

THE AUTHORSHIP OF PHILIPPIANS 2:6-11: SOME LITERARY-CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS

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I. Introduction

On April 15, 1981, the journalistic world was scandalized when it was discovered that Janet Cooke, a reporter for the Washington Post, had fabricated her Pulitzer Prize-winning story about an 8-year old heroin addict she called "Jimmy."¹ Editors everywhere began promising reform and insisting that no story would be published unless they or their subordinates knew the identity of every unnamed source. However, such policies are invariably much easier to enunciate than they are to enforce, and violations have continued to plague the news reporting industry.

Virtually everyone who is in touch with the news media is familiar with the problem. Each day news stories are published or broadcast that either use or are based on unnamed sources. Observations are attributed, variously, to "leading critics," "a Western diplomat," "a State Department official," "a senior Administration spokesperson," or other "official" sources. The unfortunate reader or viewer is left with no clues whatsoever as to the credibility of the statements that follow, nor is he alerted to the source's motives for seeking anonymity. It is a problem, one supposes, the news-seeking public will have to face forever.

¹ See "Washington Post Reporter Admits Hoax Won Pulitzer," *L A Times* (April 16, 1981) 1:1. Cooke later told Phil Donahue that she made up the story because she had spent two month looking for such a person and felt she had to justify her time (cf. *NY Times* (January 29, 1982J 18:1).

Although the matter of trying to isolate and identify the sources of a literary composition is more complicated in an ancient document like the NT than it is in a modern news story, the same questions may be asked of each: Does the document in fact have a source behind it, and if so, what is the identity of that source? These questions are two obvious and central concerns of source criticism, an important method of biblical interpretation that seeks to determine a source's presence and identity.² In its attempt to move from literary analysis to historical appraisal, source criticism is a perfectly legitimate tool. It is becoming increasingly recognized, however, that modern source critics are occasionally too prone to rely on sources that they can neither isolate nor identify. Claiming to have detected traditional material in the NT documents, but not being able or willing to support their claims, they leave their readers wondering whether their "sources" are any more credible than those of Janet Cooke.

The student of Paul will immediately see the application of what has been said to the so-called pre-Pauline NT hymns. The famous Christological song in Phil 2:6-11 is a case in point. In recent times the balance of opinion has sided decisively against Pauline authorship of the hymn on the basis of an absence in it of Pauline words and ideas. This problem is alleged to be overcome by the theory that the apostle incorporated into his letter an early hymn written by another author. Who this person may have been is never clearly stated, nor is there any unanimity on the question of the exact structure of the hymn before Paul took it over and gave it its final form. Nevertheless, the bewildering variety of proposals in these areas has not lessened belief in the pre-Pauline origin of the passage. Only a few still maintain that Paul composed the original hymn, and their numbers seem to be diminishing.³

Despite the modern consensus of opinion in support of a pre-Pauline origin⁴ of Phil 2:6-11, the arguments against Pauline author-

² For a concise description of source criticism, see D. J. Harrington, *Interpreting the New Testament* (Wilmington, Delaware: Glazier, 1979) 56-69.

³ The most thorough-going advocacy of Pauline authorship is that of J. M. Furness, "The Authorship of Phil 2, 6-11," *ExpT* 70 (1959) 240-43. Scholars who favor apostolic authorship include L. Cédoux, *Christ in the Theology of St Paul* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1959) 283-84; W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (2nd ed.; London: SPCK, 1955) 41-42, 355; G. V. Jones, *Christology and Myth in the New Testament* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1956) 66, n. 2; S. Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (WUNT 2/4; Tübingen: Mohr, 1981) 147-49.

The many advocates of a pre-Pauline origin of the hymn are ably represented by R. P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians 2:5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship* (Rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983).

⁴ The so-called interpolation theory, which regards the hymn as non-Pauline and therefore a later insertion, will not be dealt with in this paper (however, for a repre-

ship have been simply repeated without anything new being added to the evidence. Recent studies have concentrated their efforts on attempts to isolate these verses and arrange them into strophes or on conjectures that reconstruct the setting and theology of the originally independent hymn.⁵ None of the arguments against the authenticity of the hymn, however, is considered insurmountable by advocates of Pauline authorship. My purpose in this article is to review the arguments, *pro et con*, that have led to this stalemate in argumentation, and then to call attention to some overlooked literary factors that I believe point to the Pauline origin of the hymn.⁶ I wish to make it clear at the outset that my investigation does not proceed from a bias against Source-critical work on the Pauline epistles *per se*. In principle I have no objection whatever to this method. Nevertheless, if it can be shown that the Source of the hymn was Paul himself, then the door should be closed on a specious argument in which accumulated references to a supposed pre-Pauline origin of Phil 2:6-11 are used to increase the probability of hypothetical Sources for other hymnic passages, in the Pauline corpus.

II. Arguments Against Pauline Authorship

A major argument against the Paulinity of the hymn is the different tone that distinguishes it from its context. Martin calls attention to "the way in which it breaks into the continuity of the

sentative of this view, see R. W. Hawkins, *The Recovery of the Historical Paul* [New York: Vanderbilt University, 1943] 251-52, who theorizes that 2:5-11 is a later insertion, "written by one who could not accept the reality of a genuine incarnation" [p. 252]). Such a theory, in the words of D. Guthrie, "does not warrant serious attention since it is entirely lacking in manuscript support and no satisfactory solution can be proposed which facilitated the interpolation of so large a section subsequent to publication" (*New Testament Introduction* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979] 540).

⁵ See, e.g., H. W. Bartsch, *Die konkrete Wahrheit und die Lüge der Spekulation: Untersuchung über den vorpaulinischen Christushymnus und seine gnostische Mythisierung* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1974); J. Coppens, "Une nouvelle structuration de l'hymne christologique de l'épître aux Philippiens," *ETL* 43 (1967) 197-202; B. Eckman, "A Quantitative Metrical Analysis of the Philippians' Hymn," *NTS* 26 (1980) 258-66; M. Meinertz, "Zum Verständnis des Christus-hymnus Phil. 2, 5-11," *TTZ* 61 (1952) 186-92; G. Strecker, "Redaktion und Tradition im Christushymnus. Phil. 2, 6-11," *ZNW* 55 (1964) 63-78; C. H. Talbert, "The Problem of Pre-existence in Phil. 2:6-11," *JBL* 86 (1967) 141-53.

