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1 CORINTHIANS 11:3–16: SPIRIT POSSESSION AND AUTHORITY IN A NON-PAULINE INTERPOLATION

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I

“I want you to know,” begins 1 Cor 11:3. Θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι. What knowledge does this “I” intend to communicate in what follows? If the history of scholarship on 1 Cor 11:3–16 is any indication, this knowledge was lost long ago in the now unfathomable intent of the “I” speaking to a situation that can no longer be reconstructed with any certainty.¹ Perhaps the only consensus that

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¹ Troy Martin comments, “[T]he scholarly assessment is that neither the Corinthians nor possibly even Paul himself completely comprehended this argument for the veiling of women” (“Paul’s Argument from Nature for the Veil in 1 Corinthians 11:13–15: A Testicle instead of a Head Covering,” *JBL* 123 [2004]: 76). For the general problems of interpretation of this passage, see, e.g., Marlis Gielen, “Beten und Prophezeien mit unverhülltem Kopf? Die Kontroverse zwischen Paulus und der korinthischen Gemeinde um die Wahrung der Geschlechtsrollensymbolik in 1Kor 11,2–16,” *ZNW* 90 (1999): 220–49; Judith M. Gundry-Volf, “Gender and Creation in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16: A Study in Paul’s Theological Method,” in *Evangelium–Schriftauslegung–Kirche: Festschrift für Peter Stuhlmacher zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Jostein Ådna et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 151–71; L. Ann Jervis, “‘But I Want You to Know . . .’: Paul’s Midrashic Intertextual Response to the Corinthian Worshipers (1 Cor 11:2–16),” *JBL* 112 (1993): 231–46; Troels Engberg-Pederson, “1 Corinthians 11:16 and the Character of Pauline Exhortation,” *JBL* 110 (1991): 679–89; Gail Patterson Corrington, “The ‘Headless Woman’: Paul and the Language of the Body in 1 Cor 11:2–16,” *PRSt* 18 (1991): 223–31; Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 258–63; Antoinette Clark Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction through Paul’s Rhetoric* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 116–34; David W. J. Gill, “The Importance of Roman Portraiture for Head-Coverings in

has emerged about this passage is that the "I" is Paul and the knowledge has something to do with women. Most scholars read 1 Cor 11:3–16 as an integral part of 1 Corinthians and have sought to explain its difficult logic as part of Paul's response to a situation in the Corinthian community related to the roles of women.² A few scholars, however, have suggested that this passage is a non-Pauline interpolation and, following the terms of the debate set by those who see the passage as Pauline, have argued that it expresses a view of women inconsistent with Paul's own views regarding women.³

The discussion of 1 Cor 11:3–16 in terms of women's roles has obscured a more important difference between the situation presupposed by this passage and the situation presupposed by its immediate context in 1 Corinthians and in Paul's thought in general. The "I" of 1 Cor 11:3–16 imposes on the phenomenon of spirit possession in early Christianity an ecclesiastical consensus that enforces a theology of the created order and male-female biology. The ecclesiastically enforced knowledge in 1 Cor 11:3–16 presupposes a construction of authority different from that construction by which Paul seeks to exert control on phenomena associated with spirit possession in early Christianity. Both in the immediate context (in which Paul's interest is to establish a spiritual hierarchy: 1 Cor 12:28–31; 14:18–19; 14:37–38) and in Paul's thought in general (in which spirit possession constitutes a new creation: 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal

1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *TynBul* 41 (1990): 245–60; Richard Oster, "When Men Wore Veils to Worship: The Historical Context of 1 Corinthians 11.4," *NTS* 34 (1988): 481–505; Cynthia L. Thompson, "Hairstyles, Head-Coverings, and St. Paul: Portraits from Roman Corinth," *BA* 51 (1988): 99–115; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 491–530; Joël Delobel, "1 Cor 11,2–16: Towards a Coherent Interpretation," in *L'apôtre Paul: Personnalité, style et conception du ministère* (ed. A. Vanhoye; BETL 73; Leuven: Leuven University Press and Peeters, 1986), 369–89; Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 226–30; Wayne A. Meeks, "The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity," *HR* 13 (1974): 165–208; Robin Scroggs, "Paul and the Eschatological Woman: Revisited," *JAAR* 42 (1974): 532–49; idem, "Paul and the Eschatological Woman," *JAAR* 40 (1972): 283–303; Annie Jaubert, "Le voile des femmes (1 Cor. XI.2–16)," *NTS* 18 (1971/72): 419–30; Morna D. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of 1 Cor. XI.10," *NTS* 10 (1963/64): 410–16; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "A Feature of Qumran Angelology and the Angels of 1 Cor. XI.10," *NTS* 4 (1957/58): 48–58. On the specific question of whether this passage is an interpolation, see nn. 3 and 7 below.

² Oster, however, has emphasized the "male issue" in this passage ("When Men Wore Veils," 481–505). See also Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "Sex and Logic in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 483; idem, "1 Corinthians 11:2–16 Once Again," *CBQ* 50 (1988): 265–66.

³ William O. Walker, Jr., "1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and Paul's Views Regarding Women," *JBL* 94 (1975): 94–110; idem, "The 'Theology of Women's Place' and the 'Paulinist Traditions,'" *Semeia* 28 (1983): 101–12; idem, "The Vocabulary of 1 Corinthians 11.3–16: Pauline or Non-Pauline?" *JNTS* 35 (1989): 75–88; Lamar Cope, "1 Cor 11:2–16: One Step Further," *JBL* 97 (1978): 435–36; G. W. Trompf, "On Attitudes Toward Women in Paul and Paulinist Literature: 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 and Its Context," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 196–215.

6:15), Paul's understanding of authority and identity for individuals within the community is determined by spirit possession, not by the created order of this age maintained by the church.

The passage can certainly be removed without difficulty from Paul's argument.⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:2 (καθὼς παρέδωκα ὑμῖν, τὰς παραδόσεις κατέχετε, "Just as I handed down to you, you hold the traditions") anticipates 11:23 (ἐγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, ὃ καὶ παρέδωκα ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς . . . , "For I received from the Lord what also I handed down to you, that the Lord Jesus [on the night when he was betrayed . . .]"). If so, τὰς παραδόσεις κατέχετε in 11:2 does not refer to traditions about veiling of women (the putative subject of 11:3–16) but instead refers to matters pertaining to the ritual meal established by Jesus and recounted by Paul in 11:23–26. Paul has reservations, however, about the actual practice of this ritual meal in Corinth. He introduces these reservations in 11:17–22. On this reading, 11:17 (τοῦτο δὲ παραγγέλλων οὐκ ἐπαινῶ ὅτι οὐκ εἰς τὸ κρεῖσσον ἀλλὰ εἰς τὸ ἥσσον συνέρχεσθε, "In giving the following instructions, however, I do not praise you because you come together not for the better but for the worse")⁵ follows naturally on 11:2 (ἐπαινῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς ὅτι πάντα μου μέμνησθε καί, καθὼς παρέδωκα ὑμῖν, τὰς παραδόσεις κατέχετε, "I praise you that you remember me in all things, and just as I handed down to you, you hold to the traditions") to introduce these concerns in the context of a discussion of food and ritual meals preceding and following the unit 11:3–16.⁶ That this connection between 11:2 and 11:17–34 suggests that 11:3–16 is an interpolation has not persuaded many, nor have suggestions that the attitude toward women expressed in 1 Cor 11:3–16 is in tension with Paul's view of women expressed elsewhere in his letters.⁷

There is no evidence in the manuscript tradition of 1 Corinthians to support a theory of interpolation at this point. Nevertheless, unqualified confidence in the manuscript tradition of Paul's Corinthian correspondence is unwarranted. Virtually no trace is left in the manuscript tradition of the complex redaction of this correspondence to produce the archetype or archetypes that have come to be known as 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians in the NT collection of Pauline letters. Despite a lack of evidence in the manuscript tradi-

⁴ See Trompf, "Attitudes Toward Women," 198–202. Robert Jewett has proposed that 1 Cor 11:2–34 is a (genuine) letter fragment ("The Redaction of 1 Corinthians and the Trajectory of the Pauline School," *JAAR* 44 Supplement [1978]: 389–444).

⁵ On the textual variants and meaning of this verse, see Fee, *Corinthians*, 534–36.

⁶ See Cope, "1 Cor 11:2–16," 434–35. Differently Mitchell, *Paul*, 260–63. For attempts to explain the logic of an interpolation at this point, see Trompf, "Attitudes Toward Women," 214–15.

⁷ See, e.g., Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "The Non-Pauline Character of 1 Corinthians 11:2–16?" *JBL* 95 (1976): 615–21; idem, "Sex and Logic"; idem, "1 Corinthians 11:2–16 Once Again"; Alan Padgett, "Paul on Women in the Church: The Contradictions of Coiffure in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *JSNT* 20 (1984): 69–86.

tion, there is a measure of consensus about some of this redaction—for example, the letter fragment 2 Corinthians 10–13.⁸ On the other hand, is 2 Cor 6:14–7:1 an anti-Pauline fragment?⁹ Is 1 Cor 14:33b–36 non-Pauline?¹⁰ In each case, appeals to the manuscript tradition are of little value for reconstructing the redaction of the Corinthian correspondence. In the case of 1 Cor 11:3–16, there are reasons to think that the knowledge revealed by the “I” of 1 Cor 11:3 belongs to a different situation in early Christianity than does the knowledge revealed in the larger context of 1 Corinthians 11–14, reasons sufficient to warrant the hypothesis that 1 Cor 11:3–16 is a non-Pauline interpolation.¹¹ The authority of the “I” in 1 Cor 11:3–16 to impart knowledge about possession phenomena (praying in tongues, prophesying) needs to be set in the context of the phenomenon of spirit possession in Paul’s religion more generally.

II

The form of early Christianity associated with Paul can be characterized as a spirit-possession cult.¹² Paul establishes communities of those possessed by the spirit of Jesus. Paul can speak of an individual having the spirit of Christ (e.g., Rom 8:9: εἰ δὲ τις πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ οὐκ ἔχει οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ, “If anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, this person does not belong to him”)

⁸ Chapters 8 and 9 of 2 Corinthians have received separate commentary treatment. See Hans Dieter Betz, *2 Corinthians 8 and 9: A Commentary on Two Administrative Letters of the Apostle Paul* (ed. George W. MacRae; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985). For letter fragments in 1 Corinthians, see, e.g., Jewett, “Redaction of 1 Corinthians,” 389–444.

⁹ Hans Dieter Betz, “2 Cor 6:14–7:1: An Anti-Pauline Fragment?” *JBL* 92 (1973): 88–108.

