

## FORUM

# 'As in All the Churches of the Saints'

## *A Text-Critical Study of 1 Corinthians 14:34,35*

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*This essay — a response to Dr Lockwood's study published in May 1996 — is a further contribution by this journal to the continuing discussion in the Lutheran Church of Australia on the ordination of women (cf LTJ vol 28 no 3; vol 29 nos 2 & 3; vol 30 no 1).*

— Editor

### I. Introduction

Peter Lockwood asks, 'Does 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 exclude women from the pastoral office?' (*LTJ* 30/1 May, 1996). He answers in the negative and claims that

the most compelling way of accounting for the problems raised by 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 is that the regulation [for women being silent in the church] does not come from Paul's hand at all . . . Rather the 'mulier taceat' was a marginal note that was incorporated into the text by a copyist who agreed with its ruling. (33)

Although there are no extant New Testament manuscripts which omit 14:34,35 from 1 Corinthians, a number of Western manuscripts place it after 14:40 (Lockwood: 34). Since the appearance of Hans Conzelmann's commentary on 1 Corinthians, the text critical evidence has largely been ignored when examining 14:34,35. Those who hold that these verses are an interpolation cite the variant placement as evidence. As a result they have shifted their focus from text criticism to literary criticism (Hauke: 366).

This paper will examine 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 text-critically. In particular we will examine the variant texts which place 14:34,35 after 14:40. We will also discuss what may have led to the variant, and its possible origins.

The interpolation theory, as it attempts to explain away the import of 14:34,35, rests on shaky foundations (Hauke: 366). Text-critically, the evidence that 14:34,35 is original and should be placed in its traditional location, and not after 14:40, is substantial (Carson:124).

## Excursus 1

The Alexandrian-type text which gives broad support to the traditional placement of 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 is usually considered to be the best text and the most faithful in preserving the original. Evidence from the Bodmer Papyri, in particular **p66** and **p75**, takes the Alexandrian type of text back to an archetype that must be dated early in the second century (Metzger:xviii). The traditional placement is confirmed by the significant fourth century parchments Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus. Furthermore, the proto-Alexandrian Chester Beatty 2 papyri **p46** (about AD 200) and the later Alexandrian type uncials Codex Alexandrinus and Codex Athous Laurae, together with the minuscules **33 81 104 326** and **1739**, also corroborate this placement. The Coptic Sahidic and Bohairic versions frequently contain typically Alexandrian readings.

The textual evidence for the traditional placement follows:

*Papyri:* one (**p46**) ca AD 200.

*Uncials:* three from the 4th and 5th century; two from the 8th and 9th century; one from the 10th century.

*Minuscules:* one from the 9th century; one from the 10th century; six from the 11th century; five from the 12th century; two from the 13th century; five from the 14th century; one from the 14/15th century; one from the 16th century.

*Ancient Versions:*

- (a) Old Latin (witnesses either in whole or in part) one codex from the 8th century; one codex from the 9th century; one codex from the 13th century.
- (b) Vulgate of the 4/5th century.
- (c) Syriac: Peshitta of the 5th century; Harclean of the 7th century; Palestinian of the 5th century.
- (d) Coptic: Sahidic dialect of the 3rd century; Bohairic dialect of the 4th century; Fayyumic dialect of the 4th century.
- (e) Armenian: Zohrab of the 5th century.

The majority of the Byzantine manuscripts.

The reading of the majority of Lectionaries in the Synaxarion and in the Menologion when these agree.

The variant placement of 14:34,35 after 14:40 is witnessed by the **Western** type text. The chief characteristic of Western readings is their fondness for paraphrase. Words, clauses, and even whole sentences are freely changed, omitted, or inserted. Motives for these may be to bring harmony, or to enrich the narrative by including traditional or apocryphal material. A most important Greek manuscript that presents a Western-type of text in the Pauline epistles is codex Claromontanus **D**. The Old Latin versions are noteworthy witnesses to a Western type text. It was used by Tatian, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian and Marcion (Metzger:xviii).

The variant texts which place 14:34,35 after 14:40 follow.

*Papyri*: None

*Uncials*: one from the 6th century; two from the 9th century; one from the 9/10th century.

*Minuscules*: one from the 12th century.

*Old Latin Version*: one codex from the 5/6th century; three from the 9th century.

*Church Fathers*:           Ambrosiaster from the 4th century;  
  Sedulius-Scotus from the 9th century.