⁶ Our discussion of literary structure will focus mainly on Phil 1:12-2:30. Thus, issues relating to the unity of the letter lie beyond our immediate concern. Nevertheless, many of the same arguments used to support the integrity of Philippians have a bearing upon the question at hand; see D. E. Garland, "The Composition and Unity of Philippians. Some Neglected Literary Factors," *NovT* 27 (1985) 141-73, for these arguments. Garland has presented a convincing case for the unity of Philippians, and I have used his study as a paradigm for my analysis of 2:6-11.

surrounding verses by interposing an elaborate Christological digression, which. . . seems to be too fulsome and ornate for an illustration coined on the spur of the moment."⁷ It does appear that Paul turns unexpectedly from a spontaneously composed *Mahnrede* concerning the Philippians' spiritual health in 1:27-2:4 to a highly structured tribute to the Church's Lord in 2:6-11 without an appropriate transition. In form, as in substance, the passage has all the characteristics of a hymn or poem, and must have been composed deliberately with this end in view. We are thus suddenly and unexpectedly transported from the plane of ethics to the realm of Christology, and in particular to the question of the nature of Christ's pre-existence.⁸ This apparent fissure in the letter has consequently led to the hypothesis that an independent Abschnitt has been inserted at this point. Thus E. Lohmeyer describes the verses as "a self-contained *carmen Christi*,"⁹ while Hunter writes of the hymn as resembling "a 'purple patch' stitched into the fabric of the exhortation."¹⁰ E. F. Scott adds that the passage appears to be all out of proportion to Paul's subject. His admonition against the personal quarrels that have disturbed the harmony of the Philippian church hardly justifies the remarkable comparison between Christ's self-emptying and the ambition of the little cliques at Philippi. Would not a few gentle words of reproof have sufficed?¹¹ The conclusion drawn from this is that Paul must have here inserted a Christian song with which his readers would perhaps be familiar, and which expressed his own ideas more forcefully than he could do himself. Thus Martin concludes: "We are on firm ground in stating that Philippians ii. 6-11 represents a hymnic specimen, taken over by Paul as a *paradosis* from some early Christian source."¹²

A second argument against the Pauline authorship of the hymn is based on the presence in it of an impressive number of key words that are not found elsewhere in the authentic Pauline literature or else are used with a different meaning. Three words (ἀπαργμός, ὑπερ-υψοῦν, καταχθόνιος) do not occur elsewhere in the NT, and the first

⁷ Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 45. Cf. P. Grelot ("Deux notes critiques sur Philippiens 2, 6-11," *Bib* 54 [1973] 169): "Les vv. 6-11 forment un ensemble dont la construction litteraire est tres soignee. On y reconnait a bon droit un hymne liturgique. . . . Son caractere rythme et poetique contraste d'emblee avec le verset qui precede; il suggere que Paul utilise un morceau preexistant."

⁸ Cf. P. Benoit, "Preexistence et incarnation," *RB* 77 (1970) 5-29; Talbert, "The Problem of Pre-existence," 141-53.

⁹ E. Lohmeyer, *Kyrios Jesus: Eine Untersuchung zu Phil. 2, 5-11* (Heidelberg: Akademie der Wissenschaft, 1928) 7.

¹⁰ A. M. Hunter, *Paul and His Predecessors* (London: SCM, 1961) 42.

¹¹ E. F. Scott, "The Epistle to the Philippians," *IB* 11.46-47.

¹² Martin, *Carmen Christi*, xxxiv.

of these is extremely rare in secular Greek. The noun **μορφή** is otherwise attested only once in the NT (Mark 16:12). The question arises, if the hymn is Pauline, would Paul have used so many unusual expressions? As Martin reasons: "The vocabulary test is impressive. . . since so many words are non-Pauline, and NT *hapax legomena*."¹³ In like manner one can cite a number of important Pauline words that the author seems to use in a non-Pauline sense. For instance, Paul uses **κένου** four times elsewhere in his writings (Rom 4:14; 1 Cor 1:17; 4:15; 2 Cor 9:3), but always *sensu malo*, in contrast to its meaning here in Phil 2:7. Other examples include **σχῆμα** (which contains a different meaning in 1 Cor 7:31) and **ὑπήκοος** (which in the sense of religious obedience to God is without parallel in canonical literature).¹⁴ All of these observations seem to point to the conclusion that the hymn was originally a separate composition, written on a different occasion by someone other than Paul.

The disputants of Pauline authorship can also appeal to the absence in the hymn of themes normally associated with Paul's Christology and soteriology. For example, nothing is said about the resurrection, even where the author has Christ's exaltation in mind. The author also shows no signs of holding the Pauline concept of Christ's death bearing a redemptive significance **ὑπὲρ** or **περὶ ὑμῶν**.¹⁵ As A. M. Hunter notes, "Here humanity is not redeemed, but subjected to the new *kyrios*."¹⁶ Furthermore, the use of **χαρίζεσθαι** with respect to Christ is unparalleled in the Pauline writings, which tend to express the conception of Christ's exaltation with other words.¹⁷ Finally, the hymn depicts--uncharacteristically for Paul--Jesus as Lord not of the Church but of the universe. Thus the theology of the hymn contains characteristics that point to the author's use of materials that were already at hand. It seems clear, moreover, that the author of the letter did not incorporate the hymn without alteration. In particular, Lohmeyer was convinced that the line **θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ** was a later addition to the original version of the hymn, added by the apostle himself as an interpretative comment.¹⁸ In his rejection of **θανάτου δὲ**

¹³ R. P. Martin, *Philippians* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 113.

¹⁴ In the NT, obedience to men is usually in view (e.g., to Moses, Acts 7:39; to Paul himself, 2 Cor 2:9).

¹⁵ Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 49; D. M. Stanley, "The Theme of the Servant of Yahweh in Primitive Christian Soteriology and its Transposition by St Paul," *CBQ* 16 (1954) 423.

¹⁶ Hunter, *Paul*, 42 (his emphasis).

¹⁷ For a discussion of Christ's exaltation as pictured in the hymn, see Martin, *Carmen Christi*, 229-48.

¹⁸ Lohmeyer, *Kyrios Jesus*, 4-13.

