:11-14; 2 *Apoc. Bar.* 56:6-10; *Apoc. Mos.* 7-8; 39; *Adam and Eve* 1-4; 6; 18-21; 32-34; 47; 49-50. These passages are discussed by Levison. See also, A.L.Thompson (1977: 7-14). On the rabbinic literature, see Tennant (150-51); W.D.Davies (1962: 38-39).

the consensus view on the Genesis 3 background to our passage. In a recent detailed study, he argues that "Flood tradition", which grew out of Gen 6-8, furnishes the backcloth to this text. Obviously we cannot here embark on a detailed critique of Christoffersson's thesis, but several objections may be raised: 1) While the story of the Watchers provided the earliest Jewish explanation of the origin of evil in the world (*1 Enoch* 1-36), by the end of the first century CE, so far as we can gather, it had virtually been superseded in this respect by an account based on the story of Adam and Eve. From the perspective of the history of religious thought, therefore, it seems more reasonable to place Paul within the context of an emerging tradition than to pitch him against the background of a declining one. 2) The flood story has otherwise no place in Paul's thinking. The Adam and Eve story, on the other hand, features significantly. Adam motifs, as we have seen, are especially important in Romans, particularly in chapters 5-8. 3) The parallels which Christoffersson claims to have found are, on close scrutiny, not particularly strong, and at points the attempt to explain Rom 8:18-27 in the light of the Flood tradition background leads to skewed exegesis of the text.¹³⁵ In our judgement, Christoffersson's presentation, despite its detail of argumentation, does not seriously damage the case for seeing in Rom 8:19-22 an allusion to Gen 3:17-19.

¹³⁵ e.g., his contention that the $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\iota\grave{\alpha}\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\tilde{\upsilon}$ to be revealed (v. 19) should be identified as angels (120-4). Paul has already referred to Christians as sons of God using $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\iota$ in v. 14; the sonship of *believers* was in fact the theme of the previous section, vv. 12-17. Such a dramatic change of referent in v. 19, without any indication, is hardly likely.

Though most of the individual motifs of Rom 8:19-22 can be found in other Jewish texts, particularly in the apocalyptic writings, there exists no exact parallel to this passage in Jewish literature. Thus, while Paul utilizes existing traditions, all the indications are that he is composing here an "independent speech",¹³⁶ creatively handling the material he has received and developing his own distinctive emphases.¹³⁷

To give necessary focus to our examination of 8:19-22, we will concentrate on three questions: 1) What does Paul mean by κτίσις? 2) What does Paul say about κτίσις? 3) What is the immediate purpose of Paul's discussion in vv. 19-22?

5.1. The Meaning of κτίσις

Since this is ground well covered elsewhere and is an issue on which a consensus has been achieved, we need not spend much time on it here. While a host of interpretations have been proposed throughout the centuries, in the modern period of New Testament study (since F.C.Baur), the discussion on the meaning of κτίσις has revolved around four main suggestions:¹³⁸

- 1) κτίσις as denoting the angelic world;¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Baiz (1971: 38).

¹³⁷ Dodd (134) and Cranfield (1975: 404-5) point to the poetic quality of the text, but it is probably better to speak of Paul's literary creativity.

¹³⁸ See the detailed history of research in Gieraths (20-87). Cf. Christoffersson (33-6). Whitehouse's contention that κτίσις means "the human body" (26), "the living human creature who has a σῶμα" (57) has deservedly failed to win a hearing.

¹³⁹ Fuchs (108-9).

- 2) κτίσις as denoting unbelieving humankind;¹⁴⁰
- 3) κτίσις as denoting the non-human creation together with unbelievers;¹⁴¹
- 4) κτίσις as denoting the non-human creation.¹⁴²

The fourth option is favoured by the majority of interpreters.

The most important clues as to the meaning of κτίσις are found in the text itself. Since the key question is, What sense fits best in the context? one may determine the meaning of κτίσις by a process of elimination.¹⁴³ At the same time, account must also be taken of the traditions lying behind the passage,¹⁴⁴ and the established uses of κτίσις.

The angelic interpretation may be quickly dismissed. It hardly finds a single modern advocate. There is nothing in the context which would indicate that Paul has angels, either "good" or "evil" angels, in mind, nor is there anything in the text which could easily apply to them.

The case for a reference to unbelieving humankind is advanced on the following grounds: 1) Paul's use of personal language to describe the κτίσις more obviously points to an

¹⁴⁰ e.g., Gager (1970: 327-30); Pallis (102); Schlatter (270); Walter. See further Gieraths (73-82).

¹⁴¹ e.g., Balz (1971: 47-49); Gerber; Gibbs (40); Käsemann (1980: 233); Luz Newman and Nida (158); Nygren (337); Viard. See further Gieraths (27-61).

¹⁴² e.g., Bindemann (73); Byrne (1979: 105); Christoffersson (139); Cranfield (1975: 411-2); Dunn (1988: 469); Fitzmyer (1993a: 506); Gieraths (90-9); Kuss (1963: 623); Lenski (537); Lietzmann (1933: 84); Meyer (1874: 73); Morris (1988: 320); Murray (301). O'Neill (140); Sanday and Headlam (207); Stuhlmacher (1989: 122-3); Wilckens (1980: 153); Zahn; Zeller (162); Ziesler (1989: 219).

¹⁴³ Murray (1959: 301).

¹⁴⁴ Bindemann (73).

anthropological than a cosmological denotation; 2) the parallelism of κτίσις and τέκνα θεοῦ suggests a contrast between believers and non-believers; 3) because Christians are called κοινὴ κτίσις in Gal 6:15 and 2 Cor 5:16, κτίσις in Rom 8:19-22 must refer to non-Christians. The first argument can hardly stand; the personification of the natural world had long been part of Jewish tradition, and is found frequently in the OT, particularly in the Psalms and Prophets.¹⁴⁵ As to the second, on the basis of established Jewish and Greek usage, κτίσις is hardly a natural word for Paul to use to designate non-believers in contrast with believers. The third is quite insubstantial: in neither Gal 6:15 nor 2 Cor 5:17 does Paul contrast κοινὴ κτίσις with κτίσις, so nothing can be deduced from these texts as to the meaning of the κτίσις in Rom 8:19-22. Most exegetes find it hard to accept that Paul could say of non-believers what he says of κτίσις in these verses, e.g., that they are subjected through no fault of their own, that they are eagerly waiting the revelation of the sons of God. Whatever Paul's view of the fate of non-Christians, this seems, from his perspective, a quite unlikely description of their present condition.

For these reasons, it is difficult to accommodate non-Christian humanity at all within the embrace of κτίσις:

¹⁴⁵ e.g., Deut 32:1; Job 7:1-9; Ps 19:1; 68:16; 96:12; 98:8; Isa 1:2; 14:8; 35:1; 45:12; 55:12; Jer 4:28; 12:4; Ezek 31:15; Hab 2:11; Note also the personification of creation in 4 Ezra 10:9-17; 2 Apoc. Bar. 11:6-7.

"Earth is a mother" metaphors were especially common in the ancient world, found both in poetry and philosophy. According to Plato, "earth does not imitate woman, but woman earth" (*Men.* 238); Philo takes up the image of the mother-earth in *Opif.* 129ff.

the use of κτίσις to designate non-believers alone or to denote non-believers together with the non-human creation would seem equally unlikely.

We are left then with the interpretation of κτίσις as referring exclusively to the non-human creation. This not only makes best sense in the context, it is also consistent with the traditions upon which Paul draws, especially, the cursing of the earth in Gen 3:17-19. Moreover, it accords with an established use of the word in *Wisdom of Solomon* (2:6; 5:17; 16:24; 19:6), a document with which, as we have seen, more than likely, Paul was familiar.

5.2. Paul's Portrayal of κτίσις

Paul's portrait of the κτίσις in vv. 19-22 is marked by five main features. Firstly, there is a focus on creation's disjointedness: Paul tells us that the κτίσις has been subjected to ματαιότης (v. 20) and placed in bondage to φθορά (v. 21).

The word ματαιότης points to an inability to fulfill its intended purpose (as Cranfield states, "the ineffectiveness of that which does not attain its goal").¹⁴⁶ In Ecclesiastes, where the word most often occurs in the LXX, ματαιότης is used with the sense "futility", or "absurdity", in connection with the meaninglessness of life "under the sun", and there may be an echo of this perspective here. That the condition of frustration is not inherent in or original to the κτίσις is seen in the words οὐχ ἔκουσα ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸν

¹⁴⁶Cranfield (1975: 413); so also, M.Black (122); Dunn (1988: 470), Moo (552); Wilckens (1980: 154). Sanday and Headlam (208) observe that the word is the opposite of τέλειος.

ὑποτάξαντα, referring to God's pronouncement of Gen 3:17-19, Paul intensifying the scale of divine judgement.¹⁴⁷

Paul emphasizes that creation has been *subjected* to ματαιότης (ὑπετάγη, διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα). The referent of ὑπετάγη can hardly be other than God. Some see a reference to Adam in διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα,¹⁴⁸ but this is unlikely for several reasons: 1) it is difficult to see how Adam could subject creation ἐφ' ἐλπίδι; 2) since God is both the agent of the previous ὑπετάγη and the future passive ἐλευθερωθήσεται in v. 21, most probably he is the implied agent of τὸν ὑποτάξαντα;¹⁴⁹ 3) in Gen 3:17-19, it is God, not Adam, who pronounces the curse on the earth.¹⁵⁰ The awkward construction διὰ + accusative, however, probably indicates Adam's sin as the occasion of the subjection. Dunn states

¹⁴⁷ That Paul is thinking of the act of creation, rather than the curse of Gen 3:17-19 has been suggested by several exegetes of an earlier generation: see Meyer (1874: 76). Barth (308) also seems to hold this opinion: he writes: "The occasion of the dislocation and longing and *vanity*, presented to us in the whole creation...is rather createdness itself, the manifest lack of direct life, the unsatisfied hope of resurrection." So too E.Lewis (408) appears to adopt the view. A reference to the act of creation here should, however, be discounted: as Meyer (1874: 76), emphasizes, the line οὐχ' ἐκοῦσα ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα presupposes a previous state when the creation was not subject to ματαιότης.

¹⁴⁸ e.g., J.A.T.Robinson (102); G.W.H.Lampe (458); Zeller (162).

¹⁴⁹ Lenski (539).

¹⁵⁰ The majority of scholars thus take God to be the subjector: e.g., M.Black (122); Bruce (1985: 163); Cranfield (1975: 414); Dodd (134); Gibbs (44); Käsemann (1980: 235); Leenhardt (220); Lenski (539); Meyer (1874: 76); Moo (592); Morris (1988: 321-3; Michel (1966: 267); Sanday and Headlam (208); Schlier (1977: 261); Shields (1980: 139); Wilckens (1980: 153); Ziesler (1989: 220).

that

Paul was attempting to convey too briefly a quite complicated point: that God subjected all things to Adam, and that included subjecting creation to fallen Adam, to share in his fallenness.¹⁵¹

It is possible, as Zahn suggests,¹⁵² that Paul's wording reflects Gen 8:21, where God says that he will never again curse the ground because of humanity.¹⁵³

The word φθορά designates a condition of physical deterioration: Paul in 1 Cor 15:42, 50, as we have seen, uses the word in connection with the physical body. The created order has been made "perishable", subject to the forces of dissolution and decay. Talk of "slavery", however, again conveys the idea of an imposed status; φθορά is not an inherent malady.

Secondly, Paul, in anthropomorphic language, highlights the suffering experienced by κτίσις at present.

In v. 22, Paul depicts πᾶση ἢ κτίσις¹⁵⁴ as groaning and as experiencing birth-pangs.¹⁵⁵ The metaphor of childbirth was

¹⁵¹Dunn (1988: 471).

¹⁵²Zahn (536).

¹⁵³διὰ τὰ ἔργα τῶν ἀνθρώπων. In a number of OT texts, the earth is depicted as caught up in the sins of humanity, e.g., Isa 11:6-8; 24:5-6; 66:22; Jer 4:28; 12:4; Ezek 34:25-31; Hos 2:18; Zech 8:12; cf. 4 Ezra 5:55; 7:11ff; 9:17ff.

¹⁵⁴The addition of πᾶς is better understood as intensifying the earlier meaning of κτίσις than as widening its compass to now draw humanity into the picture: contra Shields (1980: 143); Vögtle (1970: 199); Wilckens (1980: 153).

¹⁵⁵The words οἶδαμεν γάρ in v. 22 appear to indicate that Paul is appealing to a matter of common knowledge, or to a well-known tradition. As Moo (554) points out, Paul generally uses οἶδαμεν γάρ to introduce a commonly

quite commonly used in both Judaism and Christianity, as well as in the OT, in eschatological contexts.¹⁵⁶ The noun ὠδίν occurs in Mk 13:8/Mt 24:8 in connection with the time of tribulation which heralds the end. In Rom 8:22, however, the birth-pangs are not the sufferings which precede the new age, which of course for Paul had been set in motion by the gospel events:¹⁵⁷ the groaning and travail of creation is something that has been going on ever since creation's subjection on account of Adam's transgression.¹⁵⁸ The child-birth image may have suggested itself to Paul from the terms of the judgement placed on the woman in the LXX of Gen 3:17 (where the noun στενωγμός is used).¹⁵⁹

Thirdly, particular emphasis is laid on the hope and sense of expectancy which attends creation. The theme of hope is expressed at several points. The childbirth metaphor implies that creation's suffering is not meaningless, but is part of a productive process which will result in a positive outcome.¹⁶⁰ The words ἐφ' ἐλπίδι in v.

recognized truth (2:2; 3:19; 7:14; 8:28).

¹⁵⁶ For a survey of the various uses of the metaphor, see Gempf.

¹⁵⁷ Among those who think that Paul has in mind the Jewish doctrine of the "messianic woes": M.Black (22); Cranfield (1975: 426); Käsemann (1980: 226); Leenhardt (222); Michel (1966: 204).

¹⁵⁸ So Balz (1971: 108); Bruce (1985: 164); Osten-Sacken (1975: 98f); Siber (149f). It seems unlikely that the phrase ἄχρη τοῦ νῦν has eschatological force: contra Käsemann (1980: 236). The words, as Cranfield recognizes (1975: 417), simply serve to emphasize the long continuance of the groaning and travail; so also Moo (555).

¹⁵⁹ Milne (17).

¹⁶⁰ Philip (509) states, "The groans are not those that precede an expiring world, but groans that tell that a glorious

20 indicate that, even though creation was subjected to futility, it was with a positive end in view: God's judgement brought with it a promise of a greater future.¹⁶¹ Paul's talk of the earnest expectation and eager longing of creation in v. 22 (the verb ἀπεκδέχεται intensifying the noun ἀποκαραδοκία), forcefully expresses a sense of anticipation. ἀποκαραδοκία occurs at Phil 1:20 where it is also connected with ἐλπίς. It signifies confident expectation. The etymology of ἀποκαραδοκία (κάρρα, head, δέκομαι, stretch) may suggest the more vivid picture of the creation stretching its neck forward,¹⁶² in view of the personification of κτίσις in this passage, but it would be unwise to press this. Since ἀπεκδέχεται is consistently used by Paul in an eschatological context (vv. 23, 25; 1 Cor 1:7; Gal 5:5; Phil 3:20), it is likely that there is a thought here of the heightening or awakening of creation's anticipation by the death and resurrection of Christ and believers' consequent *present* realization of the eschatological experience of sonship and the Spirit.

Fourth, Paul highlights in a quite striking way the solidarity between creation and humanity, and more particularly, between creation and believers. There is solidarity in judgement: the κτίσις was subjected to futility on account of human sin (v. 20); solidarity in suffering and expectation: creation and believers groan

birth is at hand. They do indeed mean deep present anguish, but anguish that shall be forgotten when the new creature shall have been born." *Contra Gempf* (126).

¹⁶¹ Cranfield (1975: 414) suggests that Paul had in mind the promise of Gen 3:15, which Paul seems to allude to in Rom 16:20.

¹⁶² Delling (1964a: 393).

together (v. 23), experiencing the same frustration and anticipating the same future hope (vv. 24-25); solidarity in final redemption: the future of the κτίσις is bound up with, and is indeed contingent upon, that of the children of God (v. 21).

Fifth, Paul envisages a high degree of continuity between the creation subjected to futility and the creation which will share in the coming glory. Its fate is depicted as liberation (ἐλευθερωθήσεται): it is destined for deliverance not destruction. Moreover, Paul emphasizes that αὐτῇ ἡ κτίσις will be liberated: the clear implication is that *this* creation has a future; it will not give way to another.¹⁶³ In our previous Chapter we saw how the hope of cosmic redemption in Intertestamental Jewish texts could be expressed either in terms of the *annihilation* of this creation and the establishment of a completely *new* creation or, in terms of a *transformation* of the present creation. We suggested that the affirmation of 1 Cor 7:31a more readily points to the former than the latter. But here, unequivocally Paul is thinking of a restoration and rejuvenation of *this* creation - creation freed from the effects of God's judgement following Adam's transgression that it may completely fulfill the purpose for which it was made (reversing ματαιότης).¹⁶⁴ The continuity implied by Paul between "fallen" and redeemed creation is much more marked

¹⁶³ So Bruce (1985: 161); Gibbs (44); Lenski (542); Meyer (1874: 78); Moo (554); Murray (1959: 304); Philippi (1879: 15).

¹⁶⁴ What emerges is not necessarily just a return to the conditions of the original state of creation: Paul could well be thinking of a setting free of creation to achieve a goal which it has never yet attained.

than we find in visions of the future world in the classic Apocalyptic writings, 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch.¹⁶⁵

5.3. The Purpose of 8:19-22

Rom 8:18ff unpacks the statement of v. 18, that the present sufferings carry little weight against the future hope. One of Paul's aims, perhaps his chief aim, in this passage (and in 8:18-39 as a whole), therefore, is to offer his readers comfort and consolation in the midst of their sufferings and trials.¹⁶⁶ As Gager writes, Paul furnishes "both justification of, and consolation for, present suffering...thus to render tolerable a situation which would otherwise have been intolerable."¹⁶⁷ The reference to θλίψις, στενοχωρία, διωγμός, κίνδυνος, and μάχαιρα in 8:35 may well suggest that Rom 8:18ff was written against the background of an actual situation of opposition and suffering in Rome,¹⁶⁸ a point which we will develop later.

Within the immediate context of 8:18-30, the purpose of vv. 19-22 is to place the suffering of believers in a cosmic setting. In the transitional verse, v. 17, συμπάσχομεν manifestly points to the sufferings which are encountered and endured for the sake of Christ. The effect of v. 18 and vv. 19-22 is that these specifically *Christian* sufferings are now located within the wider frame of suffering generally, τὰ παθήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ - the suffering which

¹⁶⁵ So Neary (11-12).

¹⁶⁶ So e.g., Kuss (1963: 621); Nygren (335-6); Stuhlmacher (1989: 120); Ziesler (1989: 218-9).

¹⁶⁷ Gager (1970: 330).

¹⁶⁸ Pobee (112). Pobee (111) notes that the present tense of συμπάσχομεν in v.17 seems to assume a current situation.

is "a *sine qua non* of a world which itself is groaning and...ushers in the new and golden age".¹⁶⁹ The result of this manoeuvre is, as Gager states, that:

The suffering of the believer now appears not as an isolated instance, but as an integral and necessary stage in the cosmic birth process whose culmination will be the glorious liberty of the sons of God.¹⁷⁰

5.4. Conclusions

Again, we pause to make some observations on κτίσις and its figuration in this passage.

1. κτίσις, as is now generally recognized, denotes the "non-human creation".
2. The κτίσις is depicted as in a state of nonfulfillment and enslavement, and as groaning and laden down with pain. In contrast to the κόσμος of Greek philosophy, this is not the best of all possible worlds: there is disorder and disharmony in God's creation. Yet this is certainly no pessimistic drawing of the κτίσις. Paul's over-riding emphasis is on the attitude of hope by which creation is characterized as it anticipates its awaited and promised deliverance. Furthermore, even in its current disjointed state, there is no sense of the created world having spun out of God's control. Quite to the contrary, creation's ματαιότης and bondage to φθορά are deliberately willed and

¹⁶⁹ Pobee (112). So also Godet (1881/82: 87); Lenski (534); Moo (548); Morris (1988: 319). According to Käsemann, τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ points to the period between Christ's first coming and his second (1980. 232), but this is unlikely, since Paul's purview in vv. 19-22 is from the moment of creation's subjection to the day of its emancipation.

¹⁷⁰ Gager (1970: 330).

put into effect by God. Even in and after its subjection, creation remains in concrete relationship with its creator.¹⁷¹ Bindemann states, "Wie die passive ὑπετάγη und ἐλευθερωθήσεται verdeutlichen, ist auch die Geschichte einer ihrem Schöpfer entfremdeten Welt eine Geschichte von ihm her und zu ihm hin."¹⁷² Creation's present distortedness is entirely within God's sovereign purposes.

3. The aberrancy of φθορά in the created order comports with the intrusiveness of death in the human world as underlined in 5:12. Death and φθορά arrive in God's creation as a consequence of Adam's sin. Thus, as C.C.Black concludes in his study of death in Romans 5-8,

the apostle indicates that death is an intrusive warp in the creator's design...it is an aberration not just of the life of an individual but of all humanity (5:18-19) and even of the entire cosmos (8:20-22).¹⁷³

The presentation of φθορά in 8:21 contrasts with that of 1 Cor 15:42-44, which, as we have observed, implies that φθορά is a natural (hence, necessary and inescapable) characteristic of the physical body as a condition of belonging to the present creation.¹⁷⁴

4. Paul pictures the future of the κτίσις in terms of liberation; it will not be dissolved to make way for a brand

¹⁷¹ Bindemann (30, 70).

¹⁷² Bindemann (75).

¹⁷³ C.C.Black (429).

