

## WSWG 28

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Campus Center, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

### *Stylometrics and the Question of Interpolation in Paul*



#### *Some Analytical Possibilities in 1 Corinthians*

There are two complications with the Corinthian correspondence. One is the possibility of post-authorial interpolations, probably made by Paul's editors. The other is the possibility that three or more Corinthian letters were edited down to the present two. Note that some 2 Cor conflation proposals also involve 1 Cor passages.

1 Cor 1-6 responds to news brought to Paul by friends; 1 Cor 7-16 responds to questions in a letter. The latter are answered in orderly fashion; each topic introduced by the itemization formula *περὶ δέ* ("as for"). We expect those sections to be topically consistent. They are not, and inconsistent passages are suspect as editorial additions.

**1 Cor 1-6.** The following, proposed by Widmann 1979, has been accepted by \*Walker 1992):

- \*2:6-16. "The secret and hidden wisdom of God." But is it really inconsistent with Paul elsewhere?

**1 Cor 7-16.** Passages which seem to be off-topic for that *περὶ δέ* section include the following (\*some have been dealt with in Walker **Interpolations**; °others in subsequent papers by Walker).

- \*7:17-24. Maintaining social station. Off-topic in a section on sex and marriage
- 9:1-27. Defense of Paul's working for his food. Off-topic in a section on idol food; cf 2 Cor 11:7f
- \*10:1-22. Food in the wilderness. But is it really off-topic in this section on idol food?
- \*11:3-16. Subordination of women. Off-topic. Contradicts the strong role of women in Paul's churches
- 11:2, 17-34. Wrong behavior at Eucharist. Only vaguely on-topic in a section on idol food

*If 11:3-16 was interpolated into this passage, then 11:3-16 is from the second of two editorial stages.*

- \*12:31b-14:1a. The "love" discourse. Off-topic in a section on spiritual gifts.
- \*14:33b-36. Subordination of women; cf 11:3-16 above
  - 15:3-11 (Robert Price). Appearances of risen Jesus. See 15:1-58 below
  - 15:21-22 (J C O'Neill). The Adam metaphor. See 15:1-58 below
  - °15:29-34. Baptism on behalf of the dead. See 15:1-58 below
  - 15:44b-48 (Widmann). Another Adam fragment. See 15:1-58 below
- 15:1-58. Resurrection details. Whole chapter off-topic; appended to section on spiritual gifts.

*Note the introductory 15:1, "Now I would remind you, brethren, in what terms I preached to you the Gospel." "Reminder" formulas are typical of post-Pauline passages; cf 2 Thess 2:5.*

*Parts of 1 Cor (c56) which agree with Matthew (c68, Gundry) are probably post-Matthean harmonizations. That some Pauline editing is post-70 is shown by the reference to the destruction of the Temple in 1 Thess 2:13-16.*

*One demonstrable interpolation impugns all others in the same category, such as the Haustafeln or the "subordination of women" passages, which occur, but uninterpolated, in the deutero-Paulines.*