σταυροῦ Lohmeyer is not alone; Martin notes that the words are "generally acceded to be Paul's hand and to break whatever metrical symmetry the various patterns yield."¹⁹ Originally, then, the reference was to Christ's obedience and self-giving, i.e., merely to his death. However, inserting "even the death of the cross," the author of the letter qualifies Jesus' death as the saving event and so builds a bridge from the incarnation-exaltation scheme of the hymn to the Pauline cross--resurrection scheme.²⁰

A final argument against the apostolic authorship of the hymn is the contention of V. Taylor, following P. Bonnard, that the Servant of the Lord theology of Phil 2:6-11 is pre-Pauline. Bonnard says:

One can understand the Christologies of Paul and of the Fourth Gospel as developments of these verses, but hardly as formulations leading up to those of the hymn. After the Pauline Epistles and the Johannine writings our verses would have had difficulty in finding their place in the development of primitive Christianity.²¹

Taylor calls this "the strongest argument" against the Pauline authorship of the passage,²² while R. H. Fuller categorically states that "Paul never makes use of the Servant language, except where he is quoting tradition which he has received from pre-Pauline Christianity."²³ It is assumed, therefore, that the apostle himself would hardly allude to the Servant teaching in Philippians. If Paul was quoting a traditional formulation, however, the allusion to Isaiah 53 would be more understandable.

III. Counter Arguments For Pauline Authorship

The question of Pauline style will be taken up below in greater detail, but it may be said at this point that none of the arguments that appeal to Paul's poetic abilities has solved the riddle of authorship. It is not for want of trying, however. In particular it is argued that if 1 Corinthians 13 and Rom 8:35-39 are authentic Pauline compositions, and few modern scholars doubt that they are, their close stylistic connection with the Philippi an hymn raises a strong presumption in favor of the latter's authenticity. Pauline authorship here, as well as

¹⁹ Martin, *Philippians*, 111.

²⁰ Ibid., 115.

²¹ P. Bonnard, *L'epître aux Philippiens* (CNT 10; Paris: Niestle, 1950) 48.

²² V. Taylor, *The Person of Christ in New Testament Teaching* (London: Macmillan, 1958) 63.

²³ R. H. Fuller, *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus* (SBT 12; Chicago: Allenson, 1954) 57.

elsewhere, it is urged, should automatically be assumed on stylistic grounds until it is disproved.²⁴ However, this kind of argumentation is purely subjective and has no basis in the text itself. Appeals to hymnodic language in other passages fail to convince since these other texts are not true parallels to Phil 2:6-11, a passage in which Paul is writing from another viewpoint and purpose. Perhaps the hymn in Col 1:15-20 best parallels the language and thought of Phil 2:6-11, but it is debatable whether the original form of Col 1:15-20 was appropriated from tradition, or whether the author of the letter composed these verses himself--i.e., precisely the same problem facing us in Phil 2:6-11.

But the issue of subjectivity cuts both ways, and many scholars have noted that those holding to a pre-Pauline source are just as unscientific and subjective since their conclusions are no less hypothetical and unverifiable. G. F. Hawthorne, for example, while cautiously espousing a pre-Pauline view, warns of the subjective nature of some of the theories of those who deny apostolic authorship:

The necessity of omitting words and phrases, or altering expressions to make the strophes come out right according to some preconceived notion of what they should be, makes one suspicious of the whole procedure and causes one to ask whether this is not just some sort of game that scholars play.²⁵

Others have rightly asked whether the whole source-critical approach to the problem of the NT hymns does not suffer from a radical defect by its adherence to a one-sided "anti-Pauline" methodology. No one has put this better than S. Kim:

The search for pre-Pauline formulae seems to have gone too far, and, if it progresses at the present rate, one wonders whether before long all the sentences written in exalted language and style in the Pauline corpus will not be declared pre-Pauline, just as some critics in 19th [sic] c. managed to declare that all the letters of the Pauline corpus were non-Pauline.²⁶

Kim's caution, though undoubtedly overstated, should serve as a moderating influence lest NT scholarship put too much weight on source-critical arguments of an obvious subjective nature. Kim has

²⁴ According to Scott ("Philippians," 47), Paul's poetic ability, known "from a number of splendid outbursts in his epistles," points to apostolic authorship. Likewise, Cerfaux (*Christ*, 376) writes: "Is this in any way less typical of Saint Paul than the hymn to charity in 1 Cor. 13?" And Furness ("Authorship," 242) notes: "That Paul had fine literary gifts none would deny, and in the leisurely composition of the Captivity Epistles they would find their full and natural expression."

²⁵ G. F. Hawthorne, *Philippians* (Waco: Word, 1983) 77.

²⁶ Kim, *Origin*, 149.

shown that the process of assigning traditional material--whether confessional, kerygmatic, liturgical, hymnodic, or catechetical--to Paul's Christian predecessors is at best a suggestive procedure and at worst an arbitrary and destructive undertaking.²⁷ The application of source criticism to the NT has been fruitful in demonstrating that the authors stood in continuity as well as discontinuity with their predecessors and contemporaries both within and without the early church.²⁸ Hence the excessive zeal that leads critics to declare this or that passage as pre- or non-Pauline often undermines an approach that in principle is a valid method of biblical criticism.²⁹

As for arguments based on the text itself, nothing requires the conclusion that Paul is quoting a pre-Pauline hymn in Phil 2:6-11. Turning first to the matter of *hapax legomena*, Taylor reminds us that "there are other passages in the Pauline Epistles of equal length in which as many words of the kind can be found."³⁰ Furness points us to the text of 1 Corinthians 13, which contains three words (ἀλλ-λάζειν, χρηστεύεσθαι, περπερεύεσθαι) that do not occur elsewhere in the NT, and three (χαλκός, παροξύνειν, ἔσοπτρον) that occur elsewhere in the NT only in non-Pauline texts.³¹ Therefore, the appeal to *hapax legomena* is inconclusive. Furthermore, unusual vocabulary may only reflect the particular theme under discussion; thus one must

²⁷ Kim, *Origin*, passim. In my judgment, Kim offers an important warning about the subjectivity involved in source criticism, but his case for the almost total rejection of source-critical hypotheses goes too far. To begin with, his argument is apparently based on an a priori bias against such theorizing, a bias that few NT scholars would share. Another major problem with Kim's argumentation is methodological. Kim rightly criticizes the over-reliance of scholarship on subjective types of argumentation, but fails to offer a satisfactory alternative method of criticism. Nevertheless, Kim's objections to the independent existence of the hymn demand more than the perfunctory dismissal given them by Martin in the preface to the 1983 edition of *Carmen Christi* (xxxiv): "Recent attempts, notably the one by S. Kim, to support a Pauline authorship of this passage have not seemed impressive and have not faced the cumulative arguments referred to in Philippians, p. 113." Surely the hermeneutical problem addressed by Kim is an issue of greater consequence for NT interpretation than Martin allows.