¹⁰ In the case of 1 Cor 14:33b–36, some evidence of tampering exists in the manuscript tradition. The Greek manuscripts D, F, and G, along with a few Latin manuscripts, place vv. 34 and 35 after v. 40. In itself, however, this is very weak manuscript evidence for vv. 33b–36 as an interpolation.

¹¹ See, e.g., the criteria for discerning fragments set down by Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (trans. James W. Leitch; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 2–4. He concludes concerning the overall unity of 1 Corinthians: “There is no conclusive proof of different situations within 1 Corinthians. The existing breaks can be explained from the circumstances of its composition.”

¹² For a useful analysis of spirit possession, see I. M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession* (3rd ed.; London/New York: Routledge, 2003); see also John Ashton, *The Religion of Paul the Apostle* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2000). Alan F. Segal has discussed Paul’s religious experiences under the category of Jewish mysticism (*Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* [New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1990], 34–71). On spirit possession and magic in the Jesus tradition, see Morton Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978). Stevan L. Davies comments on spirit possession in Paul in the context of possession phenomena associated with Jesus (*Jesus the Healer: Possession, Trance, and the Origins of Christianity* [New York: Continuum, 1995], 176–87).

or Christ being in an individual (e.g., Rom 8:10–11: εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, “If Christ is in you”).¹³ In much the same way, other early Christian texts describe individuals as having a demon (e.g., Mark 3:22: ἔλεγον ὅτι Βεελζεβούλ ἔχει, “They were saying, ‘He has Beelzebul’”; cf. John 10:20), or a hostile spirit can be said to be in someone (e.g., Mark 1:23: καὶ εὐθὺς ἦν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ αὐτῶν ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ, “And just then there was in their synagogue a man possessed by an unclean spirit”).¹⁴ In the context of such beliefs about spirit possession, certain behaviors were identified as possession phenomena.¹⁵ Just as possession by hostile spirits can be manifested by speech (e.g., Mark 1:24: τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ, “Leave us alone, Jesus of Nazareth!”),¹⁶ so too the spirit that possesses members of Paul’s communities is thought to enable the speech of those in the community (see especially 1 Corinthians 14 on prophesying and speaking in tongues). The power to do miracles/magic, including exorcisms, is also identified as possession phenomena: Mark 3:22, ἔλεγον ὅτι Βεελζεβούλ ἔχει καὶ ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια, “They were saying, ‘He has Beelzebul and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons’”; Gal 3:5, ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, “The one who gives you the spirit and works miracles among you” (see also Rom 15:19; 1 Cor 12:9–11).

For Paul this possessing spirit produces a transformation of moral behavior in the context of a spiritual battle (see, e.g., Gal 5:16–25, λέγω δέ, πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε, “I say, walk by the spirit and do not satisfy your physical desires”; see also Rom 8:9–17)—a transformation that protects the members of the community from the power of Satan (see 1 Cor 5:1–13). Such possession phenomena may have involved trance (e.g., visions [2 Cor 12:1–3], speaking in tongues [1 Cor 14:2, 23], perhaps prophesying [1 Cor 14:30]) but not necessarily (e.g., 1 Cor 12:28: ἀντιλήμψεις, “helpful deeds”; κυβερνήσεις, “administrative roles”). Whether or not such possession phenomena occurred in a trance, the essential point in characterizing Paul’s communities as spirit-possession cults is their belief that individuals within the community had come under the control of an alien spirit that subordinated the “I” of the individual to that of the occupying spirit. The individual acts within the community as a possessed “I.”¹⁷

¹³ The plural ὑμῖν refers to the community of possessed *individuals*—see v. 9. See also, e.g., 1 Thess 4:8; Gal 3:5.

¹⁴ An unclean spirit that can be forced to leave (ἐξελαθε ἐξ αὐτοῦ, v. 25). Compare Luke 4:33: ἄνθρωπος ἔχων πνεῦμα δαιμονίου ἀκαθάρτου. See also Mark 5:1–13, a story in which spirits relocate their residence.

¹⁵ Lewis puts well the prerequisite for the analysis of spirit possession as a social phenomenon: “Let those who believe in spirits and possession speak for themselves!” (*Ecstatic Religion*, 25).

¹⁶ Compare Mark 5:5; see also Lucian, *Lover of Lies*, 16.

¹⁷ Compare Gal 2:20, ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῆ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός (“I no longer live, but Christ

Through Paul's itinerant performances of the power of spirit possession, his message is an invitation for the audience to participate in the performance. For his pagan audiences, to turn from idols to serve the living God is to be possessed by the deity that works miracles through Paul—that is, to be possessed by Jesus.¹⁸ At least some of the pagans who form Paul's earliest communities have likely abandoned participation in possession phenomena associated with pagan deities to profess instead κύριος Ἰησοῦς, "Jesus is Lord" (1 Cor 12:1–3), an utterance of those possessed by the spirit of Jesus that acknowledges the presence and power of this new deity.¹⁹ In these communities, Paul's power to work signs and wonders through spirit possession is replicated in the power this

lives in me"); see Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion*, 57 (citing Kenneth Stewart, "Spirit-possession in Native America," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 2 [1946]: 325); Davies, *Jesus the Healer*, 22–42.

¹⁸ Compare 1 Thess 1:5, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐγενήθη εἰς ὑμᾶς ἐν λόγῳ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν δυνάμει καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ ("our gospel did not come to you by word only but also by power and by holy spirit") with 1 Thess 1:9, πῶς ἐπεστρέψατε πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων δουλεῦειν θεῷ ζῶντι καὶ ἀληθινῷ ("how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God"); 1 Thess 4:8, τὸν θεὸν τὸν καὶ διδόντα τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ τὸ ἅγιον εἰς ὑμᾶς ("the god who gives his holy spirit to you"); Gal 3:5; Rom 8:9–11.

¹⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:2–3 contrasts pagans carried away by mute [!] idols and those who speak possessed by the spirit of Jesus. ὅτι ὅτε ἔθνη ἦτε πρὸς τὸ εἶδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα ὡς ἂν ἤγεσθε ἀπαγόμενοι ("that when you were pagans, how you were led astray to mute idols, being carried away")—ὡς resumes ὅτι; ἂν with imperfect is iterative; see BDAG, s.v. ἄγω. This contrast is between possession phenomena of pagan deities and the possession phenomena of Paul's religion. The utterance of 12:3 is speech under the control of a possessing spirit. Compare the cautious comments by Conzelmann (*1 Corinthians*, 204–6). Compare also 1 Cor 14:23, οὐκ ἐροῦσιν ὅτι μαινεσθε ("Will they not say that you are mad?"), a question probably intended to characterize possession phenomena within Paul's communities as different from pagan possession phenomena. Followers of the deities Dionysos (Bacchus) and Cybele, for example, were well known for the possession phenomena by which the adherents to the deities acted out their possession by the deities. On Cybele, see Lynn E. Roller, *In Search of God the Mother: The Cult of Anatolian Cybele* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). Roller comments that Meter was linked with Dionysos on the basis of the similar possession phenomena characteristic of the two cults (p. 176). Performances associated with spirit possession were also characteristic of oracles. Alexander's oracle for Glycon, for example, was established on the basis of a performance of possession (Lucian, *Alex.* 12). The practice of so-called magic often involved possession by a deity (a familiar) by whose power the magician invoked spells. Spells also existed to cause an individual to become possessed by a deity to function as an oracle. The Mithras liturgy invokes a spell that sends the individual's soul on a heavenly journey that leads to a commingling of the soul and the deity (PGM IV.710; compare IV.625–30) and produces a revelation. Paul's performance of signs and wonders through the power of a spirit at his disposal would have been right at home in the cities of the Roman Empire, and his offer of this spirit to his audience would have appealed to anyone persuaded by his performance that this spirit offered relief from the perceived troubles of their daily lives. See Morton Smith, "Pauline Worship as Seen by Pagans," *HTR* 73 (1980): 241–49. On the possible role glossolalia played in the development of early Christianity, see Philip F. Esler, "Glossolalia and the Admission of Gentiles into the Early Christian Community," *BTB* 22 (1992): 136–42; reprinted in idem, *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds: Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation* (London/New York: Routledge, 1994), 37–51.

possessing spirit offers to these earliest followers of this new deity.²⁰ The possession phenomena in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 are not an aberration of Pauline religion, nor unique to Corinth.²¹ Such phenomena are constitutive of Paul's religion.

Thus, when Paul reflects on his first arrival in Corinth, he recalls his demonstration through signs and wonders of the power of the spirit that possesses him:

κἀγὼ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἦλθον οὐ καθ' ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας καταγγέλλων ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ. οὐ γὰρ ἔκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον. κἀγὼ ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ καὶ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ ἐγενόμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς σοφίας λόγοις ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως, ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾗ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ.

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God. (1 Cor 2:1–5 NRSV)²²

“For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified,” Paul says in 2:2. For Paul, Jesus' violent death makes available the power of this possessing spirit to perform signs and wonders (δύναμις, v. 4, which forms an ironic contrast with ἀσθένεια, v. 3), and Paul uses this power of the crucifixion to construct a new basis for knowledge (καταγγέλλων ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ).²³ For Paul, to know Jesus Christ is to manifest the power

²⁰ See, e.g., 1 Thess 1:5; 2 Cor 12:12, τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου κατεργάσθη ἐν ὑμῖν ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ, σημεῖοις τε καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν (“the signs of an apostle were performed among you, signs and wonders and miracles”); Rom 15:18–19, κατεργάσατο Χριστὸς δι' ἐμοῦ εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἔθνων, λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ, ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων, ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος θεοῦ (“[what] Christ accomplished through me for obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, by power of signs and wonders, by power of the spirit of God”); Gal 3:5; 1 Cor 12:4–11, including ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων (“workings of miracles”). Signs and wonders were the currency to be spent to found oracles (Lucian, *Alex.* 12), to establish the reputation of wandering representatives of various deities (e.g., Apollonius of Tyana, as reported by Philostratus; Jesus of Nazareth as reported by various Christian Gospels), and to spread the fame of temples themselves (the power of whose gods was proclaimed, for example, through the dedication to the temple of the deity of various objects in response to miraculous deliverances and healings thought to have been accomplished by the deity).

²¹ See, e.g., 1 Thess 5:19, τὸ πνεῦμα μὴ σβέννυτε (“do not suppress the spirit”); compare also Gal 3:5; Rom 15:18–19.

²² Compare 1 Thess 1:5; Gal 3:1–5; Rom 15:18–19.