## II. Examination of the texts

Antoinette Wire examines those manuscripts which place 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 after 14:40, and reveals (149) that the texts are all either Greek-Latin bilinguals or Latin texts. The exception is the minuscule **88\*** from the twelfth century. We will examine this manuscript later.

The manuscripts can be traced with some certainty:

- (a) the manuscripts **D E F G** are all bilingual (Greek and Latin) forms of 1 Corinthians.
- (b) The text **E** Sangermanensis is a direct copy of **D** Claromontanus and bears no direct evidence (Clabeaux:x; Wire:149).
- (c) The two manuscripts, **F** and **G** are so close to each other that textual critics such as Scrivener and Frede, either consider that the writer of **F** copied **G**, or that both writers copied the same Greek text.
- (d) The parallel omissions of major units of material in the Greek and Latin of **F** and **G** also confirm their common source.
- (e) Critics have named this source manuscript **X** (Wire:149,284).

We can say with certainty that the variant is present, therefore, in two Greek witnesses among the bilinguals, that is, **D** and **G** (or **X**). These two texts agree in diverging from the Alexandrian text type six times in our two verses in the Nestle-Aland 26th edition. As a result, the theory of a single common achetype of these two Greek texts, called **Z**, is well established (Wire: 149).

We also find that the Latin texts **d e f g** of the Pauline epistles also place 14:34,35 after 14:40.

The following points are of note:

- (a) It would appear that the Old Latin text tradition arose when the gospel spread away from the groups who spoke Greek well and into other provinces and ethnic groups.
- (b) The Old Latin texts come to us from an already complex tradition which existed by the time the first of the bilinguals is made about the fourth century (Clabeaux:6ff).

- (c) Scholars have classified the Old Latin tradition according to three different text types. There is the so-called African or North African type which had a fixed form by the third century. Two European type texts originate soon after and become mixed in different ways. Clabeaux (9) assigns **d f g** to a southern Italian tradition.
- (d) Text **E** Sangermanensis has no independent value for our discussion since it is a copy of **D** Claromontanus (Clabeaux:9n).
- (e) It is generally regarded that **it dem** and **it x** are not Old Latin but Vulgate with some Old Latin readings. The coded **it z** is Old Latin only in Hebrews 10:13 (Wire:284). These codices witness the traditional placement of 14:34,35.
- (f) All extant Old Latin manuscripts of 1 Corinthians, regardless of their type, agree with the bilingual texts in placing 14:34,35 at the end of the chapter. Those Latin texts which have survived show the broadest possible early Latin evidence for locating 14:34,35 after verse 40 (Wire:150).
- (g) These texts do not provide us with a wide range of independent witnesses which corroborate a broad tradition. Rather they indicate a shared, common origin (Wire:150).

When the Old Latin tradition is compared with the most reliable Greek texts, such as Chester Beatty 2 **p46**, Vaticanus **B**, and Goltz Manuscript **1739**, the Old Latin disagrees so frequently with the Greek that the Latin texts are taken together as signs that they have been derived from the same primary sources (Wire:150; Hauke:366). These primary sources can be narrowed down even further:

- (a) Scholars regularly trace the African and both European text types to a single original Greek text.
- (b) When the second of these European text types was later copied opposite a Greek text, the single archetype of the Greek bilinguals **Z** closely resembles the Greek text behind the Latin.

The manuscripts which place 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 at the end of chapter 14 belong to the Western tradition. The text-critical evidence leads to a reasonable conclusion that all most likely derive from a single textual source which is no longer extant (Wire:150).

The twelfth-century minuscule **88\*** in the original hand places 14:34,35 at the end of chapter 14 also. However, it departs from the pattern set by the other texts with this variant placement:

- (a) When the twelfth-century scribe found verses 34,35 at the end of the chapter being copied, he recognised that it had been omitted after verse 33 and misplaced there.
- (b) The scribe made two short slashes on the line of writing to indicate the reversal of order before he wrote these two verses.
- (c) As part of the correction, the scribe put similar marks some lines earlier to show where they belonged.

Scholars argue (Wire:151) that the scribal slashes and marginal marks in the manuscript **88\*** represent the final demise of the Western tradition with its placement of 14:34,35 at the end of chapter 14.

In the sixth century Victor of Capua corrected the Vulgate manuscript Codex Fuldensis using what is thought to be a text very close to the Vulgate manuscript Codex Vaticanus Reginensis. Reginensis contains the variant placement.

- (a) Victor inserted 14:36-40 in the margin **before** 14:34,35 to match the sequence of Reginensis.
- (b) He did not, however, eliminate 14:36-40 which already followed 14:34,35 in Fuldensis according to the usual Vulgate order (Wire:285; Metzger:565).
- (c) This deutero-graph has been wrongly seen as evidence that Paul glossed his own letter in this way (Wire:285).