¹⁷⁴ When Paul speaks of the σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας (6:6) σῶμα τοῦ θανάτου (7:24), θνητὸν σῶμα (6:12; 8:11), he does not thereby imply that the σῶμα is naturally sinful and mortal: what is in view is the σῶμα insofar as it lies under the dominion of sin and death. See Jewett (1971: 290-301).

new creation, but released from ματαιότης and φθορά and allowed to become what it was originally intended to be. Interestingly, the emphasis on the continuity between the κτίσις of the present and the future is matched by a corresponding stress on the continuity between the σῶμα of present and future existence. Whereas in 1 Cor 15:42-50, Paul had explained resurrection as a replacement or exchange of one kind of body for another (the σῶμα πνευματικόν for the σῶμα ψυχικόν), in Rom 8:11 and 8:23, resurrection is something that happens to *this* body. Paul claims that God will enliven τὰ θνητὰ σώματα ἡμῶν and speaks of ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν. As Witherington states, "For the first time it is possible that Paul is suggesting that the resurrection body will be numerically and "somatically" identical with the present body." To relieve Paul of a charge of inconsistency, Witherington argues that in these verses, "Paul likely is referring to the transformation of the living believers at the Parousia rather than to the resurrection of the dead".¹⁷⁵ This explanation, however, will hardly suffice: nowhere in Romans 8 nor indeed in Romans at all does Paul make a distinction between believers alive at the parousia and those who have died. It is rather that Paul's greater sense of bodily continuity in his depiction of resurrection in 8:11, 23 is informed by his emphasis in 8:19-22 on the future continuity of *this* material creation as a whole. Thus, when Paul talks of the "redemption" of the body in 8:23, he is no doubt thinking of the body's deliverance from the ματαιότης and φθορά which characterize

¹⁷⁵ Witherington (1992: 210).

the whole of creation, and the body, as part of it.¹⁷⁶

5. The way in which Paul legitimates the sufferings of Christians may be worth noting. Interestingly, he does not here interpret believers' παθήματα as part of the "cosmic battle", between the forces of darkness and the forces of light, as he had done in 1 Thessalonians (2:18; 3:3-5).¹⁷⁷ Nor is there any concern to point up the damnation and punishment which persecutors may expect on the day of retribution (1 Thess 1:10; 5:3). These sufferings do not promote any sense of alienation; rather, as Beker states, Paul paints a picture of the church in solidarity with the world and its suffering.¹⁷⁸

6. In his study of Rom 8:18f, Bindemann highlights distinctive emphases of this passage when set next to comparable texts in Jewish apocalyptic writings. Several of these may be mentioned: the extent to which Paul orients his readers to the present and does not encourage an escape into the future;¹⁷⁹ the degree of solidarity Paul envisages between believers and the rest of creation - experiencing the same tension of suffering and hope;¹⁸⁰ the fact that Paul avoids the sharp ethical, social and temporal dualisms more typical of the apocalyptic symbolic universe.¹⁸¹ We need not accept

¹⁷⁶Cranfield (1975: 419). The cry of 7:24, τίς με ῥύσεται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου is not a plea for release from *the body*, but deliverance from the body insofar as it is dominated by the power of death: cf. Benoit (48 n. 7).

¹⁷⁷See Pobee (45-6; 110).

¹⁷⁸Beker (1985: 110).

¹⁷⁹Bindemann (31).

¹⁸⁰Bindemann (30-1; 75).

¹⁸¹Bindemann (74-5).

Bindemann's wider claim that Paul is specifically setting out to correct an apocalyptic vista of the world; yet it is interesting how in utilizing apocalyptic motifs, Paul softens the more dualistic aspects of the apocalyptic world view.

7. In this passage, Paul exhibits a hope for the wider creation. Following Bultmann's lead, however, several scholars have argued that while the cosmological dimension may have had a significant place in the traditions on which Paul is drawing, in Rom 8:19-22 it is simply a backdrop to the primary object of interest - the salvation of human beings. Cosmic elements have been incorporated by Paul only to make a statement about the hope of believers; they do not reflect his deepest convictions and can easily be discarded without in any way damaging the main flow of his thought.¹⁸²

The weakness of this kind of reasoning has already been highlighted in our discussion of Paul's adoption of the extended form of the Abrahamic promise in Rom 4:13. It hardly seems feasible that Paul could have taken up these cosmic motifs in Rom 8:18ff without personally aligning himself with them: the *λογίζομαι* with which he introduces the paragraph clearly signals Paul's ownership of the whole passage.¹⁸³ The brevity of treatment of the topic of cosmic fall and redemption is no justification for concluding that the wider creation is incidental or irrelevant to Paul: as Shields states,

his use of ktisiology primarily to undergird his

¹⁸² Baumgarten (170-8); G.W.H.Lampe (455); Schwantes (44; 92f); Vögtle (1970b).

¹⁸³ So Shields (1980: 129).

Christology, soteriology, anthropology, and eschatology indicate more his overriding interest in the kerygma than his disinterest in God as Creator and in the creation as such. He drew on his ktisiological traditions precisely at those points where they needed correction from Christology or where they served his purpose of proclamation. This shows neither disinterest nor unbelief, but rather a taking for granted of this ktisiological tradition....¹⁸⁴

That Paul has inadvertently allowed these mythological elements to "slip through the net" is also difficult to square with our observation that Paul is not simply passing down a received tradition but is reworking and handling established motifs in a creative and quite distinctive way.

It is true that Paul's remarks about the wider creation are intended to illuminate the hope of believers, as is made plain in v. 23. But it also seems clear that Paul cannot conceive of the redemption of human beings apart from the redemption of their physical environment.¹⁸⁵ The destiny of humanity, for Paul, is bound up with the destiny of the universe as a whole.

6. Rom 8:39: Nor Anything Else in all Creation

In 8:31-39, Paul celebrates in hymnic style the ultimate triumph of believers over every threat, affliction and foe: nothing can stand between them and the love of God manifested in Christ.

According to Leenhardt, three series of possible trials are delineated in this passage: first, the inner struggles of faith against the assaults of doubt; second, the threats

¹⁸⁴ Shields (1980: 131). See also Vollenwieder (391-2).

¹⁸⁵ Eareckson (165-9) develops an analogy from music: the relation of "melody" to "harmony".

springing from the instrumentality of men and women (v.35); third (vv.38-39), "the mysterious forces of the universe which escape from all human control".¹⁸⁶

In vv. 38-39, Paul lists ten items, arranged in four pairs with two standing on their own, one of which, the final item, is κτίσις. The first pair is "death" and "life". "Life" seems a strange opponent, but Paul probably means, life insofar as it is marked by trials, dangers and woes. In the next pair we have "angels" (ἄγγελοι), which at least includes evil angels, and "principalities" (ἀρχαί), signifying, hostile, evil powers. Then we find, "things present" and "things to come", which as Moo states, probably simply refers to present and future circumstances.¹⁸⁷

"Powers" (δυνάμεις) denotes spiritual powers.¹⁸⁸ The final pair is "height" and "depth" (ὕψωμα and βάθος). The meaning of these terms is disputed. Some see a reference to heaven and sheol, thus to the height and depth of the three storey universe.¹⁸⁹ Others, however, see a reference to celestial powers, since ὕψωμα and βάθος are technical terms in astrology.¹⁹⁰ A firm conclusion on the matter is difficult.

Paul closes the list with the phrase τις κτίσις ἑτέρα, "any other creature", though the translation "anything else in all creation", probably catches the significance of the words. The phrase is added, according to Cranfield, "in

¹⁸⁶ Leenhardt (240).

¹⁸⁷ Moo (588).

¹⁸⁸ Ziesler (1989: 231).

¹⁸⁹ Cranfield (1975: 443); Wilckens (1980: 177); Ziesler (1989: 232); cf. Wink (49-50).

¹⁹⁰ Barrett (1957: 174); M.Black (127); Bruce (1985: 171); Caird (74).

order to make the list completely comprehensive".¹⁹¹

As noted in Chapter One,¹⁹² Bultmann observes that the juxtaposition of κτίσις with terms such as ἀρχαί casts a negative shade on the word: it implies that creation has become "the field of activity for evil, demonic powers".¹⁹³ Certainly, this is a conclusion which can be drawn from the text: one may question, however, whether such an inference was actually intended by Paul. Far from wanting to impugn κτίσις by consigning it to a list of dangers and hostile powers, it is much more likely that the addition of τις κτίσις ἑτέρα is intended to temper the preceding items on this list and mitigate the threat they pose. This reading undoubtedly fits better with the context, and the stress in 8:31-39 on the invincibility of God's love toward believers and the assurance this affords.

The rhetorical effect of using τις κτίσις ἑτέρα to close the catalogue is to qualify its members in such a way that these potential or actual threats are now brought within the compass of God's creation and therefore within the sphere of God's control.

That the flow of linguistic influence between κτίσις and the other items on the list is bi-directional may be more obvious to us than it was to Paul. In any case, it seems clear enough where Paul's accent lies: for him, the collocation serves to neutralize the threats and powers and not to stigmatize κτίσις. Bultmann's interpretation of κτίσις in 8:39, we suggest, probably inverts Paul's

¹⁹¹ Cranfield (1975: 444). Cf. Murray (1959: 334).

¹⁹² Section 1.2.

¹⁹³ Bultmann (1952: 230).

emphasis; it does this as a consequence of his abstraction of these verses from their rhetorical context.

The phrase *τις κτίσις ἑτέρα* indicates that all possible menaces to the believer are comprehended within God's creative and providential purposes: even the hostile spiritual powers are placed within the orb of the created order. There is nothing which can separate believers from the love of God in Christ precisely because no threat exists that is outside the bounds of God's creation, over which he holds sovereign sway (cf. 8:19-22; 28-30).¹⁹⁴

7. Rom 11:12, 15: Riches and Reconciliation for the World

The arguments of chapters 9 and 10 might appear to suggest that God has given up on Israel as a nation and has no further place for her in his plans. Such a corollary Paul emphatically denies (11:1). He argues in 11:1-10 that, as in previous times in Israel's history, a faithful remnant yet exists. In 11:11-27, Paul offers another perspective on the issue, maintaining that Israel's rejection is only temporary; it is part of a two-stage divine strategy, first to bring the Gentiles into the people of God, and then, by the inclusion of the Gentiles, to provoke unbelieving Jews to jealousy that they themselves may be restored.

Paul begins in v.11, by affirming that though Israel has stumbled, the slip is not a fatal one. *μὴ γένοιτο* is the resounding answer to the question of whether Israel has fallen to rise no more. Paul sees a divine gameplan at work. Israel's trespass (*παράπτωμα*) has opened the way for salvation to come to the Gentiles, and this will in turn

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Wink (50).

stir Israel to jealousy. Using a *gal va-homer* formula (πόσῳ μᾶλλον), Paul argues in v. 12, that if their trespass has meant riches for the κόσμος, and their loss, riches for the Gentiles, far greater will be their "fullness".¹⁹⁵

κόσμος in v. 12 denotes the Gentile world in contrast to Israel.¹⁹⁶ This meaning is indicated by the fact that κόσμος in v. 12a is set in parallel with ἐθνῶν in v. 12b (πλοῦτος κόσμου... πλοῦτος ἐθνῶν). The κόσμος, the non-Jewish world has come into great wealth because of Israel's trespass. Paul here is picking up a familiar Jewish theme: the eschatological pilgrimage of Gentiles to Zion.¹⁹⁷ The use of πλοῦτος suggests an allusion to Isa 60:5 ("the wealth of the nations shall come to you"). Paul, however, deliberately inverts the traditional order: the nations of the κόσμος are coming in advance of Jews.

In vv. 13-14, Paul applies the principle of vv. 11-12, to his own ministry as apostle to the Gentiles. He states (addressing the Gentiles in the community specifically) that he magnifies this ministry in order to provoke his own people to jealousy so that he might bring some of them to salvation. In v. 15, Paul develops the contrast of v. 12 in a slightly different way, though the point is essentially the same. He speaks this time of the "rejection" and "acceptance" of Israel. The consequence of their rejection

¹⁹⁵ πλήρωμα. Precisely what Paul means by the word, which can have a variety of meanings, is unclear: "full number" is the most likely interpretation: see Fitzmyer (1993a: 611).

¹⁹⁶ A similar use occurs in Luke 12:30. See further Str-B 2: 191.

¹⁹⁷ Ps 22:27-29; Isa 2:2f; 25:6f; 60:3f; Jer 16:19; Mic 4:1f; Zech 14:16.

is the reconciliation (καταλλαγή) of the κόσμος.¹⁹⁸ The result of their acceptance is something better still: life from the dead, a likely reference to the general resurrection at the end of time.¹⁹⁹

κόσμος in v. 15, refers more broadly to the human world as a whole, drawn into the orbit of the reconciling power of Christ's death (cf 5:10).

In vv. 12 and 15, we again see κόσμος used in positive contexts: κόσμος, as the recipient of God's blessing, having come into a state of enrichment, and κόσμος as the object of God's reconciling activity. There is of course the presupposition of the κόσμος once having been outside the range of such blessing and of the κόσμος as alienated from God. But Paul's emphasis is unambiguously on the new situation which has arisen for the κόσμος, and the new relationship into which (potentially, at least) the κόσμος is brought.

In the scheme of God's redemptive programme mapped out by Paul in this epistle, the phrase καταλλαγή κόσμου in 11:15 provides the positive counterpart to ὑπόδικος...πᾶς ὁ κόσμος θεῷ in 3:19: the κόσμος which stands under God's condemnation, God has taken the initiative to reconcile to himself.

These occurrences serve to show how positively Paul can utilize κόσμος in Romans, throwing into bold relief the polemically charged usage of 1 Corinthians. More broadly,

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:19, on which see Chapter Five, Section B. 3.

¹⁹⁹ So Barrett (1957: 215); M.Black (144); Cranfield (1979: 563); Dunn (1988: 658); Michel (1966: 273); Wilckens (1980: 245); Käsemann (1980: 307).

they testify to the wide range of Paul's uses of κόσμος which dooms to failure any interpretation which attempts to reduce κόσμος in Paul to a single theologically determined stratum of meaning.

8. Preliminary Conclusion: A Non-Boundary Stressing Use of κόσμος in Romans

We will lay out our main conclusions on κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans at the end of the chapter. At this point, we make one observation on Paul's usage of κόσμος in this epistle, as compared to that in 1 Corinthians: Paul betrays no concern (either by his employment of κόσμος or κτίσις) to insist upon the boundary between the Christian community and the macrosociety.

How does this observation square with the fact that the argument of 1:18-11:36 establishes a very strong, qualitative distinction between Christians and the rest of the world? While the mass of humanity lies in the power of sin (3:9) and falls under God's condemnation (3:19), believers are "justified by faith" (5:1) and reconciled to God (5:10), no longer under condemnation (8:1), having died to sin (6:10) and having been released from slavery to sin (6:18, 22; 8:2); they live in the power of God's Spirit (8:5-13) and have been adopted into God's family and made co-heirs with Christ (8:14-17), awaiting a glorious inheritance (8:18-30). Rom 1:18-11:32, as the argument unfolds, exhibits the most consistently developed "soteriological contrast pattern"²⁰⁰ we find anywhere in Paul's letters.

This pattern notwithstanding, there is still little to

²⁰⁰The term is Meeks' (1983a: 95).

give us the impression that Paul's exposition in 1:18-11:36 is explicitly directed in any way toward the formation or reinforcement of social boundaries between the church and the wider society.

In the salvific perspective of Romans 1-11, redemption is primarily conceived in terms of deliverance from sin and its consequences. Paul does not speak of God or Christ rescuing people from "this world" or "the present evil age,"²⁰¹ nor does he use language which implies that salvation entails some sort of separation from the macrosociety.

Very much less in evidence in Romans than in other Pauline letters is the sharp social dualism which categorizes the outside society in such blanket terms as "children of darkness" (1 Thess 5:4-5; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1), "outsiders" (1 Cor 5:12-13; 1 Thess 4:12), "the rest" (1 Thess 4:13; 5:6),²⁰² "the unrighteous" (1 Cor 6:1, 9),²⁰³ or "unbelievers" (e.g., 1 Cor 6:12; 7:12-14; 2 Cor 4:4; 6:14-15).²⁰⁴

Paul of course speaks of unbelieving Jews (ἄπιστία, "a condition of unbelief": 3:3; 4:20; 11:20, 23) and devotes a significant part of his discussion to the theological problem they pose. But the rejection of Jesus as Christ by the vast majority of Jews is a state of affairs which causes Paul great sorrow and anguish (9:1-3). And while he conceives of

²⁰¹ We will discuss Rom 12:2 below.

²⁰² In 1:13 Paul uses οἱ λοιποὶ with reference to other Gentile congregations, and in 11:7, with respect to non-believing Jews.

²⁰³ ἄδικος is used only at 3:5 in the rhetorical question, "Is God unrighteous when he inflicts wrath?"

²⁰⁴ Strikingly, the term ἄπιστος, which features 11 times in 1 Corinthians, is completely absent from Romans.

Christian Jews in terms of the faithful remnant of Israel (11:5), he does not write off renegade Jews in sectarian fashion as "sons of darkness" as the Qumran covenanters had done. He hopes for their re-inclusion (11:23-24) and anticipates the day when "all Israel" shall be saved (11:26-7, whatever precisely this means).

Certainly, too, we have the dismal analysis of pagan society in 1:18-32, but this picture is somewhat moderated by Paul's positive remarks about the Gentiles in 2:6-16. Taking these verses at face value, Paul attributes to the Gentiles a natural law written in their hearts by which they may instinctively do what the law requires (2:14), and apparently admits the possibility that some Gentiles may be saved on the day of judgement, though they are outside of the community of Christ and have no explicit knowledge of the gospel (2:6-11).²⁰⁵

Moreover, we have to reckon with the strong universalist note which is sounded in Romans. Rom 5:15-19 is the most universalist passage in all Paul's writings;²⁰⁶ many scholars interpret these verses as an actual affirmation of universal salvation.²⁰⁷ Perhaps a more satisfactory approach is to view Paul as emphasizing the universal scope and accessibility of salvation in Christ - that God has objectively provided for the salvation of every human being and has made this

²⁰⁵ Rom 2:6-16 is of course a hotly debated passage. For the range of proposed interpretations, see Cranfield (1975: 151). For a defence of the view taken here, see Snodgrass.

²⁰⁶ Cf. 11:26, 31-32.

²⁰⁷ e.g., Boring; de Boer (174-5). That Paul is thinking in terms of two distinct groups of humanity, those "in Adam" and those "in Christ" (as in 1 Cor 15:22), is not a viable option in this passage: see Boring (286).

salvation genuinely available to all.²⁰⁸ In any case, Paul's language points toward the comprehensiveness and universal outreach of God's saving action: God's redemptive goal is the restoration of the whole of humanity. No one is outside the scope of the salvific effects of Christ's death. Within the universal sweep of God's plans therefore, the Christian community is not redeemed *from* sinful humanity, but represents God's redemption *of* sinful humanity.

While, then, Paul maintains a radical distinction between Christians, as the bearers of God's salvation, and everyone else, and while his argument may function as a legitimation of the existence of the Christian community as a religious body apart from Judaism,²⁰⁹ there is little to indicate that he is keen to move his readers toward a greater degree of separation from the macrosociety. The social boundary between the church and those outside does not appear to be a burden of Paul's in Romans 1-11. Indeed, in the course of his exposition, he seems to point up the "gates in the boundaries".²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ e.g., Cranfield (1975: 290). Since Paul in this passage affirms both responsibility and determinism with respect to sin, if the parallelism between Adam and Christ holds, we should expect some degree of responsibility in respect of the reception of the effects of Christ's act of obedience, otherwise, salvation itself becomes fatalistic. It may well be, as Bultmann (1952: 302-3) has argued, that the participle, οἱ λαμβάνοντες in v. 17 implies a condition: the gift of grace must be received. Boring (286-7) contends that οἱ λαμβάνοντες here has a passive sense (those who *have been made* recipients), rather than an active sense (those who *consciously take*), but as Marshall (1989: 316-7) shows, the active meaning is more likely in view of Paul's use of the verb λαμβάνω elsewhere.

²⁰⁹ So F. Watson (106-9).

²¹⁰ Again, this is Meeks' term (1983a: 105).

Paul's non-pejorative usage of κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans, it might well be argued, is consistent with the balanced style of a theological treatise which is much more the product of theological reflection than a response to a community situation: Paul can afford to give κόσμος more positive connotations precisely because he is operating above the level of socio-rhetorical strategy.²¹¹ Yet, both the shift in opinion with regard to the occasion of Romans and Paul's familiarity with the Roman situation and the methodological assumption of this study, that linguistic communication ought not to be divorced from its communicative context, encourage us to look for signs that Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις are not unaffected by social considerations. To the pursuit of these, we now proceed.

C. SOCIO-RHETORICAL ASPECTS OF PAUL'S USAGE

As noted at the beginning of this Chapter, there is a lack of scholarly consensus on how far the theological arguments of 1:18-11:36 relate to the specific needs of Paul's readers. This renders the attempt to uncover a socio-rhetorical dimension to Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις, *directly from those uses*, a highly risky exercise. A less problematic (though by no means *unproblematic*) angle of inquiry is to focus attention on the paraenesis of chapters 12-15. A persuasive case can be made that this material is both

²¹¹ One could compare Drane's (1975: 124) contrast between the reactionary and polemical tone of Paul's presentation of the law in Galatians and the more balanced and evaluative and less situationally determined approach in Romans.

closely connected to the theology which precedes and to the actual situation in Rome. This makes it possible for us, at least in principle, to use the paraenesis of chapters 12-15 as a bridge to link the uses of κόσμος and κτίσις in the theological teaching of 1:18-11:36 to the social reality of the Roman believers, as perceived by Paul.

Our method of approach in this section may be clarified as follows: First, we will attempt to identify correlations between Paul's social teaching in chapters 12-15 and his earlier statements on κόσμος and κτίσις: we will suggest that the admonitions of 12:14-13:10 evidence a number of such connections. Second, we will seek to demonstrate that the exhortations of 12:14-13:10 reflect a particular awareness of and concern for the specific needs of the Roman readers. In this way, we will try to establish connecting lines between Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις, his social teaching, and the situation of his readers. This will entitle us to ask, with a greater degree of justification, whether social factors do not contribute to the way Paul talks about κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans.

1. Correlations With Paul's Social Teaching in Rom

12:14:13-10

1.1. The Literary Character of 12:1-13:14

The paraenesis of Romans 12-15 comprises two main sections, 12:1-13:14 and 14:1-15:13. 14:1-15:13 deals at length with the question of food laws and religious festivals. Most scholars now agree that this extended treatment of one issue cannot simply be explained as a general piece of advice drawn from Paul's pastoral experience (cf. 1 Cor 8-10), as,

for example, Karris argues,²¹² but relates to a particular problem in Rome.²¹³ 12:1-13:14, however, is frequently designated "general paraenesis", since it appears to comprise loosely connected directives.²¹⁴ To label the unit in this way implies that it is tangentially related to the theological exposition which has gone before and that it does not address issues *specific* to the Roman believers. Whether 12:1-13:14 bears upon the concrete needs of the Roman Christians will be discussed later. What concerns us at this point is the relation of the paraenesis to the theological argument of 1:18-11:36.

There is strong evidence to suggest that Paul's exhortations in chapters 12-13 find their foundation in and derive their shape from the theology which precedes. This is indicated by unmistakable linguistic and thematic links between chapters 1-11 and 12-13.

Rom 12:1-2 forms a summary statement or pivot for the exhortations which follow and operates as a lens which diffuses the theology of the earlier section in practical directions.²¹⁵ The οὖν in 12:1 points to an argumentative link with the preceding material: a number of connections with earlier sections are clearly discernible in 12:1-2. The reference to the "mercies (οἰκτιρμοῦ) of God" evidences a connection with 11:30-32, verses which themselves constitute a climactic statement, recalling and summing up

²¹²Karris (esp. 70-71).

