The Spirit and Flesh in Romans 8 Interpreted in the Light of the Relationship with God for People Recovering from Childhood Trauma

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S.T.L. Thesis
January 13, 2023

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I. Introduction

"I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" (Rom 7:15). Everyone who engages in at least a bit of honest self-reflection likely identifies with this statement from Saint Paul's letter to the Romans. Christians, non-Christians, and all who try to live according to some kind of moral standards or ideals discover how hard it is to stop doing what is wrong and start doing what is right. However, Romans 5-8, which describes the conflict between the Spirit and flesh, can resonate particularly strongly with those who find themselves in the clutches of addictions and compulsive destructive behavior caused by childhood trauma ("adverse childhood experiences").[1]

As Dr. Bessel van Der Kolk, a psychiatrist and trauma specialist, and author of the best-seller book *The Body Keeps the Score* states that "posttraumatic reactions feel incomprehensible and overwhelming. Feeling out of control, survivors of trauma often begin to fear that they are damaged to the core and beyond redemption."[2] Those words seem like a contemporary reformulation of Paul's words we find in Rom 7:14-25. The sense of lack of control, misunderstanding of one's own actions, and despair are present in both Paul's and van der Kolk's descriptions. Besides, one of the main thesis of van der Kolk is that "trauma is not just an event that took place sometime in the past; it is also the imprint left by that experience on mind, brain, and body."[3] This also sounds similar to Paul's statements that "nothing good dwells within me,

[1] "[…]trauma happens to us, our friends, our families, and our neighbors. Research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has shown that one in five Americans was sexually molested as child; one in three couples engages in physical violence. A quarter of us grew up with alcoholic relatives, and one out of eight witnessed their mother being beaten or hit." See: Bessel van Der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*, (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2015), 2.

[2] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 2.

[3] Van der Kolk, *The Body*, 3.

that is, in my flesh" (Rom 7:18). Those analogies can sound very promising with regards to using Paul's text as spiritual guidance for those who may experience such effects of trauma described by van der Kolk; especially when we take into account the joyful message of Romans 8, where Paul announces the solution to the problem. However, will such a spiritual interpretation be valid and authentic? Will it be faithful to Paul's intention in the text of Romans even though the new contemporary context is quite different from the context in which the text was originally written?

The Biblical Pontifical Commission in *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (*IBC*) maintains that the biblical text can be interpreted in new circumstances and provide authentic spiritual meaning even if this meaning was not intended by an author. Of course, this does not mean absolute subjectivity. Some objective principles should control interpretations (*IBC* II.B.3). Sandra Schneiders, a Catholic feminist biblical scholar, created an entire hermeneutical theory that on the one hand seeks and explores the original meaning of a biblical text, and on the other is open to and aims at the new spiritual meaning that leads to a transformative religious experience for the reader.[4] Such a theory may provide a context for interpreting the text of Romans in new, contemporary circumstances. As Thomas Stegman states, Romans is part of the New Testament, the Holy Scripture, and even though it is almost two thousand years old, it "was also written for our instruction."[5] Today Romans can be interpreted for our instruction that can be different from the circumstances of Paul and his audience. Given the striking similarities between the text of Romans and the description of those who had adverse childhood experiences, we are invited to at least explore the possibility of finding spiritual instructions in Paul's letter that speak to the people recovering from childhood trauma.

[4] Sandra Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture*, (Collegeville, MIN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 4-5.

[5] Thomas Stegman, *Written for Our Instruction, Theological and Spiritual Riches in Romans*, (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 2017), 2.

I am aware that the project seems complicated because not only does it necessitate the employment of the historical-critical method but aims at a contextual interpretation in a very complex field, an interdisciplinary approach to trauma (psychological, neurological, therapeutic, etc.). The interpretation can go wrong in many ways: unauthorized "spiritualization" of the therapeutic process, demonization of trauma or traumatized people (unfortunately, the experience of many in the past), and dualistic understanding of Paul's conflict of flesh and the Spirit that could be detrimental for the healing process from trauma (the therapeutic process requires accepting not "fighting" with the body). In my defense, I am not relying solely on my ideas, but rather using, comparing, and reformulating the ideas of scholars who have interpreted Paul's texts similarly. For example, Susan Eastman and Volker Rabens are two scholars whose interpretations of Paul have employed psychological theories that focus on human relationships. Both Eastman and Rabens refer to attachment theory and the effects of abuse and neglect, which is also van der Kolk's focus and a large part of his research on trauma. My main goal in using the works of Eastman and Rabens and other scholars, which include James Dunn, Gordon Fee, Frank Matera, and Thomas Stegman, is to find a way to interpret Paul's theological and anthropological concepts in the language of relationship with God, and then to explore how it fits into van der Kolk's therapeutic approach. I will focus on the possibility and validity of such an interpretation in which Sandra Schneiders' hermeneutics will be my guide. I will make use of her three-step method that focuses in sequence on "the world behind the text," "the world of the text," and "the world before the text." The first two steps, the historical-critical interpretation, will take up most of this paper and prepare the ground for the last step which is the spiritual interpretation with the full consequences of this meaning (*IBC* II.B.2). This approach will be one of the many possible contemporary interpretations, yet I claim it is a valid and authentic one.

Although I have so far been referring to the interpretation of Romans 5-8, I will narrow down the material I will analyze in this paper. As stated, Rom 7:14-25 creates an impression of similarity with van der Kolk's description of childhood trauma, but I will focus on chapter 8, firstly because the chapter presents the solution to the plight described in Rom 7:14-25, and secondly, because it was not explored in detail by Eastman and Rabens.[6] In Romans 8, I will focus on three metaphors highly significant in the chapter: the walking metaphor, the container metaphor, and the adoption metaphor. These metaphors describe the life of the flesh and of the Spirit.

This paper will defend the following thesis: the three metaphors from Romans 8 provide language that expresses a relationship with God; the language stays faithful to Paul's original intention and at the same time can be spiritually fruitful in the context of people who recover from childhood trauma.

The structure of the paper will follow Sandra Schneiders' hermeneutical method with its three stages of interpretation. Chapter One will deal with "the world behind the text," which includes a looking at the historical background of Paul that could have influenced the language of Romans. I will particularly focus on the meaning of the keywords in this paper: σάρξ and πνεῦμα. The historical investigation reveals Paul's apocalyptic understanding of those terms. Two facts become apparent: (1) that Paul is not following Hellenistic dualism when he criticizes σάρξ, and (2) that πνεῦμα is a relational term, which points to an experienced presence of God. Chapter Two will focus on "the world of the text," and its goal is to produce the controlling principle of the interpretation of the chosen metaphors. Paul's background, described in Chapter One will be

[6] Eastman interprets only Romans 7:14-25 and Rabens deals only with Romans 8:14-17. See: Susan Grove Eastman, *Paul and the Person: Reframing Paul's Anthropology*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017); Volker Rabens, *The Holy Spirit and Ethics in Paul: Transformation and Empowering for Religious-Ethical Life*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013).

compared with the literary and conceptual structure of the metaphors. The comparison will help to reveal how the text by itself conveys the revelatory message. This process will produce "the ideal meaning" of each metaphor. The ideal meaning as the controlling principle on one hand will connect the text with Paul's background (his faith, his experience, etc.), with a new context, the experience of the contemporary believer who suffered trauma in his or her life. Chapter Three, using "the ideal meaning" will interpret the three metaphors in the context of the "adverse childhood experiences," as described by van der Kolk. I will demonstrate how the metaphorical language of σάρξ and πνεῦμα can be interpreted in the light of a relationship with God. My project will show how the text of Romans can be understood by the contemporary reader and become a means for a transformative experience of God even in the midst of suffering from trauma.

II. Chapter One: The world behind the text.

Introduction

The interpretation of Romans requires analyzing the text in three different dimensions: historical, linguistic, and in the context of the reader.[7] In order to arrive at the meaning of the text that is valid and at the same time relevant to the reader the interpreter cannot abandon any of those three dimensions. The historical dimension Schneiders calls "the world behind the text."[8]

[7] "The historical-critical method is the indispensable method for the scientific study of the meaning of ancient texts. Holy Scripture, inasmuch as it is the "Word of God in human language," has been composed by human authors in all its various parts and in all the sources that lie behind them." (*IBC* I.A.1). "[…] a synchronic analysis of texts, we must recognize that we are dealing here with a legitime operation, for it is the text in its final stage, rather than in its earlier editions, which is the expression of the Word of God." (*IBC* I.A.4). "The interpretation of a text is always dependent on the mindset and concerns of its readers. Readers give privileged attention to certain aspects and, without even being aware of it, neglect others." (*IBC* I.E.1).

[8] Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text*, 127.

Schneiders's interest is mainly in the gospels and she explores factors that are associated with them: the memories of the historical Jesus, the experience, expectations, and imagination of the first Christians, etc.[9] However, the same method can be applied to the letters of Saint Paul by replacing the reconstruction of the historical Jesus with the reconstruction of the history of Paul and his audience: the crucial events of their lives, their experience, their expectations, and their imagination.[10] Although we cannot reach the perfect reconstruction of those factors, the biblical text requires an explanation based on historical investigation.[11] A different language, unfamiliar philosophical assumptions, and unknown cultural context often attribute to the obscurity of the text. Even though we look for the "application" or "appropriation" of the text in the new context one cannot do it without understanding the relevant elements of the context of the author and the original audience. Failing to understand properly the world behind the text can lead to misinterpretation.[12]

Every particular biblical text has specific problems in the process of explanation of its meaning, which require appropriate methods to solve them. In our project that focuses on the conflict between σάρξ and πνεῦμα in Romans, there are specific approaches that will lead to a better understanding. Firstly, we should focus on Paul as the author of the text. How did the Jewish and Greco-Roman culture influence the understanding of the crucial terms he used? Which theological and philosophical presuppositions may be present in the text? What was the impact of his meditations, charismatic experiences, his apostolic work, and debates with other Christian teachers? Secondly, since Romans is a letter addressed to a specific community it is

[9] Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text*, 97-128.
[10] Schneiders refers sometimes to the Pauline letters. Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text*, 112.
[11] Schneiders calls the goal to unravel the authors intention and the original audience understanding of the text "a romanticist-positivist chimera" which is only a nineteenth-century unattainable ideal. Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text*, 125-126.
[12] Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text*, XXXIII.

necessary to analyze Paul's audience. Who were the recipients of the letter? To whom did specifically Paul address the message? What kind of problems in the community did Paul refer to? Those questions require delving into the historical data.