Codex **Fuldensis** and **88\*** give us important evidence of scribal attempts to place 14:34,35 appropriately within 14:33-40 (Metzger:565). The evidence also supports the theory that those who originally excised 14:34,35 from 1 Corinthians 14 were not necessarily the same people who placed the verses at the end of chapter 14. The variant placement of 14:34,35 in different manuscripts could very well be the result of an original scribal attempt to replace 14:34,35 in a manuscript where it was absent.

## Excursus 2

A comparison of 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 with 1 Timothy 2:12 provides further evidence against an interpolation theory. There are no variant readings within 1 Timothy 2:11-15. There is no evidence to suggest that 1 Timothy 2:12 is an interpolation. The Corinthian and Timothy texts bear clear similarities. In the Pauline corpus, outside of the two mentioned texts, the verb *epitrephein*, to permit, only occurs in 1 Corinthians 16:7 with *Kyrios* as its subject and in Hebrew 6:3 with *Theos* as its subject.

If the interpolation theory were correct it would be reasonable for an editor to use the thrust and vocabulary of the Timothy passage to construct his interpolation. If that were the case, the Timothy passage would predate the Corinthian insertion. But when we compare the two texts we see the same thrust of argument but a significant difference in vocabulary. It is unreasonable to suggest that an interpolator constructed his exclusion of women 'speaking authoritatively' by changing the technical verb *didaskein*, 'to teach', in Timothy for the more general verb *lalein*, 'to speak', in Corinthians.

It is more reasonable to see that the resemblance between 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 and 1 Timothy 2:14 is because the Corinthian text predates the Timothy texts and they both come from the same person or school or tradition writing to different environments (Kleinig 1995a:123).



### III. Who might be the author of the variant placement?

The apostle Paul appeals to four authorities in his ruling regarding the silence of women in 14:33-40:

- (a) ecumenical practice (33b)
- (b) the law (34)
- (c) a command of the Lord (37b)
- (d) evangelical decorum (40)

When 14:34,35 is removed from its traditional placement, his appeals to ecumenical practice and a command of the Lord is also removed.

Those who support the ordination of women often discount 14:34,35 as a later Judaic, proto-Catholic or misogynist interpolation. Those who originally removed 14:34,35 from its traditional placement may have regarded 14:34,35 as a similar interpolation.

With this in mind, we will attempt to construct a profile of the person or persons who may have been responsible for removing 14:34,35 from its original, traditional placement.

- (a) Since the apostle Paul wrote 1 Corinthians in AD 55 or AD 56 near the end of his stay in Ephesus (Pfitzner:18), and the earliest record of the variant placement is Ambrosiaster around AD 375, the exciser probably lived between AD 56 and AD 375.
- (b) Because of the Greek-Latin bilingual and Latin textual evidence, he may have influenced the Old Latin textual tradition.
- (c) Similarly, he probably lived and worked within Rome or Western Europe.
- (d) He was interested in the recording and editing of the Pauline epistles.
- (e) He opposed the exclusion of women from the ordained ministry and sought to reverse the traditional ecclesiastical practice of his day.
- (f) He may well have judged that tradition and practice as apostate.
- (g) He rejected the law of Moses in the Old Testament.
- (h) He may well have dissociated the message and ministry of Jesus and his apostle Paul from the Old Testament entirely.

### IV. A culprit?

In the early church one man exerted enormous influence on the emerging texts of the New Testament. The formal recognition of a fixed list, or canon, of New Testament writings can be dated about the middle of the second century. The first person to draft one, so far as surviving evidence shows, was Marcion.

Marcion was a native of Sinope in Pontus who came to Rome shortly before AD 140. He was a member of an orthodox community until his excommunication from the Catholic Church in Rome in AD 144 (Blackman:2,3). As Marcion was unable to convert the Catholic Church to his philosophy, he began his own church (Blackman:2). Although none of his writings has survived, we are able to reconstruct large portions of his

*Antithesis* from the extensive quotations in Tertullian's *Against Marcion*, as well as from other church fathers, such as Irenaeus.