²¹³See Bruce (1991: 185-6); Dunn (1988: 795-853); Marcus (67-73); F.Watson (94-8); Wedderburn (1988: 44-65).

²¹⁴e.g., Käsemann (1980: x-xi); Michel (1966: 288-9); Schlier (1977: 349-50); Wilckens (1982: 1-2).

²¹⁵See Furnish (1968: 98-106); M.Thompson (78-86).

key themes of the letter.²¹⁶ There are striking verbal links between 12:1-2 and 1:18-32.²¹⁷ The echoes are so marked that it is difficult not to conclude with Thompson that "The action he [Paul] calls for in 12.1-2...represents a reversal of the downward spiral depicted in Romans 1".²¹⁸ There is an obvious contrast between 12:2 and 2:18.²¹⁹ 12:1-2 also picks up some of the key terms of chapters 6-8.²²⁰ Particularly strong are the links with 6:12-13²²¹ and 8:5-10.²²² Thompson also thinks likely a connection between the call to be transformed (μεταμορφωθῆμεθα) in 12:2 and talk of conformity (συμμόρφους) to the image of Christ in 8:29.²²³ These verbal and thematic similarities lead us to conclude that Paul is drawing together "previous threads of the discussion in a paraenesis which reflects the course of the complete discussion to this point".²²⁴ Links with Paul's teaching in chapters 1-11 can be detected throughout the whole section.²²⁵

²¹⁶ Dunn (1988: 687-9).

²¹⁷ ἀτιμάζεσθαι σώματα (1:24), παραστήσαι σώματα (12:1); ἐλάτρευσαν τῇ κτίσει (1:25), τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν (12:1); ἀδόκιμον νοῦν (1:28) ἀνακαινώσει νοός (12:2). See Dunn (1988: 708); Furnish (1968: 103-4); M.Thompson (81-3).

²¹⁸ M.Thompson (82).

²¹⁹ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα καὶ δοκιμάζεις (2:18), εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν τὸ θέλημα (12:2).

²²⁰ As Dunn (1988: 708) points out, παραστήσαι recalls 6:13, 16, 19, σώματα recalls 6:6, 12; 7:4, 24; 8:10, 11, 13, 23, and νοῦς recalls 7:23, 25.

²²¹ M.Thompson (79-80).

²²² M.Thompson (82).

²²³ M.Thompson (84).

²²⁴ Dunn (1988: 707).

²²⁵ e.g., 12:12 recalls 5:3-5; 12:3, 16 echoes 11:25; 12:14-21 echoes 2:1-11 in its use of the basic moral categories of

These lines of continuity indicate that Paul in Rom 12-15 is drawing out the practical and social consequences of the theology expounded in Romans 1-11.²²⁶ As Dunn points out, both the subjects and the sequence of chapters 12-15 follow naturally from the previous argument/s.²²⁷

What, then, are we make of the seemingly disconnected nature of the admonitions of 12:3-13:14? Examined more closely, these exhortations are not as piecemeal as might at first appear. The use of link words which span the paragraph divisions (διώκω, 12:13, 14; κακός/ἀγαθός, 12:21, 13:3-4; ὀφειλή/ὀφείλω, 13:7-8) indicates a clear progression of thought. A natural progression is also evident in subject matter. From the summary exhortations of 12:1-2, Paul deals in 12:3-13 with life in the Christian community, explicating the nature of the body of Christ (vv. 3-8), and the practice of love within the community (vv. 9-13). In 12:14-13:10, Paul turns to life in the wider society, focusing on relations with non-Christians (vv. 14-21),²²⁸ then

good and bad; the reference to ὀργή in 12:19, 13:4,5 recalls 1:18ff; the exhortation in 13:14 to make no provision for σάρξ builds on 6:19; 7:5, 18, 25; 8:1-13; the call to "put on" Christ ties with the Adamic soteriology of 8:29 and the claim in 6:6 that the "old man" has been crucified; the problem of food laws and laws regarding holy days discussed in 14:1-15:6 follows from Paul's treatment of the law and his "redrawing of the boundaries of the people of God" (Dunn (1988: 706)) in the main body of the letter.

²²⁶ W.T.Wilson (127-8).

²²⁷ Dunn (1988: 705-6).

²²⁸ It is usually assumed that in vv. 15-16, Paul returns to the topic of internal relations within the Christian community. But as Cranfield points out, the admonition of v. 15 is just as applicable to dealings with outsiders (1979: 641) and the injunction to internal harmony could

on responsibilities toward the governing authorities (13:1-7), and stressing love of neighbour as the controlling imperative in all human relations (13:8-10). The appeal to "put on" Christ, which comes at the end of 13:11-14, forms a summary of the paraenesis of these chapters and points back to the opening exhortation of 12:1-2 with its call for transformation and ἀνακαίνωσις.

1.2. Apocalyptic Dualism in 12:2 and 13:11-14

The block of paraenetic material in chapters 12-13 opens and closes on an apocalyptic note. In 12:2, Paul urges his readers not to be conformed to ὁ αἶὼν οὗτος but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. The two age dualism of apocalyptic is clear: conformity to ὁ αἶὼν οὗτος is set in contrast with transformation through ἀνακαίνωσις (the language of renewed creation, cf. Rom 6:1ff). ὁ αἶὼν οὗτος is depicted as a hostile power which can shape beliefs, values, and behaviour patterns: the readers are exhorted to resist its influence. This is precisely the characterization of the world-age which we noted was absent in 1:18-11:36.

In 13:11-14, apocalyptic themes are particularly concentrated. In this subsection, we find for the first and only time in the epistle, an acknowledgement of the nearness of the parousia: the imminence of the end and the sense of urgency which it engenders provide the motivation for Christian behaviour. We also have the typical apocalyptic contrasts between day and night, darkness and light, waking and sleeping. In its choice of apocalyptic symbols, Rom

well be framed with the effect such unity might have on outsiders (1979: 643).

13:11-14 is remarkably similar to 1 Thess 5:1-11.

Given their significant position, framing the series of admonitions in 12:1-13:14,²²⁹ 12:2 and 13:11-14 raise for us two key questions in the light of our preceding analysis: 1) does 12:2, with the mention of ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος signal a change in theological outlook from 1:18-11:36, Paul's emphasis on the world as God's well ordered creation now giving way to a more negative understanding of the world as "this world-age", hostile to God and temporary in nature? 2) do 12:2 and 13:11-14 introduce to his paraenesis a stark apocalyptic social duality?

In answer to the first question, 12:2 does not so much exhibit a shift in perspective as a twin perspective. We noted above the correspondences between 12:1-2 and 1:18-32. This indicates that the ἀνακαίνωσις is conceived in terms of a re-orientation to and re-alignment with God's original creative will and the order already established in creation.²³⁰ It is significant that Paul's exhortation focuses on the sacrificial presentation of their σώματα; as Käsemann states, "When God claims our bodies, in and with them he reaches after his creation."²³¹ The action called for in 12:1-2 is of a piece with a view of salvation as a restoration of creation and the creator-creature relationship:²³² the presentation of the world as God's

²²⁹Furnish (1979: 123).

²³⁰Stuhlmacher (1987: 10).

²³¹Käsemann (1980: 330); cf. Dunn (1988: 709).

²³²The existence of apocalyptic two age/world dualism in this text does not damage our earlier observations about the focus in Romans on God's creative order in the world (any more than 1 Cor 8:4-6 and 10:26 undermines our case for the over-riding apocalyptic-dualistic perspective of 1

creation is presupposed and built upon.

Secondly, neither 12:2 nor 13:11-14 bring to expression an apocalyptic social dualism. The contrast to conformity to ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος in 12:2 is inward transformation and renewal, not outward separation from the macrosociety. Paul's apocalyptic language is here desocialized: the goal set forth is transformation of the inner self. Similarly the dualistic language in Rom 13:11-14 is not used to stress the boundary between believers and non-believers but to stimulate a concern for personal morality (μὴ κώμοις καὶ μέθαις, μὴ κοίταις καὶ ἀσελγείαις, μὴ ἔριδι καὶ ζήλῳ...καὶ τῆς σαρκός πρόνοιαν μὴ ποιεῖσθε εἰς ἐπιθυμίας, vv. 13b-14). It is significant that Paul instructs his readers to conduct themselves εὐσχημόνως (v. 13a). The word εὐσχημων signifies, as Dunn states, "what would generally be regarded as decent, proper, presentable in responsible society".²³³ What Paul is commending to his readers in these verse, therefore, is "conventional respectability";²³⁴ this hardly implies social dualism. Unlike 1 Thess 5:1-11, in Rom 13:10-14 there is no mention of outsiders.

Apocalyptic social dualism, therefore, is lacking in 12:2 and 13:10-14. As we shall see, neither a temporal nor social, apocalyptic dualism is developed in 12:14-13:10.

1.3. The Admonitions of 12:14-13:10

These instructions are of particular interest to us since here, as mentioned, Paul treats the subject of relations

Corinthians), since what we are pointing to is a *dominant* rather than an *exclusive* emphasis.

²³³Dunn (1988: 789).

²³⁴Dunn (1988: 789).

with the wider society. To what extent do the particular theological emphases which we find in Paul's statements on κόσμος and κτίσις influence the content of his social teaching in these verses?

1.3.1. 12:14, 17-21: Dealing with Resentment from Outsiders

These admonitions encourage harmonious relations with outsiders (v. 18). The burden of the advice is to warn against retaliation against hostile behaviour (vv. 14, 17, 19-21), exhorting believers to respond with acts of love and kindness (vv. 14, 17, 20-21). The passage is marked by the absence of apocalyptic social dualism which one might expect Paul to introduce in paraenesis dealing with opposition from outsiders.²³⁵ Rather, Paul stresses their obligation toward πάντες ἄνθρωποι (v. 18). The word-pair, κακός/ἀγαθός, carries an appeal to a standard of behaviour on which there can be "cross-boundary" agreement between non-Christians and Christians.²³⁶

Any apocalyptic traits in the subsection are difficult to find.²³⁷ The reference to God's wrath in v. 19 need not be specified in terms of the final judgement but rather as a reference to the retributive processes built into the ordered world as outlined in 1:18-32. Indeed this interpretation is preferable since it is this aspect of the divine wrath which Paul takes up in the next subsection. Neither does the quotation of Prov 25:21-22 necessarily

²³⁵ Cf. Barclay (1993: 516-20); Meeks (1979: 7-9).

²³⁶ Bindemann (111-2).

²³⁷ Zerbe's (225, 247-8) attempt to import apocalyptic dualism into this text on the basis of the κακός/ἀγαθός contrast is a clutching at straws.

point to eschatological punishment: the standard interpretation of the "coals of fire" in v. 20 is the shame produced in the perpetrator of evil (which may lead to repentance), when his/her actions are met with good.²³⁸

The overwhelming emphasis in this passage is on the promotion of peace, conciliation, and blessing toward non-Christians. Paul's directives could almost be construed as a call to become more integrated into their society.²³⁹

1.3.2. 13:1-7: Submission to the Political Authorities²⁴⁰

In this passage Paul mounts a strong appeal for submission to the political rulers. The pericope represents an extension of the exhortation of 12:18 to live at peace with all men and women.²⁴¹

13:1-7 reflects the strong awareness of the world as

²³⁸ e.g., Cranfield (1979: 649); Cotterell and Turner (302-5); Dunn (1988: 750-1); Stuhlmacher (1989: 177); Travis (41); Wilckens (1982: 26); W.T.Wilson (195-6); though see Zerbe's recent attempt to reinstate the divine punishment interpretation (250-64).

²³⁹ Bindemann (111): "Mahnung zur Integration".

²⁴⁰ On this passage, there is a vast range of literature. Besides commentaries, the following have been consulted for this study: Bammel; Borg; Bruce (1990); Carr (1981: 115-8); Cullmann (1963); Dunn (1986); Friedrich, Pöhlmann and Stuhlmacher; Kallas; J.I.H.MacDonald; Morrison; Moxnes (1988;) Munro (57-67); Schrage (1988: 235-9); Stein; Winter (1988).

²⁴¹ Fitzmyer (1993a: 664). The thesis that this subsection is an interpolation - argued by Kallas, Munro (57-58) and O'Neill (15) - has never won large support. There is no manuscript evidence for such a view. Moreover, it fails to adequately account for the verbal links with the preceding and the following subsections, highlighted above, and the theological continuity with earlier passages, demonstrated below.

God's creation so deeply embedded in the theological teaching of chapters 1-11. As Käsemann notes, the attitude of Paul here toward the government is based on a doctrine of creation.²⁴² Similarly Dunn writes of the theological perspective of this passage: "it is creation theology if it is anything."²⁴³

Attempts to inject an apocalyptic two world-age perspective into the text remain unconvincing. The two-age point of view has been read into the passage on the basis of the angelological interpretation of ἐξουσίαι and ἄρχοντες.²⁴⁴ This interpretation, however, is overwhelmingly rejected by scholars.²⁴⁵ It has also been claimed that Paul's advice ought to be viewed in the light of the apocalyptic perspective of 12:2: thus Schrage writes, "The state, too, is provisional, belonging to the world that is passing away, not final and absolute but temporary and transitory."²⁴⁶ Though Paul would doubtless affirm the provisional character of political structures in the eternal scheme of things, the passage resists all attempts to set it within an apocalyptic, dualistic framework. The political order is located incontrovertibly in the creative and providential purposes of God. Paul encourages loyalty to the imperial government by incorporating it within the reign of God: as Meeks states, "The apocalyptic element in Pauline thought ran counter to that kind of legitimation".²⁴⁷ This is not at

²⁴² Käsemann (1969c: 205).

²⁴³ Dunn (1986: 67).

²⁴⁴ e.g., Cullmann (1963: 72-3).

²⁴⁵ See the critique of Carr (1981: 115-8).

²⁴⁶ Schrage (1988: 236).

²⁴⁷ Meeks (1983a: 170).

all to deny that Paul's advice in 13:1-17 stands under the head of 12:1-2, but to argue that it is more in keeping with the "creation" strand than the "present world-age" strand of Paul's thought in these verses. Both in 12:1-2 and 13:1-7, believers are urged to live in harmony with the will of God, in creaturely obedience to the creator.

The appeal for submission is framed largely in terms which are general and which would gain a wide moral appeal.²⁴⁸

The opening words of the pericope, *πᾶσα ψυχὴ*, are significant: Paul addresses the Roman believers as part of the wider society, not as demarcated from it or exempt from obligations toward it.

The rationale for submission is straightforward: the governing authorities have been set up by God. The power structures of society are part of the divine arrangement of the world.

As Käsemann points out, derivatives from *ταγ-* provide the leading idea in these verses:²⁴⁹ *ὑποτάσσω* (v. 1, 5), *τάσσω* (v. 2) *διαταγή* (v. 2), *ἀντιτάσσομαι* (v. 2). The basic notion is that of an ordered world. The call to submit (*ὑποτασσέσθω*) is essentially a call to recognize one's place in this order and in the hierarchical structure of human society.²⁵⁰ The thought is not exactly that of unqualified obedience to rulers; Paul's appeal is more for "good

²⁴⁸ Bammel (366) describes the terminology as "semi-philosophical": the *κακός/ἀγαθός* antithesis; *ἔπαινος*, a goal of Greek wisdom and philosophy and an incentive to the doing of civic good (v.3); *ἀνάγκη*, used in philosophy to refer to immanent necessity (v.5); *συναΐδησις* (v.5).

²⁴⁹ Käsemann (1980: 351).

²⁵⁰ See Moxnes (1988: 65-8).

citizenship".²⁵¹

The authority of God stands behind the political and administrative authority: there is no authority, except by God (εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ, v. 1); the ruling powers have been established by God (ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι, v. 1); to resist the power of the state is to oppose God's ordinance (διαταγή τοῦ θεοῦ, v. 2). Three times Paul emphasizes that the political ruler is God's servant (θεοῦ διάκονός, v. 4 twice; λειτουργοὶ θεοῦ, v. 6).

The emphasis on God's authority and control over the world he has created and the strong subordinationist theme pick up themes from Rom 8:19-22, 38-9. All that happens in creation is under God's governance (cf. 8:39). Creation submits to its creator (8:20, ὑποτάσσω); subjection of πᾶσα ψυχὴ to the divinely appointed rulers, delegates of God's authority on earth, reflects the same pattern.

There is no thought in this passage that the government is morally corrupt. On the contrary, the rulers are portrayed as upholders of the civic good (τὸ ἀγαθόν, 13:3-4), conducting themselves properly. Consequently, if one does good, the authorities should hold no terror. They provoke fear only in those who do evil. The power of the state to punish disobedient citizens, indeed to execute if necessary (as Dunn notes, "bearing of the sword" is hardly a reference to corporal punishment²⁵²) is grounded in God's will. The authorities insofar as they preserve the divine order and punish the evil-doer, are "avengers" of God's wrath (13:4).

In 1:18-32, we observed how God's ὄργη is specified as

²⁵¹ J. I. H. MacDonald (543).

²⁵² Dunn (1988: 764).

the retributive process built into the moral fabric of the world. In a similar way, in 13:4-5, ὄργή operates in and through societal structures²⁵³ and those who maintain them. Interestingly, the words of 13:2b - those who resist (the political authority) receive judgment on themselves, ἑαυτοῖς κρίμα λήμψονται, recall the language of 1:27 (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀπολαμβάνοντες). In both passages, there is the idea of a judgmental process operative in the "natural" order God has established.

The notion that the social order is a "natural" order is further suggested in the use of ἀνάγκη and συνείδησις in v. 5. As Dunn observes, ἀνάγκη points to the way things are and have to be by nature and by fate (though in Paul's frame of thought, by virtue of creation and providential arrangement).²⁵⁴ συνείδησις (cf. 2:14-16) signals a natural awareness: one's moral sensitivity tells one that submission is the right course of action (cf. 1:32).

Following the instruction to pay taxes in v.6, the pericope ends with an injunction to recognize the obligations which accrue to one's rank in society (v. 7). Three obligations are specified: to pay tax and tribute to whom they are due, fear to whom it is due, honour to whom it is due. One must act in accordance with one's station and defer to those of a higher status; one must not upset the power relations of society. The pecking order is arranged in accordance with God's purposes.

The burden of Paul's advice is that his readers recognize their place within the structures of society at large. They are not to be subversive; they are not to be a

²⁵³Dunn (1988: 765).

²⁵⁴Dunn (1988: 765).

threat to the social status quo. In fact, they are to be model citizens. This is far removed from a sectarian ethos (cf. 1 Cor 6:1-11). Indeed, if Winter is correct in taking 13:3 as an endorsement of the socio-political convention of benefaction (the public honouring of those who do good work for the benefit of the city),²⁵⁵ Paul is encouraging a high level of involvement in the life of the city.²⁵⁶

In Rom 13:1-7, then, Paul brings out the social implications of themes evident in Paul's depiction of the world as κόσμος and κτίσις in 1:18-32, 5:12ff; 8:19-22, 38-39, as well the broad theological perspective on the world as God's creation evident in 1:18-11:36 as a whole. In the process, Paul gives an endorsement of hegemony and the prevailing structures of society as strong as any legitimation precipitated by the Hellenistic world view associated with κόσμος.

1.3.3. 13:8-10: Love toward Neighbours

The call to love one another, following on from the advice in 12:14-13:7 about dealings with the wider society, should not be limited to relationships in the Christian community. It embraces even relations with non-Christians.²⁵⁷

"Neighbour" (πλησίον) is broad enough to take in all people the believers would come into contact with in the course of

²⁵⁵ Winter (1988). The suggestion is an old one, but Winter provides inscriptional evidence to show that Paul's language could well be understood in this way. See also Moxnes (1988: 66).

²⁵⁶ This may help to explain why Paul should slip in a reference to the public office of Erastus in 16:23.

²⁵⁷ The statement that love toward one's neighbour "perpetrates no evil" (κακὸν οὐκ ἐργάζεται) points back to 12:17, 21.

their everyday lives.

Again, this is not the language of sectarianism or separatism. In fact, in Christ, the debt of love toward society at large is increased.

1.4. Correlations

In the light of this brief analysis, a number of correlations with Paul's earlier talk of κόσμος and κτίσις may be identified in 12:14-13:10.

1) Paul's refusal to use κόσμος to construct a social dualism between those inside the Christian community and those outside matches the non-sectarian tone and outlook of his instructions on relations with the wider community: Paul stresses believers' obligations toward the larger society, encouraging his readers to view themselves as integrated members of society, not as marginal to or subversive of it. Significantly, Paul couches his instructions in 12:17-13:7 in terms that would have "cross-boundary" appeal, recognizing in 13:1 a fundamental unity of humankind, and a basic agreement between Christians and pagans on the norms and purposes and society.

2) The exhortation in 12:18 to live in a state of "peace" with outsiders (μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων) may be viewed as an ethical corollary of the belief that God has initiated the reconciliation of the κόσμος (11:15; cf. the connection between "peace" and "reconciliation" in Rom 5:1, 10-11).

3) Leading themes of 1:18-32 re-surface in 13:1-7: the world as divinely arranged, as exhibiting a created order and "natural" structures; there is an intuited awareness of the divinely established order; one ought to live in accordance with that order; when God's order is contravened, the divine

ὄργῃ comes into play; God's ὄργῃ operates in and through the world's structures.

4) The strong sense of God's control over and governance of the world he has created which we find in 1:18-32, 5:12ff, 8:19-22, 38-39, is apparent in 13:1-7: the political authorities have been appointed by God (ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι).

5) The theme of creaturely submission (ὑποτάσσω) to the will of the creator ties 13:1, 5 to 8:20.

6) Rom 8:19-22 indicates that God's redemptive work involves not the destruction of his creative work but its restoration and fulfillment. The deep awareness of the continuity of redemption with creation in God's sovereign purposes re-emerges in the ethical directives of 12:1-2 and 13:1-7. What it means to be a member of the redeemed community is not an abrogation or denial of what it means to be a citizen of God's ordered world; rather it involves a clearer perception of the creative order and a renewed responsibility to act upon it.

Having seen that the admonitions of 12:14-13:10 not only correlate with but appear to be informed by themes and emphases in Paul's earlier statements on κόσμος and κτίσις, we must now consider, to what extent these instructions are related to and informed by the circumstances of his readers.

2. Rom 12:14-13:10 as a Response to Circumstances in Rome

The Roman situation has not figured in our discussion up to this point. It will be necessary first, therefore, to make a few general comments on the churches in Rome before dealing specifically with the situational aspects of 12:14-13:10.