The author

In analyzing Paul as the author of Romans one has to bear in mind what we can discover about his upbringing, but also the fact of his transformation to "the apostle of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles" as he calls himself (Rom 1:1-2; 1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1, 16; 2,9; Eph 1:1). We know that Paul was a Jew born in Greco-Roman culture.[13] However, we also know that he wrote the letter to the Romans after many years of being a Christian missionary, having charismatic experiences, and teaching in communities with different problems.[14] Paul had to develop his convictions,[15] arguments, and even the specific technical terms that he used in his letters.[16] In the interpretation of σάρξ and πνεῦμα, one should take into account all the historical factors that stand behind the text. One should reflect on Paul's upbringing and education to discover how strong can be his Hellenistic and Jewish roots, so one can make valid statements about the meaning of the key concepts.

Paul was born in Tarsus in Cilicia, the proud and famous city in the eastern part of the Roman Empire where he spent approximately the first twenty years of his life.[17] The city had a vibrant Greek culture, zeal for classical Greek education, and strong institutions among them a well-known school in rhetoric and Stoic philosophy.[18] Paul demonstrates in his writings that he

[13] Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: His Story*, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 3-9.
[14] Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 199-200.
[15] In Romans he uses the phrase "my gospel" as the message he preaches in his writings (Rom 2:16; 16:25).
[16] James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 3.
[17] Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 7.
[18] Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 5.

received excellent training in Greek rhetoric.[19] As Jerome Murphy-O'Connor points out, Paul is "a vigorous Greek" who uses with ease the rhetorical style and techniques which were acquired through professional studies and practice.[20] It is also very probable that during his studies he was influenced by Stoic philosophy with its emphasis on the divine reason ruling the world, the virtue of ἀπάθεια, human freedom, and responsibility.[21]

However, even though Paul was educated in Greek culture and held the status of a Roman citizen, which also indicates the good standing of his family, the Greco-Roman culture was not the source of his identity. First and foremost Paul was and remained a Jew.[22] It is confirmed by himself in his letters (Cf., 2 Cor 11:21-22, Gal 2:15, Phil 3:4-5), as well as by the strong consensus of the contemporary scholars.[23] Paul chose to be a proud Jew who had to develop a strong distinctive identity from his Greek environment in Tarsus (through so-called "boundary marks," the external signs of observing the law that included dietary laws, circumcision, and the Sabbath celebration).[24] The only question that is left is what kind of Jew Paul became after his so-called "conversion."

It is known from Paul's self-presentation that he received training in the Jewish scripture and tradition in Jerusalem at the Pharisaic school of Gamaliel I (Acts 5:34). From Gal 1:14 one discovers that he was "extremely zealous for the tradition of his fathers." This zeal, according to the Pharisaic perspective, was focused on keeping the Law.[25] As Murphy-O'Connor states Paul's distaste for the new movement that proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah was because of its

[19] Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*,, 4.
[20] Murpy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 5.
[21] Murpy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 6.
[22] Murpy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 6.
[23] Brant J. Pitre, Michael P. Barber, and John A. Kincaid, Paul, a New Covenant Jew: Rethinking Pauline Theology, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019), 11.
[24] See: Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul*, 6.
[25] Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul,* 18.

ambivalent attitude to the salvatory function of the Jewish law.[26] It is important to bear in mind at this point that the discoveries of scholars such as E.P. Sanders and James Dunn have changed the perception of the attitude of the Jews from the Second Temple Period towards the Law. Sanders and Dunn, the chief architects of the New Perspective on Paul, have demonstrated that Jews from that period (including Paul) in general were far from seeing their religion as legalistic.[27] In fact, for the Jewish people of the Second Temple Period, the Mosaic law was given by God's grace and observed as the response to this unmerited God's gift and election.[28] The presentation of Judaism as a legalistic religion came from the anachronistic interpretation of Paul's letters in the Reformation era. Those interpretations failed to understand what Paul was saying when he contrasted the law with grace, faith, or the Spirit.[29] The way to avoid such an unfortunate mistake is the proper comprehension of the change in Paul's attitude towards the law and Judaism that appeared after the event on the road to Damascus, which is described in Acts 9:1-18.[30]

Eschatological imagination

Almost all contemporary New Testament scholars emphasize Paul's indebtedness to Jewish apocalyptic eschatology.[31] It is hard to say when and how Paul was influenced by this strand of Judaism but it is clear that his writings and Jewish apocalyptic texts show similarities in language and concepts. Clarifying terms associated with eschatology allows seeing Paul as an apocalyptic writer. If one takes into account the distinction of Martinus de Boer, one recognizes the following terms: (1) apocalypse – a genre, which name is taken from the first word of the

[26] Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul,* 19.
[27] James D. G. Dunn, *The New Perspective on Paul*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 6.
[28] Ed P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: a comparison of patterns of religion,* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 421-422.
[29] Dunn, *New Perspective*, 22.
[30] Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, *Paul,* 66.
[31] Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, *Paul,* 64-65.

Book of Revelation (ἀποκάλυψις), (2) apocalyptic eschatology – "a religious perspective" that accepts the divine revelation about "the last things" and interprets the present events according to this revelation, (3) apocalypticism – "a symbolic universe" characteristic for the religious groups that accept the apocalyptic eschatology.[32] Since apocalyptic eschatology is a perspective and not a genre, it can appear not only in apocalypses but also in other genres like parables, hymns, or letters; therefore, it is correct to speak about the apocalyptic eschatology in Paul's writing.

The most recognizable feature of the eschatological perspective which is common to Paul and the whole Jewish apocalyptic eschatology is the doctrine of two "ages" or two "eons."[33] This doctrine is called "the eschatological dualism."[34] The idea comes from the expectation that God will radically transform reality (Isa 65:17), hence there is "this age," "the old age" and the expected "age to come," "the new age."[35] The dualism is temporal ("this age" and "the age to come"), but also at the same time cosmic (the realm of the earth and the realm of heaven or the Kingdom of Heaven), and moral ("this age" is evil, while "the coming age" is the age of God's righteousness, life, and peace).[36] As de Boer notices "this age" is dominated by sin and death (or Sin and Death – capitalized because the eschatological imagination sometimes personifies them, as the demonic principles or beings and enemies of God and his people).[37] Human beings are too weak to fight Sin and Death, therefore to be saved they need God's intervention.[38] According to

[32] Martinus C. de Boer, "The Appropriation of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology in the New Testament, especially Paul," in *Hoffnung für die Zukunft. Modelle eschatologischen und apokalyptischen Denkens*, ed. E. Noort, M. Popovic, (Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen), 2001, 17.

[33] Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, *Paul*, 68.

[34] De Boer, "Appropriation," 17.

[35] Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, *Paul*, 69.

[36] De Boer, "Appropriation," 17.

[37] De Boer, "Appropriation," 18.

[38] Martinus C. de Boer, "Apocalyptic as God's Eschatological. Activity in Paul's Theology," in *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, Jason Maston, (Augsburg: Fortress, 2016), 51, 57.

apocalyptic eschatology, there is no continuity between "this age" and "the age to come". "The age to come" will replace "this age," which is going to be destroyed and annihilated.[39]

Although in Paul's writing the eschatological dualism is present (1 Cor 15:20-26), there is also a profound dissimilarity with the Jewish apocalypticism.[40] For Paul, the transition between ages has already started with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; beginning with this event God has been carrying on "apocalyptic-eschatological saving activity" through the Spirit (Gal 4:4-5; Rom 8:3-4).[41] One can consider the beginning of "the new age" because Sin and Death, the two main enemies of God and the rulers of "this age" were defeated (Sin on the cross, and Death through the resurrection).[42] Parousia, the final act of God's intervention has not yet arrived (1 Thess 4:15; 1 Cor 1:8; 15:23-24) and there is still a time of struggle (Rom 8:18-21 Eph 1:14; 4:30), but the believer can enjoy "the new life in the Spirit" (Rom 3:24; 8:1-4; Col 1:14). This situation is usually described as "already and not yet" eschatology or "the eschatological tension" which says that believers are caught up in the time of transition between the ages.[43] However, according to de Boer, this "eschatological tension" should not be overestimated.[44] The resurrection of Christ and the gift of the Spirit was an absolute novelty and the first Christian communities and Paul must have experienced something extraordinary in their lives.[45] De Boer proposes to use the phrases "already and still more" which in his opinion describes more accurately Paul's understanding of the beginning of the new age and the eager expectation of the imminent conclusion.[46] I will later argue along the same lines that the change in the life of the

[39] De Boer, "Appropriation," 18.
[40] Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, *Paul*, 71.
[41] De Boer, "Appropriation," 19.
[42] De Boer, "Apocalyptic," 5.
[43] Dunn, *Theology*, 461-482.
[44] De Boer, "Apocalyptic," 52.
[45] Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, *Paul*, 73.
[46] De Boer, "Apocalyptic," 52.

believer, as Paul sees it, is radical, and using the phrase "already and still more" is better than "already and not yet."

Another important issue in understanding Paul's eschatological perspective is de Boer's discovery of two distinguished patterns in the Jewish apocalyptic eschatology: (1) the cosmological and (2) the forensic pattern.[47] One group of Jewish apocalyptic writings focused on the role of the angels and demons in the apocalyptic drama (Jubilees, 1 Enoch, or the War Rule of Qumran) and the other on deeds of the individual (Psalms of Solomon, 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra).[48] According to the cosmological pattern, the whole world and all the people live under the power of the evil, angelic powers that lead them astray from God, and in consequence from life and peace.[49] Those who are faithful to God await the time when God will deliver them and destroy those powers that victimize and oppress them. In those writings, in the final act, God will end the rule of the cosmic powers and restore righteousness and peace.[50] Conversely, the other strand of eschatological writing (the forensic pattern) is less concerned about demons or angels and the cosmic dimension.[51] "This age" or "this world" is evil and dominated by sin and death (not capitalized because it focuses on the condition and responsibility of the human being), because it was the decision of humanity not to follow God's will.[52] God in his mercy gives the law as the solution to the human plight, and people can freely choose their destiny by following it or not.[53] There is not much about demonic forces exercising power but rather "this age" is the time of making a decision that will determine a person's destiny.[54] As de Boer indicates, the forensic

[47] De Boer, "Appropriation," 20.
[48] De Boer, "Appropriation," 21.
[49] De Boer, "Appropriation," 21.
[50] De Boer, "Appropriation," 21.
[51] De Boer, "Appropriation," 21.
[52] De Boer, "Appropriation," 21.
[53] De Boer, "Appropriation," 21.
[54] "Evil angelic powers are absent from both works. According to 2 Baruch, for example, 'Adam sinned first and ... brought death upon all ... each of us has become his [or her] own Adam' (54:14, 19; translation A.F.J. Klijn in

pattern is the weak version of the cosmological pattern, because focusing on the decisions and deeds of the human being does not explain the primal source of evil.[55]

With regards to Paul, it seems that he builds his ideas on the cosmological pattern, while at the same time, he is in dialogue with the Christians who are more in line with the forensic pattern.[56] De Boer claims that Paul shows his cosmological pattern through: (1) references to Satan as an enemy of God and Christ (Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 7:5; 2 Cor 2:11; 11: 14; 12:7; 1 Thess. 2:18; cf. 2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Thess. 3:5), (2) mentioning the angelic rulers of the worlds (Rom. 8:38 and 1 Cor. 15:24) and (3) the personification of Sin and Death, which are demonic powers at war with God and the Gospel.[57] In Paul's writings, the main reason for the plight of humanity is not the behavior and moral choices of human beings but their enslavement by superhuman forces.[58] Those superhuman and demonic powers can manipulate and deceive human beings to the point that even the law becomes a tool of Sin (7:7-8). This is why Paul does not accept solely the forensic pattern, according to which the law is a sufficient remedy for human plight.[59] Paul recontextualizes the forensic pattern by saying that only through "God's gracious, liberating power revealed (= made effectively present in the world) in the death and resurrection of Christ (cf. Rom 5:11)" one can transform one's life and be saved.[60] The ethical life is still important in

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Charlesworth 1983). The destiny of each person is in his or her own hands: 'each of them who has been born from him [Adam] has prepared for himself [or herself] the coming torment ... each of them has chosen for himself [or herself] the coming glory' (54:15; cf 51:16; 85:7). To choose the Law is thus to choose the coming glory (cf. 17:4; 38: 1-2; 48:22; 54:5). The present age is the time of decision." De Boer, "Appropriation," 22.