²³ On the connection of (magical) power to violent death compare, e.g., PGM IV.1390–1495:

of Jesus' crucifixion in one's body through spirit possession and performance characterized by possession phenomena. Paul's body has become the site at which Jesus' crucifixion is displayed as an interpretive paradox of δύναιμι/ἀσθένεια, an interpretive paradox that manifests a battle with spirits.²⁴

Love spell of attraction performed with the help of heroes or gladiators or those who have died a violent death:

Leave a little of the bread which you eat; break it up and form it into seven bite-size pieces. And go to where heroes and gladiators and those who have died a violent death were slain. Say the spell to the pieces of bread and throw them. And pick up some polluted dirt from the place where you perform the ritual and throw it inside the house of the woman whom you desire, go on home and go to sleep.

The spell which is said upon the pieces of bread is this:

“To Morai, Destinies, Malignities,
To Famine, Jealousy, to those who died
Untimely deaths and those dead violently,
I'm sending food . . .
You who've left the light, O you
Unfortunate ones, bring success to him,
NN, who is distressed at heart because
Of her, NN, ungodly and unholy.
So bring her wracked with torment—and in haste!
EIOUT ABAOTH PSAKERBA . . .
Give heed to me and rouse her, NN, on
This night and from her eyes remove sweet sleep,
And cause her wretched care and fearful pain,
Cause her to follow after my footsteps,
And for my will give her a willingness
Until she does what I command of her . . .”

When you have done these things for 3 days and accomplish nothing, then use this forceful spell: just go to the same place and again perform the ritual of the bread pieces. Then upon ashes of flax offer up dung from a black cow and say this and again pick up the polluted dirt and throw it as you have learned.

The words spoken over the offering are these:

“[C]ome today, Moirai and Destiny; accomplish the purpose with the help of the love spell of attraction, that you may attract to me her, NN whose mother is NN, to me NN, whose mother is NN, because I am calling . . .

Send up to me the phantoms of the dead
Forthwith for service in this very hour.

So that they may go and attract to me, NN, her, NN, whose mother is NN . . .”

(Hans Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, including the Demotic Spells* [2nd ed.; Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1992], 64–66).

In *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 15, Paul is actually accused of being a sorcerer who casts such spells on women. For the connection of the power of Jesus' death to Paul's mythology of Jesus, see, e.g., Rom 8:31–39; see also Phil 2:5–11. The crucifixion of the mythic “last Adam” (1 Cor 15:45) makes available the power to defeat hostile spirits. See n. 33 below. See also Mark 6:14, 16; Matt 14:1–2; contrast Luke 9:7–9 (on magic in Luke-Acts, see below). See Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, 97–98.

²⁴ See Gal 3:1, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοῦς Ἰησοῦς Χριστός προεγράφη ἔσταυρωμένος (“before your

Paul reflects on this battle of spirits in his account of his journey to the heavens ἐν Χριστῷ (a possession state probably marked by trance—εἴτε ἐν σώματι οὐκ οἶδα, εἴτε ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος οὐκ οἶδα, ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν, “Whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows” [2 Cor 12:2]). In Paul’s report of this battle in 2 Cor 12:7–10, σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί (“thorn in the flesh”) corresponds to ἄγγελος σατανᾶ (“messenger of Satan”) and defines an existence ἐν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις μου in which “the power of Christ dwells in me” (ἐπισκηνώση ἐπ’ ἐμέ ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ).²⁵ With a performance of signs and wonders as a possessed “I,” Paul initiates pagan converts into the power and knowledge of this possessing spirit (1 Cor 12:3) that grants knowledge of heavenly mysteries (τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:1). Performances associated with spirit possession were one way of constructing the presence of a deity in the Greco-Roman world, and the possession phenomena displayed by Paul persuaded some pagans of the power of the new deity Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἑσταυρωμένος and of Paul’s authority to declare knowledge revealed by this deity.²⁶

Those possessed by the spirit of Jesus declare under the direction of the spirit, κύριος Ἰησοῦς.²⁷ This utterance defines a community that for Paul par-

eyes Jesus Christ was portrayed on a cross”). On προεγρᾶφη, see BDAG, s.v. προγράφο. The visual performance witnessed by the Galatians was likely a manifestation of spirit possession (Gal 3:5). Compare Gal 6:17, ἐγὼ γὰρ τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι μου βαστάζω (“I bear the marks of Jesus in my body”). These marks should be connected to Paul’s ἀσθένεια, interpreted as a site of spiritual battle in which the power of Christ crucified is displayed. In Gal 4:13–14 Paul recalls his first arrival in Galatia: “You know that the gospel was first proclaimed to you δι’ ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκός.” For Paul, this ἀσθένεια τῆς σαρκός is a mark of a battle with spirits (compare 2 Cor 12:7–10) that manifests the power of Christ crucified—a battle that the Galatians rightly interpreted as evidence of the presence of Jesus himself in Paul. Hans Dieter Betz has commented on the demonological language of this passage (*Galatians: A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Churches in Galatia* [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979], 225). Troy Martin rejects a connection between Gal 4:13–14 and 2 Cor 12:7–10 (“Whose Flesh? What Temptations? [Galatians 4.13–14],” *JSNT* 74 [1999]: 65–91). The πείρασμος of Gal 4:14, however, is probably not Paul’s circumcision but the paradox of δύναμις/ἀσθένεια that the Galatians interpreted correctly on Paul’s first visit (compare Gal 3:1–2; 1:8). For Paul, physical affliction becomes a sign of spiritual battle and as such an ironical mark of the power of Christ crucified. On affliction and spirit possession, see Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion*, 59–89.

²⁵ Compare Betz, *Galatians*, 224–25. Compare also Ashton, *Religion of Paul*, 113–23.

²⁶ See Smith, “Pauline Worship,” 241–49. The association of weakness with spirit possession is not unique to Paul in antiquity. The possessed state, often perceived as a state of madness, was intrinsically ambiguous and open to competing interpretations. See, e.g., Plato, *Phaedrus* 244, 265; Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (trans. John Raffan; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 110–11. The image of Socrates as the physically unattractive vessel possessed by a *daimonion* and imparting wisdom of great beauty is paradigmatic of power in weakness in the philosophical tradition. See, e.g., Alcibiades’ comparison of Socrates to Silenus (Plato, *Symposium* 215B).

²⁷ Compare the possession phenomenon described in Rom 8:15, in which the spirit produces the utterance of a foreign language, Αββα. See also Gal 4:6.

ticipates in a new creation (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15) in which a baptismal formula characterized by the negation of a series of antithetical pairs (cited in one form in 1 Cor 12:13 and in another form in Gal 3:28) proclaims freedom in the spirit from social boundaries defined by one's physical body inhabiting an αἶψον that is soon to pass away.²⁸ Spirit possession reconstitutes the relation of individuals to one another (Gal 3:28, "neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female"; 1 Cor 12:27, "you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it") and as a consequence the relation of the community to the world.²⁹ How, then, is authority constructed in such a community?

²⁸ Galatians 6:15 concludes a discussion in which Paul rejects social boundaries defined by a physical body inhabiting this αἶψον. A physical body embeds an individual into a network of roles anchored in this αἶψον (Jew–Gentile, slave–free, male–female). For Paul, spirit possession constitutes an "I" separate from these social boundaries marked out by the physical body. The abolition of social boundaries expressed in Gal 3:28 is the consequence of the antithesis between spirit possession and "works of the law" set forth in Gal 3:1–5. The identification of Gal 3:28 as a citation of a fixed baptismal formula has been questioned by Troy Martin, who is right to point out the lack of any set pattern for such antitheses as the basis for a standard baptismal formula in early Christianity ("The Covenant of Circumcision [Genesis 17:9–14] and the Situational Antitheses in Galatians 3:28," *JBL* 122 [2003]:111–25). However, in relating Gal 3:28 to the situation addressed by Paul, Martin understates the consequences of such antitheses for roles in the new communities (p. 122): "This verse [Gal 3:28] does not proclaim the absolute abolition of these distinctions [Jew–Greek, slave–free, male–female] but only their irrelevance for participation in Christian baptism and full membership in the Christian community. According to 1 Cor 12:12–14, these distinctions must remain intact to reflect the true nature of the body as composed of many members." This conclusion misses an important redefinition of roles in the community for those possessed by the spirit that Paul represents. The social hierarchies enshrined by the antitheses Jew–Greek, slave–free, and male–female have been replaced by a hierarchy determined by spirit possession: apostles, prophets, teachers, et al. (1 Cor 12:28–31a). This new hierarchy reflects the true nature of the body as composed of many members. It is just because the distinction between Jews and Greeks no longer holds, for example, that Jews and non-Jews can share meals together (Gal 2:11–14). The radical nature of Paul's conclusions about the consequences of spirit possession for social identity and roles is evident in the apparent split that took place between him and the rest of the leaders of the new movement at Antioch. Romans 15 attests to Paul's desire to mend this rift created by his interpretation of his experience of spirit possession (15:15–21) with those who opposed him at Antioch (15:31).

²⁹ In discussions of women's roles in early Christianity, Gal 3:28 has been used to support the idea that Paul's communities were egalitarian. "Egalitarian" is an infelicitous term. Yet, in attacking the idea of Paul's communities as (radically) egalitarian, John Elliott goes to the opposite extreme of denying virtually any social implication of the baptismal formula ("The Jesus Movement Was Not Egalitarian but Family Oriented," *BibInt* 11 [2003]: 173–210). To be sure, as Elliott points out, Paul's communities were hierarchical (see below on Paul's construction of authority). The hierarchy, however, was not defined by any of the antitheses Jew–Gentile, slave–free, male–female (see comments in n. 28 above on Martin's interpretation of Gal 3:28). For Paul, the negation of these antitheses through spirit possession that is pronounced ritually in baptism creates room for a new hierarchy determined by spirit possession. See below on 1 Cor 12:28–31a. Possession by the spirit of Jesus, according to Paul, does not create egalitarian communities but rather is a new marker of social status and hierarchy in the community, a marker open to non-Jews, slaves, and women.

In social terms, spirit possession can be analyzed as a strategy for distributing power in a community.³⁰ A human possessed by the divine gains a new way to relate to other humans. For Paul's communities, spirit possession grants the possessed "I" a new power in relation to an αἰών that is to be destroyed.³¹ A specific consequence of this power is a willingness to suffer for the new political, social, and economic identity constructed by membership in the community.³² Possession by the spirit of Jesus grants the possessed "I" a new power in relation to physical realities and hostile spirits.³³ Apparently, Paul and some of his earliest converts believed they would not experience death.³⁴ Not only does spirit possession give the possessed "I" power to reimagine a broader social-cosmological context, but the possessed "I" gains a new power in the community of other possessed individuals—a power that includes nothing less than the competence to pass judicial sentence to exclude individuals from the community of those possessed by the spirit that shelters them from sin and death in this world.³⁵

³⁰ See Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion*, 90–113. See also Judith M. Gundry-Volf, "Celibate Pneumatics and Social Power: On the Motivations for Sexual Asceticism in Corinth," *USQR* 48 (1994): 115–18.