2.1. Roman Christianity: A General Profile²⁵⁸

We have no explicit knowledge about the beginnings of Christianity in Rome: it seems to have emerged from within the city's synagogues, the somewhat loose structure of Roman Judaism providing an opening for the penetration of the Christian message.²⁵⁹ Suetonius tells us that Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome because of their constant disturbances "at the instigation of *Chrestus*".²⁶⁰ It is generally accepted that the *Chrestus* to whom Suetonius refers is Jesus Christ and that the incident reflects a clash between orthodox and Christian Jews over the preaching of Jesus as messiah.²⁶¹ The event can be dated from Orosius at CE

²⁵⁸ See Brown and Meier (87-127); Dunn (1988: xliv-liv); Edmundson; Fitzmyer (1993a: 25-36); P.Lampe (1987; 1991); J.T.Sanders (214-28); F.Watson (1986: 88-105); Wedderburn (1988: 44-65); Wiefel.

²⁵⁹ On the history of the Jewish colony in Rome see Clarke (1994: 466-71); Leon; Penna; Smallwood (201-19); Wiefel. The number of Jews in Rome in the mid first century is estimated by Leon (135-6) at 50,000. The total population of Rome is usually accepted to have been around 1,000,000: Clarke (1994: 465).

²⁶⁰ *Judaeos assidue tumultuantes impulsore Chresto Roma expulit*: Suetonius, *Claud.* 25.

²⁶¹ So e.g., Brown and Meier (101-2); Jewett (1979: 37); Momigliano (33); Smallwood (211); F.Watson (91). The name of Christ was regularly misspelt as *Chrestus* in the early centuries, e.g., Justin, *Apol.* 1.4; Tertullian, *Apol.* 3.5: see Howard (1981).

Benko challenges the identification of Christ and *Chrestus* (1980: 1057-62; 1984: 18-19). He thinks it unlikely that Suetonius would have confused the pronunciation since in *Nero* 16:2, he knew the proper spelling of "Christian". He concludes that Suetonius was referring to a person named *Chrestus*, a name which, he points out, was very common in Rome. But even if Benko is right and Suetonius did know that the founder of

49.²⁶² Whether all Jews were excluded or only those most directly involved is unclear.²⁶³ But certainly Christian Jews were affected (Acts 18:2).

The edict of Claudius significantly altered the constituency of Roman Christianity. Following the expulsion, the Christian community in Rome inevitably became predominantly Gentile. When Paul writes in the late CE 50's,²⁶⁴ he is able to assume a Gentile majority in the congregations.²⁶⁵ The return of Jewish Christians to Rome (when the edict had lapsed after Claudius' death in CE 54), probably caused some tension in the community, both Jews and

Christianity was Christ and not *Chrestus*, it is reasonable to assume that Suetonius would use the spelling most commonly known. Moreover, if Suetonius had been referring to an otherwise unknown *Chrestus*, a Jewish activist who caused the riots, then is he more likely to have said *impulsore Chresto quodam*: so Bruce (1991: 179). Indeed his failure to do so is all the more strange, if, as Benko insists, *Chrestus* was such a common name in Rome.

²⁶² Orosius, *Hist.* 7.6.15. Dio Cassius (60.6.6) refers to an edict aimed at Jews in Rome earlier in the reign of Claudius, at CE 41. This decree was probably a limited ruling (since Dio does not say that Claudius drove the Jews out but rather that he forbade them to hold meetings), while the decree of CE 49 was a much more drastic measure. So e.g., Jewett (1979: 36-38); Momigliano (31-7); Smallwood (210-16); F.Watson (91-3).

²⁶³ Leon (24) and Smallwood (216) argue that only the rioters were ejected. Acts 18:2 says πάντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους.

²⁶⁴ The date CE 56-57 is possible: see Cranfield (1975: 16); Dunn (1988: xliii). A strong case can be made for CE 57-58: Fitzmyer (1993a: 85-7); cf. M.Black (20); Sanday and Headlam (xiii).

²⁶⁵ 1:5-6, 13-15; 11:13-31; 15:7-12, 15-16. Only three of the names in Chapter 16 can be identified as Jewish: see P.Lampe (1991: 224-5). Brown and Meier and J.T.Sanders, in arguing for a Jewish majority, insufficiently explain this evidence.

Gentiles in the churches finding it difficult to re-adjust.²⁶⁶ An increasing polarization of Jewish and Gentile members, as a result, is likely. Jewish-Gentile friction is evident in 14:1-15:13: the "weak" and "strong" mentioned in this section are best identified as Jewish and Gentile believers, respectively.²⁶⁷ The existence of Jewish-Gentile tensions within the community and disagreements among members on the nature of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity would make a good deal of Paul's theological argument highly applicable to the Roman readers.

Paul's letter seems to presuppose a somewhat divided community with different groups meeting at different locations. At least five pockets of Christianity in Rome are identified in chapter 16.²⁶⁸ The divided nature of the community accounts for Paul's failure to address the Roman believers as an ἐκκλησία.²⁶⁹

The social level of the Roman believers is extremely difficult to ascertain. In his analysis of the names of Romans 16, Lampe comes to the conclusion that of the 13 persons about whom a probability statement can be made, "more than two thirds...have an affinity to slave origins".²⁷⁰ But since, as Lampe admits, many freedmen and women who

²⁶⁶Wiefel (95-6).

²⁶⁷A division on ethnic lines is indicated by 15:7-13: Marcus (68). F.Watson (94-105) exceeds the evidence in arguing for the existence of two mutually hostile congregations in Rome.

²⁶⁸To account for the fourteen individuals not located within one of these, P.Lampe (1991: 230) posits the existence of at least another two separate groups.

²⁶⁹P.Lampe (1991: 229).

²⁷⁰P.Lampe (1991: 228). See further P.Lampe (1987: 135-153).

engaged in commerce, often became wealthier than freeborn,²⁷¹ this is not necessarily an indicator of socio-economic position. Some of the individuals Paul greets seem to have been of an elevated status, e.g., Prisca and Aquila, Urbanus, Rufus and his mother. And if Winter is correct in his interpretation of 13:3,²⁷² there were one or two in the community who had the means to make benefactions. It seems more reasonable, however, to assume, that the community addressed by Paul was significantly weighted toward the lower end of the social scale. As Lampe demonstrates, the early Christian groups were most likely located in Trastevere and the district around the Via Appia near the Porta Capena: these were the poorest areas of the city.²⁷³ Also, later evidence from the first and second centuries in Rome, points to well-to-do members forming only a minority in the church.²⁷⁴

2.2. 12:14-13:10: General or Specific to Rome?

As stated earlier, the designation of chapters 12-13 as "general paraenesis" usually carries with it the assumption that the admonitions contained therein are unconnected to the situation in Rome. This is a supposition which must be

²⁷¹P.Lampe (1991: 229).

²⁷²Winter (1988).

²⁷³P.Lampe (1987: 52).

²⁷⁴P.Lampe (1991: 229). Jewett (1993) suggests that the two groups mentioned in 16:14 and 16:15 may well have consisted of members who lived in tenement buildings, *insulae*, and who met for worship within the tenement itself. Tenement housing was used to accommodate the poor and was extensive in Rome: La Piana (210). For a description of life in the *insulae*, see Juvenal, *Sat.* 3.193-202.

seriously questioned. Since 14:1-15:13, in all probability, reflects an actual set of circumstances in Rome, it seems quite reasonable to conclude that at least some of the exhortations of 12:1-13:14 have the specific needs of the Roman believers in view. It is true that chapters 12-13 draw to a fair extent on traditional Jewish ethical material;²⁷⁵ this, however, is no argument against their special applicability to the Roman believers. As Wedderburn emphasizes,

Even if individual pieces amongst their contents were found to be in large measure traditional, that would still not account for Paul's use of precisely these pieces of tradition chosen out from amongst all the mass of traditional ethical material that lay to hand in early Christianity and Greek-speaking Judaism.²⁷⁶

Almost certainly Paul's instruction on paying taxes in 13:6-7, reflects an awareness on his part of particular circumstances in Rome.²⁷⁷ An instruction of this kind (despite the echo of the Jesus saying, Mark 12:17 par) is highly unusual in Jewish and Greek literature and is unprecedented in Paul. The year 58, we know from Tacitus,²⁷⁸ was marked by complaint and unrest in the city of Rome over the collection of indirect taxes: the outcry was so great that Nero himself had to intervene in the matter. That Paul wrote this piece of advice to Christians in Rome at the very time when complaints would have been building up seems to be

²⁷⁵ See e.g., W.T. Wilson (on Rom 12:9-21); Zerbe (211-69, on Rom 12:14, 17-21).

²⁷⁶ Wedderburn (1988: 78).

²⁷⁷ See Friedrich, Pöhlmann and Stuhlmacher; also Dunn (1986:60); Wedderburn (1988: 62-3).

²⁷⁸ Tacitus, Ann. 13.50-1.

almost beyond coincidence.

The specificity of one part of the paraenesis is certainly no proof of the situational character of the whole, but it does prompt us to look for other points of contact between Paul's admonitions in Romans 12-13 and events in Rome.

From what can be known and inferred about the historical, socio-political context of Christianity in Rome, a good case can be made for the relatedness of much of Paul's teaching in Rom 12:14-13:10 to the actual situation of the Roman believers. Fortunately, we have two solid pieces of historical information from which to build a reconstruction: the Claudian edict of CE 49 and the Neronian persecution of CE 64. From these fixed historical points, we can plot the likely course of events in Rome and within that development find a plausible socio-historical location for Rom 12:14-13:10.

2.3. The Claudian Edict and its Likely Consequences

The initial connections of the Roman Christian community with Judaism would have made it vulnerable to the ill-will displayed toward Jews in Roman society, and particularly in the capital, during this period.²⁷⁹ Identification with the Jewish colony, however, at least gave it some measure of security (despite Claudius' exclusion order) as a tolerated non-Roman religion. But when most of those connections were broken as a consequence of the Claudian edict, and Christianity began to be perceived as a social entity in its own right, at least two things would have happened: Firstly,

²⁷⁹Wiefel (98-100).

it would have become much more politically vulnerable. Existing separately from the Jewish synagogues, the congregations could no longer so easily enjoy the privileged position granted to the Jewish community in the empire,²⁸⁰ but were liable to the strictures imposed on public and private *collegia* binding at this time.²⁸¹ The slightest hint of conspiracy with political overtones, particularly in Rome, the seat of political power, would bring about immediate suppression. The city was constantly policed to uncover the activities of unauthorized groups; spies were placed throughout the capital to detect crime against the Roman order.

Secondly, the congregations would have become increasingly susceptible to the suspicion and opposition which we know from later evidence, attended the emergence of this new religious movement into public view.²⁸² There are a number of features of Christianity as it came to public light in the Graeco-Roman world that not only aroused suspicion but provoked a sense of dismay and outrage.

There was its *foreignness*. Pliny, Suetonius and Tacitus apply the term *superstitio* to Christianity.²⁸³ The term was most commonly used with reference to eastern cults whose

²⁸⁰ Judaism was respected and treated favourably as an ancient, ancestral religion: see Esler (1987: 212-5).

²⁸¹ Stuhlmacher (1989: 12-13). On *collegia*, see G.H. Stevenson.

²⁸² We must of course exercise caution as to how far the attitudes of a later period may be seen to obtain at this time. Yet, with proper reserve, later pagan perceptions of Christianity can be used to illuminate the earlier situation: see Barclay (1993: 513-6); cf. 1 Pet 3:1-6; 4:1-6, 12-16.

²⁸³ Suetonius, *Nero* 16.2; Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.4; Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.96.

beliefs and practices were foreign to Rome.²⁸⁴ The Roman government was particularly wary about the intrusion of foreign religions and intervened heavily in this area.²⁸⁵ The deep unease, and indeed hostility, had been provoked in 186 BCE by the scandalous excesses and criminal activity of devotees of Bacchus, a cult which had at that time only recently come to Rome. The Senate banned the *Bacchanalia* from Rome and Italy. This incident and Livy's well known description of it,²⁸⁶ shaped Roman perceptions of, and reactions to, foreign cults, thereafter. Consequently, when the people of Rome came into contact with Christianity, perceiving it to be an oriental *superstitio*,²⁸⁷ and classifying it according to this well established negative stereotype,²⁸⁸ we can assume that their suspicion and concern would have been immediately awoken.²⁸⁹

Secondly, there was its *newness*.²⁹⁰ As a *new* superstition, it had no claim to legitimation on the basis of the axiomatic principle, *maior ex longinquo reverentia*. Tacitus, who was contemptuous of the Jews, had to concede that some aspects of the Jewish religion were vindicated by

²⁸⁴ Cicero, *Flacc.* 66, applied the term to Judaism.

²⁸⁵ Nock (66-76).

²⁸⁶ Livy 39:8-18

²⁸⁷ From the names of Romans 16, P.Lampe (1991: 226-7) posits a high proportion of immigrants in the Roman churches.

²⁸⁸ On the social process of stereotyping, see Giddens (256-7).

²⁸⁹ The parallels between Christianity and *Bacchanalia* seem to have been evident to Pliny: so Benko (1980: 1067).

²⁹⁰ Suetonius, *Nero* 16.2, calls it "a new and wicked superstition".

their antiquity.²⁹¹ The newness of Christianity marked out the movement as dangerous. As Benko points out, "The Romans had an exceptionally fine sense of time...deeply rooted in their religion":²⁹² new and unproven religious practices, in the eyes of Romans, disturbed the harmony between the human and the divine spheres and thus endangered the security of the state.²⁹³

Related to its newness, was its *strangeness*. It had none of the trappings of a religion. The Jews at least (up to CE 70) had a temple and in each locality they had regular and identifiable places of worship - synagogues. The Christians had no temple, no altar and no shrine, *i.e.*, no detectable places of worship. Christianity had none of the characteristic material features of religion.

Fourthly, there was its *exclusivity*. The rejection of Graeco-Roman religion by the Christians deeply offended pagans. One of the most frequent charges made against Christians in the second century was that of "atheism", abandoning the gods.²⁹⁴ This was no trivial matter: as MacMullen writes, "there was very little doubt in people's minds that the religious practices of one generation should be cherished without change by the next".²⁹⁵ Abandonment of the ancient gods was not only a slight against ancestral tradition, it was also viewed as an extremely dangerous course of action, by a society who lived in constant fear of

²⁹¹ Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.

²⁹² Benko (1984: 21).

²⁹³ Benko (1984: 22).

²⁹⁴ *e.g.*, Justin, *Apol.* 1.5-6. Tertullian, *Apol.* 10-11.

²⁹⁵ MacMullen (1981: 2).

the gods' anger.²⁹⁶

As a consequence of its exclusivity, Christianity was viewed as *socially subversive and disruptive*. Withdrawal from the pagan temples, public worship and cultic activities was tantamount to withdrawal from society itself.²⁹⁷ By the second century, the Christians were commonly viewed as anti-social. This is certainly the portrait painted of Christians in the *Octavius*: Christians are secretive, they shun the light; they are silent in public but effusive in corners; they despise the temples and reject the gods, turning their backs on long established religion; they fail to attend public entertainments, the processions and public banquets, and despise all honours and positions, showing themselves to be unpatriotic.²⁹⁸ It is quite likely that Aelius Aristides had Christians in view when he spoke of those who do not recognize authority and do not contribute toward the common good, but rather bring trouble and discord into families.²⁹⁹

By abandoning the ancestral religion, the Christians were perceived as rocking the very foundations of society. Tacitus viewed Christianity as a dangerous sect, the very existence of which threatened the well-being and security of the Roman state. According to Tacitus, Christians were guilty of *odium humani generis* "hatred of the human race".³⁰⁰ As Wilken writes, by this Tacitus "did not simply mean that

²⁹⁶ See Fox (425-6).

²⁹⁷ Cf. 1 Pet 4:1-6.

²⁹⁸ Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 8; cf. 10-12.

²⁹⁹ Aelius Aristides, 'Υπὲρ τῶν τετάρων, 2.394ff. See Benko (1980: 1097-8); also Fox (423-4).

³⁰⁰ Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44.5-6.

he did not like the Christians and found them a nuisance...but that they were an affront to his social and religious world."³⁰¹

As Christianity in Rome broke away from its Jewish roots, it would have become increasingly vulnerable to such perceptions. The continued existence of a large Jewish community in Rome, after the ban expired, would have added to its problems. Wilken observes the perplexity caused for pagans by the fact that Christians could claim to be inheritors of Jewish tradition, while at the same time disavowing the Jewish community, its customs and laws.³⁰² One of Celsus' chief arguments against the Christians was that Christianity's repudiation of its origin proved its illegitimacy.³⁰³ The Jewish community's existence and continued observance of its customs was also Julian's fundamental objection to Christianity.³⁰⁴ The embarrassment of Judaism to the Gentile Christians in Rome, in this connection, would have been particularly acute since they had begun to forge an identity apart from the synagogues (cf. Rom 11:17-24). The Christians' apparent rejection of their "parent religion" would have been another indication to onlookers of their appalling disregard of ancient, ancestral traditions.

It is not at all unlikely that the social and religious offensiveness of Christianity had already begun to be felt by non-Christians with whom the believers came into close

³⁰¹Wilken (66).

³⁰²Wilken (114).

³⁰³Origen, *Cels.* 2.4; 5.25; 7.18.

³⁰⁴Wilken (166).

contact, at the time of Paul's writing, and that it was already beginning to provoke hostility and aversion. Indeed, occurrences in Rome approximately seven years later, makes this quite probable.

2.4. The Neronian Persecution

Both the precariousness of the Christians' political position in Rome and the depth of public feeling against them become fully manifest in the events surrounding the Neronian persecution.

The persecution followed the fire of Rome of July 19, CE 64. It was a localized event, confined to the capital. Having no precedent and being limited to Rome, we must look to conditions and events in the capital in order to account for its origin.

The great fire of CE 64 is reported by Tacitus (*Ann.* 15.44) and additional information is given by Suetonius (*Nero* 38), Dio Cassius (62.16), and Pliny the Elder (*Nat. Hist.* 17.1-5). Pliny, Suetonius and Dio blame Nero for the fire; Tacitus says that it was either an accident or deliberately caused by the emperor. Since rumours were rife that Nero was responsible for the fire, Tacitus tells us, the emperor made the Christians scapegoats. It is unclear from Tacitus whether the Christians were convicted of arson or punished simply for being Christians. For him the important thing is the Christians' *odium humani generis*: this made them entirely deserving of their punishment, regardless of whether they actually were to blame for the disaster.

Keresztes questions the accuracy of Tacitus' account of

events.³⁰⁵ He points out that of the ancient writers, only Tacitus makes the association between the fire of Rome and the persecution of Christians. Suetonius writes about both events but treats them separately and makes no connection between them. Moreover the charge is not mentioned by the apologists or in anti-Christian polemic. According to Keresztes, the Christians were persecuted a considerable time after the fire and for reasons entirely unconnected with the fire - simply as social undesirables.³⁰⁶ Tacitus' explanation, however, cannot be so easily dismissed. Warmington advises that it would be unwise to doubt Tacitus in a matter such as this. He points out that burning alive, the punishment inflicted upon the Christians, is well attested as the regular penalty for incendiarism.³⁰⁷ And if the charge of arson was quickly dropped and forgotten, as Tacitus says, this would quite adequately account for the silence of later writers on the matter. Tacitus' explanation remains the most plausible.

Accepting Tacitus' version of events, several inferences can be made with regard to the state of Roman Christianity immediately prior to the fire of CE 64.

Firstly, the Romans Christians were a *sufficiently identifiable* entity (distinct from the Jews), albeit an obscure and mysterious one, within the mass of the Roman population for them to be singled out and rounded up as Nero's scapegoats. The Christian community in Rome does

³⁰⁵ Keresztes (1980; 1989: 73ff).

³⁰⁶ Keresztes (1980: 257).

³⁰⁷ Warmington (126); cf. Rudich (86).

seem to have been fairly sizable at this stage,³⁰⁸ though in such a densely inhabited city it would still only have been a very tiny segment of the total population. Yet it remains highly probable that the Roman believers, by this time, possessed a profile sharp enough to make them a fairly conspicuous group within their neighbourhoods of the city.³⁰⁹ Tacitus mentions that the populace knew them by the title "Christians".³¹⁰ If the designation had begun to acquire its negative associations by this time,³¹¹ this would have had the effect of labelling and stigmatizing the Roman believers as social deviants.³¹²

Secondly, the Christians in Rome must have been *sufficiently unpopular* with the masses in order to make ideal scapegoats for Nero. Unless the Roman believers had achieved a large measure of notoriety, it is difficult to imagine how Nero could so swiftly and so successfully divert public attention away from himself and on to them. We know from sociology that when scapegoating occurs, it is directed

³⁰⁸ Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44.5; 1 Clement 6:1; Rom 1:9-13.

³⁰⁹ This holds whatever the exact circumstances in which the Christians came to the notice of Nero. According to Frend (164), the Jews of Rome were responsible for bringing the Christians to the Emperor's attention. The Jews were the initial suspects, and in order to shift the blame from themselves, they pointed to the Christians. Frend suggests that they were able to do this by their influence in the royal court, in the persons of Poppaea Sabina and the actor Tigellinus. But this thesis is widely rejected. Intriguingly, Fox (430-4) suggests that Paul's trial brought the Christians to Nero's attention.

³¹⁰ Cf. Acts 11:28; 26:28; 1 Pet 4:16.

³¹¹ Cf. 1 Pet 4:16. See Benko (1984: 1-24).

³¹² On Labelling and Deviance theory in sociology, see H.S.Becker; Freedman and Doob; S.Box; Aggleton.

toward a group in society against whom there is widespread prejudice and upon whom feelings of hostility can easily be vented.³¹³ Quite probably, the Christians were widely regarded by the populace as an undesirable, intolerable and socially disruptive element within the city. It was the strength of public opposition to the Christians which, very likely, enabled Nero to act against them as he did.

Thirdly, the Christians seem to have been *sufficiently perceived as dangerous and threatening to the state* as to make the charge of arson a plausible one. In the ancient world, arson was viewed as a revolutionary act - the ancient equivalent of a terrorist bomb. In the suppression of the *Bacchanalia*, the Senate ensured that provisions were made against incendiarism. That Christians could be suspected of arson strongly indicates that they were perceived as a threat to the established order.

A number of scholars have suggested that it was the Christians' apocalyptic beliefs, specifically the belief in the destruction of the world by fire that made them credible targets of a charge of arson.³¹⁴ It is not at all clear, however, how widespread the idea of universal conflagration was in early Christianity.³¹⁵ We need not assume, though,

³¹³Giddens (256-7). It was of course the complaint of Tertullian that when anything bad happened in the empire, Christians got the blame: Tertullian, *Apol.* 40.2. Cf. Fox (425-6).

³¹⁴See Edmundson (137); Ferguson (481); Grant (160); Smallwood (217-8); J. Stevenson (3).