[55] De Boer, "Appropriation," 21.

[56] "Paul does not, however, reject the forensic categories of his conversation partners; he places them within a different apocalyptic-eschatological framework, the cosmological one: God's righteous, saving power (cf. Rom 1:16-17) liberates and will liberate human beings from the evil cosmic forces (pre-eminently Sin and Death) which control them and determine their destiny." De Boer, "Appropriation," 27.

[57] De Boer, "Appropriation," 23. "Sin and death, for example, are no longer simply matters of human behavior or experience, but are also conceptualized as evil cosmological powers that oppress, and thus victimize human beings—hence, Sin and Death (see esp. 1 Cor. 15:20–28, 54–56; Rom. 5:12–21)." See: De Boer, "Apocalyptic," 57.

[58] De Boer, "Appropriation," 26.

[59] De Boer, "Appropriation," 27.

[60] De Boer, "Appropriation," 27.

the drama of salvation however it is not a consequence of one's moral decision but of submitting to God's saving power that can truly set free a person from the enslaving cosmic powers of Sin and Death.[61] As I will demonstrate later the cosmological pattern is a better explanation of the argument presented in Romans 5-8.

The audience

Another important issue in the stage of "the world behind the text" is analyzing the audience and the specific problems that were addressed in the text of Romans. The reconstruction of the audience and reasons for Romans will allow us to understand Paul's argumentation and his train of thought in an exegesis of the chosen phrases.

As Matera rightly states, the question of the circumstance of Christians in Rome and the problems Paul refers to can be known only from Paul's letter itself. Moreover, one must bear in mind that Paul does not describe them but responds to them.[62] Only the critical analysis of the text can reveal the probable circumstances of Paul's audience as well as the reason or reasons for writing the letter.

Most commentators agree that Paul wrote his letter in AD 56/57 in Corinth.[63] From Romans 15:26 we know that he intends to go to Jerusalem with the collection of the churches in Macedonia and Achaia. After his successful missionary work in Greece, he plans to visit Rome and embark on the new apostolic mission to Spain (Rom 15:22-24). Paul has not established and has never visited the community in Rome (Rom 1:8, 13). He also hopes that he will collect there some money for his travel to Spain (Rom 15:24). The most important fact from the dating of

[61] De Boer, "Appropriation," 27.
[62] Frank J. Matera, *Romans*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2010), 6.
[63] Matera, *Romans*, 5. The evidence for it is in Romans 16:23 where Paul mentions that he is hosting by Gaius who is probably the same person mention as the member of the community in Corinth (1 Cor 1:14).

Romans is that it was written after the correspondence to Galatians and Corinthians therefore it is likely that Paul uses ideas he came up with during his missionary experience in those two communities.[64] As we will see later, this information is especially important in understanding the concept of σάρξ.

We know that Christian communities in Rome appeared very soon after the death of Jesus and were based around Jewish synagogues.[65] One can assume that there was no single church in Rome but several house churches that were meeting places for Christians with different ethnic backgrounds (Jewish and Gentile).[66] Although Jewish Christians constituted at the beginning the majority of Christians in Rome, they were outnumbered later by Gentile believers, especially after Claudius's decree to expel Jews from the city in AD 49 (Acts 18:2).[67] It is evident from the text of Romans that Paul addresses both groups: on one hand, he writes directly to the Gentiles (1:6; 11:13; 15:15-16), but on the other, he deals with the concerns that the Law-observant Jews would have had and once he explicitly refers to a Jewish interlocutor (Rom 2:17). One should remember that the Jewish-Christians distinctions can be sometimes misleading because there could have been also Christians of the Gentile origins who were law-observant proselytes.[68] In summarizing, Paul writes to the Christians of mixed Jewish and Gentile origins who probably were divided over the issue of the law observance.[69]

Paul's letter to the Romans, differently from his earlier correspondence, resembles more a systematic lecture of his teaching than a set of pastoral instructions.[70] Such style can be explained

[64] Thomas D. Stegman, "Romans" in *The Paulist Biblical Commentary*, eds. José Enrique Aguilar Chiu et al., (New York, NJ: Paulist Press, 2018), 1234.
[65] Matera, *Romans*, 7.
[66] Matera, *Romans*, 6-7.
[67] Matera, *Romans*, 9-10.
[68] Matera, *Romans*, 7.
[69] Matera, Romans, 7. Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: the Holy Spirit in the letters of Paul*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 473-474.
[70] Stegman, *Romans*, 1236.

when we consider possible reasons for Romans: "(1) Paul writes to summarize his gospel; (2) Paul writes to prepare his defense at Jerusalem, (3) Paul writes for his mission to Spain; (4) Paul writes to resolve the problem of the weak and the strong."[71] All of the reasons are supported by the text of Romans. Paul is, first of all, the apostle who strives to preach the gospel (Rom 1:5, 11) to all people (Rom 1:15, 16). However, his approach to circumcision and Law observance is put under question and is contested by many whom Robert Jewett calls the "Judaizers" or "nomists."[72] The rumors about his "law-free gospel" probably reached Rome and as the result, Paul also has to deal with the "libertinistic"[73] approach which some accuse him of (Rom 3:8; 6:1, 15; 7:7, 13).[74] Paul wants to be on good terms with the Roman congregation (the proponents of Paul's gospel and the law-observers who may have been suspicious of him), especially because he needs their support before the visit to Jerusalem and the mission in the west of the Roman Empire.[75] Lastly, the tension between the "strong" and the "weak" (Rom 14:1-15:13) is evidence that Paul also knows something about the specific problems of the community. Matera states that the conflict between the weak and the strong is the division between the Gentile believers who do not see it necessary to observe the law and the Jewish (with the Gentile proselytes) who continue to observe some elements of the law.[76] Nevertheless, the point of the whole passage is focused not on resolving the problem theoretically but on the reconciliation of different groups among Romans.[77] As Matera and Stegman state those different "reasons for Romans" do not exclude one

[71] Matera *Romans*, 8.

[72] "The Judaizers' strategy to interest a Gentile Christian group in circumcision and the cultic law was to connect them with entrance into the perfection of Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:6-18) and with appeasing the cosmic forces through calendric observances (Gal. 4:9-10)." Robert Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of Their Use in Conflict Settings*, (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 19-20.

[73] "Their Hellenistic view of the spirit as a divinizing rather than an ethicizing force (Gal. 3: 2-5; 4:6; 5:25) led them to disregard ethical distinctions (Gal. 5:19-23), to deny any future judgment (Gal. 6:3-8), and to pride themselves as pneumatics (Gal. 5:26; 6:1-6)." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 20.

[74] Matera, *Romans*, 8.

[75] Matera, *Romans*, 9.

[76] Matera, *Romans*, 7-8.

[77] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 474.

another but they could have coexisted together making the letter a true presentation of Paul's gospel.[78]

Σάρξ and πνεῦμα

This section will look closely at the "world behind the text" that refers to the concepts of σάρξ and πνεῦμα. I will demonstrate how different ideas about the world, the human being, cosmology, and God may have influenced Paul in using σάρξ and πνεῦμα in his specific way. Paul was a Jew and a devoted Pharisee, educated in the Greek culture, but his thought developed also under influence of his Christian and apostolic experiences. The apocalyptic eschatology shows the strongest impact on Paul's language. However, the problem and debates in communities to which he had written previously, led him to hammer out a specific, technical language that can be sometimes hard to understand. In the case of σάρξ, Paul operates more in the Jewish (especially eschatological) mindset, however, he also employs some elements of Hellenistic anthropology that help him to strengthen his argumentation and protects his gospel from misunderstanding. In the case of πνεῦμα, it seems that Paul uses the concept of the eschatological Spirit, which was promised by God in the prophetic books. Elaboration of those issues will help to understand and then properly interpret the text of Romans.

Σάρξ

Richard Erickson distinguishes six different meanings of σάρξ in Paul's writings: physical matter, human body, human person, morally neutral sphere, morally negative sphere, and

[78] Matera, *Romans*, 10. Stegman, "Romans," 1235.

rebellious human nature.[79] Because the reader of Paul discovers that those different meanings can be present in one letter or even in one passage,[80] therefore understanding σάρξ in a particular case requires a meticulous analysis of context and the logic of an argument.

With regards to the source of Paul's meaning of σάρξ, Erickson rules out the Hellenistic influence and sees it only in the Jewish Scripture and secondly in the eschatological Judaism.[81] Similarly, Fee states that Paul took the meaning of σάρξ from the LXX and transformed it into the eschatological one without any inspiration from his Greek background.[82] Conversely, Dunn and Jewett argue that the matter is more complicated. According to the latter scholars, even though Paul operates primarily in the Jewish mindset, he creates his synthesis of the term σάρξ taking advantage of his and his audience's Hellenistic background.[83] As I will elaborate below, although to understand Paul's anthropology one must start with his Jewishness, nevertheless Hellenistic influences also explain some aspects of his usage of σάρξ. The fact that Paul addressed his letters to audiences that were partly Jewish and partly Hellenistic and because he wanted to communicate effectively to both groups does not allow ruling out possible influences of any of the two worlds.