³¹ See, e.g., 1 Thess 1:10: "to wait for his son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus who rescues us from the wrath that is coming"; also Gal 1:4. Compare Phil 3:20, "our citizenship is in heaven."

³² See, e.g., 1 Thess 1:6; 2:1–2; 3:1–13. The political and economic consequences of this willingness to suffer are imagined in Revelation, an apocalypse in which a Christian community confronts the Roman Empire in a mythic battle to rule the world seen through the eyes of a (possessed) prophet (Rev 1:10).

³³ On physical realities: first and foremost, corrupt material existence (Gal 5:16–26) and death (1 Thess 4:14; 1 Cor 15:54–55; Rom 8:38). On hostile spirits, see Rom 8:37–39; Gal 4:3. For Paul the concept of "Sin" links the two together, as he argues in Rom 5:12–8:39. Participation in at least some of the mystery religions seems to have offered a similar protection. For example, in *Metamorphoses* by Apuleius, participation in the Isis mysteries is portrayed as offering deliverance from the hostile forces of magic. Similarly, the Mithras liturgy invokes a spell that allows the individual to placate deities that prevent access to the higher realms (PGM IV.555–60).

³⁴ Judging from Paul's words in 1 Thess 4:13–18, Paul himself expected to escape death, though Phil 1:21 suggests that Paul revised his expectations.

³⁵ 1 Corinthians 5:1–13 reports a ritual execution "in the spirit" carried out by members of the community. See Arthur J. Droge, "Discerning the Body: Early Christian Sex and Other Apocryphal Acts," in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy Presented to Hans Dieter Betz on His 70th Birthday* (ed. Adela Yarbro Collins and Margaret M. Mitchell; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 297–99. This competence to pass judicial sentence presupposes the moral certitude imparted by the spirit (compare Gal 5:16–26) and expressed in Paul's paraenesis. On the out-of-body presence of Paul at this judicial proceeding, compare Ezek 11:1–13 for an account of a similar spirit journey to pass a sentence of death. For a discussion of the social function of such intermediaries in ancient Israel, see Robert Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); compare also David L. Petersen, *The Roles of Israel's Prophets* (JSOTSup 17; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), 9–34.

Within Paul's communities, possession by the spirit redistributes power from those who have to those who do not by the very fact that it creates a new way of knowing.³⁶ The "I" possessed by the spirit speaks a new knowledge with a divine authority.³⁷ The "I" possessed by the spirit can reveal divine mysteries—divine mysteries that only other individuals of the community can understand.³⁸ For Paul's communities, these mysteries promise to redistribute power in the present and in the future. One specific consequence of the redefinition of social boundaries and redistribution of power created by this knowledge is that on Paul's authority the resources of members of the community are now taxed to support Paul's interests.³⁹

In this type of community, the "I" who is possessed by a spirit is an authority unto itself.⁴⁰ Ironically, however, the authority of the "I" possessed by a spirit exists only to the extent that the community assents to the reality of that possession.⁴¹ The "I" possessed by a spirit speaks with ultimate authority, yet is ever in competition with and at the mercy of the community that validates the possessed "I" (cf. 1 Cor 14:29). From the perspective of Paul's communities as cults of spirit possession, the rhetoric of Paul's letters is an attempt to construct this "I"–community dialectic of knowledge in such a way that the individual possessed by a spirit (in this case, Paul) authenticates his or her authority in dialogue with a community that acknowledges that authority.⁴² The knowledge

³⁶ Those characterized by Paul in 1 Cor 1:26–31 as powerless ("not many wise according to the flesh, not many powerful, not many well born") gain access to divine mysteries the world cannot understand.

³⁷ See 1 Cor 14:37: "What I write to you is a command of the Lord"; see also 1 Thess 4:8; 1 Cor 2:6–16.

³⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:51, ἰδοὺ μυστήριον ὑμῖν λέγω, "I speak to you a mystery"; cf. 1 Thess 4:15. Compare also the Mithras liturgy (PGM IV.475–829), in which an individual gains access to divine mysteries. Some mysteries are reserved only for the most powerful—see 2 Cor 12:2–4.

³⁹ See Rom 15; 1 Cor 16:1–14; 2 Cor 8–9; Phil 4:15; compare Lucian, *Peregr.* 11–13. Paul's authority to extract wealth from his communities leads to the inevitable charges of fraud and misappropriation against which he constantly has to defend himself. See esp. 1 Thess 2:1–12; 2 Cor 8:18–21. Such charges of fraud were not uncommon against those establishing a new cult in antiquity. See, e.g., Lucian's portrayal of Alexander in *Alexander the False Prophet*.

⁴⁰ See 1 Cor 2:15: ὁ δὲ πνευματικὸς ἀνακρίνει τὰ πάντα, αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται ("the one possessed by the spirit judges all things, but is judged by no one").

⁴¹ See 1 Cor 9:2: εἰ ἄλλοις οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος, ἀλλὰ γε ὑμῖν εἰμι. ἡ γὰρ σφραγὶς μου τῆς ἀποστολῆς ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ ("if to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord"); see also 2 Cor 12:11–12; 13:6.

⁴² On the usefulness of Max Weber's concept of charisma for understanding the "I"–community dialectic in these possession communities associated with Paul, see John Howard Schütz, "Charisma and Social Reality in Primitive Christianity," *JR* 54 (1974): 51–70. As Schütz points out, Weber's concept of a charismatic leader is not entirely adequate for understanding the dynamics of Paul's relation to a community whose members also possess *charismata*. (See also the comments of

that Paul hands down exists only insofar as a community reifies that knowledge as something other than a construction of this “I”–community dialectic. Paul’s problem is that his authority is entirely from heaven,⁴³ yet he must persuade his followers to validate that authority (see esp. 2 Cor 10–13). The irony of Paul’s rhetoric is that he claims that his authority is divine and thus unassailable, yet his authority exists only as the community comes to share Paul’s understanding of the reality of possession by Jesus. Not surprisingly, Paul’s attempt to construct authority in the spirit-possession cult formed around the worship of Jesus in Corinth proves to be an intractable problem.⁴⁴

III

1 Corinthians 12 and 14 introduce possession phenomena characteristic of these early Christian possession cults formed around the spirit-controlled utterance, κύριος Ἰησοῦς. The topic of possession phenomena in the community is anticipated by the discussion beginning in ch. 8 concerning pagan idols, ritual meals in honor of demons and gods (10:14–22), and sickness and death connected with these rituals (11:27–32). Paul asserts his authority as an apostle

Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel*, 58; see also Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* [SNTSMS 26; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975], 249–80.) In Paul’s correspondence with the Corinthians, he is not a charismatic leader set apart from ordinary but devoted followers. Instead, he is but one possessed “I” among many attempting to define roles to govern the interaction of possessed individuals in the community. By contrast, Weber’s charismatic leader stands over against his followers: “The term ‘charisma’ will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader” (*Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building: Selected Papers* [ed. S. N. Eisenstadt; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968], 48). Paul’s discussion of unity and plurality in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 and his hierarchy of spiritual gifts in 1 Cor 12:28–31a ranks disputed roles of individuals in the community, all of whom are possessed (see esp. 14:26–40). On Paul as a charismatic leader, see Anthony J. Blasi, *Making Charisma: The Social Construction of Paul’s Public Image* (New Brunswick/London: Transaction Publishers, 1991), esp. 1–20. See also Petersen, *Roles of Israel’s Prophets*, esp. 9–34.

⁴³ See Gal 1:1: ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι’ ἀνθρώπου ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς (“an apostle not from men nor through human agency, but through Jesus Christ and God the father”).

⁴⁴ The problematic nature of the authority of the possessed “I” in relation to a community is evident in the rise and fall of the popularity of ancient oracles. Lucian has chronicled the rise of the oracle associated with the deity Glycon in his scathing account *Alexander the False Prophet*. Lucian is a hostile witness to the process by which Alexander “negotiated” with the patrons of his oracle the power to reveal knowledge through a performance marked by possession phenomena.

who has seen Jesus in 1 Cor 9:1–3, yet the full defense of this authority in the context of the possession phenomena characteristic of his communities begins in ch. 12.⁴⁵ The issue is one of order and chaos in a community in which every “I” speaks and acts in his or her own way with the authority of the spirit. The anarchy latent in such a spirit-possession cult not only threatens the order of the community at Corinth; it also threatens to deconstruct the role of Paul as one who speaks with more authority than any other “I.” Paul crafts his argument in chs. 12 and 14 to establish his authority to deliver (construct) knowledge from the deity.

After a discussion of the mystery of unity and diversity in the multiple spiritual gifts from the one spirit under the rubric πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον (“for the common good,” 12:7), in 12:28–31a Paul establishes a spiritual hierarchy for the different gifts of the spirit. Apostles stand first; those who speak in tongues stand last.⁴⁶ “Are all apostles? Do all speak in tongues?” Paul asks. No. Each “I” possessed by the spirit stands in relation not only to the deity but also to other members of the spirit-possession cult in a hierarchy of spiritual power. That such a hierarchy of roles would exist is rationalized by the metaphor of the body (12:12–27), though the specific hierarchy itself is not self-evident. The hierarchy is revealed by Paul, the possessed “I” speaking for the deity to the community: “God has appointed” (12:28).⁴⁷ Roles in the community of those possessed by Jesus are not marked by the place one’s physical body (as Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female—1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28) occupies in this αἰὼν but instead by the status granted by God to the possessed “I” for the sake of the spiritual body.

The discussion of spiritual gifts continues in ch. 14, again under the rubric πρὸς τὴν οἰκοδομὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας (“for the building up of the church,” 14:12; see also 14:4).⁴⁸ Paul turns to two manifestations of the spirit that apparently

⁴⁵ Paul’s questions—“Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus?”—construct apostolic authority on the basis of possession phenomena associated with visions of Jesus. See 1 Cor 15:1–11, on which see n. 54 below; see also 2 Cor 12:1–10. Compare Acts 1, in which apostolic authority is based on association with the historical Jesus.

⁴⁶ Paul can correlate apostleship and speaking in tongues in a spiritual hierarchy because for Paul apostleship is a manifestation of spirit possession (see n. 45) marked by the performance of signs and wonders (2 Cor 12:12).