²⁸ Hunter (*Paul*, 9) himself admits that "Paul's is a highly original and seminal mind," and that "on occasion. . . he definitely protests his spiritual independence of his apostolic predecessors."

²⁹ See the perceptive discussion by R. Strimple, "Philippians 2:5-11 in Recent Studies: Some Exegetical Conclusions," *WTJ* 41 (1979) 246-68. Strimple shows why opting for non-apostolic authorship "is not an innocuous decision" (p. 250).

³⁰ Taylor, *The Person of Christ*, 63. Cf. G. B. Caird (*The Apostolic Age* [London: Duckworth, 1955] 114): "It is true that the passage contains three *hapax legomena* and one word. . . used in an unusual sense. But one of the *hapax legomena* is a compound word of the kind that Paul delighted to create. . . . Moreover, Philippians has a higher proportion of *hapax legomena* than any other Pauline Epistle."

³¹ Furness, "Authorship," 241.

ask whether there were any better or more natural terms at the writer's disposal to express what he desired, or whether there are any words used here that Paul himself could not have used. The occurrence of *κενοῦν* is perhaps the hardest to reconcile with Pauline thought, but the explanation given by Hawthorne allows us to define the term in keeping with Paul's theology elsewhere.³² On the other hand, it should not be overlooked that the hymn contains several words that, taken at face value, seem faithfully to reflect the apostle's characteristic ideas and spirit (e.g., *ὁμοίωμα*, which appears in Rom 1:23; 5:14; 6:5; 8:3, and elsewhere only in Rev 9:7; and the passive of *εὐρίσκειν*, which occurs in Rom 7:10; 1 Cor 4:2; 15:5; 2 Cor 5:3; 11:12; Gal 2:17; Phil 3:9). The argument from vocabulary can also be charged with neglecting the important fact that the language of hymnody tends to be cryptic by its very nature; it is the language of poetry, in which one would expect to find an unusual word or phrase used to heighten the effect.³³

More significant for the issue at hand is the growing distrust of the statistical analysis of literary vocabulary in the determining of authorship. It is notoriously difficult to devise any certain criteria for the examination of style, for the area of comparison is so restricted that the results are sure to be misleading. Quite often subjective impressions based upon Pauline style receive greater stress than justified. With reference to the question of the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles, for example, Metzger has called attention to the basic limitations that are involved in statistical studies. The questions he raises can be asked with equal benefit of those who regard Phil 2:6-11 as pre-Pauline.³⁴

1. How long must a treatise be in order to provide an adequate sample of style?
2. How different can the analysis of two texts be before they raise serious doubt that they have a common author?
3. What allowances should be made for matters of (a) subject matter and (b) literary form?

³² Hawthorne (*Philippians*, 86) cites 2 Cor 8:9 and Eph 1:23; 4:10 as parallels to *ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν*.

³³ On the unusualness of poetic language and the significance of rhetorical criticism, see E. A. Nida, J. P. Louw, A. H. Snyman, J. v. W. Cronje, *Style and Discourse, With Special Reference to the Text of the Greek New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1983) 66-68.

³⁴ B. M. Metzger, "A Reconsideration of Certain Arguments against the Pauline Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles," *ExpT* 70 (1958) 93. For a more recent discussion, see P. Trudinger, "Computers and the Authorship of the Pauline Epistles," *Faith and Freedom* 39 (1986) 24-27.

4. Is it correct to assume automatically that two works are necessarily more similar if they are by the same author than if they were not? Because the answers to these questions are so tentative and subjective, Metzger wisely advocates "a discreet reticence"³⁵ in the use of linguistic arguments. It is, of course, open to anyone to express the opinion that Paul could not have written the hymn on stylistic grounds, but the evidence does not demand this view. It may, in fact, be regarded as evidence of Paul's versatility in writing. Thus, this objection could carry weight only if it could be shown that Paul could not have used the new words in question. In my view, this cannot be substantiated.³⁶

Those who argue for the complete lack of connection between the hymn and the rest of the letter must also reckon with the continuity of themes that point to their unity. The most interesting links are found in 3:20-21, a section that contains numerous lexical and conceptual parallels to 2:6-11.³⁷

2:6, 7	μορφῇ, μορφήν	3:21	σύμμορφον
2:6	ὑπάρχων	3:20	ὑπάρχει
2:7	σχήματι	3:21	μετασχηματίσει
2:8	ἐταπείνωσεν	3:21	ταπεινώσεως
2:10	ἐπουρανίων	3:20	ἐν οὐρανοῖς
2:10	ἵνα . . . πᾶν γόνυ κάμψη	3:21	ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα
2:11	κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός	3:20	κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν
2:11	δόξαν	3:21	τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ

What is especially significant about these parallels is that so many of them belong to the "non-Pauline" language of the hymn.³⁸ Martin discounts these parallels by arguing that 2:6-11 and 3:20-21 derive from the same "pre-Pauline, credal, or liturgical origin;" a fact that "would unite them and explain their common terminology and similar thought forms."³⁹ However, this argument was forcefully refuted by R. Gundry, who notes that not only do the terms appear with a different application but also that many important terms in one are absent in the other.⁴⁰ This seems to suggest, not that Phil 3:20-21

³⁵ Metzger, "A Reconsideration," 94.

³⁶ CE. Furness, "Authorship," 241.

³⁷ On these parallels, see N. Flanagan, "A Note on Philippians iii. 20-21," *CBQ* 18 (1956) 8-9; Garland, "Composition and Unity," 158-59; Strecker, "Redaktion und Tradition," 74-77.

³⁸ See Garland's discussion, "Composition and Unity," 157-58.

³⁹ Martin, *Philippians*, 150. .