The starting point for the investigation of Paul's understanding of σάρξ is his Jewish background (including in the first place the Jewish Scriptures), which as was stated before is the most dominant and obvious factor in his background. The LXX translates the Hebrew word בָּשָׂר as σάρξ. Σάρξ in the LXX denotes skin, muscles, and soft parts of the body (Gen 17:11; Lev 13:10; Ps 102:5), living creatures (Gen 6:17, 9:11; Ps 136:25; Job 12:10; Jer 32:27), the human

[79] Richard J. Erickson, "Flesh," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, eds. Gerald F. Hawthorne, et al., (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 303-305.

[80] For example σάρξ in Romans 8:3 with reference to Christ and Romans 8:4-8 with reference to the evil sphere.

[81] Erickson, "Flesh," 305.

[82] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 818-819.

[83] See: Dunn, *Theology*, 55. Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 4-6.

race (Isa 40:5, 6; Jer 25:31), every human being (Isa 66:23, 24; Jer 12:12), the human body (Gen 2:3; Lev 13:2, 17:11, Ps 38, 3; Job 6:12; Eze 32:5), the animal body (Lev 17:11, 14; Job 41:15) or the corpse (1 Sam 17:44; 2 Kings 9:36).[84] Sometimes it indicates human relationships: blood relationship (Gen 29:14; 2 Sam 19:13, 14), close relatives (Gen 37:27) or the circumcision (Gen 17:11; Lev 12:3; Eze 44:7,9; Sir 44:20).[85] In a more metaphorical way σάρξ in the LXX expresses a distance between creation and God, a human weakness, frailty in opposition to God (Gen 6:3; Ps 56:4; Isa 31:3), or a human being on his own without divine support (Jer 17:5; Job 10:4; Ps 78:39).[86] To sum up, σάρξ in the Old Testament is neutral or is associated with human weakness or frailty. Paul also uses σάρξ in the neutral, biblical sense, but in the majority of cases the term has a negative meaning, and for this reason, the Jewish Scripture cannot be the only inspiration for Paul's understanding of σάρξ.[87]

Considering the meaning of σάρξ in Paul, Fee indicates that firstly it comes from the Old Testament where it evolved from the literal meaning (physical human body, muscles) into the more theological one (creatureliness, human weakness). According to Fee, Paul later transformed the term into an eschatological concept as the indication of the existence in the old, passing age.[88] In the new age that began with the death and resurrection of Jesus, the existence of believers is characterized by the gift of the eschatological Spirit (πνεῦμα) which stands in opposition to the life characterized by σάρξ. Hence, the conflict between πνεῦμα and σάρξ refers to the

[84] Eduard Schweizer, Friedrich Baumgärtel, and Rudolf Meyer, "Σάρξ, Σάρκῖνος, Σάρκικός" in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Geoffrey William, eds. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 7:106.

[85] Schweitzer, Baumgärtel, and Meyer, " Σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:107.

[86] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 818.

[87] "[…] no one before and after Paul ever used σάρξ exactly as he did." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 114.

[88] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 819

eschatological dualism.[89] But how did he come up with the idea of this conflict and how does it influence the meaning of σάρξ?

Jewett states that Paul developed his specific understanding of σάρξ firstly due to the argument against the circumcision of the Gentiles.[90] Paul uses σάρξ in Galatians where the conflict with the Christians insisting on circumcision appears most vividly for the first time.[91] In the LXX one finds examples of using σάρξ as the reference to circumcision and belonging to Israel. Paul takes advantage of it. He develops his argument against the necessity of circumcision for the Gentile converts and uses σάρξ as the expression that denotes the position of his opponents (Gal 3:3; 6:13).[92] Subsequently, he makes σάρξ an eschatological term by placing it in the dialectic with πνεῦμα (Gal 4:29; 5:16-26).

Paul argues that through faith believers enter the blessing of Abraham which is coterminous with receiving the Spirit (Gal 3:14; Gal 4:6). He claims that not the "works of the law" (including the circumcision) but faith is necessary to receive the Spirit (Gal 3:2-5). Since the Spirit is the eschatological reality indicating the new era, the circumcised flesh (σάρξ) belongs to the values of old age.[93] As Jewett argues, once Paul placed σάρξ in the eschatological context he extended its meaning so it could be used also in the argument against the libertinists (the antinomists), who misused the freedom of faith to diminish the ethical obligations (Gal 5:16-26).[94] Σάρξ became an indicator of everything apart from God in which one can put his or her

[89] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 822.
[90] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 101.
[91] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 101.
[92] "Σάρξ for Paul is not rooted in sensuality but rather in religious rebellion in the form of self-righteousness which was in his terms, a 'boasting in one's own flesh.'" Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 114.
[93] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 99.
[94] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 107.

trust.[95] This eschatological and extended meaning of σάρξ was used in the letters to the Corinthians.

In the Corinthian correspondence, Paul writes against πνευματικοί,[96] who considered themselves as fully spiritual people and boasted in their miracles (2 Cor 12:12), charismatic preaching (2 Cor 10:10; 11:6), visions (2 Cor 5:13; 12:1), wisdom (1 Cor 2:6) and knowledge (1 Cor 8:1-10).[97] According to the apostle, πνευματικοί, contrary to their high regard for themselves, were actually σαρκικοί (fleshy people) because they behaved as "leaders of this passing age, who crucified Christ in the first place" (2 Cor 2:6-8).[98] Based on 1 and 2 Corinthians we can make the whole list of different misbehaviors in the community that are contrary to Christian love: maintaining conflicts and divisions (1 Cor 11-12; 11:17-18), being jealous (1 Cor 3:3), being puffed up, pride and boastful because of the knowledge (1 Cor 4:8-10), scandalizing others (1 Cor 8:1-10), indulging in lust (1 Cor 6:13-18; 15:1; 2 Cor 12:21) and gluttony (1 Cor 5:11; 1 Cor 11:20-22) or even practicing idolatry (1 Cor 10:14-21). Paul criticizes the attitude of the Corinthians using eschatological language. After the death and resurrection of Christ and the gift of the Spirit, their immoral behavior is not an option.[99] The believers should be "the new creation in Christ" (2 Cor 5:14-17).

In comparison with Galatians, in which there was an emphasis on the debate about circumcision, in the Corinthian correspondence σάρξ is "the old age point of view, where value

[95] "The critical shift in the moral significance of the σάρξ occurs at the moment when one places his faith in it. […] The realm of σάρξ was a historical reality since Sinai brought man into bondage to self-righteousness, and it acts in the principalities and powers which enslave the pagan to lust, superstition and self-destruction." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 115.

[96] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 820. Jewett calls them "radical enthusiasts and libertinists with definite gnostic tendencies." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 35.

[97] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 29, 37.

[98] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 820.

[99] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 820-821.

and significance lie in power, influence, wealth and wisdom (cf. 1 Cor 1:26-31)."[100] In this pejorative, eschatological meaning Paul speaks of: being fleshy and not spiritual (1 Cor 3:1), having fleshy wisdom (2 Cor 1:12), knowing Christ according to the flesh (2 Cor 5:16), boasting according to the flesh (2 Cor 11:18), and walking according to the flesh (2 Cor 10:2-3). The phrase "according to the flesh" (κατὰ σάρκα) became in Romans one of the most important eschatological terminologies that denote life according to the values of old age.

The problem is that even though Paul ascribes to σάρξ specific, eschatological meaning he still uses it as an indication of physical existence. Therefore, there is a question about Paul's attitude towards the physical human body. The problem is especially visible with the phrase "in the flesh" (ἐν σαρκί). Assuming that Paul inherited Jewish respect for the created world it is improbable that he disregards in any sense the physical existence.[101] It seems that Paul uses the phrase ἐν σαρκί in a neutral way (Gal 2:20), contrary to the negative meaning of the phrase κατὰ σάρκα (2 Cor 10:2-3). Therefore, many commentators postulate that we can summarize Paul's language in a sentence: believers live "in the flesh" (ἐν σαρκί) but not "according to the flesh" (κατὰ σάρκα).[102] Fee interprets both phrases in the eschatological context. He states that believers are ἐν σαρκί but they do not live κατὰ σάρκα. In other words, they have to live in a world that is characterized by values and behaviors contradicting the Spirit but they do not comfort with these values.[103] Fee argues that the conflict between flesh and Spirit in Paul's letters is not the conflict between physical and spiritual realms as it was present in the Greek philosophies and culture but the conflict between the values of the old and the new eons of the Jewish eschatology.[104]

[100] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 821.
[101] Dunn, *Theology*, 72.
[102] Dunn, *Theology*, 63.
[103] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 822.
[104] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 822.

According to Fee, Paul never describes some kind of struggle inside the believer (internal conflict), which would be a probable Greek influence, but rather proclaims that those who experienced the Spirit should abandon the lifestyle that is built on old values and traditions.[105] The problem with Fee's conclusion is that it seems that Paul uses σάρξ as the reference to the sensual desires that are in conflict with the "higher," spiritual parts of the human being (Rom 7:14-25; Gal 5:16-25).

There is no doubt that Paul understood σάρξ in the eschatological context, but there is also no reason to reject the possibility of the Hellenistic inspiration. The negative language of σάρξ in opposition to πνεῦμα is present in Greek thought, especially in Stoic philosophy and there is a lack of πνεῦμα-σάρξ antithesis in the Jewish eschatology.[106] Paul's argumentation and rhetoric are more sophisticated than a clear distinction between one background against another; overlooking one of them can lead to confusion and misinterpretation of his texts. It is true that in the first centuries, Christianity interpreted Paul's texts more through the lenses of the Hellenistic culture and understood σάρξ primarily as the fallen nature with its sinful inclinations.[107] On the other hand, denying any Hellenistic influences can leave some of Pauline texts about σάρξ in the void.[108]

As Schweitzer points out in the Hellenistic culture σάρξ had both neutral and negative connotations.[109] Primarily, σάρξ referred to muscles and soft parts of human or animal bodies. In Greek medicine, σάρξ meant muscles and skin in contrast with σῶμα which described the whole

[105] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 821-822.
[106] Schweitzer, Baumgärtel, and Meyer, " Σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:105.
[107] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 50.
[108] „Instead of trying to play off Hebrew and Greek influence against each other, then, or to spend time looking for particular parallels in Greek or Hebrew thought, as though that might fully explain Paul's anthropology, a more promising approach will be to look for the coherence of Paul's thought in itself and only to draw attention to points of possible influence where they are relevant to our better understanding of Paul." Dunn, *Theology*¸ 55.
[109] Schweitzer, Baumgärtel, and Meyer, " Σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:99-105.

body with bones, sinews, and blood.[110] This neutral meaning of σάρξ was developed into a more philosophical and moral concept by Platonic and Stoic philosophies.[111] For dualistic Platonic views, σάρξ was a part of σῶμα, which was considered the corruptible and lower part of the human being. Σάρξ as a part of σῶμα was a burden and bondage for the immortal and higher ψυχή and νοῦς.[112] In Stoic philosophy, σάρξ was used in the polemic with Epicureanism. Σάρξ was for the Stoics the seat of emotions and low drives and it was associated with the danger of indulging oneself in desires uncontrolled by reason.[113] This criticism of σάρξ was quite popular not only among the Stoic philosophers but in the whole Hellenistic world (including Hellenistic Judaism),[114] and it is very probable that also Paul used them in his writings.