⁴⁷ Compare 1 Thess 4:15, where Paul speaks a word of the Lord to resolve a problem in the community. On Paul’s use of the political commonplace of the image of the body and the language of the common good for the body politic, see Mitchell, *Paul*, esp. 157–64, 267–70. Such imagery was inherently hierarchical in the Greco-Roman world. See Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1995), 29–34. For Paul, the unity of the community of those possessed by Jesus is expressed in a hierarchy determined by the spirit and revealed through Paul.

⁴⁸ On ch. 13, see n. 103 below.

were creating a particular competition for recognition and authority in the community of spirit-possessed individuals at Corinth: prophesying and speaking in tongues. Both may have been marked by a trance state, though the performance of an individual prophesying apparently would have appeared quite different from the performance of an individual speaking in tongues (1 Cor 14:23–25). Paul presents two arguments for subordinating speaking in tongues to prophesying. First, the value of a spiritual gift is measured in relation to its usefulness in building up the community. Paul appeals to the function of language to explain the role of utterances associated with possession phenomena in the community. Utterances under the influence of the spirit in a known language connect the possessed “I” to other members of the community through language that engages the mind; utterances under the influence of the spirit in an unknown language connect the “I” only to the deity. The good of the community takes priority over the interests of the individual (14:4, 12).⁴⁹ Thus, prophesying is greater than speaking in tongues. Paul realizes, though, the inadequacy of this attempt to rationalize the role of possession phenomena in the community. A stronger argument is needed.

The second and more important argument for subordinating praying in tongues to prophesying is Paul’s experience as a possessed “I.”

εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ, πάντων ὑμῶν μᾶλλον γλώσσαις λαλῶ· ἀλλὰ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ θέλω πέντε λόγους τῷ νοῦ μου λαλῆσαι, ἵνα καὶ ἄλλους κατηγήσω, ἢ μυρίου λόγους ἐν γλώσσῃ. Ἄδελφοί, μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσὶν ἀλλὰ τῇ κακίᾳ νηπιάζετε, ταῖς δὲ φρεσὶν τέλειοι γίνεσθε.

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you; nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue. Brothers and sisters, do not be children in your thinking; rather, be infants in evil, but in thinking be adults. (1 Cor 14:18–20 NRSV)⁵⁰

Amid the diversity of spiritual powers allotted to various individuals possessed by the spirit, Paul claims not only to be an apostle (the gift that occupies first position in his hierarchy in 12:28–31a) but also to be one who prophesies (the second gift) and one who speaks in tongues (the gift that occupies last position in his hierarchy of spiritual gifts). As one who both prophesies and speaks in tongues, Paul is best able to judge their relative merits. There is a more fundamental assertion that Paul is making here, though. Paul’s authority to resolve

⁴⁹ This principle underlies his discussion of the eating of meat sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8:1–13; 10:31–33).

⁵⁰ *τέλειοι* connotes for Paul not merely “adult” thinking but “spiritual” thinking, thinking the thoughts of the spirit (see 1 Cor 2:6–16).

the conflict rests in his power as, what might be called, a spirit master.⁵¹ Whereas he can ask the Corinthians in 12:29–30, “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all workers of miracles? . . . Do all speak in tongues?” and expect a negative answer, he himself claims to have all these gifts of the spirit. Moreover, he mediates these gifts to the community (1 Cor 9:2). He is a “professional” when it comes to matters of spirit possession. He has more power than all the rest. His authority to establish a hierarchy rests on this construction of the superiority of his spiritual power—and this construction of authority will come back to haunt him as his relation to the Corinthians deteriorates.

Paul concludes his discussion of prophecy and tongues with an appeal for order and decency in the community’s gatherings, again under the rubric *πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν* (“for building up,” 1 Cor 14:26; cf. 14:40). Such order is possible because the “I” possessed by the spirit can direct the manifestations of the spirit for the common good (14:32) because “God is not a God of disorder but of peace” (14:33)—an insight that Paul as conduit of divine knowledge is able to reveal.

In chs. 12 and 14 Paul negotiates the dynamic between the individual and the community that animates a spirit-possession cult. At stake in this negotiation is not only order in the community but Paul’s authority to speak for the deity in the community. The logic of this negotiation of order and hierarchy depends on the community’s willingness to assent to the authority of the one speaking for the spirit, an assent that allows the community to construct “spiritual” knowledge (cf. 1 Cor 2:6–16). Paul, however, cannot explicitly recognize this social dynamic that constructs knowledge in the community. Instead, in what is ultimately an assertion of the independence of the possessed “I” from the community, in 1 Cor 14:37–38 Paul defines the community of the possessed in terms of his own status as spirit master.⁵²

εἴ τις δοκεῖ προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνευματικός, ἐπιγινωσκέτω ὃ γράφω ὑμῖν ὅτι κυρίου ἐστὶν ἐντολή· εἰ δέ τις ἀγνοεῖ, ἀγνοεῖται.

Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. Anyone who does not recognize this is not to be recognized. (NRSV)

Here Paul constructs the possessed “I” with which he speaks as an authoritative voice of the Lord and defines the legitimacy of any other possessed “I” in terms

⁵¹ Paul is, to employ a category from comparative religions, a shaman. For the use of the comparative category of shaman to understand Paul, see I. M. Lewis, *Religion in Context: Cults and Charisma* (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 105–21; idem, *Ecstatic Religion*, 60. See also Ashton, *Religion of Paul*, 6–72.

⁵² 1 Corinthians 14:33b–36 is, like 11:3–16, a later gloss by another individual on the possession phenomena of chs. 12 and 14. See n. 103 below.

of his own authority. There is a definitive test for one who claims to be possessed by the spirit of Jesus: that individual recognizes Paul's authority. Anyone who does not recognize Paul's authority does not speak with the spirit that proclaims κύριος Ἰησοῦς (12:3) and is not to be recognized by the community. Only an "I" possessed and therefore transformed by the spirit can judge spiritual matters,⁵³ yet such an "I" must acknowledge Paul's authority to speak for the Lord. Paul has constructed a community that must acknowledge his role and authority as apostle or cease to exist.⁵⁴

The precarious nature of the spiritual hierarchy of power and authority that Paul has created becomes clear as his position as an apostle is directly challenged by the community. He has to defend himself in 2 Corinthians 10–13 against others whose performances of spiritual powers are quite impressive.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, even as his relationship to the community at Corinth deteriorates, he does not abandon the construction of authority based on his power as one possessed by the spirit. In responding to the challenge to his authority, he asserts his power as a spirit master in visions, out-of-body journeys, and the working of signs and wonders as part of an argument to restore the community's acknowledgment of his authority.⁵⁶ Paul's authority as a possessed "I" in a spirit-

⁵³ 1 Corinthians 2:15: ὁ δὲ πνευματικός ἀνακρίνει τὰ πάντα, αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ἀνακρίνεται ("the one who is possessed by the spirit judges all things, but is not judged by anyone").

⁵⁴ Paul continues the construction of his apostolic authority in 1 Cor 15:1–11 in terms of possession phenomena. Because ch. 15 introduces a new topic (resurrection), ὁ καὶ παρέλαβον (15:3) is easily misconstrued as Paul's acknowledgment of dependence on a human tradition. Not only would such dependence undercut his construction of authority up to the end of ch. 14 and the construction of his apostolic authority elsewhere (see esp. Galatians 1), but a notion of dependence on human tradition misunderstands the logic of 15:1–11. The language of 15:1–3 is directly parallel to the language of 11:23. In 11:23, ὁ καὶ παρέλαβον is ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου. Paul claims to have received the account of the institution of the ritual meal directly from Jesus; so too, Paul's knowledge of the "facts" of Jesus' death and resurrection comes directly from Jesus. Though Paul quotes in both places traditional formulations (see, e.g., Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 251–55), Paul claims that what he has received has been granted by an experience of possession by the resurrected Jesus (15:8; cf. Gal 1:16). In 1 Cor 15:1–11 Paul is reflecting on the qualifications of an apostle (v. 7; see Gal 1), the spiritual gift that occupies the highest position in the hierarchy of spiritual gifts in ch. 12 and which is marked by visions of Jesus (1 Cor 9:1). When Paul's status as an apostle is challenged, he defends his apostleship by claiming visions (2 Cor 12:1–10), a possession phenomenon probably associated with trance. The content of what Paul handed down to the Corinthians in 15:1–11 (παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν) includes the "fact" of his vision of Jesus reported in 15:8 as part of what he himself has received. This experience of visions of Jesus qualifies him to reveal mysteries (15:51; 1 Thess 4:15) and to speak with the authority of the Lord (1 Cor 14:37).

⁵⁵ On Paul's rhetoric in 2 Corinthians 10–13, see Donald Dale Walker, *Paul's Offer of Leniency (2 Cor 10:1): Populist Ideology and Rhetoric in a Pauline Letter Fragment* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 258–325.

⁵⁶ See 2 Cor 12:11. Paul's irony in chs. 10–13 (e.g., 11:30, "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness") is an irony characteristic of many individuals who can be labeled

possession cult is inherently unstable. A spirit master must constantly compete for the allegiance of the spirit-possessed community, and the words of a spirit master become knowledge only as the community grants allegiance to the spirit master.⁵⁷ Yet, even when faced with competing spirit masters, Paul refuses to acknowledge any higher authority beyond the spirit that possesses him.⁵⁸

IV

What, then, is the knowledge that the “I” of 1 Cor 11:3 reveals? This knowledge concerns the phenomena of praying (in tongues) and prophesying.⁵⁹ 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 comments on the phenomena of chs. 12 and 14—possession phenomena associated with Paul’s religion. The relation of men and women is of interest specifically as men and women manifest spirit possession. Authority for the knowledge disclosed in 1 Cor 11:3–16 is constructed

shamans: physical, social, political, or economic weakness becomes evidence of the spiritual power of the individual. See n. 26 above. Paul turns the derision of his opponents in 2 Cor 10:10—“his letters are weighty and forceful, but his physical presence is weak and his speech contemptible”—into proof of his power as a spirit master. The hagiography of the sixth-century holy man Theodore of Sykeon provides an interesting example of the irony of power in weakness (*Three Byzantine Saints* [trans. Elizabeth Dawes and Norman H. Baynes; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948], 87–192). The job description of such a holy man included extreme asceticism as evidence of power over spirits. The greater Theodore’s physical torments accompanied by social and economic deprivations, the more power he was conceded by communities of Asia Minor to mediate disputes (the solution of which often involved the enactment of elaborate exorcisms). On the holy man in late antiquity, see Peter Brown, “The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity,” *JRS* 61 (1971): 80–101; reprinted in Peter Brown, *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 103–52. See also Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion*, 59–89. Likewise Paul can assert, “I will boast all the more in my weakness, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me” (2 Cor 12:9).