³¹⁵Paul apparently knows nothing of it, unless 1 Cor 3:13-15 bears some allusion to it. The earliest attested New Testament witness to the belief dates from a later period (2 Pet 3:10). The concept, however, may have been more widely known: see Thiede. The language of cosmic

that the Roman Christians specifically affirmed universal conflagration in order to detect a connection between the believers' eschatological view and the suspicion of arson in the minds of Roman onlookers. To Romans who had come into contact with the Christians, the action of setting fire to the city might well have seemed quite consonant with the Christian claim that Christ's coming would usher in the end of history. The end of the world-cycle would have been readily enough linked with fire for pagans that the Christians need not have specifically spoken of a cosmic conflagration for such a connection to have been made.³¹⁶

The imminence of the end, if it formed a prominent part of the Christian message propounded in Rome, would have undoubtedly been received as politically subversive.³¹⁷

Firstly, predictions of the future were vigorously discouraged by the state. In 11 CE, Augustus forbade divinitary consultations, a prohibition repeated by Tiberius. According to Suetonius³¹⁸ over two thousand books, both Greek and Latin of dubious nature, were confiscated and burned in 12 BCE. The private ownership of such works was forbidden. Under Tiberius, the circulation of the Sybilline Oracles was held in check.³¹⁹ Secondly, to speak of the end

conflagration appears in the OT and other early Jewish texts: Deut 32:22; Isa 34:4; Zeph 1:18; 3:8; Mal 4:1; *1 Enoch* 1:5-8; 102:1; Jub 9:15.

³¹⁶The end of the world-cycle was commonly associated with fire in the minds of Graeco-Romans. As we have seen, it was this ancient belief which formed the basis of the Stoic doctrine of conflagration.

³¹⁷See MacMullen (1967: 128-62).

³¹⁸Suetonius, *Aug.* 31:1.

³¹⁹MacMullen (1967: 130).

of this present age would have been a highly risky thing to do in the capital of the empire. The Roman order was legitimated by the belief that Augustus had inaugurated a golden age of peace.³²⁰ Virgil declared that the empire was eternal;³²¹ the city of Rome was the *urbs aeterna*.³²² To undermine these claims, even inadvertently, would have been highly politically dangerous.³²³

Whether or not apocalyptic beliefs had anything to do with their being charged with arson, as we noted above, the Roman Christians' abandonment of Graeco-Roman religion would have sufficiently marked them out as a menace to society to make the stereotypical act of revolution seem conceivable.

The strong public feeling against the Christians which gave Nero the occasion to make them scapegoats for the fire clearly did not emerge overnight. We must probably assume a gestation period of some years for Christians to acquire their subversive reputation and for such a high level of public indignation to build up. That the seeds of public resentment were already developing at the time Paul wrote his epistle is quite likely.³²⁴

³²⁰Virgil, *Aen.* 6.791-5; cf. *Ecl.* 4.4-10. On the *Pax Romana*, see Wengst (1-54).

³²¹Virgil, *Aen.* 1.275ff.

³²²Eliade (135-6).

³²³For 1 Thess 5:3 as a stab at the Roman ideology, see Bammel (375-81).

³²⁴F. Watson (88-176) helpfully applies the sociological model of transformation from a reform-movement to a sect to the Roman Christian community. However, Watson, despite his emphasis on social realities, views this process in abstract terms. He fails to consider the social and political consequences of such a process for Christian groups breaking away from the relative security of

2.5. 12:14-13:10 as Situationally Conditioned.

From the above reconstruction, there is good evidence to believe that, when Paul wrote, the Roman congregations were in a highly exposed social and political position. Quite probably, already experiencing opposition from outsiders, they were in danger of gaining a reputation as socially subversive.

We can be reasonably confident that Paul knew of the vulnerable status of Christianity in Rome through his contacts mentioned in Romans 16. Paul's apparent awareness of the public and political sensitivity surrounding the collection of indirect taxes, current in Rome at the time, indicates that he was sufficiently well informed as to the social and political environment surrounding the believers. It is likely therefore that he framed his advice in Rom 12:14-13:10 on relations with the wider society, specifically in the light of his knowledge of their situation.

The accuracy of our reconstruction of conditions in Rome in the late CE 50's and our assumption that Paul was familiar with those conditions, goes some way to being confirmed by 12:14-21. There are significant indicators that Paul here presupposes an already existing situation of emerging public opposition.³²⁵

1) Advice counselling non-retaliatory responses to abusive behaviour from outsiders in 1 Thess 5:14-15 is directed to an

remaining under the Jewish umbrella in the Graeco-Roman world.

³²⁵See also Zerbe (230-1).

actual situation of conflict between Christians and non-Christians.³²⁶

2) That the Roman Christians were experiencing opposition and social strife is suggested by references to *θλίψις* in 5:3; 8:35, and particularly in 12:12, where he exhorts his readers to perseverance in the midst of *θλίψις*. The word *θλίψις* is commonly used by Paul to refer to the opposition and persecution Christians face in a hostile environment.

3) A couple of stylistic features of the passage point to the exigency of these instruction for the readers. Firstly, repetition of a theme signals its importance: no less than four times in these verses, Paul urges the Romans to respond positively to ill-treatment at the hands of non-Christians and not to offer retaliation (vv. 14, 17, 19-20, 21); this concern of Paul's, as Dunn points out, is given the place of emphasis at both the beginning and end of the subsection (vv.14 and 21).³²⁷ Secondly, by alluding to the words of Christ in v. 14 (the echo is unmistakable)³²⁸ at the beginning of the pericope, Paul gives his injunctions an immediate ring of authority, and sets the tenor of the advice which follows. The most obvious implication of the style in which Paul sets out these admonitions is that he feels his words are of direct relevance to his readers' needs. The note of urgency which Paul injects into his exhortation not to retaliate when provoked, by repeating it three times, strongly points to the problem of abuse from outsiders as being *actual* and not merely potential.

³²⁶ See Barclay (1993).

³²⁷ Dunn (1988: 755).

³²⁸ M. Thompson (96-105).

It need not be supposed that Christians were facing physical violence at this stage. Hostility, in the years preceding Nero's persecution, is likely to have taken the form of ostracism, verbal abuse, and the exacting of various degrees of social pressure,³²⁹ no doubt increasing in measure as the Christians' social and religious offensiveness became increasingly apparent.

When we read Rom 12:14-13:10 against a background of political vulnerability and public opposition, the relevance of these particular instructions to the readers comes into much sharper focus. Not only that Paul should take up the subject of response to ill-treatment at the hands of outsiders and stress the importance of love toward neighbours (13:8-10), but also that he should deal with the question of how to relate to the political authorities become entirely explicable.

Our reconstruction also affords us an insight into why Paul framed his advice in the way he did. Aware of the congregations' weak political status, Paul would have realized that friction between Christians and outsiders, though not unusual for a Christian community, and though perhaps not as yet particularly severe, *in their case* made an already precarious situation potentially much more hazardous.³³⁰ His exhortations in 12:14-21 can thus be seen as at least partially determined by the desire that the Roman Christians should avoid any action that would make them appear to be disruptive or subversive to the order of society, thereby attracting the unwelcome attention of the

³²⁹ Barclay (1993: 514).

³³⁰ Dunn (1988: 755).

imperial authorities. The emphasis on non-retaliation, though a standard theme of Jewish ethics, might reflect a sensitivity to and concern for their vulnerability to informers and to malicious accusations from offendees with grudges to bear.

That Paul could see an imminent crisis looming (which was in great measure beyond their control, 12:18) is not at all unlikely given the sense of urgency in the admonitions of 12:14, 17-21 (though Paul could hardly have foreseen the gravity of the situation that would arise in about seven years time). Paul was no doubt aware that the current situation, if exacerbated, could result in an outbreak of physical persecution, which as well as endangering the Roman congregation, given its strategic location, could also have a serious knock-on effect for the status and treatment of Christian communities throughout the Empire.

The particular emphases we find in 13:1-7 - the divinely established nature of the political authorities and the social order, the importance of loyalty to the imperial government, the need to respect the hierarchical structures of society, the obligation to good citizenship - are also readily appreciable if Paul is alert to the danger of the Romans believers being perceived as socially subversive. There is no parallel to this kind of advice in his epistles; this increases the likelihood that it is drawn out and, in some measure, shaped by conditions in Rome.³³¹ A fear on Paul's part that the Roman Christians might be seen as disruptive to the social and political order helps to explain the main burden of his counsel: that the believers

³³¹ On the context-specific nature of Rom 13:1-7, see Dunn (1986: 56-60, 66-67).

show themselves to be model citizens.³³² Such a fear could also be seen as lying behind the exhortation on paying taxes. They are to give no cause for suspicion, no indication that they represent a threat to the Roman order, and no reason for being marked out as seditious.

As Bammel writes, "It is this interaction between care for the well-being of the community and circumspection about dangers that may arise from outside that are constitutive factors for Paul's design in Romans 13."³³³

With good reason, then, it may be suggested that the admonitions of Rom 12:14-13:10 respond to events in Rome and reflect a very definite concern for the health of the Roman Christian community.

3. Conclusion

We have thus shown how Paul's usage of κόσμος and κτίσις is consistent with the admonitions of 12:14-13:10; indeed this usage helps to provide a theological grounding for these injunctions: Rom 13:1-7 in particular, draws out the social and ethical consequences of Paul's teaching on God's creative and providential ordering of the world.

If our reconstruction carries a satisfactory degree of plausibility, we are also able to see how the admonitions of 12:14-13:10 are geared toward an actual situation in Rome. Not only so, we can see how Paul's knowledge of social and political conditions actually colours the content of the advice he gives.

³³²It seems unlikely that there was in the Jewish quarter of the Christian community any move toward political resistance; *contra* Borg: see Dunn (1988: 773).

³³³Bammel (382).

To the extent that Paul's social teaching in 12:14-13:10 is informed by social factors and influenced and reinforced by earlier theological themes evident in his talk of κόσμος and κτίσις, these admonitions evince a link between Paul's uses of these terms and the situation in Rome, that may enable us to speak of a socio-rhetorical dimension to those uses. We may posit that the quite specific pastoral concern for the well-being of the community, given its increasing exposure to public ill-feeling and political vulnerability, lying behind the advice laid down in 12:14-13:10, by extension affects his previous talk of κόσμος and κτίσις.

We suggest that it is possible to see Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις as a part of the theoretical legitimation for the ethos recommended in 12:14-13:10. This is not to cynically reduce Paul's theology to an ideology engineered for the sole purpose of promoting certain social practices and conditions, but to acknowledge that social factors heavily contribute to the development of ideas. Given the multi-motivated occasioning of Romans, it may be argued that both Paul's theological interests and his perception of the needs of his readers converge to bring to prominence the particular emphases in his uses of κόσμος and κτίσις which we see in this epistle.

D. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is now time to draw together the various strands of our investigation in Romans. Let us first summarize the links, themes and emphases evident in Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις in this epistle.

κόσμος is used with the senses, the world as the

dwelling-place of humanity (1:8; 4:13), the ordered universe (1:20) and humanity (3:6, 19, 5:12-13; 11:12, 15). It is interesting to see how Paul links κόσμος with κτίσις: a close linkage occurs at 1:20; a link between κόσμος in 4:13 and κτίσις in 8:21 is probably also to be seen. This link with κτίσις gives κόσμος the nuance of the world/universe as created by God. The thought of κόσμος as God's creation is also present in 5:12-13.

There is no hint of a pejorative edge to Paul's usage: at no point is κόσμος cast in the role of a hostile, apocalyptic power. In fact, in Romans Paul can use κόσμος in highly positive ways: κόσμος as the vehicle of God's revelation, κόσμος as the object of God's blessing and reconciling activity (11:12, 15), and most striking of all, κόσμος as the future redeemed world, the inheritance of believers. In 1:20, it is very likely that Paul is playing upon some of the associations of κόσμος in Hellenistic philosophical usage: κόσμος as the well-ordered (perhaps beautiful) universe into which men and women are integrated, with which they are rationally linked and through which they receive a knowledge of the divine. Admittedly, κόσμος is, within its context, toned somewhat negatively at 3:19 (*disobedient* humanity); the use of κόσμος in this text on the "plight" side of the salvific coin, however, is counterbalanced by its employment on the "solution" side in 11:15.

From a socio-rhetorical perspective, Paul's use of κόσμος quite clearly forms no part of a strategy to stress the boundary between the church and the wider society.

The very presence of κτίσις in the theological vocabulary of Romans is noteworthy: nowhere else in the undisputed Pauline letters does it appear, apart from in the

expression καὶνὴ κτίσις. Almost by definition, κτίσις is a term of positive evaluation for Paul: quite misleading is Bultmann's attempt to read negative associations into the uses of κτίσις (creature/created thing) at 1:25 and 8:38. In the climactic section of the Romans 1-8, Paul gives us a striking portrayal of κτίσις (non-human creation) in 8:19-22, spanning its past, present and future. A number of important theological themes emerge from this passage, including: God's authority over the κτίσις; the disjunction, but not completely disfigurement of κτίσις; the current suffering and expectation of κτίσις; the positive future of κτίσις: it is not fated for destruction but will be set free from its present state of bondage and subjection.

These emphases in Paul's use of κόσμος and κτίσις cohere with the broader theological perspective of Romans: the universal sweep of the story of redemption, embracing the *whole* of humankind, which has fallen into sin, and for which God acted to bring salvation; the setting of that story within the broad context of the understanding of God as creator and the world as his creation; the juxtaposition serving to show that God's redeeming purposes derive from and express his faithfulness toward his creation.

Interesting is the fact that Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις bear similarities with the use of these terms in *Wisdom of Solomon*:³³⁴ as we have noted, it is highly likely

³³⁴The senses with which κόσμος is used in Romans are evident in *Wisdom of Solomon*: κόσμος as the physical universe (9:1; 11:22; 13:2), κόσμος as the dwelling-place of humanity (9:2; 14:13; 17:18), κόσμος as humanity (2:24; 6:23; 10:1; 14:6). And of course, we have κτίσις with the sense of the wider non-human creation (2:6; 5:17; 16:24; 19:6). Also we find several similar themes: the κόσμος as created by God (9:1; 11:17); death as an intruder into the human κόσμος

that Paul consciously draws from this document in his drafting of Romans.³³⁵

These observations could give rise to the following conclusion: this is how Paul talks about κόσμος - and κτίσις - when he is not writing with social constraints imposed on him. In the absence of socio-rhetorical considerations, forcing him into a narrow apocalyptic, social and temporal dualism, Paul has the freedom to shed a more favourable light on κόσμος and to reflect much more on how the world stands in a positive relation to its creator.

Such a judgement would be in keeping with the opinion that Romans bears the character of a "theological treatise", in which Paul is more reflective than reactive, and more ruminative than responsive.³³⁶ Yet in recent years we have seen the emergence of a new consensus on Romans which prefers to speak of multiple motivations in the occasioning of the letter, which acknowledges a good deal of familiarity with the Roman situation on Paul's part, and which tentatively grants the possibility that some of Paul's theological arguments could have been quite in tune with the needs of his readers. In the light of this consensus, we have attempted to explore the possibility that Paul's talk of κόσμος and κτίσις is not entirely uninformed by socio-rhetorical factors.

We have suggested that by using 12:14-13:10 as a prism

(2:24; cf. 1:13); talk of the salvation of the κόσμος (6:23-4); κτίσις personified (5:17; 16:24; 19:6); κτίσις portrayed as on the side of the children of God (19:6).

³³⁵ NA 26 (722-3) identifies fourteen allusions to *Wisdom of Solomon* in Romans.

³³⁶ e.g., Manson; Bornkamm (1991).

through which to view Paul's usage of κόσμος and κτίσις, a socio-rhetorical dimension to that usage may be recovered.

Our specific thesis is that Paul's talk of κόσμος and κτίσις may be influenced to some degree by his pastoral concern that *the Roman believers should avoid being seen by outsiders as socially subversive.*

There are several aspects of Paul's usage which could be partly explained by socio-rhetorical factors.

1) Paul's careful avoidance of the apocalyptic social dualism of church and κόσμος in this epistle may reveal his awareness of the politically and socially sensitive position of the Roman congregations, and his fear that by pointing up the antithetical relation of κόσμος and church he might foster or support sectarian attitudes within the community, which in the present climate could have been harmful to its well-being.

Encountering acts of resentment from their non-Christian neighbours, Christians could have easily adopted a ghetto mentality, withdrawing from involvement in the larger community as much as possible in order to avoid further confrontation. It may have been that the Christians groups were strongly marked by apocalyptic outlook and fervor.³³⁷ Some in the community may have entertained a highly pessimistic view of the present world-age, believing the whole prevailing order to belong to a world which has gone so irreversibly astray that hope is only to be found in its complete destruction. A strong apocalyptic social and temporal dualism might have cast the political powers in the role of agencies of evil, wholly inimical to God's purposes.

³³⁷ Bindemann (109-13).

Exposure to sustained conflict with outsiders could have easily reinforced and sharpened such an outlook. It matters little to our argument whether sectarian tendencies and apocalyptic pessimism were already existent or potential.

Realizing that pointing up the boundary between insiders and outsiders by means of a sharp apocalyptic dualism, might have had a detrimental social effect on his readers, given their circumstances, Paul may well be consciously trying to tone down the emphasis in 1 Corinthians, in view of the more delicate social dynamics at work in Rome. Retreat into a ghetto would after all have marked them out as anti-social, led to rumours of furtive activities and generally increased suspicions of subversiveness.

Equally, Paul could have been aware that to stress the opposition of church and κόσμος - to portray κόσμος as a threatening and hostile power - might inadvertently encourage conflict on the side of believers toward outsiders. We see in 12:14, 17-21 that in the face of opposition from outsiders, Paul is worried that they might over-react, responding aggressively to acts of hostility. For some, being targets of aversion could have equally prompted a sense of hostility toward outsiders. The fact that Paul in 12:14-21 strongly urges his readers not to retaliate to provocation (encouraging them rather to do "good") seems to imply that they had been severely tempted to do so.³³⁸

2) Rom 13:1-7 betrays a concern for social integration and good citizenship, probably in view of the particular social and historical context in Rome. Paul makes his

³³⁸On the possibility of non-passive reaction to provocation, see Barclay (1993: 520-5).

appeal in these verses on the following basis: since there is an order in society which is divinely established, to respect and submit to that order is part of the creature's response to the creative will of God to which believers have been reoriented in Christ (cf. 12:1-2). In so arguing Paul is able to build on his earlier theological emphasis on the world as God's well ordered creation, a perspective to which some of his statements on κόσμος and κτίσις (1:20ff; 5:12ff; 8:19-23, 38-39) heavily contribute. In this way, these uses of κόσμος and κτίσις provide a positive basis and theological grounding for the social teaching of 13:1-7.

By the same token, the social considerations revealed in 13:1-7 may have helped to shape this aspect of Paul's talk of κόσμος and κτίσις and to bring to the fore the themes of God as creator and the world as an orderly creation in the theological discussion of 1:18-11:36.

3) Our analysis of the Roman situation and Paul's reading of it sheds some light on the purpose of Rom 8:18ff. The passage functions to legitimate believers' sufferings, but, it may be suggested it does so in a way that is sensitive to the (perceived) needs and context of the Roman readers. The sufferings to which reference is made in this passage, quite probably, at least include the Roman Christians' experience of conflict with outsiders. Paul emphasizes that their afflictions ought not to make them feel alienated toward their present physical and social world (which may have fostered a ghetto mentality and withdrawal from society³³⁹). Rather, their suffering is a sign of their solidarity with *this* creation.

³³⁹ Cf. Thomas (155-6).

Paul's legitimation of believers' suffering as part of a cosmic process is framed in such a manner as to discourage an outlook of despair on the present world-order. By playing up the continuity of present world and the future world, Paul is able to counter any notions of the future hope which might have entailed removal from this world of suffering and pain and a consequent lack of interest in everyday life and obligations toward society.

We have had to cast the net wide in order to place Paul's talk of κόσμος and κτίσις in an appropriate theological and social setting. Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις, we suggest, exhibit a pattern of usage consistent with and supportive of the social exhortations of 12:14-13:10 and the social concerns lying behind them. Whether the evidence entitles us to speak of a socio-rhetorical "strategy" (a word we have expressly avoided so far) at work is a moot point. If the word is at all permitted, we must speak of a strategy less explicit, less direct, and perhaps less deliberate than that which we find in 1 Corinthians.

When compared to 1 Corinthians, it must be conceded that Paul's talk of κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans serves as a smaller and less significant ingredient in a much less obvious theological, social and rhetorical mix. Nevertheless, we have at least demonstrated that a case can be made for positing a socio-rhetorical dimension to Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις in this epistle. Thus it is again possible to see Paul using κόσμος and κτίσις to construct the world of his readers in accordance with his *particular* social concerns for the *particular* community being addressed.

GALATIANS AND 2 CORINTHIANS

A. GALATIANS

Paul's letter to the Galatians contains three occurrences of κόσμος: the word appears in 4:3 and twice in 6:14. In 6:15, we find the expression καινή κτίσις. Since this is an intensely polemical and situation-dependent epistle, it is clearly worth investigating whether these uses of κόσμος and the term καινή κτίσις are, to some extent, conditioned by circumstances in the churches addressed and are intended to play a definite rhetorical role in Paul's argument against the perceived threat in Galatia.

1. The Situation in Galatia: An Outline¹

Certain "troublemakers" (1:7; 5:10) and "agitators" (5:12) had arrived in Galatia offering Paul's converts there a

¹ Debate continues to rage over the interrelated issues of the date and destination of Galatians: see Bruce (1982: 3-18, 43-56); Dunn (1993: 5-8); Longenecker (1990: lxi-lxxxviii); F. Watson (56-59). The "south Galatian" hypothesis probably has a slight edge over the "north Galatian" hypothesis (see esp. Bruce). Acceptance of this theory would tend to imply that Galatians is early in the sequence of Paul's letters (though, on the basis of theological comparison, it is unlikely to pre-date 1 Thessalonians: see Dunn (1993: 18-19)). Our present argument, however, is not dependent on any conclusion on date and destination; it certainly matters little whether Galatians precedes or follows the Corinthian correspondence.

"different" (1:6) version of the gospel to Paul's. From the evidence of the epistle it is possible to build a reasonable profile of these intruders and the claims they were advancing.² It is evident that they were Jewish believers. That they were Christians (*i.e.*, that they accepted Jesus as messiah) follows from the facts that the word "gospel" seems to have formed part of their religious vocabulary (1:6-9) and that Paul can accuse them of seeking to avoid persecution for the cross of Christ (only of believers could this be said).³ Their Jewish identity is obvious from their chief demand, circumcision (5:2-3; 6:12-13).⁴ From Paul's insistence on his independence of the Jerusalem apostles (1:11ff) and his contrast between the present Jerusalem and the Jerusalem which is above (4:25-26), we can infer that the opponents claimed the authority of the Jerusalem church for their demands. That the opponents really did have the support of the Jerusalem apostles seems unlikely: Paul nowhere says that they came with the authorization of James and the other Jerusalem apostles (the "men from James" are connected with the Antioch incident, 2:12),⁵ and, as Ziesler observes, in view of the way Paul recounts his rebuke of Peter in 2:11-14,

²On the difficulties and prospects of "mirror-reading" the epistle in order to reconstruct the identity and views of Paul's opponents, see Barclay (1987).