Jewett in his study of σάρξ in the Pauline letters argues that Paul made his own synthesis of the Greek, Jewish and eschatological ideas.[115] Jewett states that when Paul used σάρξ in Galatians tying up the argument against the nomists with the eschatological idea of two worlds he also chose this term because of its negative connotations for the Hellenistic audience.[116] Hellenistic Gentiles and even Hellenistic Jews would have associated σάρξ with negative values and behaviors. For those who were influenced by the popular Stoic and Platonic ideas "the contrast between flesh and spirit would have been immediately comprehended."[117] In other words, σάρξ was used as the discussion against the circumcision of the Gentiles but an important

[110] Schweitzer, Baumgärtel, and Meyer, "Σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:100.
[111] Schweitzer, Baumgärtel, and Meyer, "Σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:102-103.
[112] Schweitzer, Baumgärtel, and Meyer, "Σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:103.
[113] Schweitzer, Baumgärtel, and Meyer, "Σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:105
[114] "Thus σάρξ is increasingly regarded as the source of ἡδονή and esp. of uncontrolled sexuality and immoderate gluttony. It makes the freedom of the soul impossible. Hell. Judaism drank all this in eagerly." Schweitzer, Baumgärtel, and Meyer, "Σάρξ," *TDNT* 7:105.
[115] "The word σάρξ was chosen by Paul because it represented that which is circumcised and thus could be polemically characterized as that in which one wished to trust. The fact that σάρξ had a negative connotation in the Hellenistic world made its polemic possibilities particularly attractive." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 96.
[116] "Not only has Paul found a principle (σάρξ) which connects to his main assumption (πνεῦμα) in a neat and convincing way, but he has also used categories which were readily understandable to his hearers." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 110.
[117] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 110.

component of Paul's argument was the Hellenistic criticism of indulgence in uncontrolled pleasures.

According to Jewett, the Hellenistic criticism of σάρξ was also present in the argumentation against the antinomian libertinistic tendencies in Christian communities.[118] Those tendencies appeared in the congregation as a misunderstanding of Christian freedom (Gal 5:13-21). Paul reminds his audience that σάρξ does not refer only to placing trust in circumcision but also to indulging oneself in pleasures, trusting superstition, and conforming to pagan value systems.[119] The Hellenistic understanding of σάρξ fitted well into the argument against both: law and lawlessness. Σάρξ started to function as the indication of everything "aside from God in which one places his final trust."[120] In other words, the eschatological context results in the conclusion that human beings can conform to old age by placing their trust in circumcised as well as sensual σάρξ.[121]

Jewett admits, however, that the Hellenistic component of σάρξ in Paul's usage could have led his audience to understand it in terms of anthropological dualism.[122] In the Corinthians correspondence, Paul distinguishes between living ἐν σαρκὶ (as the physical existence) and κατὰ σάρκα (the life according to the rule of the old age).[123] However, in Romans 8 the phrase ἐν σαρκὶ has the same negative meaning as κατὰ σάρκα – it denotes the life opposed to God.[124] Jewett notes that the Hellenistic audience did not notice the difference between life ἐν σαρκὶ and

[118] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 114.

[119] "When man identifies the center of his person with his flesh and its capabilities, flesh enters the extra-personal dimension and makes man captive to the evil designs of the old aeon." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 115.

[120] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 103.

[121] "Just as the circumcised flesh lured the nomist to place his hope of life upon it, so the sensual flesh lures the libertinist to make provision for it, presumably because one hopes thereby to gain life." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 165.

[122] "[…] in order to avoid misunderstandings he must accept the consistently negative use of "flesh" which was current in the Hellenistic church and he is thereby unable to distinguish between flesh as a neutral sphere and flesh as a demonic power." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 153.

[123] See 2 Cor 10:3.

[124] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 154.

κατὰ σάρκα, so Paul also gave this distinction.[125] Also, in Rom 7:14, 7:25, 8:3, and Rom 13:14 σάρξ is presented as the source of sensuality, and an obstacle to the fulfillment of the spiritual law. Paul believed in the goodness of creation and the redemption of the body through resurrection but because he used σάρξ together with its Hellenistic associations he needed to find a way to demonstrate that he did not follow the anthropological assumptions of Greek philosophers.

There are many ways in which Paul demonstrates that his views are different from Greek dualism even though he sometimes uses some Hellenistic concepts. First of all, Paul employs the negative connotations of σάρξ usually in the argument against nomists. As Jewett indicates the technical meaning of σάρξ is historically and rhetorically used firstly against circumcision and only secondly in an ethical or parenetical sense that can be associated with the Hellenistic background.[126] Secondly, Paul places the conflict between σάρξ and πνεῦμα in the context of eschatology, hence the dualism in his writing is not anthropological but eschatological. Whether it is the physical body, the religious and national identity, or the law, they are not evil in themselves, but they can be perverted by demonic, personified Sin (ἁμαρτία) that can rule over those realities.[127] As Dunn states in Paul's worldview, the forces of evil are active and cannot be reduced merely to human weakness. Sin seems to be an oppressive and enslaving power within the society using human weakness "to corrupt both individual and community."[128] Lastly, to emphasize his belief in the goodness of creation and redemption of the human body Paul introduces the concept of σῶμα, which becomes another important term in his writings.[129]

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[125] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 154.

[126] "Paul used σάρξ category first in the polemic against the nomists and then secondarily against the libertinists." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 165.

[127] "[…] "flesh" is demonic not because of its material nature but because it belongs to the old aeon." Jewett, *anthropological Terms*, 165.

[128] Dunn, *Theology*, 127.

[129] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 159.

Because, the word σάρξ was compromised as an indication of things that belong to old age it could not be used to denote something good, destined for redemption in the world to come.[130] For Paul σῶμα was the bridge between the old and the new eschatological age.[131]

The Greek term σῶμα was used by the Orphic-Platonic philosophies in the expression of dualism between material and spiritual elements of the cosmos. In those philosophies, σῶμα is regarded as the tomb (σῆμα) for the soul (ψυχή). Σῶμα clings to the physical and material things that lead the soul toward illusion. Only through rejection of what is material and physical the soul can experience true freedom. However, for stoicism, σῶμα means also the whole person with its social relationships.[132] The LXX uses σῶμα and σάρξ as a translation of בָּשָׂר. As it was stated before, σάρξ in the LXX usually denotes the physicality of the human body and the distance from God. Σῶμα can also refer to the human body but it does not underscore a distance between the earthly and heavenly spheres like σάρξ. By σῶμα, the LXX seems to indicate the complexity of human nature as well as connectedness with the spiritual world.[133]

Similarly to the LXX, σῶμα in Paul's writings denotes a physical human body (1 Cor 5:3) but it also means the person whose existence has physical, social, and spiritual aspects. Dunn proposes that when Paul uses the word σῶμα the reader should have in mind not only the notion of the physical body but rather something that he calls "embodiment" which refers to the person's existence within the world of relationships.[134] According to Eastman, Paul did not understand the human being with his or her body as an individual who is isolated from other human beings and

[130] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 159.

[131] "Paul's 'flesh' category was inadequate to do more than explicate man's dilemma; it could not be used to depict the new life. In contrast, the 'body' category could bridge the gap between the old and the new man." Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 159.

[132] Eduard Schweizer and Friedrich Baumgärtel, "Σῶμα, Σωματικός, Σύσσωμος," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Geoffrey William, eds. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 7.1025-1033.

[133] Schweitzer and Baumgärtel, "Σῶμα," *TDNT* 7.1044-1048.

[134] Dunn, *Theology*, 56.

the environment.[135] Eastman states that Paul, as was common in the ancient world, saw human beings "embedded" in concrete social and historical circumstances, always open to relationships with other people, traditions, social and political structures, and even with spiritual powers.[136] Those relationships can shape a person in a good and also in a bad way.[137] While σάρξ because of Paul's technical usage was less and less suitable to express "being embedded" in good relationships (with God, Christ, the Spirit, and with other believers),[138] σῶμα was available to express it.[139]

Paul through σῶμα wants to show his appreciation of the human body as God's creation and its role in the act of worship of God through life according to God's will in the new era.[140] Because in the ancient world, there was σάρξ- πνεῦμα antithesis and not σῶμα- πνεῦμα, it allowed Paul to use σῶμα in the description of the new behavior that should follow the conversion and the reception of the Spirit. [141] Σῶμα can belong to the passing age and this is why one can find in Paul expressions like" τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας (Rom 6:6), τὸ σῶμα τοῦ θανάτου (Rom 7:24) or τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος (Rom 8:13). However, Paul asserts in 1 Cor 6:19-20 that σῶμα is the temple of the Holy Spirit and in Rom 12:1 that the believer should present τὰ σώματα "as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God."

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[135] Eastman, *Paul and the Person*, 98.

[136] Eastman, *Paul and the Person*, 101.

[137] Eastman, *Paul and the Person*, 101.

[138] The relational dimension of σῶμα can also be the reason why Paul uses the image of the body when he writes about the church (Rom 12:5, 1 Cor 10:17, 12:13). Paul uses σῶμα in Romans 12:4-5 the phrase "body of Christ" as the concept of the church to show that the believer is a member of the church. The body is "a model of human relationship." The believers are supposed to live within the body of Christ because through their own bodies they are connected, and they work together to reach the same goal – salvation. Being in the body of Christ means that the believers are embedded in a relationship with Christ and other believers.

[139] "[…] in essence σάρξ and σῶμα designate different aspects of the human relationship to God. While σάρξ stands for man, in the solidarity of creation, in his distance from God, σῶμα stands for man, in the solidarity of creation, as made for God." John A. T. Robinson, *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology*, (Chicago: Regnery, 1952), 31.

[140] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 159.

[141] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 159.

Finally, σῶμα is connected with the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15:35-44; Rom 8:11). Paul's usage of σῶμα in the context of the resurrection expresses the fact that people exist in the two ages and σῶμα ensures the continuity of their personalities.[142] Σάρξ cannot play this role because it was tied to the old, passing age. With the strong statement: "I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable" (1 Cor15:50) Paul closes the possibility of redemption and resurrection of σάρξ. Dunn deplores that Paul's creative distinction between σῶμα and σάρξ was lost in the first centuries of Christianity.[143] It resulted in either treating σάρξ too positively, forgetting about the eschatological dualism that it expresses, or treating σῶμα too negatively strengthening dualistic tendencies in the views on the human body.[144] Retrieving the full meaning of Paul's teaching about σάρξ and σῶμα avoids those two mistakes.