⁵⁷ On the career of a shaman, see Lewis, *Religion in Context*, 105–21.

⁵⁸ This construction of his authority as a possessed “I” stands behind the opening rhetoric of several of his letters: Παῦλος . . . ἀπόστολος he asserts in 1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Rom 1:1; and Gal 1:1. Paul’s rhetorical strategies are not limited to claims of his authority as a spirit master (as, e.g., his attempts to rationalize spirit possession in 1 Cor 12:14–26 and 14:6–12 indicate). Nevertheless, τὸ μυστήριον that Paul proclaims (1 Cor 2:2; cf. 15:51; 1 Thess 4:15; Gal 1:6–9) finally depends on his authority as one possessed by Jesus to speak the word of the Lord. Δοκῶ δὲ κἀγὼ πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἔχειν in 1 Cor 7:40 underscores the irony of the rhetorical contrast between 7:10 and 7:12.

⁵⁹ The conjunction of praying with prophesying in 11:4 suggests that the topic is the same as that discussed in ch. 14, speaking (praying) in tongues (14:2; cf. 14:14) and prophesying. The interpolation of the material at this point rather than somewhere in ch. 14 can perhaps be explained by a desire of the interpolator to identify this material clearly as part of the traditions handed on by Paul directly from the Lord (11:2; cf. 11:23).

according to the relation of the “I” to three principles: the order of creation, nature, and the custom (συνήθεια) of churches.⁶⁰

Θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι ὅτι πάντος ἀνδρὸς ἡ κεφαλὴ ὁ Χριστὸς ἐστίν, κεφαλὴ δὲ γυναικὸς ὁ ἀνὴρ, κεφαλὴ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ Θεός.

I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and man is the head of woman, and God is the head of Christ. (1 Cor 11:3)

According to 11:3–12, a hierarchy constrains the possession phenomena of praying and prophesying in the church: θεός, Χριστός, ἀνὴρ, γυνή. This hierarchy is not the hierarchy of 1 Cor 12:28–31a or 14:37. A number of scholars have rejected a hierarchical reading of the ranked pairs in v. 3.⁶¹ Yet, even though κεφαλὴ in v. 3 probably expresses an idea of “source of being,”⁶² the hierarchical implications of the ranked pairs cannot be easily evaded.⁶³ The distinction between the sexes introduced by the pair ἀνὴρ–γυνή and developed in vv. 4–12 is inescapably hierarchical in the context of the first century.⁶⁴ This hierarchy is determined by God’s act in creation (vv. 8 and 9—expressed in the ranked pair ἀνὴρ–γυνή)⁶⁵ and Christ’s act in recreation (expressed by the ranked pair

⁶⁰ Compare Murphy-O’Connor, “Sex and Reason,” 491, who rightly argues that these three points establish a consistent perspective in 1 Cor 11:3–16.

⁶¹ See, e.g., Fee, *Corinthians*, 502–5. The confidence with which Fee dismisses the hierarchical implications of this passage seems to be misplaced, given his acknowledgment at several points in his commentary on this passage that he can make little sense of what Paul is talking about. For example, commenting on the problems of interpreting ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπί (“to have authority over”), Fee concludes, “But finally we must beg ignorance. Paul seems to be affirming the ‘freedom’ of women over their own heads; but what that means in this context remains a mystery” (p. 521).

⁶² As emphatically argued, e.g., by Murphy-O’Connor, “Sex and Reason,” 491–95.

⁶³ Fee suggests that the clause κεφαλὴ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ Θεός is difficult for those who interpret these pairs as hierarchical (*Corinthians*, 505 n. 51). According to Fee, “The usual solution is to make a distinction between ontological equality and functional subordination.” One can only ask in response to the way Fee has framed the issue, What evidence is there for anyone in the first century conceiving of Christ in anything but an ontologically subordinate relationship to the (one) high God? For Paul himself, see 1 Cor 15:24–28. See Dale Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 232 n. 18. See also the comments of Engberg-Pedersen, “1 Corinthians 11:16,” 681 n. 9.

⁶⁴ Dale Martin is correct when he comments on the ranked pairs, “The subordination of women could hardly be clearer” (*Corinthian Body*, 232). Commenting on v. 3, Fee states: “Thus Paul’s concern is not hierarchical (who has authority over whom), but relational (the unique relationships that are predicated on one’s being the source of the other’s existence)” (*Corinthians*, 503). Fee later develops this point in terms of a distinction between the sexes (pp. 510–11). The “unique relationships” that are predicated on the male being the source of the female in antiquity subordinate women (as inferior) to men (as superior). The Aristotelian household codes enforced in Col 3:18–4:2 and Eph 5:21–6:9 express this superior-inferior ranked pairing of male-female. On the household codes, see Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 251–84.

⁶⁵ The pair ἀνὴρ–γυνή is not a statement about the husband–wife relationship but rather

Χριστός-άνηρ, a ranked pair in which άνηρ subsumes γυνή).⁶⁶ The final ranked pair, θεός-Χριστός, correlates the divine act of creation and recreation, subordinating the latter to the former just as Christ is subordinate to God. The new creation (πάντος άνδρός ή κεφαλή ό Χριστός έστιν) has been assimilated into the old creation (κεφαλή δέ γυναικός ό άνηρ), in sharp contrast to the principle of new creation set forth in 2 Cor 5:17 (see also Gal 6:15; cf. Gal 3:28).

According to the knowledge revealed by the “I” of 1 Cor 11:3, the community’s practice of religion εν κυρίω (11:11) is constrained by the place human beings occupy in the created order of this αιών (11:8).⁶⁷ Men and women are interdependent εν κυρίω not because possession by the spirit establishes a new principle of hierarchy and unity (1 Cor 12:28–31a; Gal 3:28) but because men and women are codependent for reproduction.⁶⁸ The hierarchy θεός, Χριστός, άνηρ, γυνή subordinates possession phenomena in the community to a theology of the order of creation that makes the antithesis male–female normative for conduct associated with possession in the churches. In contrast to Paul’s understanding of the freedom of the spirit-possessed “I” from social hierarchies defined by a physical body inhabiting an αιών that is soon to pass away, the “I” of 1 Cor 11:13–16 reasserts the physical body as an anchor for one’s identity in a present world judged to be good.

According to 11:13–15 a principle of nature (φύσις) constrains the possession phenomena of praying and prophesying. Not only a theology of creation but also male-female biology governs conduct associated with possession according to the “I” of 1 Cor 11:3–16. In 1 Cor 11:13–15 the “I” appeals to the judgment of those εν κυρίω (11:11). This competency to judge in matters pertaining to conduct associated with spirit possession, however, is not directed to a possessed “I” discerning spiritual matters (cf. 1 Cor 2:15) but instead to one familiar with nature—more specifically, male-female biology of the created order set forth in 11:3–12.⁶⁹

expresses the priority of the male to the female in creation, as the explanation of this pair in 11:12 makes clear. Creation establishes the priority of the male to the female, but reproduction establishes the dependence of the male on the female.

⁶⁶ The pair Χριστός-άνηρ expresses existence within the church. See Murphy-O’Connor, “Sex and Reason,” 494. The priority of male to female in creation (the ranked pair άνηρ–γυνή) thus becomes normative for subsuming women under men in the church (εν κυρίω, 11:11—on which see below).

⁶⁷ This created order includes the angels (v. 10). If the reference to angels is negative, then the passage suggests that conformity to the created order protects women from spirit attack. See below.

⁶⁸ See, e.g., Hans-Josef Klauck, *1. Korintherbrief* (NEchtB, NT 7; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1984), 79–80: “Implizit hängt die Höherbewertung der Frau allerdings mit ihrem Mutterstatus zusammen: Mit Ausnahme des ersten Menschenpaares ist es so, daß Männer immer von Müttern geboren werden.”

⁶⁹ Dale Martin has made the observation that the only (other) place Paul makes an ethical

Verse 15 has been problematic for understanding the logic of 11:3–16. “If a woman has long hair, it is her glory, because her hair has been given to her in place of a περιβόλαιον.” If περιβόλαιον is translated “covering” (the usual translation), then 11:15 seems to contradict 11:4–5. Is a woman’s hair her covering, or does a woman’s hair need to be covered?⁷⁰ Περιβόλαιον, however, has a more precise meaning than “covering” in the context of a discussion of nature. Troy Martin has persuasively argued that the physiological semantic domain of the language of 11:15 (in which περιβόλαιον is contrasted with hair) suggests a context in which περιβόλαιον refers not generally to a covering (a translation that seems to contradict the argument in 11:3–12) but specifically to male testicles.⁷¹ According to Martin, “This ancient physiological conception of hair [as part of female genitalia] indicates that Paul’s argument from nature in 1 Cor 11:13–15 contrasts long hair in women with testicles in men. Paul states that appropriate to her nature, a woman is not given an external testicle (περιβόλαιον; 1 Cor 11:15b) but rather hair instead.”⁷² On such an interpretation of περιβόλαιον, the knowledge imparted by the “Paul” of 11:3–16 includes the knowledge that a woman’s long hair, conceived as part of the female genitalia in ancient biological theory, should be covered when a woman speaks under the control of the spirit.

The theory of male-female biology in 11:13–15 is closely connected to the theology of creation in 11:3–12. Ancient biological theory was hierarchical and thus supports the ranked pair ἀνὴρ–γυνή of 11:3–12.⁷³ Moreover, utterances associated with possession phenomena may very well expose women to a (sexual) threat from spiritual forces (ἄγγελοι, 11:10—perhaps alluding to Gen 6:4).⁷⁴ The conduct of men and women while possessed by the spirit is constrained by ancient biology.

argument based on “nature” is in Rom 1:18–32 (“Heterosexism and the Interpretation of Romans 1:18–32,” *BibInt* 3 [1995]: 348). In Rom 1:26–27 Paul characterizes certain conduct as παρὰ φύσιν, conduct that goes “beyond the proper limits prescribed by nature” (p. 343). Paul “reads” nature to describe the moral consequence of pagan idolatry. In Rom 1:18–32, however, Paul does not resolve a dispute about conduct within the community by appealing to nature. An instructive example of how Paul resolves a dispute about (moral) conduct within a church is 1 Cor 5:1–13 (see n. 35 above). To be sure, in 1 Cor 5:1 Paul does compare what he has judged to be an immoral act by a member of the community to the practices (and standards) of pagans in general. The basis for moral judgment leading to the ritual execution of the member of the community, however, is not “nature” but the possessed “I” (Paul) speaking (κέκρικα) for Christ (vv. 3–4). See 4:16–17; 5:11; cf. 1 Thess 4:8. For Paul’s construction of authority in relation to spirit possession, “nature” is not grounds for arbitrating disputes about the conduct of those possessed by Jesus.