⁴⁰ See R. Gundry, *Soma in Biblical Theology with Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology* (SNTSMS 29; Cambridge: University Press, 1976) 177-83, esp. 178; Garland, "Composition and Unity," 158-59.

is a pre-Pauline hymn that the apostle is quoting, as for example Guttgemanns has argued,⁴¹ but rather that in 3:20-21 Paul is deliberately recalling the vocabulary of 2:6-11. Kim therefore concludes: "Precisely because of the parallels Phil 3:20 f. can be used for the view that Phil 2:6-11 is Pauline."⁴²

The case for the non-Paulinity of the hymn is weakened further by the glaring failure of its proponents to reach a consensus about the source of the original hymn. Martin has spotlighted a number of different life-settings that have been thought to explain the origin of the hymn.⁴³ Some scholars favor an Aramaic or Hebrew original, of which 2:6-11 was merely a translation. Others trace the hymn to Jewish Gnosticism, to Hellenistic Gnosticism, and even to the Iranian myth of the Heavenly Redeemer. A mediating view has been suggested by D. Georgi⁴⁴ and Martin himself,⁴⁵ who seek to trace the hymn to Hellenistic Jewish Wisdom. But the fact is that none of these approaches has yet won universal acceptance. This alone should raise a question about the credibility of the hypothesis. Writes Hawthorne: "The multitude of suggestions about sources of the hymn. . . only serve to send one off in pursuit of a question impossible to answer."⁴⁶ Moreover, even if one could clearly demonstrate the existence of a pre-Pauline *paradosis* underlying the hymn in Phil 2:6-11, this would still not rule out Pauline authorship. As J.-F. Collange states it:

No one doubts that Christianity was the melting-pot which produced a fusing of all kinds of influences the traces of which are *indirectly* revealed by our hymn. But it is not just the matter of traces, and the alloy which comes from the crucible has a character *sui generis*; the hymn is not primarily a Christianised copy of prior speculations; it is an original and profound reflection on the *Church's confession of faith* and on its implications for traditional *theology* using, of course, intellectual and religious material which the author may have had at his disposal.⁴⁷

⁴¹ E. Guttgemanns, *Der leidende Apostel und sein Herr* (FRLANT 90; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 241-47.

⁴² Kim, *Origin*, 152.

⁴³ Martin, *Philippians*, 112-13.

⁴⁴ D. Georgi, *Die Gegner des Paulus im 2. Korintherbrief* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964) 292-93.

⁴⁵ Martin, *Philippians*, 113.

⁴⁶ Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 79. Cf. M. D. Hooker ("Philippians 2, 6-11," Jesus und Paulus [eds. E. E. Ellis and E. Grasser; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975] 152): "If the passage [Phil 2:6-11] is pre-Pauline, then we have no guidelines to help us in understanding its meaning. Commentators may speculate about the background--but we know very little about pre-Pauline Christianity, and nothing at all about the context in which the passage originated."

⁴⁷ J.-F. Collange, *The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Philippians* (London: Epworth, 1979) 88 (his emphasis),

The fact is that we do not know enough about primitive Christianity to be confident in our isolation of traditional materials in the Pauline literature or to be dogmatic about our hypotheses concerning possible sources and influences. Thus as *comprehensive* explanations for the background of the NT hymns, source-critical hypotheses are inadequate and far too insubstantial to draw from them any conclusions about authorship.

As for the Servant of the Lord teaching; it can be said that this theological expression is not *necessarily* incompatible with the genuine letters of Paul. On the one hand, Taylor himself admits that "the thought of the Servant undoubtedly lies in the background of Romans iv. 25 . . . and of Ephesians v. 2."⁴⁸ O. Cullmann has likewise called into question the common assumption that the Servant theology of the hymn is foreign to Pauline thought, noting that "in Rom. 5:12ff. Paul makes use of ideas relative to the *ebed Yahweh* and his atoning work."⁴⁹ On the other hand, there are several reasons that may explain the relative neglect of the Servant teaching in Pauline Christology.⁵⁰ More consideration should be given to the fact that the "theological argument is radical" (as Furness says),⁵¹ and that "*statistical* statements about word-occurrences may often be superficial or even misleading guides to the occurrence of actual concepts" (as A. Thiselton has written).⁵² Thus in the final analysis conjectures that the hymn is incongruous with uncontestable Pauline thought can neither be proved nor disproved.

Finally, the problem of an apparent fissure in the letter at 2:6 is rooted in some assumptions that also need not be true. Though it is usually assumed that the exalted language of 2:6-11 indicates their traditional character, there is nothing in the text itself that requires this assumption. As Collange notes, it is just as possible that Paul himself composed the hymn at a time previous to his writing of Philippians and that he used it here because of the appropriate subject matter:

⁴⁸ V. Taylor, *The Atonement in New Testament Teaching* (London: Epworth, 1958) 65.

⁴⁹ O. Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1959) 79.

⁵⁰ See the explanations offered by Taylor, *Atonement*, 65ff.; "The Origin of the Markan Passion Sayings," *NTS* 1 (1954) 159-67.

⁵¹ Furness, "Authorship," 242. Martin himself has written (*Carmen Christi*, 56): "It would be unnatural to ask that every truth about Him and His work should be included in one short tribute. The author would have to be selective of his ideas, and this one fact may go far to explain the omission of those features which we find in undoubtedly Pauline works."

⁵² A. Thiselton, "Semantics and New Testament Interpretation," *New Testament Interpretation* (ed. I. H. Marshall; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977) 97.

If . . . regard is paid to the fact that this passage comes to us only interwoven within a Pauline context--and how fully interwoven it is with the thread of the argument!--and that the coming of Christ in the flesh. . . . the specific reference to the Cross (v. 8) and the rigorous theocentrism (vv. 9a, 11c) are also authentic Pauline themes, then it would be ungracious to deny to the apostle the authorship of a hymn which perhaps reflects preoccupations of his youth to which the theologian of the epistles was less partial.⁵³

IV. *Overlooked Literary Factors*

It is my judgment that the arguments against Pauline authorship are insufficient to prove that the hymn is pre- Pauline. The vocabulary and theology are so compatible with genuine Pauline thought that the best hypothesis is also the simplest: Paul is the author. Though this is a minority view, it seems preferable to one that postulates on the basis of disputable conceptual and grammatical discrepancies the existence of hypothetical sources stemming from ambiguous strands of tradition. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that we face an impasse in the debate unless new evidence can be introduced that will tip the scale even more clearly in favor of Pauline authorship. It is my belief that several overlooked clues to solving the puzzle of authorship are available to us through an examination of the literary structure of the epistle. Identifying the presence of these factors not only points to the Paulinity of 2:6-11 but also sheds light on the plan of the epistle.