Πνεῦμα

After dealing with Paul's language of σάρξ and σῶμα, it is now time to focus on his usage of πνεῦμα (the Spirit). This section will investigate the sources of inspiration that stand behind his language about the Spirit. Similar to the section about σάρξ, the Greek and Jewish understanding of πνεῦμα will be considered as well as Paul's own development of the concept. Although, πνεῦμα is a Greek word and its function in Hellenistic and especially Stoic philosophy has some parallels with Paul's usage it seems that the Jewish and especially eschatological thinking fully explains the meaning of the concept in the apostle's writings.

[142] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms*, 159.
[143] Dunn, *Theology*, 73.
[144] Dunn, *Theology*, 73.

Exploration of the world behind the language of πνεῦμα poses several important questions: the materiality or immateriality of πνεῦμα, the personal or impersonal character of πνεῦμα, and the relation of πνεῦμα with God and Christ. Those issues lead also to the question about the presence of the Trinitarian doctrine in Paul. However, this topic is too broad for this thesis, so I would rather focus more narrowly on the features of Paul's language that expresses his experience and the experience of the first Christians. This approach follows the discoveries of scholars who underscores the soteriological and experiential dimension of Paul's language rather than its doctrinal elements.[145] This language reveals the broad range of different experiences of the Spirit which include: charismatic visions and miraculous healings, the transformation of moral and religious behavior, as well as having new convictions and feelings. This diversified experience of the Spirit gives an impression of the powerful and personal force working among the Christian community and inside the individual believer.

Beginning with the Hellenistic background, one can discover that πνεῦμα was used in various areas like medicine, poetry, and philosophy and was a part of the popular understanding of the world.[146] The literal meaning of πνεῦμα was "wind" or "breath" but the concept was developed into more philosophical and cosmological meanings like "life," divine, living force," "soul," or "spirit."[147] The common element of those different examples is that πνεῦμα is associated with something uncontrollable that influences the life and behavior of a person.[148]

[145] James Dunn ("Jesus and the Spirit", "Theology od Paul the Apostle"), Gordon Fee ("God's Empowering Presence", „Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God"), Larry Hurtado ("One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism", "How on Earth did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus"), and Volker Rabens ("The Holy Spirit and Ethics in Paul: Transformation and Empowering for Religious-ethical Life").

[146] Hermann Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα, Πνευματικός, Πνέω, Ἐμπνέω, Πνοή, Ἐκπνέω, Θεόπνευστος," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey William, eds. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans William B. Publishing Company, 1968), 6:353-354.

[147] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:358.

[148] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:358.

Moreover, πνεῦμα in Greek thought is always on the verge of the material and spiritual worlds, it is something both natural and divine.[149] Stoic philosophy regards πνεῦμα as the divine power that gives the universe unity and life and helps human beings to lead an ethical life. The Stoics consider it also as being material.[150]

Volker Rabens states that although the idea of material πνεῦμα can be found in the Hellenistic philosophies it is not present in Judaism or Paul.[151] Rabens points out that the Jewish writers in Paul's times did not discuss the immateriality or materiality of the Spirit of God.[152] According to Rabens, all the vivid descriptions of the Old Testament are poetic, metaphorical expressions and it is methodologically questionable to use them as evidence of the belief in the materiality of the Spirit.[153] Similarly, in Paul's letters, the expressions about the Spirit seem to be metaphors that describe a powerful experience, and treating the metaphors too literally is a methodological failure.[154] If one wants to understand Paul it is more fruitful to investigate his Jewish background.

In the Hebrew Bible, the equivalent of πνεῦμα is the word רוּחַ, which means "breath" or "wind".[155] In most cases in the LXX, רוּחַ was translated into πνεῦμα. Out of 377 (264 in LXX) occurrences, 94 refer to the Spirit of God, while others denote the human spirit, heavenly beings, or attitudes ("willing spirit", "broken spirit", "spirit of jealousy", "the spirit of wisdom and

[149] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:335.
[150] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:355-358.
[151] Rabens, *The Holy Spirit*, 119
[152] Rabens, *The Holy Spirit*, 79. Conversely, Engberg-Pedersen argues that Paul has Stoic concepts in mind when he wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:44 about σῶμα πνευματικόν. Enberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology*, 14. However, as Volker rightly states, this passage is often used as proof of the material πνεῦμα in Paul's writing but does not describe "the matter" of the future of the body. The point of the passage is the argument that human beings are destined for the resurrection in the new reality that belongs to the Spirit See: Rabens, *The Holy Spirit,* 95.
[153] Rabens illustrates his point by referring to Psalm 104:1-4 where there is a description of God who is "clothed with honor and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment" and "rides on the wings of the wind." According to Rabens, it is a good example of the fact the biblical authors were u the material imagery and did not imply the literal meaning when they say about the "materiality" of the Spirit. Rabens, *The Holy Spirit*, 37.
[154] Rabens, *The Holy Spirit*, 99-101.
[155] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:363.

understanding," "the spirit of counsel and might," "the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord").[156] The Spirit of God is associated with the creation and God's empowerment.[157] God sends his Spirit to people to make them alive or enable them to undertake divine tasks. The Spirit gives strength (Judg 14:6), power (Ezek 2:2), special skills (Exod 31:3-4), knowledge, wisdom, and ecstatic states (1 Sam 19:20). People are empowered by the Spirit in the events that are important for the history of salvation, for example in the life of Moses (Num 11:17), Joshua (Num 27:18), Gideon (Judg 6:34) or David (1 Sam 16:13).[158] Very important is also the connection between the Spirit and prophesy. Prophets are inspired by the Spirit to speak and act according to God's will (Num 11:29; 2 Sam 23:2; Ezek 11:5; Mic 3:8;).[159]

Prophecy and the Spirit are important from the eschatological perspective.[160] Israel's eschatological future is presented in the prophetic books as restoring the nation (Ezek 37:14; Isa 34:16), fulfilling the covenant by the dwelling of God's Spirit in the hearts of the people (Ezek 36:27), and the renewal of prophecy (Joel 2:28-29).[161] The role of the Spirit of God is paramount in eschatological times.[162] The Spirit will rest on the Messiah (Isa 11:2), gather the exiles (Isa 34:16), and will be poured out on Israel and Gentiles (Joel 2:28-29). The prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel) developed the idea that God's promises were not entirely fulfilled and that this fulfillment would come in the future and would be associated with the outpouring of the Spirit of God,[163] the wicked would be destroyed, and Israel would be filled with the Spirit which

[156] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:363. Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 14.
[157] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:363-366.
[158] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:362-363.
[159] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:362-363
[160] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:370.
[161] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 910.
[162] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 910.
[163] Marie E. Isaacs, *The Concept of Spirit. A Study of Pneuma in Hellenistic Judaism and its Bearing on the New Testament* (London: Heythrop Monographs, 1976), 83.

purifies and renews it.[164] Those characteristics of the Spirit in the Old Testament have their echo in Jewish eschatology.[165]

The book of Isaiah links the Spirit of the Lord with judgment and moral purification,[166] but it also gives us a clue that in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God was understood as God's presence.[167] Analyzing Isa 63:10 and Isa 63:14 one can find evidence that God himself is equated with the Spirit.[168] Isa 63:7-64 which has a form of a lament psalm retells the past events of God's saving acts during the Exodus. It mentions the favor of the Lord towards Israel, but then it also reminds a memory of the rebellion against God. Instead of writing that Israel grieved God, Isaiah states that the people "grieved his Holy Spirit" (Isa 63:10). It can be interpreted as a development of the tradition that speaks about the identity of the one who led Israel through the desert.[169] In Ex 23:20 God says: "See, I am sending an angel before you, to guard you." Later Moses asks for God's presence rather than the angel to lead Israelites. God agrees: "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest" (Exodus 33:1). Isa 64:14 changes the word "presence" to the Spirit as the one who guides people during their wandering in the desert. The Spirit as God's presence means that God himself will intervene in the history of the world.

There is also a connection between the Spirit, God's presence, the language of "dwelling" and the temple.[170] Fee points out that the motif of God's dwelling begins in the book of Exodus.[171] God dwells (or God is present) on Sinai and in the tabernacle (Ex 20-24; 40:35).

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[164] Isaacs, *Concept of Spirit*, 83.
[165] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:370.
[166] George T. Montague, *The Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition* (New York: Paulist Press, 1976), 38. See also Isiah 30:28: his breath is like an overflowing stream that reaches up to the neck— to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction, and to place on the jaws of the peoples a bridle that leads them astray.
[167] Kleinknecht et al., "Πνεῦμα," *TDNT* 6:367.
[168] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 845.
[169] Montague, *The Holy Spirit*, 57.
[170] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 7, 843-844.
[171] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 7.

According to Fee, it is God's presence and not the law or other "identity markers" that distinguishes Israel from other nations.[172] Solomon's temple is built so that God's presence can dwell among the people, and at the end of the construction "the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord" (1 Kg 8:11). When later the temple is destroyed because of Israel's failure God's presence is no longer available. In Ezekiel's vision, God promises that the presence will come back and God will again be in the midst of his people (Ezek 40-48).[173] Paul in many places (1 Cor 3:16-17; 6:19; Rom 8:9-11) uses those images and themes claiming that God dwells in the believers corporately and individually through the Spirit.[174] The Spirit as God's presence gives life (Ezek 37:14; 2 Cor 3:5-6; Rom 8:6) and enables people to "follow his decrees" (Ezek 36:27; Gal 5:16-25; Rom 8:3-4). "The Spirit is none other than the fulfillment of the promise that God himself would once again be present with his people."[175]

It is striking that focus on the Spirit was something quite unparalleled in the Second Temple Judaism, found only in writings of Christians and the community in Qumran.[176] In Hellenistic Judaism that was not interested in eschatology, the word πνεῦμα was associated with the past activity of God than with the future.[177] However, Isaacs states that the concept of the Spirit played also a minor role in Palestinian Judaism.[178] Only the Qumran community is an example of linking the Spirit with the eschatological expectations. The Qumran community thought about itself as an eschatological Israel that was living at the end of times.[179] They

[172] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 7.
[173] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 7.
[174] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 7-8.
[175] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 845.
[176] Isaacs, *Concept of Spirit*, 83
[177] Isaacs, *Concept of Spirit*, 82.
[178] Isaacs, *Concept of Spirit*, 82.
[179] Isaacs, *Concept of Spirit*, 82.

understood the Spirit as the future gift as well as something that was present and experienced among them.[180]