⁷⁰ Schüssler Fiorenza characterizes the logic as “a very convoluted argument, which can no longer be unraveled completely” (*In Memory of Her*, 228).

⁷¹ Troy Martin, “Paul’s Argument from Nature,” 76–83.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 83.

⁷³ See, e.g., Dale Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 32–34.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 239–44.

The theology of creation and the theory of biology articulated in 11:3–15 suppress Paul’s understanding of sex, marriage, and spirit possession as expressed in 1 Cor 7:1–40.⁷⁵ Paul defines proper sex and marriage not in terms of gender roles established by creation but instead in relation to the battle of the possessed “I” with *πορνεία* (7:2)⁷⁶ and the authority of the possessed “I” working for the good of the community (7:7, 35).⁷⁷ In contrast to the emphasis in 11:11–12 on procreation *ἐν κυρίῳ* (see below on this ecclesiastical slogan),⁷⁸ Paul upholds celibacy as the preferred state for men *and women* possessed by the spirit. As characteristic of his rhetoric elsewhere in 1 Corinthians, Paul begins his discussion of sex and marriage with a slogan of the Corinthians that he judges to be deficient: *περὶ δὲ ὧν ἐγράψατε καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ γυναικὸς μὴ ἄπτεσθαι*, “Now concerning what you wrote, ‘It is good for a man not to touch a woman’” (7:1).⁷⁹ This one-sided formulation of the sexual relationship between men and women presupposes the body hierarchy of the Greco-Roman world.⁸⁰ Paul proceeds to recast the relationship between man and woman implicit in the slogan formulated in v. 1. The *σῶμα* (v. 4) of an individual possessed by the spirit (*ἐν κυρίῳ*, vv. 39–40; having *χάρισμα ἐκ θεοῦ*, v. 7) is no longer determined by social hierarchies of this world (*σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου*, v. 31).⁸¹ The statement marked by gender in 7:1, *καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ γυναικὸς μὴ ἄπτεσθαι*, is challenged by Paul’s concluding comment in 7:40 on the existence of the possessed “I” in this *αἰὼν*: *μακαριωτέρα δὲ ἐστὶν ἐὰν οὕτως μείνη, κατὰ τὴν ἐμὴν γνώμην· δοκῶ δὲ καγὼ πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἔχειν*, “But she is happier if she remains unmarried in my judgment, and I think that I have the spirit of God.”

Finally, according to 1 Cor 11:16 a principle of the custom of the churches constrains the possession phenomena of praying and prophesying. The knowledge disclosed in 11:3–16 correlates the churches of God with the order of creation and male-female biology expressed in vv. 3–15. The churches of God

⁷⁵ For interpretations of the connection between these passages, see Dale Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 198–249; Gundry-Volf, “Celibate Pneumatics and Social Power,” 105–26, esp. 116–18.

⁷⁶ See Gal 5:16–26, esp. v. 19; Rom 8:1–11 (cf. Rom 1:18–32, esp. vv. 28–29).

⁷⁷ See 1 Cor 5:1–13 and n. 35 above.

⁷⁸ Compare 1 Tim 2:15 on the role of women in the community: *σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, ἐὰν μείνωσιν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἀγιασμῷ μετὰ σωφροσύνης* (“she will be saved through childbearing if they continue in faith and love and holiness with self-control”); see also 1 Tim 5:14.

⁷⁹ See 1 Cor 8:1–3; Wire, *Corinthian Women Prophets*, 80.

⁸⁰ See Dale Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 198–228.

⁸¹ See Gundry-Volf, “Celebrate Pneumatics and Social Power,” 116–18. Paul returns in 7:36–38 to address directly the concerns of the *ἄνθρωπος* of v. 1, but only after he has rejected the hierarchical relationship between men and women implied by the statement in v. 1. Dale Martin underestimates the extent to which the structure of Paul’s response to the slogan in v. 1 does in fact undercut the ideological assumptions of the body hierarchy of the ancient world (*Corinthian Body*, 227–28).

maintain the order of creation as a standard for conduct associated with spirit possession.⁸² The activities of a possessed “I” have been institutionalized in a church at home in this world.⁸³ The shift from the first person singular “I” of 11:3 to the first person plural “we” of 11:16 betrays the loss of voice of the possessed “I” in an emerging institutional structure that enforces social antitheses of this present αἰών. The “we” in 11:16 replaces the utterance of the possessed “I,” κύριος Ἰησοῦς, with the voice of the church, ἡμεῖς τοιαύτην συνήθειαν οὐκ ἔχομεν.

The extent to which this “we” that speaks for the churches in 11:16 displaces Paul’s understanding of the authority of the possessed “I” is evident from Paul’s version of events associated with the Jerusalem council in Galatians 1–2. At this meeting and later at Antioch, Paul confronts the “custom of the churches” that emerges around the practices of authoritative individuals.⁸⁴ Over against the ecclesiastical authority represented by those present at the meeting, Paul asserts his authority as one possessed by Jesus (Gal 1:15–16; see 2:20; 1 Cor 9:1–2). His authorization to attend the council is κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν (Gal 2:2; cf. 1:12, 16–17).⁸⁵ The equal standing of Titus in the church is a consequence of spirit possession (Gal 4:6–7; cf. 3:1–5, 26–28; 2:20). When the equal standing of all those possessed by the spirit is called into question at Antioch by practices that Paul attributes to the Jerusalem church (Gal 2:12), whose authority to establish custom is accepted by others at Antioch, Paul breaks from the other leaders of the church.⁸⁶ Ecclesiastical authority—whether at Jerusalem,

⁸² Contrast 1 Cor 4:16–17, where Paul himself (as speaking for God) establishes the practices of the churches. The protasis εἰ δέ τις δοκεῖ φιλόνηκος εἶναι in 11:16 is similar to those found in 3:18; 8:2; and 14:37, but the apodosis is quite different: elsewhere Paul appeals to his authority in the spirit (see esp. 1 Cor 14:37–38), not the authority of the church. See also n. 83.

⁸³ The connection of the church to the present created order articulated in 1 Cor 11:3–16 is quite similar to the viewpoint expressed by 1 Tim 3:4–5. Compare Paul’s own view in, e.g., Gal 1:4. Wire connects the appeal to the practice of the churches of God in 11:16 not only to the appeal to “all the churches of the saints” in 14:33 (on which, see n. 103 below) but also to 1 Cor 4:16–17 and 7:17 (*Corinthian Women Prophets*, 31–32). See also Fee, *Corinthians*, 530. However, in the latter two contexts, Paul asserts his authority as a possessed “I” over all the churches. In 11:16 and 14:33 the authority of all the churches is asserted over the possessed “I.” The construction of authority in 4:16–17 and 7:17 is different from the construction of authority in 11:16 and 14:33.

⁸⁴ οἱ δοκοῦντες στυλοὶ εἶναι (Gal 2:9; cf. 1:22; 2:11–12; 1 Cor 9:5).

⁸⁵ On Paul’s visions in connection with traditions mediated by leaders at Jerusalem, see n. 54 above.

⁸⁶ The Acts of the Apostles reports a different version of events associated with the Jerusalem council. The outcome of the council reported in Acts 15:22 thoroughly subordinates Paul to the customary practices of the church—τότε ἔδοξε τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ. Moreover, Paul’s conversion in Acts 9:1–31 is carefully narrated to subordinate Paul’s vision and possession by the spirit (9:17) to the authority of the church (9:6: ἀλλὰ ἀνάστηθι καὶ εἴσελθε εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ λαληθήσεται σοι ὃ τί σε δεῖ ποιεῖν, commands Jesus in Paul’s vision). Unlike Paul’s claims in Gal 1:15–17, in Acts 9 Paul’s commission and spirit possession are mediated by human agents acting on behalf of the church. See n. 90 and section V below.

Antioch, or Corinth—carries little weight for Paul.⁸⁷ Not the custom of the churches but the κανών of the καινή κτίσις of those possessed by Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐσταυρωμένος governs conduct in the community (Gal 6:14–16; 3:1; cf. 2 Cor 5:17).

In short, the knowledge revealed in 1 Cor 11:3–16 suggests a situation and set of exigencies quite different from the situation in chs. 12 and 14. 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 constructs knowledge in the community in terms of a theology of the order of creation and male-female biology, a theology enforced by the churches of God. The “I” of 1 Cor 11:3 is quite comfortable with the social antithesis male–female of this αἰών. The effect of this knowledge is to subordinate women to men in the church through the distinctions between male and female institutionalized by this knowledge, but the purpose of this gloss on the phenomena of chs. 12 and 14 is to establish ecclesiastical control over the spirit possession characteristic of Paul’s religion.⁸⁸ The authority of the “I” possessed by the spirit, whether man or woman, can now be judged by an institution that mediates divine authority in the present αἰών. More to the point, the “I” possessed by the spirit can now be judged by the “we” who do not experience possession phenomena. Ἐν κυρίῳ (11:11) has become an ecclesiastical slogan, not a sign of spirit possession.⁸⁹ As such, the slogan ἐν κυρίῳ in 11:11 connotes a situation in early Christianity quite different from the utterance of the possessed “I” in 12:3, κύριος Ἰησοῦς.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Consequently, Paul also has a minimal interest in the historical Jesus and in authority vested in those connected to the historical Jesus. For example, when Paul reports “traditional” material in 1 Cor 11:23–26 and 15:1–11, he claims to have received this material by revelation. See n. 54 above. When Paul comments on a saying of the historical Jesus in 1 Cor 7:10, he creates an ironic contrast with his own authority as one possessed by Jesus (1 Cor 7:12, see v. 40). See n. 58 above.

⁸⁸ Women and spirit possession are closely connected in early Christianity. See below on Montanism, a movement characterized by possession phenomena in which women took a leading role as prophets.

⁸⁹ Ἐν κυρίῳ refers back to the formulation in 11:3 (παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἡ κεφαλὴ ὁ Χριστός), and vv. 11–12 restate the ranked pairs of v. 3, culminating in τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. Ἐν κυρίῳ expresses the properly ordered creation preserved by the churches of God, not a notion of possession by Jesus.