The Use of Inclusio

The relationship between the literary structure of a given book to that book's theme is increasingly being recognized as an important aspect of NT research. What E. Grasser has written about Heb 1:1-4 could be applied to almost every NT epistle:

For exegesis it is, I think, of the greatest importance that one understand that the stylistic care and meticulously composed structure are a factor in

⁵³ Collange, *Philippians*, 92-93. In an earlier study ("Paul and Christian Unity: A Formal Analysis of Philippians 2:1-4," *JETS* 28 [1985] 299-308) I proposed the thesis that Phil 2:1-4 is a highly structured composition, similar to the Christ hymn in several ways. More specifically, I suggested that the sections comprising 2:1-4 and 2:5-11 have been tied together in form and message with at least five literary connectors that are discernible in the present form of the text. J. A. Sanders, who likewise emphasizes the unity of the Christ hymn with its present context, is surely correct in stating: "Our debt to Lohmeyer is great, but we do not compliment or complement his work by ignoring the integrity of vss. 1-11 as Paul penned them" ("Dissenting Deities and Philippians 2, 1-11," *JBL* 88 [1969] 290).

the author's intention. We are therefore interested in the analysis of the literary structure not simply as something alongside of exegesis, but precisely as exegesis.⁵⁴

While Grasser is referring only to the opening verses of Hebrews, his remarks apply equally well to the framework in which the Philippian hymn is found. Commentators have tried repeatedly to explain the exact connection between the structure of Philippians and the Christ hymn in 2:6-11. Much of the previous work contains valid insights,⁵⁵ but in my opinion several important links--both structural and literary--have been overlooked. One reason for this neglect is the tendency to divorce the hymn from its context. Since these verses deal with an important conception of Christology it is perhaps inevitable that they will be at the center of any discussion of Philippians. As a consequence they tend to receive undue attention from scholars who are concerned with the exposition of the epistle. For example, a glance at the writings devoted to Phil 2:1-11 is enough to show that the studies pertaining to 2:5-11 are much more weighty than those devoted to 2:1-4.⁵⁶ This is not discreditable in itself, but the lack of balance all too easily leads to a regarding of the hymn and its context as though they were two entirely separate things. The way to a comprehensive and more generally accurate interpretation of the hymn must lie in a proper combination or unification of both hymn and epistle, i.e., in seeking an explanation of the hymn that is consistent with, and adequately related to, the context. Any interpretation of the hymn that fails to do justice to the context is misleading and automatically, by definition, excluded.⁵⁷

One such neglected factor in the composition of Philippians is the author's use of the rhetorical device known as *inclusio* to indicate the literary structure of his writing. By "literary structure" I mean those stylistic, verbal and thematic features that are reflected in Paul's composition and that serve as components from which the discourse

⁵⁴ E. Grasser, "Hebraer I, 1-4. Ein exegetischer Versuch," *Text und Situation* (Gutersloh: Mohn, 1973) 183. I have attempted to make the same point in "Hebrews 1:1-4: A Study in Discourse Analysis," *WTJ* 49 (1987) 175-94; "The Problem of the Literary Structure of Hebrews: An Evaluation and a Proposal," *GTJ* 7 (1986) 177.

⁵⁵ See esp. R. Russell, "Pauline Letter Structure in Philippians," *JETS* 25 (1982) 292-306.

⁵⁶ For instance, Hawthorne's bibliography on 2:1-4 takes up only ten lines and includes but nine different entries (Philippians, 63). His bibliography on 2:5-11 takes up 205 lines of text (approximately four pages!) and includes 159 entries (pp. 71-75). I am indebted to one of my graduate students, Mr. Neil Cole, for bringing these facts to my attention.

⁵⁷ Cf. Black, "Paul and Christian Unity," 307-8.

has been constructed. By "inclusio" I mean the repetition of key words to mark off literary units by restating at the end what was said at the beginning. Recent study has shown that the section comprising 1:12-2:30 is among the most carefully structured in the entire epistle.⁵⁸ The clear use of *inclusio* can be seen in the following chart:

<i>Sub-section</i>	<i>Inclusio</i>	
1:12-26	1:12	προκοπήν
	1:25	προκοπήν
1:27-30	1:27	ἰδών, ἀκούω
	1:30	εἶδετε, ἀκούετε
2:1-18	2:2	χάραν
	2:17-18	χαίρω, συγχαίρω; χαιρετε, συγχαίρετε
2:19-24	2:19	ἐν κυρίῳ, ταχέως
	2:24	ἐν κυρίῳ, ταχέως
2:25-30	2:25	λειτουργόν
	2:30	λειτουργίας

The structure of 1:12-2:30 can also be said to represent a *chiasmus*:

- A News about Paul's Imprisonment (1:12-26)
- B Instructions for the Church (1:27-2:18)
 - Concerning the Enemy Without (1:27-30)
 - Concerning the Enemy Within (2:1-18)
- A' News about Paul's Companions (2:19-30)
 - Commendation of Timothy (2:19-24)
 - Commendation of Epaphroditus (2:25-30)

What should we make of all this? The repetition of key words in the opening and concluding verses of each of these subsections explodes the myth that Philippians is an artless composition with little attentiveness to structure.⁵⁹ It discloses that Paul intended 1:12-30 to be a carefully structured unit. Thus what appears at first to be merely "a kind of aimless chitchat"⁶⁰ is instead a coherent and purposeful argument. After an opening introduction (1:3-11) Paul gives news of his own circumstances (1:12-26), the basic significance of which is to show that the events that he has experienced serve for the advancement (προκοπή[ν], 1:12, 25) of the gospel. Paul lives for one concern--to proclaim Christ. But this gospel has its enemies and

⁵⁸ See Garland, "Composition and Unity," 159-62.

⁵⁹ Cf. Russell, "Pauline Letter Structure," 306.