Similar to the Qumran community, for Christian writers the Spirit is one of the most important concepts that describe power and ministry within their communities.[181] Fee states that Paul is influenced by the Old Testament texts about the Spirit because he experienced the Spirit in the Christian ministry and his own life.[182] Dunn adds that there must have been something extraordinary going on when the Palestinian Christian missionaries were preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.[183]

Dunn presents the whole spectrum of religious experience that Paul associates with the Spirit: ecstatic spirituality (1 Cor 14, Gal 3:5, Rom 15:19), emotional reactions (1 Thess 1:6, Rom 5:5), deep conviction (1 Thess 1:5, 1 Cor 2:4), intellectual illumination (2 Cor 3:12-16), and moral transformation (1 Cor 6:9-11).[184] Dunn also points out that the content of the experience is multidimensional: liberation from former religious convictions or slavery to sin (Gal 4:28-31, 5:16-18; Rom 8:2, 7:6; Rom 2:28-29), being a son of God (Gal 4:5-6; Rom 8:14-16), having a strong relationship with Christ and God (Rom 8:9; 2 Cor 3:12-16[185]), being "filled with love" (Rom 5:5, Gal 5:22), self-constraint and being able to live a moral life (Rom 8:2.13), longing for the eschatological fulfillment of the history and resurrection (Rom 8:23; 2 Cor 5:23), support in weakness (Rom 8:23-24), positive emotions like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness (Gal 5:22-23). [186] The Spirit was experienced inside the community of believers during the communal and personal prayer (Rom 8:26; 1 Cor 14:14-15), ministry,

[180] Isaacs, *Concept of Spirit*, 82-84.
[181] Dunn, *Theology*, 418.
[182] Fee, *Empowering Presence*,
[183] Dunn, *Theology*, 419.
[184] Dunn, *Theology*, 431 – 432.
[185] Dunn, *Theology*, 422.
[186] Dunn, *Theology*, 424.

preaching or proclaiming the Gospel (Gal 5:3-2, 1 Cor 2:4), daily life (Rom 8:5-9), sufferings (Rom 8:16-26).[187] It is clear that according to Paul's writings, the Spirit touches the lives of Christians in many different ways and dimensions. The whole person with his or her mind, soul, spirit, relationships and body participates in the process of salvation through the Spirit. However, Paul's description of the experience can also raise questions about the nature of the Spirit.

The challenge is that the early Christians and Paul used soteriological, experiential, and dogmatic language to describe the phenomena they saw in their lives. Dunn emphasizes that in general, the language of experience is usually vague and hard to communicate and systematize.[188] He argues that experience appears before someone has a chance to conceptualize it and even during conceptualization the pre-existing ideas are not always accurate in elaborating what actually happened.[189] Especially when an experience is new one struggles to find adequate words or phrases to express it; there is creativity in searching for words and phrases that sometimes causes an impression of incoherency.[190] According to Dunn, this was the case in the first Christian communities.[191] The experience of the Spirit was something totally new that needed a new vocabulary. Paul uses the biblical language of the "outpouring of the Spirit," but he also creates a new vocabulary that helps him to provide a description of the multidimensional experience of the Spirit.[192] Paul's language and imagery create an impression that the Spirit is at

[187] Dunn, *Theology*, 434-439.
[188] Dunn, *Theology*, 428.
[189] Dunn¸ *Theology*, 428.
[190] "The child experience parental love before being able to talk of it. The teenager may experience an orgasm or first period without knowing what it is. The great artistic occasion provides aesthetic sensations which no words can adequately capture. There may be frightening experiences of the onset of disease or mental illness, which are frightening precisely because the sufferer has no language to describe, let alone explain what, is happening. Questionnaires followed up by personal interviews have shown that a significant proportion of the UK population have had some sort of "religious experience," but have been unable to speak of it because they lacked appropriate vocabulary." Dunn, *Theology*, 428.
[191] Dunn, *Theology*, 428.
[192] Dunn, *Theology*, 428.

the same time a substance, a sphere, a normative rule, a person, or a fluid.[193] Dunn argues that attempts to systemize Paul's understanding of the Spirit unnecessarily obscures what Paul's language communicates.[194] Dunn proposes to focus on the experience that is behind the language of the Spirit and not speculate too much about Paul's understanding of the nature of the Spirit.[195]

Although Dunn focuses on analyzing the diversity of experiences of the Spirit, he also admits that there must be something that defines all of them.[196] Defining the Spirit is not crucial only from the point of view of biblical research but also must have been important from Paul's perspective as a leader in the church. If the experience of the Spirit is so omnipresent one may question how to distinguish it from other experiences (Paul himself in 1 Cor 12:10 writes about the discerning of spirits, διακρίσεις πνευμάτων). Dunn states that the sharpest and clearest definition is that "the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ."[197] He argues that for Paul "the Spirit of Christ" is "a critical conceptual tool which enabled him to evaluate experiences and to distinguish one experience from another."[198] According to Dunn, Paul's definition of the Spirit and discernment was based on recognizing whether the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. Dunn supports his argument by pointing out that the Spirit in Paul's writing is always associated with Jesus.[199] In his earlier book *Jesus and the Spirt* Dunn stated that "Paul equates the risen Jesus with the Spirit" and that in the experience of the early Christians "Jesus and Spirit are no different."[200] His "Spirit

[193] Dunn, *Theology*, 426.
[194] Dunn, *Theology*, 426.
[195] Dunn, *Theology*, 426.
[196] Dunn, *Theology*, 433.
[197] Dunn, *Theology*, 433.
[198] Dunn, *Theology*, 433.
[199] (1) Rom 8:15-16 as sharing Jesus's experience of prayer of sonship, (2) 2 Cor 3:18 the experience of being shape by the image of Christ, (3) Gal 5:22-23 the fruit of the Spirit is a "character sketch" of Christ. Dunn, *Theology*, 433.
[200] James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: a Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament*, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), 323.

Christology"[201] has a theological depth[202] and wants to be faithful to the historical "realism," which cannot accept that in the first century, Christians would have understood their experience in terms of the Trinitarian doctrine.[203] However, Dunn's opinion does not address the fact that there are other expressions with the word "Spirit" like "the Spirit of God/his Spirit" or "the Holy Spirit," that in the name of methodological accuracy should not be easily discarded when we try to understand Pauline letters (1 Thess 4:8; Gal 3:5; 2 Cor 1:22; Rom 5:5).[204]

Fee defines the Spirit in Paul as: "*person*; the person of God himself," "God's presence," and "God's empowering presence."[205] He claims that the Old Testament prophecies of God's presence among people through the Spirit gave the Christian communities (and Paul) the perfect language to express their experience.[206] The experience was not something that made Christians diminish the Old Testament but rather Christians through their experience came back to the language of the Old Testament.[207] The language of prophets like Isaiah or Ezekiel inspired Paul to write about the Spirit who gives life, empowers, and indwells among believers. The Spirit is how God acts personally among his people.

Fee argues that Paul expressed his experience of God "in a fundamentally Trinitarian way."[208] He also focuses on the experience of the Spirit in Paul and treats it as the major factor that affected Paul's language, however, he is not so hesitant to attempt the reconstruction of

[201] Fee, *Empowering Presence,* 837.

[202] "One cannot experience Christ without experiencing Spirit. Or to put it more accurately: one cannot experience Christ except as Spirit, which also means that one cannot experience Spirit except as Christ." Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit,* 323.

[203] "It is evident from Paul that the first Christians soon became aware that they stood in a dual relationship – to Gd as Father, and to Jesus as Lord. […] To say that the Christians 'experienced Trinity' would be inaccurate […]." Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit,* 326.

[204] Fee, *Empowering Presence,* 834-836.

[205] Fee, *Empowering Presence,* 5.

[206] Fee, *Empowering Presence,* 843.

[207] "Thus for Paul the line is not from the Old Testament to the New, but from his experience of the Spirit as the empowering presence of God back to the Old." Fee, *Empowering Presence,* 915.

[208] Fee, *Empowering Presence,* 827.

Paul's understanding of the Spirit. Fee indicates that in the majority of cases, the word πνεῦμα in Pauline letters refers to the Holy Spirit understood as in the Trinitarian faith (the Spirit is the personal God and at the same time distinct from God the Father, and Christ).[209] He admits that the language of the Trinity was developed later by the church, and it cannot be imposed on Paul, but at the same time, he rightly points out that it was precisely the language of the New Testament, so also the language of Paul that is responsible for the later formulation of the Trinitarian doctrine.[210] In fact, there are many characteristics of Paul's language about the Spirit that confirm the Trinitarian confession. Those characteristics for Fee are evidence that Paul experienced God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and then expressed it in his experiential and soteriological, yet not ontological language.[211]

Fee supports his thesis by indicating that many of Paul's statements show the personal agency of the Spirit.[212] The Spirit searches (1 Cor 2:10), knows (1 Cor 2:11), teaches (1 Cor 2:13), accomplishes (1 Cor 12:11), gives life (2 Cor 3:6), cries out (Gal 4:6), leads (Gal 5:18; Rom 8:14), bears witness (Rom 8:16), helps (Rom 8:26), intercedes (Rom 8:26-27).[213] Those phrases imply that the Spirit is a personal agent of some actions. The large number of them confirms that Paul presents the Spirit above all as a person,[214] and not only any person but a person with divine attributes. The Spirit is the agent of soteriological actions that are also ascribed to God and Christ (1 Cor 12:6, 11; 2 Cor 3:6; Rom 8:26).[215]

[209] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 14.
[210] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 828.
[211] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 841.
[212] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 828-829.
[213] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 830.
[214] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 830.
[215] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 831.

Fee acknowledges that there are also expressions in Paul's writings where the Spirit has impersonal features.[216] However, Fee points out that first of all, they are in the minority, and secondly, they are also used for Christ.[217] For example, the Spirit is sent by God (Gal 4:5-6) and also Christ is sent by God (Gal 4:4; Rom 8:3); the believers are "washed" in the name of Jesus and in the Spirit of God(1 Cor 6:11), the Spirit and Christ can be "in" the believer and the believer (Rom 8:10, 11) can be "in" Christ and "in" the Spirit (Rom 8:1, 9). Since Christ is for Paul without a doubt a person, so those impersonal expressions cannot be evidence that the Spirit lacks personhood.