⁹⁰ The Pastoral Epistles institutionalize prophecy in a similar way. Spiritual gifts are granted by a council of elders (1 Tim 4:14). Few traces of Paul’s spirit-possession cult remain in the male-dominated ecclesiastical hierarchy established in these letters. Note also that in the Acts of the Apostles, possession phenomena have a very narrowly defined function in the church. The Acts of the Apostles defines the possession phenomena of tongues and prophecy in terms of the mission of the church to establish itself within the political and cultural world of the Roman Empire. See, e.g., Acts 1:8; also Acts 2, in which tongues is the ability to speak other human languages for the purposes of spreading the message of the apostles. Christopher Forbes restates this tendentious interpretation of possession phenomena in Paul’s religion: “Inspired speech (both glossolalic and

This difference of situations presupposed by the thought of 11:3–16 and the thought of chs. 12 and 14 is evident in the construction of authority. In chs. 12 and 14, as elsewhere in Paul, authority resides in the “I” possessed by the spirit in relation to the larger spirit-possession cult construed as a new creation. In 11:3–16 authority resides in the practice of churches construed as a bulwark for the divine order of this world. Paul’s argument about prophesying and speaking in tongues in chs. 12 and 14 culminates with the possessed “I” who speaks the commands of the Lord (14:37); the argument of 11:3–16 culminates with the “we” who speaks for the consensus of the churches.⁹¹

V

The “I” of 1 Cor 11:3 anticipates the strategy certain leaders in early Christianity would adopt to control spirit possession. Some factions within early Christianity maintained an uneasy relationship with the phenomenon of spirit possession. The close connection between magic and spirit possession created an interpretive problem for what happened within the church and what happened outside the church.⁹² This problem of interpretation is already evident in the story in Acts 8, in which spirit possession and miracle associated with the

prophetic, as we shall see) was subordinated to the community and the Gospel, not vice versa” (*Prophecy and Inspired Speech in Early Christianity and Its Hellenistic Environment* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997], 169; see also his comments on the portrayal of Alexander by Lucian, pp. 162–65). See also Stefan Schreiber, *Paulus als Wundertäter: Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Apostelgeschichte und den authentischen Paulusbriefen* (BZNW 79; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996), 292–93.

⁹¹ Fee comments at the end of his discussion of 11:2–16: “Indeed, there is nothing quite like this in [Paul’s] extant letters, where he argues for maintaining a custom, let alone predicating a large part of the argument on shame, propriety, and custom” (*Corinthians*, 530). Yet, against those who have suggested that 1 Cor 11:3–16 is an interpolation, Fee passes a harsh rhetorical judgment (p. 492 n. 3): “This [excising the passage altogether as a non-Pauline interpolation] is a counsel of despair and is predicated not on grammatical and linguistic difficulties (*pace* Walker), but on the alleged non-Pauline character of the passage. But there is a certain danger in assuming that one knows so well what Paul could or could not have written that one can perform such radical surgery on a text, especially when nothing in the language or style is non-Pauline!” Leaving aside the rhetoric of “danger,” “radical surgery,” “counsel of despair,” and the final exclamation point that seems to be out of place given Fee’s concluding comments on p. 530, the issue is simply one of understanding the collection and editing of the Pauline letters in the context of the development of forms of early Christianity. No clear understanding of this development can be achieved by imposing what amounts to almost an a priori assumption that Paul’s correspondence was not subject to editing to produce the archetype or archetypes of 1 and 2 Corinthians that are the basis of the manuscript tradition.

⁹² See n. 19 above.

apostles are distinguished from magic and the possession of a familiar sought by individuals such as Simon.⁹³ The problematic relation between spirit possession and miracle in the church, on the one hand, and magic and familiars outside the church, on the other, can be seen in two passages from Irenaeus. In the first, Irenaeus characterizes the “magic” of certain “heretics”:

Thus, then, the mystic priests belonging to this sect [the followers of Simon] both lead profligate lives and practise magical arts, each one to the extent of his ability. They use exorcisms and incantations. Love-potions, too, and charms, as well as those beings who are called “Paredri” (familiar) and “Oniropompi” (dream-senders), and whatever other curious arts can be had recourse to, are eagerly pressed into their service. (*Haer.* 1.23.4)⁹⁴

A second passage puts a different spin on such phenomena as they occur within the church as defined by Irenaeus:

In like manner we do also hear many brethren in the Church, who possess prophetic gifts, and who through the Spirit speak all kinds of languages, and bring to light for the general benefit the hidden things of men, and declare the mysteries of God. (*Haer.* 5.6.1)⁹⁵

For certain church fathers, spirit possession was a gift of God if properly bounded within the church that possessed the apostolic deposit of truth;⁹⁶ spirit possession outside the properly defined apostolic church was the domain of magicians and heretics.

In the second century, phenomena associated with spirit possession surfaced in Phrygia.⁹⁷ The fourth-century church historian Eusebius preserves sources that suggest the way certain Christian leaders and intellectuals attempted to control this outbreak of “heretical” spirit possession.⁹⁸

According to Eusebius and his sources, genuine possession phenomena belong under the control of the church as an institution presided over by a male

⁹³ See Hans-Josef Klauck, *Magic and Paganism in Early Christianity: The World of the Acts of the Apostles* (trans. Brian McNeil; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 13–29, 119–20. The competition between miracle and magic represented by Peter and Simon is developed elaborately in the *Acts of Peter*. For the problem of spirit possession and magic in the life of Jesus, see Mark 3:22.

⁹⁴ ANF 1:348.

⁹⁵ ANF 1:531. This passage is cited by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 5.7) against possession phenomena outside the church associated with Montanism.

⁹⁶ On the apostolic deposit of truth, see, e.g., Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.1–3; cf. 1 Tim 4:11–16.

⁹⁷ The movement was variously labeled but is widely known as “Montanism” after one of its early leaders. The leadership of this movement included the female prophets Priscilla and Maximilla. See Christine Trevett, *Montanism: Gender, Authority, and the New Prophecy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 151–97.

⁹⁸ Eusebius is an important, though tendentious, source for information about Montanism in Phrygia.

hierarchy preserving the apostolic deposit of truth. There is a sharp distinction between possession phenomena that occur within the church under the control of its leaders and possession phenomena that occur outside the church as a challenge to its leaders. In *Hist. eccl.* 5.3 Eusebius comments:

It was at that very time, in Phrygia, that Montanus, Alcibiades, Theodotus, and their followers began to acquire a widespread reputation for prophecy; for numerous other manifestations of the miraculous gift of God, still occurring in various churches, led many to believe that these men too were prophets. When there was a difference of opinion about them [that is, those manifesting possession phenomena], the Gallic Christians again submitted their own careful and most orthodox conclusions on the question.⁹⁹

Eusebius claims that spirit possession was at home in the church in the second century (he cites Irenaeus to support this claim) just to the extent that differences of opinion about possession phenomena are resolved by careful intellectual inquiry and a consensus of the “we” of orthodoxy. In other words, the manifestations of spirit possession are subject to the consensus of a community of churches and their leaders (who do not necessarily manifest possession phenomena) enforcing ecclesiastical order. Eusebius quotes a letter by Serapion on this point:

In order that you may know this, that the working of the so-called New Prophecy of this fraudulent organization is held in detestation by the whole brotherhood throughout the world, I am sending you the writings of Claudius Apolinarius, Bishop of Hierapolis in Asia, of most blessed memory. (*Hist. eccl.* 5.19)

Manifestations of spirit possession are subject to the glosses of those writing in service of the true church, and the genuine succession of prophecy has been institutionalized by a carefully defined ecclesiastical consensus.

Possession phenomena were accepted to the extent that spirit possession could be domesticated by a consensus of church leaders quite comfortable in the church in this world.¹⁰⁰ The possessed “I” who challenged the authority of the bishops, however, was excluded on the authority of the practice of the churches,¹⁰¹ churches whose leaders could reassure themselves that they were

⁹⁹ Translations of Eusebius are from *Eusebius: The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* (trans. G. A. Williamson; rev. Andrew Louth; London: Penguin Books, 1989).

¹⁰⁰ In contrast to the institutional “at home in this world” character of the bishops opposing Montanism, Montanists proclaimed the imminent end of the age. To this extent, the tension between the bishops and Montanism parallels the tension between Paul’s religion and the Acts of the Apostles.

¹⁰¹ See *Hist. eccl.* 5.16: “[Those possessed by a spirit] were taught by this arrogant spirit to denigrate the entire Catholic Church throughout the world, because the spirit of pseudo-prophecy

not suppressing the spirit (see 1 Thess 5:19) because they could point to domesticated prophets who operated within the boundaries laid out by the institution.¹⁰² 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 is perhaps one of the earliest attempts to gloss the manifestations of spirit possession in terms of the institution of the church at home in this world.¹⁰³

“I want you to know,” begins 1 Cor 11:3. The “I” who speaks in 1 Cor 11:3 is not the “I” who speaks in chs. 12 and 14. The “I” of chs. 12 and 14 speaks with the authority of one possessed by the spirit. The “I” of 1 Cor 11:3–16 speaks with the authority of one who represents an ecclesiastical consensus of the churches, an ecclesiastical consensus that enforces a theology of the order of creation and male-female biology on manifestations of spirit possession. 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 is a non-Pauline interpolation that displaces the authority and knowledge of the possessed “I” from the center to the periphery of Paul’s religion.

received neither honour nor admission into it; for the Asian believers repeatedly and in many parts of Asia had met for this purpose, and after investigating the recent utterances pronounced them profane and ejected the heresy. Then at last its devotees were turned out of the Church and excommunicated.”

¹⁰² Or, as Eusebius quotes another opponent of Montanism in *Hist. eccl.* 5.17: “For the prophetic gift must continue in the true Church until the final coming. . . .” Cf. 1 Tim 4:14.

¹⁰³ The problem that Paul’s construction of authority in relation to spirit possession in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 posed for those forms of early Christianity that did not construct authority in terms of manifestations of possession phenomena is evident in another gloss explicitly intended to silence the female “I” possessed by the spirit: 1 Cor 14:33b–36. In this passage the principle of the law replaces the theology and science of creation in 11:3–16, and the strictures on manifestations of possession phenomena by women are much more severe, but a similar appeal is made to the authority of “all the churches of the saints” (14:33b). 1 Corinthians 11:3–16 and 14:33b–36 should be taken as independent, non-Pauline glosses on the manifestations of spirit possession that are characteristic of Paul’s religion. For a different view of the relation of these interpolations, see Winsome Munro, *Authority in Paul and Peter* (SNTSMS 45; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 69–80. A number of scholars have suggested that 1 Cor 12:31b–14:1a is out of place. See, e.g., Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 217–18. Whether this passage is Pauline or not (see William O. Walker, Jr., “Is First Corinthians 13 a Non-Pauline Interpolation?” *CBQ* 60 [1998]: 484–99), its present location may also be due to editing intended to gloss the manifestations of spirit possession in chs. 12 and 14 that are characteristic of Paul’s religion with a principle of conduct rooted in the practice of the ethical virtue of love stripped of possession phenomena.