⁶⁰ Collange, Philippians, 5.

detractors, both outside of the church (1:27-30) and within it (2:1-4). So Paul "trains his sights" (ἰδών, 1:27) on the problem of the church's spiritual enemies with an exhortation to steadfastness (1:27) and unity (2:2). In voluntary humility (2:3-4) the Christians at Philippi are to put away selfish ambition, just as Christ wanted nothing for himself and yet received everything from God (2:5-11). Then, and only then, will their joy--and Paul's--be made perfect (χάραν, 2:2; χαιρω, συγγαίρω, χαίρετε, συγγαίρετε, 2:17-18).

After dealing with his own circumstances (1:12-26) and those of his readers (1:27-2:18), Paul returns to his own plans (2:19-30). If God be pleased (ἐν κυρίῳ, 2:19, 24) he will send Timothy to them shortly (ταχέως, 2:19) to precede Paul's own speedy arrival (ταχέως, 2:24). In the meantime the Philippians' own representative (λειτουργόν, 2:25) Epaphroditus, who had completed their service (λειτουργίας, 2:30) to Paul, is to be returned (2:25-30). Yet this section (2:19-30) is much more than a mere travelogue. Paul ties it closely to his exhortation to humility and unity in 2:1-4: In contrast to those who are consumed with self-concern (τὰ ἑαυτῶν ζητοῦσιν, 2:21; cf. 2:4, μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες), these men are flesh and blood examples of the same selfless attitude that characterized Christ (2:6-11) and that Paul now wants the church to emulate (2:5).

Thus the structure of 1:12-2:30 in its entirety and in the inter-relation of the individual subsections indicates a literary unit marked by cohesion and balance. It should be clear that 1:12-2:30 is a piece of great technical skill, and that we are dealing with a unit, and a unit that has not been composed haphazardly. Rather than having its source in an already formed tradition, Phil 2:6-11 reflects the thought, language and purpose of the section as a whole. Thus, while it is possible that 2:6-11 was an independent unit at one time, it is difficult to believe that the larger framework in which it is found was made to conform to it, rather than vice versa.

Perhaps someone will condemn this kind of analysis as arguing in a circle: The hymn cannot be understood before one understands the overall structure of the passage, and the overall structure cannot be understood as such except by an examination of the hymn. My only rebuttal is that all arguing, exegetical and otherwise, is arguing in a circle, within a system. The only question becomes, Who has drawn the circle? Who has closed the system? My appeal is simply for more closed minds, more arguing in terms of Paul's circle.⁶¹ To approach the investigation of the hymn by isolating it from the larger context of

⁶¹ See my "Paul and Christian Unity," 307.

the discourse is to obscure Paul's method of developing and presenting his argument and to neglect the way in which that method binds the discussion together by the use of verbal and thematic associations. Rather, Paul's use of the hymn and the literary structure of 1:12-2:30 are inseparable, and together both structure and hymn present a strong presumption that the latter was originally composed by Paul.

The Use of the Societas Concept

But 1:12-2:30 maintains a cohesiveness in more ways than just this. Another aspect of literary structure within this unit of discourse is related to the *κοινωνία*-theme that is so prominent in the epistle. In an important study, J. P. Sampley has shown that *κοινωνία* in the Pauline writings is closely connected with the Roman legal concept of *societas*.⁶² Though his study has as its primary aim the analysis of Paul's use of the *societas* partnership as a model of Christian community, it also sheds light on the authorship and purpose of Phil 2:6-11. A *societas* was a partnership between equal partners based on their mutual assent to a common purpose. In a *societas*, "each of the partners contributed something to the association with a view toward a shared goal."⁶³ Thus each partner was expected to make a contribution to that purpose, and each partner could expect a share of the resulting profit.

Philippians shows that such a *societas* existed between Paul and the Christians at Philippi.⁶⁴ Together they had formed a consensual partnership in Christ for preaching the gospel (4:15: "no church entered into partnership [*ἐκοινώνησεν*] with me . . . except you only"). This partnership involved, among other things, the matter of "giving and receiving" (4:15). Thus Paul, contrary to his otherwise prevalent claims of financial independence, takes support from one of the churches that he has established. One of the reasons Paul wrote to the Philippians is to acknowledge the gift they had sent with Epaphroditus. The last major section in Philippians (4:10-20) is in fact a formal receipt tendered by Paul to the Philippian Christians for their contribution. So Paul thanks God for their partnership (*τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν*) in the gospel from the beginning of his European ministry to the present time (1:3-5).

⁶² J. P. Sampley, *Pauline Partnership in Christ: Christian Community and Commitment in Light of Roman Law* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980).

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 51-77.

At the same time, however, Paul is aware that the unity of a *societas* can be threatened by the failure of a partner to act according to the established purpose of the association. "As long as all the partners are disposed in the same way, the contract continues. *Societas* terminates with the loss of unanimity, single-mindedness, among the partners."⁶⁵ As a consequence, Paul uses the language of *societas* in appealing to his readers for unity and mutual love. In 2:1-4 he condemns selfishness and conceit as being fundamentally alien to the *societas*. Instead, humility and self-giving make possible their "being of the same mind" (2:2). Paul then goes on to ground these positive virtues in the One who alone gave the *societas* birth and who can sustain it, namely, the Lord known for his humble acts of service to others. Thus the sketch of Christ's life and death in 2:6-11 is not given simply out of a need to set forth Christ as an example of humility and love (as in the usual interpretation). Paul uses the hymn to express the way the Philippians were to live with one another and with Paul in a full partnership *societas* in Christ. Says Paul: If all the Philippians will abandon their pride and self-seeking and turn in service to one another, as Christ acted, then they will truly be of one mind.

From the *societas* language of the letter as described above we are better able to understand the structure of 2:1-11 and particularly the purpose of 2:6-11. For Paul, to be of the same mind (2:2) is to maintain the commitment to the goal about which the *societas* was established. Thus the occurrence of the *societas* terminology in 2:1-4 expresses Paul's understanding of what is appropriate to the *societas* and what is inappropriate to it. However, only "in Christ" is *societas* possible. In Sampley's words, "The *societas* is indeed *societas Christi*."⁶⁶ Thus it is not surprising to find *societas* language in the section just prior to the hymn as well as in the hymn itself.