Marcion did not avail himself of the allegorical method of exegesis current in the church of his day. Subsequently he found the Old Testament impossible to reconcile with the gospel of Christ. From this impasse Marcion held that there must be two Gods, a lower Demiurge who created the universe (ie, the God of Judaism) and the supreme God made known for the first time in Christ (Kelly: 57). This dualism led Marcion to reject the Old Testament. Furthermore, Marcion canonised an alternative set of Scripture for use in his church. He regarded all Christian writings which seemed in the slightest way infected with a Jewish outlook as suspect (Kelly: 57; Dunbar: 331).

The apostle Paul, the champion of the gospel against the law, was Marcion's hero. Marcion believed that all the original apostles had fallen away from the truth revealed in Jesus. Only Paul represented Jesus' teaching in its pure form (Dunbar: 331).

Marcion set about restoring the true text of the New Testament. The letter to the Galatians became Marcion's hermeneutical principle for understanding Paul (Hauke: 392; cf Habel and Wurst: 130). He was convinced that in the Pauline epistles there were interpolations and alterations by Judaising interests anxious to make the apostle say that the Old Testament contained divine revelation (Chadwick: 40). Tertullian (Stevenson: 181) described Marcion's approach to text criticism by saying, '[he] used the knife, not the pen'. Irenaeus writes of Marcion:

He mutilates the Gospel which is according to Luke . . . He dismembered the epistles of Paul removing . . . also those passages from the prophetic writings which the apostle quotes in order to teach us that they announced beforehand the coming of the Lord. (Stevenson: 97)

Scholars agree that Marcion used the Western type text, influencing it and the Old Latin tradition along the way. The degree of Marcion's influence on these texts, however, remains a subject of dispute. The Marcionite canon consisted of the ten letters of the *Apostles* (ie, the Pauline corpus minus the Pastoral Epistles) and the *Gospel*, an edited version of Luke.

Marcion's theology has been described as a combination of Christianity and Syrian gnosis (Dunbar: 331). Since Marcion rejected the inferior God of Creation, he rejected the created orders also. Marcion rejected marriage and taught a strict ascetism. For Marcion, the lesser God devised the humiliating method of sexual reproduction, the discomfort of pregnancy, and the pains of childbirth, the mere contemplation of which filled Marcion with nausea (Chadwick: 39). A Marcionite innovation was the permission given to women to hold office in the church, to teach and to baptise (Blackman: 5; Stevenson: 154,182,184). Marcion claimed that the Holy Spirit bestows his various gifts on each one, without taking notice of pre-existing differences (Hauke: 391, cf Habel and Wurst: 132). For Marcion this included the gifting of the Holy Spirit as the only qualification for the public ministry.

For Marcion, the message of 1 Corinthians 14:33-40 would have contained all the hallmarks of interpolation and alteration by the Judaizing elements:

- (a) women were portrayed as in subjection to their husbands;
- (b) they were made to be silent in the church in keeping with the Catholic ('apostate') practice of his day;
- (c) the text that sanctioned this made its appeal through the law and a command of the Lord.

Clearly, Marcion had motive, opportunity, and an established *modus operandi* to excise this offensive passage and reclaim, what was for him, the pure text of St Paul.

## V. Conclusion

The textual evidence does not support the theory that the apostle's prohibition on women speaking in the church was a marginal note that was incorporated into the text by a copyist who agreed with its ruling (*contra* Lockwood: 33).

The textual evidence supports the theory that Paul's prohibition was excised from its original placement by a person(s) who disagreed with his ruling. In addition:

- (a) The textual evidence strongly supports that the Western-type text tradition which places 14:34,35 after 14:40 is dependent on one, no longer extant, variant text.
- (b) The textual evidence gives little support either to its original placement after 14:40 or to its interpolation into the text by a later scribe under the influence of 1 Timothy 2:12.
- (c) 1 Corinthians was part of Marcion's canon. The Pastoral epistles, which includes 1 Timothy, were not. 1 Timothy 2:12, which supports the apostle's teaching in 14:34,35, is free from any textual variants.
- (d) It is reasonable to suggest that the original editor who excised from 1 Corinthians the apostle's prohibition of women speaking in the church was Marcion or Marcionite.
- (e) Likewise, it is reasonable to see the variant placement of 14:34,35 as evidence of an attempt to again include Paul's teaching concerning women into an appropriate position within the context of 14:33-40 (Metzger:565).

The Lutheran Church of Australia publicly teaches that the rule of the apostle excludes the possibility of women acting as pastors and shepherds of congregations (*DSTO F2*). There is extensive textual evidence that requires the LCA to continue to apply 1 Corinthians 14:34,35 in any discussion on the ordination of women. The text is part of Paul's apostolic teaching for the church: *as in all the congregations of the saints* (1 Cor 14:33b).



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