³Dunn (1993a: 10).

⁴Munck (130-4) and Harvey argue in favour of Gentile opposition, but this point of view is overwhelmingly rejected by scholars. Munck also contends that the opponents were Paul's own Galatian converts, but this is difficult to square with the fact that Paul makes a clear distinction between the Galatian Christians and the agitators (1:7-9; 3:1; 4:17; 5:7, 10, 12; 6:12-13).

⁵*Contra* F. Watson (59-61) who identifies Paul's opponents with the "men from James" in the Antioch incident.

he would surely have done so had he thought that Jerusalem was the source of the trouble.⁶ It is reasonable to assume, as Martyn and Dunn argue,⁷ that the opponents were engaged in some sort of "missionary" activity, correcting and filling out Paul's original message.

As to their claims and demands, it is clear that they were urging upon the Galatians a more recognizably Jewish lifestyle. As well as the main demand for circumcision, which they seem to have argued from the example of Abraham (judging from Paul's critique in 3:6ff; 4:2),⁸ they also appear to have pressed the need to observe the Jewish law. This seems to follow from Paul's polemic against the law in the main part of the epistle.⁹ The extent to which the law is being enjoined upon the Galatians is perhaps more open to question. 5:3 and 6:13 may point to a more selective approach to law observance on the part of both the Galatians and the agitators.¹⁰ However, texts such as 2:16, 21, 3:2 and

⁶Ziesler (1992: 114).

⁷Martyn (1984); Dunn (1993: 10-11).

⁸For a plausible reconstruction of the opponents' arguments on this issue, see Barclay (1988: 52-6); E.P.Sanders (54-5).

⁹See Barclay (1988: 65-8) for the opponents' arguments in favour of law observance.

¹⁰In 5:3, Paul seems to imply that the Galatians were unaware of the need to keep the *whole* law, if they were to go the way of circumcision, and in 6:13, he argues that the opponents (οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι is better read as a reference to the opponents than to the Galatians: so Bruce (1982: 270)) are not really serious about obeying the law. But on the other hand, 5:3 may simply reflect the fact that, as Paul sees it, the Galatians did not *fully* realize what they were getting themselves into: so Ziesler (1992: 74-5); Barclay (1988: 64). And 6:13 is probably a swipe at the opponents' lack of integrity or their laxity in observance of the law from the perspective of Paul's own previous

4:21 clearly point to a more comprehensive and committed observance of the law such as would have been required of proselytes. On the basis of 4:10, we may deduce a particular emphasis on observance of the Jewish religious calendar, and in particular (though this is not specifically stated) on the keeping of the Sabbath, and from 2:11-14, depending on how far these verses touch upon the situation in Galatia, we may perhaps infer a particular stress on Jewish food regulations. As Dunn points out, together with circumcision, Sabbath observance and dietary laws were the three main identity markers of Judaism.¹¹

In all probability, the intruders were advancing their position in conscious opposition to Paul. Following Jewett,¹² Howard¹³ argues that the agitators thought they held the same view as Paul and saw him as their ally. But Paul's self-defence in 1:1, 10 and 1:11-2:14 is best made intelligible by the inference that Paul himself was a target of their attack.¹⁴ They claimed that Paul's apostolic authority was dependent on and secondary to that of the Jerusalem apostles. They also appear to have cast aspersions on Paul's integrity (1:10; 5:10), claiming that he adapts his stance on circumcision to suit the occasion: Paul's more developed view is that circumcision is necessary and this he has deliberately withheld from them.

standards of law-keeping as a Pharisee (1:14, cf. Phil 3:12).

¹¹Dunn (1990: 191-4).

¹²Jewett (1970/71).

¹³Howard (1979: 2, 9).

¹⁴For a reconstruction of their case against Paul, see Bruce (1982: 25-7).

2. Group Identity: A Factor in the Crisis

How are we to account for the Galatians' willingness to accede to the demands of the agitators (though they had not as yet submitted to the rite of circumcision, 5:2, 6:12)? An obvious, indeed the dominant, factor in the equation is the persuasive strength of the agitators' theological and scriptural arguments. It also seems fairly evident that the Galatians were particularly impressed by the credentials and authority-claims of the agitators. Paul, in his absence, had acquired a much lower status in the Galatians' estimation (4:16, 18-20). Consequently the Galatian believers were far more intent on pleasing their new religious guides than remaining faithful to Paul.

At the same time, the message of the agitators probably also tapped in to a felt need among the Galatians - the need for a more stable and acceptable group identity. This aspect of the Galatian crisis has been spotlighted by J.M.G. Barclay. He points to the dislocation entailed in converting to Christianity in the Graeco-Roman world:¹⁵ the process left converts in a quite precarious social position and often resulted in ostracism by the larger community. We have seen that this was likely to have been the case in Rome. It is quite probable that a similar situation obtained in Galatia (though without the more serious political overtones and consequences in the Roman context).¹⁶ The Galatian Christians

¹⁵ Barclay (1988: 58).

¹⁶ Goddard and Cummins (120) have recently argued on the basis of 4:12-20 that "From its inception in Galatia, Paul's gospel of the crucified Christ inevitably engendered hostility and persecution - both for Paul and his Galatian converts."

would have suffered a considerable loss of social identity. On the one hand, the members of the Galatian churches had to dissociate themselves from their former paganism with all the social disruption this would have entailed. And on the other hand, "neither were they members (or even attenders) of the Jewish synagogues although they had the same Scriptures and much the same theology as those synagogues."¹⁷ Given the ambiguity of their social position, we can appreciate how attractive the message of Paul's opponents might have seemed. Submission to circumcision and law observance would have meant taking on a more recognizable and socially-acceptable set of religious characteristics.

The effect of the agitators' message in the Galatian situation may be elucidated by insights from sociology.¹⁸ H. Tajfel, in his exploration of the dynamics of group identity and differentiation, points out that groups are usually socially and consensually defined as "superior" and "inferior" in relation to each other. What a society defines as inferior or superior characteristics differ according to culture and social context. When members of a socially inferior group become aware that their existing social reality "is not the only possible one and that alternatives to it are conceivable and perhaps attainable", the ensuing problem of identity can be resolved in one, or a combination, of three ways.

- 1) To become, through action and reinterpretation of group characteristics, more like the superior group.
- 2) To reinterpret the existing inferior characteristics of the group, so that they do not appear as inferior but acquire a positively valued distinctiveness from the

¹⁷ Barclay (1988: 59).

¹⁸ Tajfel (1978a; 1978b).

superior group.

3) To create, through social action and/or diffusion of new "ideologies" new group characteristics which have a positively valued distinctiveness from the superior group.

The first solution is that of assimilation to the superior group. Tajfel suggests that given the right conditions, this could be the solution to be tried first.²⁰ Solutions 2) and 3) usually appear in conjunction. For these solutions to be successful, two things must take place. First of all, the re-evaluation of existing, negatively perceived group characteristics and the new and distinctive characteristics created, need to be accepted by the members of the group. Secondly, the positive evaluation of these features needs to be accepted by the larger society.²¹

Tajfel's observations seem particularly applicable to events in Galatia since the Galatian situation has to do with the place of two groups - Judaism and (emerging) Christianity - within a given society and that society's attitude toward them (going back to paganism, assimilating to the dominant culture, is not an option the Galatians are considering).

It may be posited then when the agitators arrived in Galatia, they not only addressed the Galatians' problem of social identity, they may well have made that problem more acute by showing that the Galatians present social reality was not the only possible one. There was a valid (indeed, seemingly *more* valid) alternative - identifying with the Jewish community, the social group with whom they had most in

¹⁹Tajfel (1978b: 93-4).

²⁰Tajfel (1978b: 94).

²¹Tajfel (1978b: 96).

common.²² Though Jews were sometimes viewed with contempt, Judaism, as an ancient and national religion, would certainly have been judged by Galatian society at large as "superior" to the new, marginal and highly suspect, Christian movement. By becoming proselytes and integrating into the Jewish community, the Gentile Galatian believers could assume a more credible social identity, in respect of the social categorizations of the day, and occupy a more secure place in Galatian society, less exposed to social censure. We can easily imagine the allure of the solution offered by the intruders. Given the aversion of the surrounding world to many of the features which characterized the Christian community, it would probably have seemed a more appealing option than the more painful route of carving out a distinctive group identity as *Christians*.²³

3. The Social Goal and Socio-rhetorical Strategy of Galatians

The epistle is a heated, urgent and impassioned response to events in Galatia. In the message of the intruders, Paul saw the essential truth of the gospel, as he understood it, under attack (1:6). Paul denounces these agitators in the strongest terms, pronouncing them "accursed" (1:8-9).

The aim of Galatians is clear-cut: it is to convince the Galatian Christians to resist the demands of the troublemakers and to remain loyal to Paul and his gospel.

²² Social and historical circumstances in Rome, at the time Paul wrote, made this option less attainable, the early Christian movement there having provoked the hostility of the synagogues.

²³ Cf. the later evidence cited by S.G. Wilson of Christian drift-over to the Jewish community.

The thrust of Paul's case is that faith in Christ is sufficient for acceptance with God and reception of God's promised blessings. Various arguments (and counter-arguments) are deployed in defence of this claim, e.g., to accept the demands of the agitators is to revert to an age of infancy and immaturity (3:23ff); to yield to circumcision and conformity to the Jewish law is to undermine the liberation which Christ brings and to submit afresh to a yoke of slavery (4:1-11, 21-31; 5:1). The sole requirement for "getting in" and "staying in" the community of God's people is faith in Christ. Membership of the eschatological community is not defined in ethnic and national terms. The gospel of God's grace transcends racial and cultural boundaries.

In social terms, Paul's goal in writing is to legitimate the existence of the Gentile Galatian Christian community as an entity socially distinct from Judaism.²⁴ This understanding of the group's distinctive identity corresponds to his theological convictions.²⁵

4. The Theological Context of Reference

The theological outlook of Galatians combines a *salvation-historical* perspective with an *apocalyptic* viewpoint:²⁶ the former maintains a positive line of

²⁴ Cf. F. Watson (61).

²⁵ F. Watson on the whole tends to view Paul's theological arguments as "secondary theological reflection on a primary historical and social reality" (31). This unfortunate social determinism obscures the highly intricate relationship between Paul's social objectives and theological convictions.

²⁶ Cf. Barclay (1988: 96-105).

continuity between the gospel and traditions of Israel; the latter views God's work in Christ as a radical turning point in God's saving purposes.²⁷ The salvation-historical viewpoint is revealed most clearly in the discussion of Abraham in chapters 3-4: Paul can say that the "gospel" had been preached to Abraham (3:8); believers are the true "sons" of Abraham (3:7); they have entered into the blessing of Abraham (3:9); they are to consider themselves participants in the Abrahamic promise and heirs to the Abrahamic inheritance (3:14ff; 4:23ff). The apocalyptic perspective is made apparent in the opening verses of the letter: Paul declares in 1:4 that Christ has rescued believers from "this present evil age".²⁸ According to this point of view, the distinction between Jew and Gentile is relegated to the old age, obliterated in Christ (3:28), and the law is placed alongside sin and the flesh as "apocalyptic antinomies"²⁹ set in contrast with the Spirit (5:17-18).³⁰

The symbolic outlook of apocalyptic provides the context of reference for Paul's use of κόσμος and καινή κτίσις. It is in the text, 6:14-15 that the apocalyptic vista is most

²⁷ The extent to which Paul in Galatians presents the Christian faith as in continuity with the religion and history of Israel is at the heart of the debate between Dunn (1991) and Martyn (1991). Dunn stresses the continuity which Paul traces between the gospel and God's covenant purposes. Martyn so emphasizes the apocalyptic character of the theology of Galatians (cf. 1985) that he eschews any notion of *Heilsgeschichte* in the epistle and insists that Paul "does not accept 'covenant' as a term indicating a fundamental building block of his theology." (1991: 179).

²⁸ See further Dunn (1993b: 36-41).

²⁹ The phrase in Martyn's (1985).

³⁰ See further Dunn (1993b: 46-52).

explicitly articulated in the epistle;³¹ we suggest that it also informs Paul's talk of τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in 4:3.

5. Gal 6:14, 15: The Crucified World and the New Creation

The closing paragraph, 6:11-18 (which, following Hellenistic epistolary convention,³² Paul writes in his own hand), forms a summary capturing the essential concerns and the main thrust of the epistle. Betz has argued that 6:11-18 falls into the Graeco-Roman rhetorical category of *peroratio* and functions to sum up the case being argued and to elicit the appropriate response from the readers/hearers. He can thus insist on the importance of this passage for the interpretation of the whole of Galatians: he writes,

It contains the interpretive clues to the understanding of Paul's major concerns in the letter as a whole and should be employed as the hermeneutical key to the intentions of the Apostle.³³

Whatever the merits or demerits of Betz's rhetorical analysis, the summational force and broader hermeneutical significance of 6:11-18 is widely recognized.³⁴ The denunciation of the agitators (vv. 12-13), the disavowal of circumcision (vv. 12-16), the emphasis on the cross of

³¹This text forms the basis for Martyn's (1985: 412ff) apocalyptic analysis of Galatians. On the strength of Gal 6:14-15, Gaventa (149) can write, "the governing theological antithesis in Galatians is between Christ or the new creation and the cosmos; the antithesis between Christ and the law and between the cross and circumcision are not the equivalent of this central premise but follow from it."

³²Betz (1979: 312 n. 4).

³³Betz (1979: 313).

³⁴Longenecker (1990: 286).

Christ (vv. 12, 14; cf. 2:18-20; 3:1-2, 10-14; 5:11), the reference to $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\rho\acute{\xi}$ (v. 12), the autobiographical, self-exemplary note (vv. 14, 17) all pick up key themes of the letter.

In his castigation of the intruders in vv. 12-13, Paul focuses on the motivation which he sees as guiding their activities. Their only ($\mu\acute{o}\nu\omicron\nu\nu$) motive for pressurizing the Galatians to submit to circumcision, Paul asserts, is to avoid persecution. The persecution he has in mind is most probably persecution at the hands of fellow non-believing Jews, of the kind Paul himself was once a perpetrator (1:13, 23; Phil 3:6). It is possible, as Jewett has argued, that the trouble-makers' campaign arose from the desire to evade Zealot-motivated reprisals against all Jews who compromised on Jewish purity, in the wake of a growing mood of nationalism.³⁵ Paul further accuses them of wanting his converts to accede to the demand for circumcision so that they can "boast" in their (the Galatians') flesh. Here he seems to be charging them with "scalphunting":³⁶ the intruders view the Galatians merely as trophies to be won, thus enhancing their own reputation at the expense of Paul's and demonstrating their zeal for Jewish traditions and customs in their attempt to offset persecution from non-Christian Jews.³⁷

³⁵ Jewett (1970/71).

³⁶ Bruce (1982: 270).

³⁷ Also plausible is Dunn's (1993a: 339) explanation that the "boast" in view is the boast of the confident Jew over the Gentile sinner, "because for Gentiles thus to affirm that acceptance by God was dependent on their becoming Jews, by taking on the fleshly identification mark of the Jew..., was tantamount to affirming the Jewish claims to have a

The verb *καυχάομαι* provides the link between the denunciation of v. 13 and the affirmation of v. 14. Paul contrasts their illegitimate ground for boasting with what he regards as the only rightful cause for boasting - the cross of Christ. The troublemakers make their boast in the very things that Paul would now consign to the rubbish heap in the light of his conversion (Phil 3:4ff). As Bruce states, the cross had effected for Paul, "a total 'transvaluation of values'".³⁸ The import and extent of that transvaluation is made clear in the following clause: *δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται καὶ γὰρ κόσμῳ.*³⁹

The statement is certainly autobiographical, crucifixion to the *κόσμος* reflecting and structuring Paul's own post-conversion experience, but at the same time Paul is presenting his experience as paradigmatic of Christian experience in general, that is to say, he is speaking as the archetypical believer. The background to Gal 6:14 seems to be the apocalyptic notion of the change of the ages, the exit of the old world-age and the birth of a new world-age. For Paul, this shift has been effected by Christ's death and resurrection.⁴⁰ The believer through identification with Christ has been transferred from one world-age to the other. The perfect tense of the verb indicates that crucifixion to the *κόσμος* is viewed not so much as an ongoing experience as an event of the past which has ongoing effects.

The *κόσμος* to which believers have been crucified is

distinctive prerogative over against the Gentiles."

³⁸ Bruce (1982: 271).

³⁹ Cf. 2:19-20; the *δι' οὗ* has its antecedent in *σταυρωθῆ* rather than *Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*: so Longenecker (1990: 294).

⁴⁰ See esp. Tannehill (62-3).

probably to be equated with "the present evil age", from which believers have been rescued, mentioned in 1:4 (cf. the alternation of κόσμος, ὁ κόσμος οὗτος and ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος in 1 Cor 1-3).⁴¹ κόσμος is the old world-age opposed to God which has been dealt a death-blow in the crucifixion (6:14) and resurrection (1:4) of Jesus.

The immensely powerful metaphor of crucifixion to the κόσμος clearly aims at underlining the radical break from the past entailed in conversion to Christ (cf. 2:19-20). The image was no doubt chosen to reflect and interpret the painful social upheaval and disruption experienced by Paul and his converts (and perhaps also the "death", which conversion brought about, of their old symbolic universes).

Paul goes on to say in v. 15, οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστὶν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία, ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις. Longenecker suggests that v. 15 is a traditional maxim which Paul takes up and uses for his own argumentative purposes.⁴² Since the main evidence for this claim is the comment of Georgius Syncellus writing in the 8th century CE, that Gal 6:15 is a citation from the *Apocalypse of Moses*, a document otherwise unknown, it must be viewed with some scepticism. Certainly, the term καινὴ κτίσις, as Mell has shown, draws on a well established and developing Jewish tradition,⁴³ which we have already

⁴¹ Dunn (1993b: 49). Burton's (514) definition, approved by Longenecker (1990: 295), "the mode of life which is characterized by earthly advantages, viewed as obstacles to righteousness" fails to capture the sense of hostility and evil evoked by κόσμος in this verse. Cf. Minear (399 n. 12).

⁴² Longenecker (1990: 295).

⁴³ Mell (47-257). See also Aymer (59-73); G. Schneider (1961: 15-50); Stuhlmacher (1967: 10-20); on "new creation" in Qumran see Derrett (599-601).

partly sketched out in our discussion of 1 Cor 7:31b and Rom 8:19-22.

The meaning of the phrase $\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\eta\ \kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$, as noted at the beginning of our study,⁴⁴ has long been the subject of dispute. How we should interpret the term stands at the centre of an important scholarly debate: as Mell states, "Der Begriff $\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\eta\ \kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ steht in dieser Auseinandersetzung am Schnittpunkt der Frage, ob die Anthropologie oder die Kosmologie der Cantus firmus paulinischer Theologie sei."⁴⁵ There are three main ways in which the expression has been understood.⁴⁶

- a) as referring to the renewal, that is, the conversion, of the individual;⁴⁷
- b) as a reference to the new community of Christ;⁴⁸
- c) as referring to a transformation of the whole universe;⁴⁹

The conviction that God in Christ has established/is

⁴⁴ See Chapter One, Section 1.2.

⁴⁵ Mell (3).

⁴⁶ Burton (356) takes $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ in Gal 6:14 as having the sense "act of creation" (as in Rom 1:20), rather than "creation" or "creature". This translation has won little favour.

⁴⁷ e.g., Cole (235); W.D.Davies (1962: 119); Parsons; Reumann (97); Ridderbos (1956: 226); Schwantes (32-42); Sjöberg (1950). Attention is drawn (by Davies, Reumann, Sjöberg and Schwantes) to the use of the metaphor in rabbinic Judaism to describe a proselyte, e.g., *Gen. Rab.* 39.14; *Yebam.* 48b; cf. *Jos. As.* 8:10-11; 15:5.

⁴⁸ e.g., Barclay (1988: 108); Baumgarten (163-70); Bruce (1982: 273); Chilton (312, "new humanity"); Cousar (156); Vögtle (1970a: 182).

⁴⁹ e.g., Aymer (116); Dunn (1993a: 343); Fung (308); Martyn (1985: 412); Mell (324); Tannehill (65).

establishing a "new/renewed creation" is central to Paul's theology, being implied in his Adam/Christ parallels and his wider use of Adamic categories to express his soteriology. This conception embraces individual conversion (2 Cor 4:6), renewed humanity (Rom 8:29; 12:2),⁵⁰ and the renewal of the non-human creation (Rom 8:19-22): so each of the above options can lay claim to a legitimate basis in the wider Pauline theology.

If it is accepted that κόσμος in v. 14 denotes the old world-age in the symbolic framework of apocalyptic two age dualism, it seems likely that καινῆ κτίσις would refer to the corresponding new world-age.⁵¹ One suspects, therefore, that καινῆ κτίσις serves here as a shorthand evoking for Paul the whole theological conception of God's redemptive work in Christ as inaugurating a new or renewed creation, both in its anthropological (individual and corporate) and in its cosmological dimensions. Even so, it appears to be the case that the cosmic aspect, while presupposed, in this text is subordinate to the anthropological. Quite plainly καινῆ κτίσις is set forth as a present reality,⁵² and for Paul the transformation or re-creation of the physical world, like bodily resurrection, is firmly reserved for the future (Rom 8:19-22; 1 Cor 7:31b). Paul's particular emphasis in 6:15 therefore probably lies on the *community* as it resides in and participates in the sphere of God's new created order: this seems to be confirmed in v. 16 where Paul speaks of those (ἄσσοι) who will walk (στοιχῆσουσιν) by the "rule"

⁵⁰ cf. Col 3:10; Eph 2:10, 15; 4:24.

⁵¹ Dunn (1993b: 49).

⁵² Mell (257) argues that this is Paul's distinctive contribution to the Jewish motif.

(καθῶν) of the new creation, *i.e.*, the community of the faithful.

Having considered the meaning of κόσμος and καινὴ κτίσις in 6:14-15, we must now ask what role they play in Paul's socially motivated rhetoric. First of all, we can see Paul engaged in a polemic against Judaism, Ἰουδαϊσμός. The fundamental distinction between Jew and Gentile on which Jewish religion turned, circumcision, is banished to the old world-order which has been overthrown in Christ. The irony of Paul's bold statement in v. 14 must not be overlooked. Jews viewed themselves as marked out from the nations of the world; circumcision was the crucial indicator of that distinction. Paul here subverts the division between Israel and "the world":⁵³ Jews are now seen as belonging to the κόσμος, the world-order which stands under God's judgement!⁵⁴ The event of Christ's death and resurrection has created a new order of existence where the covenant advantage of the Jew over the Gentile has been abolished; Jews are as equally in need of rescuing from the "present evil age" as Gentiles. This polemic serves Paul's social objectives. Judaism is banished to the old world-age from which the Galatians have broken free. Paul thus drives an ideological wedge between the Jewish community and the Galatian churches. To assimilate to Judaism is to transfer *back* from the καινὴ κτίσις to the crucified κόσμος.