That the language of 2:1-11 reflects the *societas* motif suggests that Paul is not merely quoting a traditional hymn about Christ. On the contrary, life together is described in 2:1-11 in such a way as to suggest strongly the Pauline origin of both subsections of which it is comprised. We can now see why Paul omits any reference to himself as an apostle, as being "over" the Philippians rather than one with them (1:1). We can also see why Paul's exhortation to Euodia and Syntyche (4:2) is so emphatically worded, for he understands these women to be indispensable partners in the *societas* and in the spreading of the gospel for which the *societas* exists. In Paul's commenda-

⁶⁵ Ibid., 62.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 68.

tion of Timothy (2:19-24) we see yet another feature of *societas*. In keeping with Roman law concerning a representative in lieu of an absent partner,⁶⁷ Timothy is to go to Philippi in Paul's behalf. Thus "in sending Timothy to the Philippians, Paul very nearly sends his double, like a son in place of a father."⁶⁸ Finally, we have already noted that the last part of Philippians (4:10-20) is specifically prompted by their offering and is Paul's receipt. In short, only with the Philippi an church was the *societas* so firmly established that Paul could use the language of partnership to conceptualize their mutual relationship. While none of these factors proves that the hymn in 2:6-11 was originally composed by Paul, together they present a strong case that it was. The hymn fits the present context and theme so well that it is very difficult to see how it could be detachable.⁶⁹

The Use of σταυρός

By now it is undoubtedly clear that we have not sought to deal with all of the issues raised by Phil 2:6-11 but have instead attempted to chart an exegetical thread through the epistle in order to illuminate Paul's use of the hymn. However, I would urge, finally, that more consideration be given to the view that the words **θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ** ("even death on a cross") are a genuine part of the already existing hymn. This notion is not, of course, new. Collange has shown that "the reference to the Cross is central and can perfectly well be retained in a number of viable schemes."⁷⁰ While some would dispute this latter point, there seems to be no compelling reason to reject the words merely because some scholars insist it is a Pauline addition to the hymn. As Hooker has written:

One of the difficulties is that the passage [2:6-11] as we have it never really fits the pattern into which the commentators try to push it; they therefore excise certain lines as Pauline glosses. But there is a dangerous circularity in this kind of method; I suspect that often those who analyse the lines have decided which words are Pauline glosses before they start their poetic analysis.⁷¹

Moreover, it is hardly probable that a primitive Christian hymn would have consisted of perfectly balanced lines and strophes. Rather, as

⁶⁷ Ibid., 89-91.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 90.

⁶⁹ So also N. T. Wright, "ἄρπαγμός and the Meaning of Philippians 2:5-11," *JTS* 37 (1986) 351-52.

⁷⁰ Collange, *Philippians*, 84.

⁷¹ Hooker, "Philippians 2, 6-11," 157.

E. Haenchen has suggested, the individual strophes of NT hymns probably differed a great deal in structure and were composed in the free rhythm of hymnic prose.⁷²

It would therefore follow that with the words "even death on a cross" the climax of Christ's abasement is reached. Writes M. Dibelius:

The way in which the closing clause emphasizes the cross indicates both rhythmically and objectively the last step in the humiliation. So great was Christ's humble renunciation of divine horror that he [Paul] placed it last on the pillory.⁷³

If, then, the phrase *θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ* is an integral part of the hymn, then the argument that the hymn does not contain the characteristic Pauline soteriology completely falls down, for the idea of substitutionary atonement is at least implicit in the phrase (as those critics who take the phrase as a Pauline gloss believe).⁷⁴

V. Conclusion

In this study I have attempted to show that the arguments for the Pauline authorship of Phil 2:6-11 are more defensible than those for the existence of documents or sources that *ex hypothesi* are unprovable and whose presence are known only by inference. It is insufficient merely to suppose that Paul must have gotten the material from someone else. If we want to argue this position, we must first show that this material belonged together in a document or at least in a source whose literary characteristics can be known through some means other than purely subjective impressions. Since, however, nothing compels the conclusion that Paul himself could not have formulated the hymn previously and then included it in the work under examination because of its relevance to the issue being discussed, such a procedure is unnecessary.

No doubt the problem of the authorship of Phil 2:6-11 will continue to be discussed and scholars will be convinced one way or the other partly by background, temperament and predisposition. Unfortunately, the fundamental insistence upon the pre-Pauline origin of the hymn has in our day become a *consensus opinio*. This impressive consensus must be given its due weight. But we must also bear in mind that a good deal of modern opinion appears to be due more to

⁷² E. Haenchen, "Probleme des johanneischen 'Prologs'," *ZTK* 60 (1963) 309.

⁷³ M. Dibelius, *An die Philipper* (HNT 11; Tübingen: Mohr, 1925) 81.

⁷⁴ See further, E. Lupien, "La morte di croce. Contributi per un'analisi di Fil. 2, 6-11," *RivB* 27 (1979) 271-311.

the prevailing climate of thinking than to any new evidence. It is interesting to note that Furness, who held to Pauline authorship, was well aware of the reasons that Lohmeyer gave for rejecting it. But he held that other considerations outweighed them, and that the best solution to the problem on the basis of *all* the evidence is to see Paul the apostle as the author. Furness has not so much been confuted as bypassed. Even scholars who reveal an acquaintance with Furness's essay (and there are few of these) seem to deal inadequately with his massive arguments.⁷⁵

To summarize: the theory of an underlying source directs attention to some' difficult phenomena in the hymn, but it fails to offer a convincing explanation of them. It fails, moreover, to answer the most important objection: the absence of any solid evidence that the ode to Christ ever existed in a pre-Pauline form.

We need, therefore, to consider more carefully the alternative that the author of the epistle has composed the hymn rather than taken it over. This conclusion does not, of course, imply that the hymn throws no light at all on early Christian worship and its content. Quite the contrary: the hymn provides a valuable insight into the development of Christology and of Christian devotional thought during the mid-1st century. But the more closely the facts are examined, the less tenable becomes the case for a purely cultic origin for the hymn-despite the likelihood that it reflects early worship. Existing creedal or hymnic themes most likely provided only certain thoughts out of which the author fashioned a new Christological tribute. Thus most of the elements in the passage may be explained as the result of the writer's own private meditation on his theme, with perhaps (and only perhaps) some other elements coming in which bear the stamp of Christological speculation from some other tradition.

⁷⁵ See, e.g., the criticism of Martin's *Carmen Christi* in I. H. Marshall, "The Christ-Hymn in Philippians 2:5-11. A Review Article," *TynB* 19 (1968) 120.

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