Secondly, the statements of vv. 14-15 form part of Paul's polemic against the intruders. The link word καυχᾶσθαι, as noted, indicates that vv. 14-15 are set in

⁵³This typical distinction is reflected in the use of κόσμος in Rom 11:12, cf. Luke 12:30.

⁵⁴Dunn (1993a: 342).

contrast to v. 13. In the context it is implied, therefore, that the troublemakers are operating precisely on the level of the old world-order. They have failed to understand that in the new situation circumcision is no longer of any significance. By insisting on circumcision and observance of the law they reveal that they have not fully been crucified to the κόσμος nor passed into the καινή κτίσις (which is probably why Paul charges them with having completely misunderstood the nature of the gospel, 1:5-6). Again the polemical point serves a social goal: by discrediting the agitators and their claims Paul can loosen the hold which they have on the Galatians.

Thirdly, Paul's talk of crucifixion to the κόσμος and the establishment of a καινή κτίσις helps to define the social identity of the Galatians, uncertainty over which had probably increased their susceptibility to the message of the agitators. Paul's language functions to legitimate the existence of "a new social entity".⁵⁵ The new movement to which the Galatians belong has a social identity distinct from both the paganism from which they had been set free and the Judaism to which they have become attracted. It is a new social alignment. The social demarcation of circumcised and uncircumcised is done away with: God has established a new community, which stands in distinction to the whole outside society as καινή κτίσις to κόσμος. The community of Christ transcends all social boundaries (3:28). Community outlook and self-understanding is governed by the principle of καινή κτίσις. καινή κτίσις defines the church's identity and horizons, establishes its patterns of existence and

⁵⁵Barclay (1988: 102).

guides the behaviour and attitudes of its members.⁵⁶

6. Gal 4:3: The Elements of the World

The meaning of the phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in Gal 4:3 is one of the most debated issues in Pauline interpretation.⁵⁷ Does the term, among other possibilities, refer to "elementary religious teachings",⁵⁸ "the physical elements of the universe"⁵⁹ (i.e., earth, water, fire and air), "astral powers",⁶⁰ "tribal deities"⁶¹ or "demonic powers/elemental spirits"⁶²? A consensus on the matter seems as yet a long way off. The issues and arguments have been

⁵⁶ Betz (1979: 320) argues that Paul's words in vv. 14-15 have the effect of announcing "the establishment of a new religion". But the fact that Paul in this epistle can conceive of the Christian community as standing in *continuity* with God's purposes in relation to Israel makes us hesitant about accepting Betz's claim. If the "Israel of God" is to be equated with "those who walk by the rule of the κοινῆ κτίσις" that "strong sense of continuity" may well be present in 6:16: see Dunn (1993a: 346).

⁵⁷ For a history of interpretation, albeit somewhat outdated now, see Bandstra (5-30). See also Delling (1971).

⁵⁸ e.g., Belleville (68); D.A.Black (60); Burton (510-18); Cole (159); Fung (189-92); Longenecker (1990: 166); Moore-Crispin (212); Ridderbos (1956: 154).

⁵⁹ Schweizer (1988).

⁶⁰ e.g., Bruce (1982: 204); he argues that by accusing his readers in v. 9 of returning to service of the στοιχεῖα, Paul "means that by treating the sacred calendar as a matter of religious obligation they are in effect putting themselves in bondage to the forces that control the calendar."

⁶¹ Howard (1979: 78).

⁶² e.g., Betz (1979: 204-5); Cousar (92-3); Hatch; Reicke. Reicke (262) identifies the angel mediators of the law, mentioned in 3:19 with the elemental spirits.

set out many times elsewhere; we need only present our own case here.

We noted above the hermeneutical significance of 6:11-18 for Galatians as a whole; it may be suggested, therefore, that the affirmations of 6:14-15 can be used to illumine Paul's talk of στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου in 4:3, 9.

The apocalyptic perspective of 6:14-15 is certainly congruous with two key facets of Paul's argument in 4:1-11. Firstly, the paragraph is styled as a vivid contrast between the era before and the situation after Christ (note esp. the "once/now", τότε/νῦν language of vv. 8-9a): Paul sets off the state of "slavery" and "infancy" prior to God's saving act in Christ and the liberation, adoption into God's family and experience of the Spirit which Christ brings. We can safely assume that the sharp antithesis of κόσμος and new creation, created by the cross underlies this stark contrast. Secondly, in a most astonishing fashion, Paul in 4:1-11 equates life under paganism with life under Judaism.⁶³ He warns the Galatians that by placing themselves under the Jewish law they would be reverting to life under their former bondage (vv. 8-11): having been redeemed from bondage to τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, Paul asks his readers (v. 9), πῶς ἐπιστρέφετε πάλιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα, οἷς πάλιν ἄνωθεν δουλεύειν θέλετε;⁶⁴ This rhetorical move is

⁶³ Paul's argumentative aim to level out the distinctions between Judaism and paganism partly explains the difficulty in interpreting τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου and helps to account for other anomalies in the passage: the ambiguity of ἡμεῖς in vv. 3-4, 6 (Jewish Christians or Christians generally?); Paul's description of the Jewish calendar in such general terms, as "days", "months", "seasons" and "years": Barclay (1988: 64).

⁶⁴ The use of the verb ἐπιστρέφω defines such a course of

very much in accord with the conviction expressed in 6:14-15: in the radical moral and religious realignment effected by the cross, the Jewish religion is now lumped together with paganism under the heading of "crucified κόσμος".

Not unreasonably then, it can be argued that κόσμος in the phrase στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου relates to κόσμος in 6:14. In other words, on the basis of 6:14, κόσμος in 4:3 may be taken to denote the old world-age and realm of opposition of God immobilized by Christ's death and resurrection.⁶⁵ If this contextual sense is admitted, στοιχεῖα seems likely to mean "(antagonistic) powers" given that "this world-age", for Paul, is a realm characterized by *hostility* to God and believers. This certainly fits with the fact that Paul talks of *enslavement* to the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου which clearly suggests that the στοιχεῖα are subjugating powers.

Turning to v. 9, the στοιχεῖα to which reference is made here, are best interpreted as demonic powers. This accords with the personalizing language which is used to describe the στοιχεῖα - ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχά, on the one hand, and with Paul's identification of the στοιχεῖα with pagan deities (v. 8) on the other. Paul asserts that these pagan divinities are "by nature" no true gods (μὴ οὖσιν θεοῖς, v. 8). This immediately calls to mind Paul's treatment of εἰδωλα in 1 Cor 8-10: Paul, in agreement with the Corinthians, denies that idols represent what can truly be called θεοί (1 Cor 8:6-8) but insists that they *do* represent real spiritual powers (1 Cor 10:20-21).

action as apostasy: Dunn (1993a: 225).

⁶⁵Reicke (265).

The inclusion of the law among the στοιχεῖα in 4:3 is clear from the fact that ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου stands in parallel to ὑπὸ νόμον in 4:4-5.⁶⁶ The Jewish law is thus ranked alongside the pagan gods (or the evil powers standing behind the idols), classified with them as under the category, στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. This does not mean that the law and the demonic forces of paganism are being identified in every respect. Unlike the supernatural powers behind paganism, the law is not being viewed as intrinsically evil (cf. 3:24) or as a personal being. It is important, therefore, to draw a distinction between the *sense* and the *reference*⁶⁷ of στοιχεῖα in 4:3, 9. While in both texts, the sense of στοιχεῖα is the same, "enslaving power", its referent is different, the law in 4:3, and the supernatural forces represented by the pagan gods in 4:9. The law and the demonic beings are equated only insofar as they constitute enslaving powers of the old world-age.⁶⁸

By classifying the law as a στοιχεῖον τοῦ κόσμου, Paul is saying that in terms of its effect of people's lives, it operates as a hostile, dominating power holding human beings in spiritual darkness.⁶⁹ That Paul can here profile the law in such a way reflects the polarizing force of the apocalyptic event of the cross and resurrection: even the

⁶⁶ See further Bandstra (171).

⁶⁷ See Cotterell and Turner (82-90).

⁶⁸ We thus take στοιχεῖα to be *category* for Paul and not a term with a specific referent. It is not unlikely that Paul coined this use of τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου himself: so Delling (1971: 685); Reicke (261).

⁶⁹ cf. Rom 7:1-6, where the law is presented as a power which stimulates sin (cf. 7:8; 1 Cor 15:56) and from which Christ has effected liberation.

law which had a constructive place in the history of God's redemptive dealings with humankind (as indicated by the description of the law as a παιδαγωγός in 3:24-25, and the analogy a child in minority and under guardianship in 4:1-2), is now cast in the role of a slavemaster as a result of the apocalyptic revelation in Christ.

The socio-rhetorical thrust of Paul's statement is plain. Within the context of this devastating critique of Judaism, it serves to erect a very sharp boundary between the Christian community and the Jewish community. For the Galatians to adopt the traditions of Judaism was to fall back under the sway of the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. And, "To return to the weak and beggarly στοιχεῖα was to cut themselves off from Christ, i.e., from the new creation".⁷⁰

7. Conclusions

κόσμος and καινὴ κτίσις in 6:14-15 are placed in apocalyptic antithesis. The antithetical character of κόσμος, we suggest, is likely to be in view in the problematic expression, τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. The κόσμος/καινὴ κτίσις contrast probably reflects the σὰρξ/πνεῦμα dualism of 5:13ff.⁷¹

As with 1 Corinthians, we see in Galatians a very clear socio-rhetorical strategy at work. Paul's use of κόσμος and καινὴ κτίσις forms a conspicuous part of that strategy. The language is utilized within the frame of apocalyptic dualism to reconstruct the world of his readers so as to sanction the separate existence of the Christian community *vis-à-vis*

⁷⁰ Minear (400).

⁷¹ On the Spirit/flesh dualism in Galatians, see Barclay (1988: 178-215).

Judaism, and so as to prevent the Gentile Galatians from taking a part in the Jewish community. The declaration that the community is of the order of *καὶνῆ κτίσις* emphasizes that it is a wholly new social phenomenon: it belongs in the social structures of neither paganism nor Judaism.

Paul's language thus functions to close off assimilation to the Jewish religion as an option in easing the problem of the group's social insecurity. Rather, what Paul does is to lay the basis for the formation of a distinct group identity. On the one hand, Paul's consigning of Judaism to the crucified *κόσμος* provides the warrant for reevaluating the seeming positive features of the "superior" group as negative ones (4:1-11); on the other hand, the assertion that the Galatian community resides in the sphere of *καὶνῆ κτίσις* justifies the creation of new group norms over against the Jewish community.⁷²

Paul's social purpose is close to that of 1 Corinthians - the erection of high group boundaries. In Galatians, however, the focus is not so much on the boundary between the Christian community and the surrounding Graeco-Roman cultural and social environment (which is presupposed rather than argued for), but more specifically between the Christian group and the Jewish community.

Finally we may observe an interesting correspondence between Paul's use of *κόσμος* in Gal 6:14-15 and 1 Cor 1:20ff. In both passages, Paul employs anti-*κόσμος* language to denigrate canons of evaluation, religious expectations

⁷² Meeks (1983b: 196-8) notes the "warrant-for-innovation" function of apocalyptic language in Galatians. Barclay (1988: 216-20) argues that the paraenesis of 5:13ff is Paul's attempt to provide group norms and patterns of existence for his readers.

and standards and social categorizations. Such "worldly" estimations have been radically turned upside down and transcended in the cross and God's new creative initiative.

B. 2 CORINTHIANS

Having observed the key place of κόσμος in the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians, one is struck by the relative unimportance of the term in 2 Corinthians: κόσμος appears only three times in the epistle and makes little contribution to Paul's main lines of argument. This partly has to do with the fact that in 2 Corinthians Paul is much less occupied with the problem of the church's loosely maintained boundaries with the surrounding society, against which his employment of κόσμος in the first epistle had been targeted; he has more immediate and pressing concerns. In the period between 1 and 2 Corinthians 1-9 (it is generally accepted that chapters 10-13 constitute a separate work, most probably written after chapters 1-9, and reflecting a later stage in the church's history) seeds of resistance to Paul in Corinth had blossomed into outright rebellion against him, quite possibly due to the arrival there of a group of Paul's opponents.⁷³ The extent of opposition to him in the congregation was made evident to Paul during his "painful visit" to Corinth (2:1-2,

⁷³ Much has been written on Paul's opponents in 2 Corinthians. For our purposes only the fact of their opposition to Paul and their influence in the Corinthian church is important. We need not enter into the complex and uncertain area of the identity and background of this group and the precise nature of their teaching. For a recent discussion of these matters see Sumney, whose tentative conclusions probably reflect the unsettled state of the question at present.

5-11; 7:12). As a result of a "sorrowful letter" written by Paul to the Corinthians and the skillful mediation of Titus (2:3-4, 9) a partial reconciliation between Paul and the majority of the congregation had been achieved (the church even disciplined one of its members who had particularly offended Paul during that unpleasant occasion, 7:6-13). Yet tensions remain. There is still resistance to Paul (6:11-13) behind which we can probably detect the influence of Paul's opponents. These incomers, it seems, had launched a personal attack on Paul, disparaging him as a weak and mundane figure (2:14ff; 5:12-13) and denigrating his apostolic status and ministry (διακονία).⁷⁴ Their views had won a receptive hearing in Corinth. Paul writes the present letter to consolidate the gains made by the "sorrowful letter" and to effect a full reconciliation between himself and his converts, defending his apostleship and personal character against the charges of his detractors in order to legitimate his leadership.

None of this means that the church's relations with the outside world had become any less of a problem since the writing of 1 Corinthians (esp. if 6:17-7:1, with its appeal not to be yoked with unbelievers, was written by Paul and does belong here⁷⁵), but rather that that problem had to play

⁷⁴This is a key term in 2 Corinthians occurring 12 times.

⁷⁵There are two key interpretive issues surrounding 6:13-7:1, its integrity and its authorship: did the passage originally belong in its present context and was it written by Paul? The abrupt transition from 6:13 to 6:14 and from 7:1 to 7:2 together with the fact that 6:13 leads naturally and smoothly into 7:2 give rise to the conclusion that the passage is an interpolation. The concentration of *hapax legomena* (occurring nowhere else in the New Testament) and un-Pauline terms (occurring nowhere else in Paul) in this

second fiddle to the more urgent issue.

The occurrences of κόσμος and the term καινή κτίσις are all located within the first seven chapters (the so-called "Letter of Reconciliation"), so we can neatly sidestep the difficult introductory questions associated with chapters 8-9 and of course chapters 10-13. We now briefly look at each instance in turn.

1. 2 Cor 1:12: Comportment in the World

In the paragraph, 1:12-14, Paul defends his apostolic conduct against charges of unreliability and duplicity apparently leveled at him by his opponents in Corinth. His having appeared to renege on an earlier plan to visit Corinth had given rise or credence to such accusations (1:15-17). In v. 12, Paul appeals to the testimony of his conscience⁷⁶ as to the integrity of his actions: he behaved not according to "the wisdom of the flesh" (ἐν σοφίᾳ σαρκικῇ) but in dependence on the grace of God, both in the κόσμος and more especially (περισσοτέρως) toward his readers.

κόσμος here, as in 1 Cor 5:10b, 14:10 and Rom 1:8, has

unit, among other features, leads scholars to conclude that Paul was not its author. Various stances on these verses have been taken by scholars, including: that 6:13-7:1 is a fragment from an earlier letter, perhaps the "previous letter" referred to in 1 Cor 5:9, e.g., Moffatt (xxiv); that the passage is a non-Pauline interpolation, e.g., N.A.Dahl (1977b); that the passage is an anti-Pauline interpolation: Betz (1973); that the passage was penned by Paul and was part of the original letter, e.g., Fee (1977); Thrall. See commentaries, esp. Furnish (1984: 376-83), Martin (190-5), for arguments and assesment. There exists no scholarly consensus on these matters.

⁷⁶In this unit, Paul consistently uses the first person plural, i.e., he is speaking of himself and his co-workers.

the sense of "inhabited world". There is no pejorative note to Paul's usage; as Furnish writes, "Nothing specifically negative is connoted".⁷⁷ Paul makes a distinction between the κόσμος and the Corinthians, but his intention in doing so is plainly not to stress the social boundary between the Corinthian church and the macrosociety. The contrast simply highlights two aspects and spheres of the apostolic ministry: evangelistic (in the wider world) and pastoral (in the church).

2. 2 Cor 5:17: Behold, New Creation

In 5:11-15 Paul resumes his defence of his apostleship. Whereas his opponents boast in outward show (ἐν προσώπῳ), *i.e.*, on external appearances, Paul lays claim to genuineness of heart (ἐν καρδίᾳ, 5:12) as the determinant of all he does as an apostle. He identifies two motives for his ministry: firstly, the fear of God (5:11), *i.e.*, an awareness of his accountability to Christ (5:9-10); secondly, and more significantly, the compelling power of the love of Christ - the love which was demonstrated to the whole of humanity in his death for all (5:14-15).⁷⁸ The recognition that Christ

⁷⁷Furnish (1984: 127). *Contra* Plummer (26) who writes that what is in view is the "wicked heathen world".

⁷⁸Paul's reiterated claim in vv. 14-15 that Christ died ὑπὲρ πάντων indicates the universal scope of redemption; in neither case ought the compass of πάντων to be restricted to believers. The statement, οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον, in v. 14, is more difficult to interpret. The most reasonable solution is to take πάντες as meaning *all* humanity but to view the "death" referred to as the *potential* rather than the *actual* death of all: so Harris (1976: 352); N.M.Watson (1993: 59). The focus narrows to believers when Paul speaks of the obligation of those who have been made alive (ζῶντες) to live for Christ.

died for all leads to a radical re-orientation of a person's life: those who participate in his death and resurrection and are thereby brought to life, must now live their lives no longer for themselves but in devoted service to him (5:15).

Paul goes on in vv. 16-17 to spell out two consequences⁷⁹ of dying and rising with Christ and living for him. The first (v. 16) is a different way of knowing (γινώσκω). "From now on" (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν), no-one is regarded κατὰ σάρκα. The perspective is that of the change of the ages effected by Christ.⁸⁰ To know κατὰ σάρκα is to perceive from the point of view of ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος. To those who live at the intersection of the ages, a new means of apprehension has been granted. As a result, Paul claims, even our understanding of Christ has undergone a shift - no longer do we perceive Christ κατὰ σάρκα, though we once did so.⁸¹ To see Christ κατὰ σάρκα is to regard him from a "this worldly" standpoint, by which standards the idea of crucified saviour is scandal and folly (1 Cor 1:18-25). Once, this was Paul's disposition, but now he has come to recognize Christ as the agent of God's salvation whose death has resulted in life (5:14-15).

The second consequence of participating in Christ's death and resurrection, Paul states as follows: εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά.⁸² As

⁷⁹ Note the ὥστε which introduces both v. 16 and v. 17.

⁸⁰ See Martyn (1967: 274).

⁸¹ Any suggestion that Paul is playing down the value of knowledge of the historical Jesus in comparison with the perception of Christ as risen and glorified Lord ought to be rejected: see Furnish (1984: 312, 320); N.M. Watson (1993: 61).

⁸² The language τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά is drawn from Isa 42:9; 43:18-19; 48:6-8.

with Gal 6:15, the emphasis here is on καινὴ κτίσις as a present reality. Thus while καινὴ κτίσις is to be construed as widely as Paul's theology will allow, Paul's focus, as in Galatians, is probably on the community in which God's new creation finds its most concrete present expression. The εἴ τις may suggest a particular reference to the (conversion of the) individual believer.⁸³ But Martin is probably right to argue that the accent is placed on ἐν Χριστῷ,⁸⁴ an expression which has corporate overtones.⁸⁵ What is primarily in view, therefore, is the *community* of Christ as it falls within the orbit of God's new creation.⁸⁶

The contrast between ἀρχαῖα and καινά, and παρῆλθεν (passed away) and γέγονεν (come into being) indicates a radical discontinuity between the standpoint of the old age and the new creation.⁸⁷

In 5:16-17, then, Paul effectively contrasts two ways of knowing: κατὰ σάρκα, the old-age perspective, and the

⁸³The view that new creation signifies the conversion of the individual is adopted, for example, by Barrett (1973: 171, "a universal statement that becomes actually true by individual participation on his conversion"); Bruce (1971: 209); Harris (1976: 353); Hughes (201-2); Mead (148); Plummer (180); Stagg (173, viewing the new creation of the individual as the microcosm of the "eschatological macrocosm of the new heaven and the new earth").

⁸⁴Martin (152).

⁸⁵Ziesler (1990: 49-52).

⁸⁶Furnish (1984: 333) writes, "although Paul regards the new creation as an eschatological reality - and hence cosmic in scope, not narrowly ecclesiastical - he understands it to be experienced within the believing community".

⁸⁷Danker (117) rightly insists that καινά is the subject of γέγονεν: "Paul does not mean to say 'Old things are become new'". So also Stagg (74). *Contra* Hughes (203).

perspective of καινή κτίσις which determines those who belong to Christ. This implied contrast probably has a polemical thrust, directed both against his opponents in Corinth and at the Corinthians themselves. In seeking to measure Paul and his style of ministry by the "outward" signs of presence and power, his opponents were in fact adopting a mode of perception and manner of judgement that is κατὰ σάρκα. So too, in their receptivity to the opponents' charges against Paul, the Corinthians were showing themselves to be still determined by the perspective of σάρξ (cf. 1 Cor 1:26; 3:1-4; and therefore, the perspective of ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος). Paul's talk of καινή κτίσις by implication, therefore, serves to legitimate his apostolic authority and to reassert his position of power within the Corinthian community.

3. 2 Cor 5:19: The Reconciled World

Paul's discussion of the effects of Christ's death and resurrection leads in vv. 19-21 into a general statement of the gospel, God's saving initiative in Christ. Quite possibly, Paul is at this point drawing on pre-existing early Christian tradition.⁸⁸ The key theme in this formulation of the gospel is reconciliation (καταλλάσσω occurs 3 times and καταλλαγή twice in these verses).

In v. 19, Paul points to the scope of God's redeeming activity: in the event of the cross and resurrection God was reconciling the κόσμος to himself. κόσμος here, as most recognize,⁸⁹ denotes the world of humanity (a "reconciliation"

⁸⁸ N.M.Watson (1993: 63); Martin (138-51).

⁸⁹ So, e.g., Danker (120); Furnish (1984: 336); Héring (1967: 44); J.P.Lewis (1989b: 138); Mead (154); Plummer (183); Stagg (75).

of the whole physical universe is envisaged in Col 1:15-20, but this thought ought not to be read into Paul's words here). The anthropological denotation is clear from the words immediately following, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, which most naturally apply to human beings.⁹⁰ As in Rom 11:15, it is implicit that the κόσμος, the human world, is estranged from God. But again, as is the case with the Romans text, the emphasis is on the κόσμος having become the object of God's redeeming action in Christ.

It is this message of reconciliation (διακονία τῆς καταλλαγῆς, v. 18, λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς) which Paul and his fellow ministers of the gospel have been appointed as ambassadors to proclaim (v. 20). Again, the issue of Paul's apostleship and authority comes to the fore. It is thus possible to detect a polemical edge to Paul's words: "to accept the true gospel means also to accept Paul as an authentic apostle".⁹¹ Paul's entreaty in v. 20, δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ may well, in the situational context, constitute an appeal for the Corinthians to be fully reconciled to Paul.

It is interesting to note that in comparison with Gal 6:14-15, κόσμος and καινὴ κτίσις in 2 Cor 5:17ff do not stand in antithesis to each other. Whereas in Galatians God's καινὴ κτίσις effects the alienation of the κόσμος, in 2 Cor 5:19, it is seen to involve the reconciliation of the κόσμος.

⁹⁰ Barrett (1973: 177) suggests that rebellious heavenly powers are also included, but there is nothing in the text which would otherwise indicate this.

⁹¹ Martin (156).

4. 2 Cor 7:10: The Sorrow of the World

Having expressed his delight at the news brought to him from Corinth by Titus that the majority of the congregation had been won back to his side (7:5-7), Paul pauses in 7:8-12 to consider the overall effect of his "severe letter" (cf. 2:4, 9). Though at one time he regretted having sent it for the sorrow it caused them, he is now pleased that he did so, since it had brought them to repentance (v. 9). The sorrow they experienced, Paul tells them, was in accordance with the will of God (κατὰ θεόν). Paul goes on in v. 10 (in a more general statement, expressing what he views as a universal principle) to draw a contrast between ἡ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη with ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη: the former produces repentance leading to salvation, whereas the latter results in death. Watson describes the contrast as one between "true penitence". and "mere remorse".⁹²

The facts that κόσμος and θεός are placed in explicit contrast and that death is specified as the outcome of ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη clearly indicate that κόσμος is shaded negatively in this text. However, the word does not seem to carry the meaning, which it predominantly has in 1 Corinthians, of the old world-age hostile to God and Christ. The phrase θάνατον κατεργάζεται is used for rhetorical balance: in context, the thought which Paul seemingly wants to convey is the ineffectiveness of ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη for salvation, thus its worthlessness beyond this life. κόσμος here is not exactly human society in *rebellion* against God, but more, human society *without reference* to God. The contextual sense it bears in this verse is very close to that

⁹²N.M.Watson (1993: 83).

in 1 Cor 7:33-34 (cf. the contrast between the things of the κόσμος and the things of God).

It is important to note that Paul does not use κόσμος in this negative way here to berate his readers. On the contrary, he is encouraged that they *did not* experience ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη but ἡ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη. Paul is thus able to commend for his readers precisely for *not* exhibiting the attitude of the κόσμος.

5. Conclusions

It is clear, then, that there is no consistent pattern to Paul's uses of κόσμος in 2 Corinthians. In each of its three occurrences, a different contextual sense is apparent. Only in 7:10 can we detect obvious pejorative overtones, but there is no polemical edge to the usage. There is no indication that κόσμος is a rhetorically-charged term in this epistle.

A polemical and socio-rhetorical note, however, can be discerned in the use of καινὴ κτίσις. Effectively Paul is saying in 5:16ff that when his ministry is seen from the perspective of God's new creation, his status as a divinely appointed ambassador of the gospel, which is being called into question at Corinth is immediately recognized. Paul thus appeals to the principle of καινὴ κτίσις to vindicate the manner and pattern of his apostolic ministry and to endorse and re-establish his authoritative position in the Corinthian community.

As noted at the beginning of this section, the comparative unimportance and innocuousness of κόσμος in this epistle when viewed in the light of 1 Corinthians is quite striking. As suggested, this is surely related to the different motivations occasioning the epistles: Paul in 2 Corinthians is more concerned with defending his apostolic

authority and fending off the criticisms of his opponents, than with stressing the boundary between the church and the wider society, the primary use to which κόσμος had been put in 1 Corinthians. Even so, it is interesting to observe that where he could have used κόσμος to censure his readers, as he had done in 1 Cor 1-4, he fails to do so. In 5:12ff Paul criticizes his opponents (and by extension, their sympathizers in Corinth) for appraising him by the superficial standards of society and not by the standards of καὶνὴ κτίσις. Judging from 1 Cor 1:20ff; 4:9ff; Gal 6:14ff, this is precisely the point where Paul could have taken up anti-κόσμος language. But instead of using κόσμος to signify the old-age perspective adopted by his detractors, Paul employs the expression καρὰ σάρκα. This might suggest, therefore, that even where he could have introduced a polemical use of κόσμος into the argument, for some reason, he has deliberately chosen not to do so.

Several possibilities might be suggested as to why Paul might have avoided the critical use of κόσμος. From Paul's point of view, that aspect of his usage may simply have served its purpose: having exploited the term to its fullest rhetorical potential, he may have considered there to have been little more polemical leverage to be gained from it. Or, κόσμος may by this time have become a less important term for the Corinthians. It is possible that the terminological battle had by now centred on σὰρξ. His opponents in Corinth had perhaps charged him with acting καρὰ σάρκα (10:2-4; cf. 1:12). Instead of using κόσμος to vilify his opponents, therefore, in 5:16, he polemically re-directs the charge of being καρὰ σάρκα back at them. There is, however, another possibility. It may well have been that Paul's polemical use of κόσμος turned out to be too controversial: Paul had used

the term in such a defamiliarized way that it had proved too confusing for his readers. He is therefore forced to give up the polemical usage for the sake of clarity and to adopt other rhetorical strategies and tactics to achieve his goals. We have of course strayed into a hopelessly speculative area, but an intriguing one, nevertheless.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It remains now to gather together the results of the foregoing investigation and to tease out some of its wider implications for New Testament study. We begin by summarizing the main conclusions of our exegetical and socio-rhetorical analyses.

1. Socio-rhetorical Analysis of Paul's Uses of κόσμος and κτίσις

κόσμος in 1 Corinthians: In our analysis of the Corinthian community, we highlighted the lack of clear-cut group boundaries between the Christian community and the surrounding Corinthian society. We argued that Paul's negative talk of κόσμος in this epistle is largely directed against this situation.

It was suggested that Paul's use of κόσμος in 1 Corinthians may be understood in terms of a socio-rhetorical strategy of defamiliarization, whereby Paul removes κόσμος from its more recognizable network of meaning and places it within an altogether different web of associations, challenging his readers' assumptions and perceptions. κόσμος is relocated within a predominantly apocalyptic symbol system, structured by oppositions and contrasts. Within this context of reference, κόσμος most often designates the present world-age, a realm characterized by hostility to Christ and the church. By setting church and κόσμος in

apocalyptic opposition, Paul is able to erect a more clearly defined boundary between the congregation and the outside society.

In 1 Corinthians, therefore, we see Paul utilizing κόσμος to construct a social world for his readers in which the Christian community is clearly marked off from the rest of society.

κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans: We observed that in this epistle Paul uses κόσμος in a remarkably positive way alongside κτίσις. Emphasis is placed on κόσμος and κτίσις as God's created world, to which God remains committed and for which he has acted to redeem. Completely absent from Romans is the utilization of κόσμος to fashion a social dualism of church and macrosociety. We demonstrated how various theological aspects of Paul's talk of κόσμος and κτίσις interpenetrate with his social teaching in chapters 12-13. Correlations with Paul's advice in Rom 13:1-7 were found to be particularly strong. We then went on to suggest that Paul's distinctive uses of κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans might not be unconnected to and uninformed by the social situation in Rome. Drawing on external historical information as well as the evidence of the epistle itself, we attempted to reconstruct a plausible context in the Roman Christian community into which Paul's talk of κόσμος and κτίσις could be fitted. Specifically we posited a situation of mounting conflict with outsiders and exposure to public ill-will with outsiders, increasing the congregations' vulnerability to repressive actions by the state. Against this background, it was mooted that Paul uses κόσμος and κτίσις in such a way as to lend support to his advice in Romans 12-13. From this

perspective, Paul's usage might be seen as functioning to diffuse and dampen sectarian tendencies which might have existed in the Roman congregations and as legitimating the *non-socially subversive* character of Christianity. We avoided the use of the term "socio-rhetorical strategy" with respect to Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις in Romans since this is probably too strong a description of what Paul is doing. What we have at least been able to demonstrate is a remarkable congruence between Paul's statements on κόσμος and κτίσις, his social teaching in Rom 12:14-13:7 and the suggested situation in Rome, which may permit us to speak of a socio-rhetorical dimension to Paul's use of these terms.

κόσμος and καινή κτίσις in Galatians: A very clear socio-rhetorical strategy was shown to be at work in Paul's use of κόσμος and καινή κτίσις in Gal 4:3 and 6:14-15. The language, oriented again to the apocalyptic perspective, it was argued, serves to reinforce the separation of the Christian community from the Jewish community. Paul's statements function to stress that the Galatian Gentile converts belong to a *new social grouping*, wholly distinct from the social structures and relational networks of the Graeco-Roman world and of Jews. As in 1 Corinthians, Paul's negative talk of κόσμος has an unmistakable boundary-stressing effect.

κόσμος and καινή κτίσις in 2 Corinthians: We noted the absence of a polemical use of κόσμος in this epistle: the few instances we have of κόσμος in 2 Corinthians are incidental to Paul's main social goals and concerns in writing. Paul's use of καινή κτίσις in 2 Cor 5:17, however, can be related to one of those key aims. Paul appeals to the

principle of new creation to justify his style of ministry and leadership against the censures of his detractors. Those who fail to recognize Paul's apostolic authority reveal that they are still locked into the "fleshly", *i.e.*, old world-age, perspective. The polemical point serves Paul's aim of re-establishing his leadership position in Corinth.

Our socio-rhetorical analyses, therefore, have demonstrated that Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις play a not insignificant role in his attempts to configure the social worlds of the communities he addresses. More specifically, our investigation has shown that Paul uses these terms socio-rhetorically to reconstruct the worlds of his readers *in particular ways*, according to the *particular social goals and concerns* of his epistles, ensuing from his perception of the *particular needs* of the congregations.

2. A Theological Definition of κόσμος in Paul?

Though it has not been a primary aim of this study, our analysis has placed us in a position to determine how far a comprehensive, theological definition of κόσμος in Paul is possible or desirable. We can now at least supply some answers to the questions posed in our Chapter One.

To what extent and in what contexts is κόσμος used negatively by Paul? We have seen that Paul's derogatory use of κόσμος is largely confined to 1 Corinthians and Galatians, and there are definite socio-rhetorical reasons as to why this is so. In Romans Paul can use κόσμος neutrally (1:8; 3:6) and quite positively (1:20; 4:13; 11:12, 15). In 2 Corinthians the word is used positively (5:19), neutrally (1:12) and negatively (7:10). As with other New Testament writers, Paul's negative uses can be classified as radical or

relative depreciations of the word. At the radical end of the scale, we have κόσμος as the present (ethically evil) world-age within an apocalyptic frame of reference. Towards the other end, we have κόσμος as the world, an obstacle to holiness (1 Cor 7:32ff). Least disparaging of Paul's negative uses is the instance in Rom 3:19 - κόσμος as *sinful* humanity.

Where and how far is κόσμος used to denote a hostile realm or anti-godly power and/or the stage on which the salvific drama is played out? The former is certainly to the fore in 1 Corinthians and Galatians. κόσμος in these epistles is largely presented as the sphere of opposition to God. In 1 Cor 1:20f; 3:19, 22, κόσμος is personified as an apocalyptic power. In Rom 5:12-13, however, κόσμος, the human world (God's creation), is depicted as the scene of the drama, the field on which the apocalyptic conflict is fought. Here κόσμος is not the enemy (sin and death are cast in the role of the villains in this passage), but the terrain over which the battle is fought.

How far is κόσμος an anthropological term with Paul? As noted at the beginning of our study, Bultmann places emphasis on the anthropological and historical character of κόσμος in Paul. On a number of occasions, κόσμος quite clearly denotes "humanity" (Rom 3:6, 19; 5:12, 13; 11:12, 15; 2 Cor 5:19). When κόσμος is used with the sense "this world-age", however, the reference cannot be so narrowly circumscribed. Bearing in mind Paul's apocalyptic world view, ὁ κόσμος οὗτος has both human and cosmic (esp. 1 Cor 7:31b) dimensions. It is interesting to note how easily Paul can move from a particular focus on human beings (1 Cor 1:20ff; 6:1) to a spotlight on spiritual powers (1 Cor 2:6-8; 6:2). ὁ κόσμος οὗτος is the realm to which non-believers belong but it is

not to be wholly equated with non-Christian humanity.

Is κόσμος wholly consigned to the plight side of Paul's soteriology? Certainly this is the case when κόσμος is used to designate the evil realm from which Christ has rescued believers (cf. αἰών in Gal 1:4). Paul also speaks of the κόσμος=humanity as standing under condemnation and in need of redemption (Rom 3:19). Yet Paul can also place κόσμος on the solution side. The revelation through the κόσμος has a positive place in God's redemptive purposes; the revelation has the capacity to lead people into a right relationship with God (though men and women reject that possibility, Rom 1:19-21). Paul is able to speak of the κόσμος having become the object of God's redemption (Rom 11:12, 15; 2 Cor 5:19). And of course, Paul can use κόσμος to designate the world to be inherited by believers (Rom 4:13). This observation answers the question, does Paul ever use κόσμος with reference to the future redeemed world? That κόσμος refers to the eschatological, renewed world is the clear implication of this text. Thus Sasse's claim that κόσμος "is reserved for the world which lies under sin and death" is seriously undermined.¹

All this shows that Paul's usage of κόσμος is characterized by subtlety, variety and diversity. To encapsulate all the various senses, nuances and connotations under one all-embracing theological formulation would not only be an extremely difficult task but, in our view, a wholly misguided procedure.

3. Theological Conviction and Social Exigency

¹Sasse (1965: 893).

A crucial part of our argument was that Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις are situationally determined and are framed with specific social purposes in view. What then is the place of theological conviction and presupposition in our analysis? Are Paul's theological statements simply theoretical legitimations of social goals?

Hopefully, in the course of our investigation it will have been made clear that we are at pains to eschew such reductionism and social determinism.

In an influential essay, N.A.Dahl pointed out that a tension stands at the heart of the fundamental New Testament conviction of the church as the eschatological community. On the one hand, the belief engenders "a positive attitude to all things which God has created"; on the other hand, it entails "a contrast between the Church and 'the world'".² Paul's theological statements involving κόσμος and κτίσις reflect and articulate that tension. Our claim is that Paul can exploit one side of the tension in one context and the other side in another context. Which aspect is in focus in a given instance is determined by external social factors, *i.e.*, the exigencies of the situational context.³ The situation addressed brings to prominence one aspect or the other: in 1 Corinthians, the emphasis is on "this (evil) world", reflecting the problem of weak group boundaries in Corinth; in Romans, the stress is on the world as God's good and well-ordered creation, reflecting a concern for good citizenship.

²N.A.Dahl (1956: 423).

³Cf. Drane (1976: 25) on theological diversity in Paul.

4. Further Implications

As we conclude, it is appropriate now to make a few brief comments on how the insights which we have gained in the course of this investigation might impinge on other areas of New Testament research.

4.1. The Study of Paul's Theological Terms

"Word-study" has become something of a by-word in New Testament study following Barr's criticisms of it. Yet it remains an indispensable part of the hermeneutical task to give due attention to key terms in a New Testament writer's vocabulary and to that writer's use of them in specific utterances. This is especially true of Paul. Terminological investigation, despite the abuses of the past, continues to be a legitimate mode of inquiry, provided some basic ground-rules of linguistics and semantics are followed. By applying insights from the field of critical linguistics, hopefully it has been shown that terminological study can still have something fresh and interesting to offer.

As we noted in Chapter One, Jewett's study of Paul's anthropological terms made an important step forward in New Testament word-study by emphasizing that Paul's use of terms should be analyzed in relation to the historical situation Paul is addressing.⁴ Jewett concentrated on the influence of the polemical situation on Paul's terminology. Our study has focused particularly on the (intended) influence of Paul's terminological usage on community situations. Informed by the perspective of critical linguistics, which sees language as a social practice and language-use as

⁴Jewett (1971: 7).

encoding social interests, we have sought to analyze the social functions or social consequences intended by Paul in his uses of key terms.

The approach outlined here involves examination of the place of word-usages in the goal-driven rhetoric of an epistle, as part of a historical context of utterance. Focusing on the contributions of specific terms to Paul's socio-rhetorical strategy may shed new and important light on why particular terms are chosen, e.g., for its polemical value, for its persuasive impact, for social effect, etc. The approach may help to explain diversity within the range of usage of a particular term and enable us to better understand why terms can be used in seemingly contradictory ways. The perspective encourages us to see certain terms as "rhetorically" as well as "theologically" loaded. This is not to suggest that we can thereby account for all the intricacies of a word-usage in Paul, but it can at least help us to appreciate another contour in the larger linguistic landscape.

4.2. Sectarian Analysis of Pauline Christianity

Reservation was expressed in Chapter One about the value of using sect-type analysis to interpret and explain Pauline Christianity. The findings of this study reinforce our earlier doubt. The conversionist sect-type as applied by MacDonald is too general and indiscriminate to be of more than cursory value in our understanding of the social situations of Paul's addressees. This study resisted the imposition of any specific sociological model in our reconstruction of the community situations. Primary emphasis was laid on evidence which could be gathered from Paul's letters, the cultural context and other historical sources.

Sociological explanation was used when and where appropriate to illuminate that data.

In our study, attention was given to the social and historical specifics of each community. Strict application of the conversionist sect model glosses over differences between Christian groups. As we have shown, with its highly porous boundaries, the Corinthian Christianity is decidedly unsectarian, at least in the classic definition of "sect" given by Troeltsch.⁵ The sect model provides neither for difference in social context nor variety of social experience.

The approach taken up in this study enabled us to make finer distinctions, more accurate discriminations, and more subtle evaluations than sectarian analysis with its broad brush strokes is capable of achieving.

Our study also raises serious question about the interpretation of Paul in sectarian terms. On the one hand, 1 Corinthians and Galatians certainly represents a sectarian outlook on the part of Paul, with Paul's emphasis on the distinction and distance between the church and the κόσμος. But on the other hand, Romans is much less sectarian in character. Indeed Paul's admonitions in Rom 13:1-7 are anything but sectarian: Paul's words serve as a wide-ranging legitimation of the existing political and social order. On the basis of the evidence of Romans we may conclude that Paul exhibits a "response to the world" that is more characteristic of Troeltsch's church-type than the sect-type. It is noteworthy that Troeltsch traced the descent of the

⁵Troeltsch (331-3).

church-type to Paul.⁶

To interpret Paul's theology as a legitimation of a conversionist sect which requires a tension to be maintained between separation from the world and mission to it, blunts the edge of both Paul's highly radical statements on the relation of the church to the wider society (1 Cor 2:6-8; 6:1-2; 7:29-31) and his starkly conservative teaching in Rom 13:1-7. The striking nature of each is lost to us. We have shown that the "separatist" and "integrationist" aspects of Paul's teaching are not simply to be accounted for in terms of the inevitable dynamic of the sect but are rather to be understood against the background of the different situations to which Paul is responding and reacting.

4.3. The Dynamics of World-Construction

We have investigated Paul's uses of κόσμος and κτίσις as part of the "enterprise of world-building" in Pauline Christianity. On the basis of our inquiry and the theoretical perspectives by which it has been informed, we are able to make a few brief observations on the process of world-construction as reflected in Paul's letters and how further inquiry into this area might proceed.

1) As Berger himself stresses, world-construction is a continuous process.⁷ It is not simply the case that social worlds are built and then preserved. Social worlds are constantly being constructed and reconstructed. Indeed the ongoing enterprise of world-construction is vital if a society or community is to survive and develop. Our study

⁶Troeltsch (342).

⁷Berger (1969: 28).

has highlighted the *ongoing* nature of the world-building process in early Christian communities as new situations are confronted and new problems arise.

2) Berger's conceptual model tends to interpret world-construction in functionalist terms: social worlds are viewed as *cohesive* entities, characterized by *consensus*; symbolic universes are seen as means of *perpetuating* an existing social order.⁸ Yet, as the critical linguists emphasize, there is also conflict, competition, division, struggle, tension and change. Paul's letters give us a glimpse of precisely these dynamics. It is therefore highly simplistic to read off from Paul's epistles the "symbolic universe" of Pauline Christianity. Essentially we have the views of a single, albeit authoritative, figure. Paul and the Corinthians clearly had conflicting symbolic universes and versions of Christianity. We have no indication as to whether or how far the "corrective" picture of the world drawn by Paul in 1 Corinthians was taken on board by his readers. It may well have been that Paul's portrait did not sufficiently resonate with the life-experience of the Corinthians to make it plausible: the defamiliarized world may just not have been familiar enough. That Paul completely gives up the polemical use of *κόσμος* in 2 Corinthians might point in this direction. Therefore we cannot automatically assume that Paul's symbolic universe was also adopted by those to whom he wrote. A more nuanced approach to world-construction in New Testament Christianity may look for elements of social *critique* as well as elements of *legitimation*.

⁸On the functionalist perspective in sociology, see Giddens (711-2).

3) Since language is the primary means of reality-construction, the role of language in the process needs to be examined with a greater degree of sophistication. Our study has pointed a way forward in this respect. The critical linguistic perspective enables a more penetrating analysis than Berger's model which deals with large-scale processes. Critical linguistics focuses on specific uses of language in specific contexts. It encourages examination of how particular linguistic constructions construct reality in particular ways, serving definite social ends.

5. Closing Remarks

A basic element of the religious impulse is the need to form a comprehensive picture of the world, a framework within which to interpret human existence and experience.⁹ In this study, we have attempted to explore how Paul constructs a "sacred cosmos"¹⁰ for his readers, which both gives meaning and order to their lives and structures and shapes their social experience and relations.

We have seen that Paul's endeavours in world-construction are both guided by controlling theological beliefs and, to a quite remarkable degree, informed by social concerns related to the specific circumstances and needs of the communities addressed. The dialectic between theological conviction and social exigency we find in Paul is hardly without contemporary relevance. In particular, it provides inspiration for those who would still seek to construct their

⁹Geertz (1975a: 90).

¹⁰Berger (1969: 26).

worlds from a Christian perspective, yet to do so in a way that is alert and sensitive to the social, political, economic and ecological needs of today.

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