Fee also deals with phrases that have genitive modifiers like "the s/Spirit of gentleness" (1 Cor 4:21) or the "the s/Spirit of adoption" (Rom 8:15), including some phrases that have negative connotations, and also with the phrase πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.[218] He claims that positive phrases and the human spirit have a strong association with God's presence.[219] Fee argues that in the Old Testament, "humans did not so much possess a 'spirit' as something innate to their humanity but they were given πνεῦμα of life."[220] Moreover, "the believer's spirit is the place where, by means of God's own Spirit, the human and the divine interface in the believer's life."[221]Along those same lines, Dunn states that in Paul's writings πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου is the aspect of the human being by which he or she connects with God.[222] The instances where Paul uses the phrase "a spirit of" as a periphrasis of the negative attitude (ex. "a spirit of stupor" in Romans 11:8 or "a spirit of slavery" in Romans 8:15) are peripheral and none would think of them as the

[216] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 830-831.
[217] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 838.
[218] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 24-38.
[219] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 25-27
[220] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 26.
[221] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 25.
[222] When Paul speaks in 1 Cor 2:13-15 about people who are ψυχικὸς and those who are πνευματικοῖς he expresses the idea that a human being cannot be reduced to only vitality, but his destiny is to be in the relationship with God, to be in his presence. See: Dunn, *Theology*, 77.

characteristics of the Spirit of God.[223] In the majority of cases, πνεῦμα with a genitive modifier expresses the qualities and characteristics of the Holy Spirit (Rom 1:4; 8:2; 2 Cor 14:13; Eph 1:17) or the results of the Spirit's activity and empowerment in the life of the believers (Rom 8:15; 1 Cor 4:21).[224]

Fee not only claims that the Spirit is a divine person, but he argues that Paul's language describes the Spirit as distinct from God the Father and Christ. He backs his thesis by pointing out phrases that imply such distinction and also the frequent trinitarian formulas.[225] Fee notices that out of over 140 uses of the word πνεῦμα, in 17 occurrences πνεῦμα is called by its "full name" the Holy Spirit (the same number as the Lord Jesus Christ), in 16 occurrences "the Spirit of God/his Spirit," and in 3 occurrences "the Spirit of Christ."[226] Differently to the "Spirit Christology" concept supported by Dunn, for Fee, it is clear that Paul writes not only about the Spirit of Christ but also about the Spirit of God and the Holy Spirit. As Fee argues that even though Christ "marked our understanding of the Spirit,"[227] "Christ is the absolute criterion for what is truly Spirit activity"[228] and that "Paul identifies the risen Lord with the Spirit" (1Cor 6:17; 15:45; 2 Cor 3:17-18),[229] one cannot ignore the fact that Paul mentions the Spirit who is different from the Father and Christ (1 Cor 2:10-12; 1 Cor 2:7).[230] Besides this, Paul many times uses the trinitarian formals, mentioning God the Father, Christ and the Spirit in one sentence (1 Thess 1:4-5; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Cor 1:4-7; 1 Cor 2:4-5; 1 Cor 2:12; 1 Cor 6:11; 1 Cor 6:19-20; 2 Cor 1:21-22; Gal 3:1-5; Rom 8:3-4; Rom 8:15-17; Phil 3:3).[231]

[223] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 26.
[224] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 28.
[225] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 841.
[226] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 835.
[227] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 837.
[228] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 837.
[229] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 837.
[230] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 835.
[231] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 841-842.

However, even though Fee proposes the thesis about the existence of the Trinitarian concept in Paul's writings,[232] he agrees with Dunn that the language of Paul is based on experience and refers to the function of the Spirit in the salvation of the believers.[233] He admits that the matter is not that simple and makes remarks about the fluidity and mystery of Paul's language (after all Paul deals with God's mystery).[234] This thesis is limited only to the experience that the language expresses, so I would like to focus only on his main idea that the Spirit is God's presence without going into the topic of the nature of the Spirit and withholding from the argument about the Trinitarian implications of Paul's language. For the purpose of this thesis, it is enough to assert that the Spirit in Paul's writings has personal features and that the concept of the Trinity cannot be dismissed on the basis of what Paul wrote about the Spirit.

Identifying the Spirit as God's presence expresses the experience of the nearness of God whether one has in mind God the Father, Jesus Christ, the distinct person of the Spirit, or the three divine persons in unity. Paul's personal experience, his fluid language, all of his expressions, and his Jewish and eschatological background meet at this one point. According to Paul, the Father, the Son, and also the Spirit can be experienced as persons and their actions are closely "related." The nearness of any of the divine persons (or three of them at the same time) and dwelling of them among and in believers can explain Paul's descriptions of miraculous

[232] "Pauline theology can hardly be examined without wrestling with the fundamental issues of Trinitarian theology. […] we cannot avoid the ontological questions, even if Paul does not speak directly to them." Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 828.

[233] "At the heart of Pauline theology is his gospel, and his gospel is essentially *soteriology* – God's saving a people for his name through the redemptive work of Christ and the appropriating work of the Spirit. It is his encounter with God soteriologically, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that accounts for the transformation of Paul's theological language and of his understanding of God – although this is never worked out at the level of immanent, or doxological." Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 839.

[234] "Some mystery is involved here because finally, we are dealing with divine mysteries." Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 836.

experiences as well as the moral and spiritual empowerment that affected the lives and bodies of those who received it.

Conclusions

This chapter explored "the world behind the text" that could have influenced Paul in his writing about σάρξ and πνεῦμα. As was hopefully demonstrated, the circumstances of Paul and the audience of Romans can explain a specific understanding and usage of those concepts.

Firstly, Paul was an author influenced by his Jewish upbringing in the Greco-Roman culture. Although he grew up in the vibrant city of the Roman empire, had a solid education in Greek rhetoric, and knew well the popular Hellenistic ideas about the world and ethics, he clearly remained Jewish. Pharisaic training in Jerusalem shaped his worldview and identity, which he proudly and fervently defended before encountering Christ. Those factors influenced him when he was writing his letters and coining the concepts of σάρξ and πνεῦμα, and so it is valid to look at parallels in the Greek and Jewish sources he might have known.

Secondly, the incident that happened to him on the road to Damascus, which was described in Acts, seems to change him much more than his upbringing. Although one cannot be sure what exactly happened, after this incident Paul started believing in the resurrection of Christ and experiencing the powerful working of the Spirit. The clear evidence of such changes is the language he used to describe them. The language reveals the patterns of the Jewish apocalyptic eschatology. The idea of the two ages or eons, the role of the cosmological powers in causing the human plight, and faith in God's personal intervention to save human beings are prevalent in Paul's writings. Paul seems to follow the cosmological (focusing on the role of the cosmological powers) more than the forensic pattern (focusing on the human responsibilities) of Jewish

eschatology, but he combines both of them. The major dissimilarity with Jewish eschatology is his emphasis on the fact that the "new age" with God's final intervention has already started with the death and resurrection of Christ and the gift of the Spirit.

Thirdly, this chapter demonstrated that Paul only partly refers to specific problems of Romans (the case of "strong" and "weak" in the community). Taking into account the possible reasons for Romans, one can assume that he first and foremost presents his teaching (Paul's gospel), defending it also from rumors and slanders. He refers to the problems that were common for the whole of Christianity at this time: the mixed ethnic background of the first Christians (Jews and Gentiles), the case of the law-observance after believing in Christ, and the consequences as well as distortions of Christian freedom. The challenging topics made Paul use the full arsenal of theological and rhetorical argumentations in which his own specific understanding of σάρξ and πνεῦμα played a pivotal role.

Lastly, I focused on things that stand behind Paul's understanding of the concepts of σάρξ and πνεῦμα. His usage of σάρξ was influenced by the biblical understanding: the physical existence, belonging to Israel (mainly through blood relation and circumcision), and expression of the distance between creation and God. He developed σάρξ as a response to the debates present in the communities in Galatian and Corinth into the pejorative eschatological term that indicates the lifestyle of the passing age (putting trust into circumcision, law-observance, or the pagan values). As my research demonstrates, in order to properly understand Paul, one should admit that he partly takes advantage of the popular Stoic ideas that criticized Epicureanism and indulgence in worldly pleasures. Those ideas are also behind his σάρξ- πνεῦμα antithesis. The association of σάρξ with circumcision and indulgence makes it a perfect term for Paul to use in the discussion with the nomists on one hand and the libertinists on the other. Nevertheless, one should not forget that Paul is not against the body with its needs and desires for satisfaction.

Moreover, as a Christian, he proclaims the final salvation through resurrection. Paul defends his teaching from a misunderstanding by putting σάρξ into an eschatological context, using it primarily against the nomists, and employing a Greek concept of σῶμα. Σῶμα expresses human embodied and embedded existence. Because Paul made σάρξ a technical term with a negative connotation he could not use in the context of salvation, σῶμα became for him the bridge between the two eschatological ages. Although the believers still have their physical existence (σῶμα) that needs to be redeemed and radically transformed, they should treat it as the temple of the Holy Spirit, glorify God in it, and hope for its resurrection.

The section on πνεῦμα in Paul outlined the two most important factors in Paul's language about the Spirit: his Jewish background and his and the first Christians' experience of God. The Stoic concept of πνεῦμα has some resemblance to Paul's concept (especially in its opposition to σάρξ and usage in parenesis to ethical life), but it cannot be reconciled with Paul's writings which are based on the Jewish and Christian convictions. The language that Paul uses about the Spirit shows a strong indebtedness in Jewish eschatology. One can notice in Paul the association of the Spirit with God's presence that was promised to dwell among Israel and to deal with the evil forces in the age to come.

The Spirit is also a personal force in Paul's language, distinct from God the Father and Christ. However, the fact that the language describes the experience rather than the doctrine provokes the question of whether we can think of the Spirit in Trinitarian terms. As was demonstrated on the basis of the comparison between the works of James Dunn and Gordon Fee the matter is not simple. Dunn argues that we should only analyze the experience that had many dimensions and its keystone is Christ. Fee pushes the thesis that although Paul's language is not doctrinal but experiential and soteriological we can still see its trinitarian structure. Although Fee's argument seems convincing in this paper I want to focus only on his main idea that the

Spirit is the personal presence of God whether we think about the experience of God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Spirit as the distinct person or the three divine persons at the same time. This stopping halfway seems enough for the interpretation of the texts of Romans in relational terms.

III. Chapter Two: The world of the text

Introduction

This interpretation of the text from Romans 8 aims to arrive at the meaning of the metaphors that are applicable in the context of people who experienced adverse childhood. The goal is to move from the historical context and demonstrate that the passage can be a fruitful source of Christian spirituality for contemporary readers who went through trauma in their lives. Assuming that the text of Romans should be the medium between the spiritual experience of the first Christians and the experience of the later readers,[235] there is a question of how the contemporary audience of Romans can appropriate the ancient text. The historical circumstances that stand "behind the text" allow reconstruction of the probable meaning of the metaphors as it was understood by Paul and his audience, but what kind of meaning can be relevant for people in the specific circumstances that this thesis focuses on? And if such meaning exists how can one be sure that it is a valid interpretation within the community of the Church?

The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church (*IBC*) admits that it is possible to provide new interpretations of the biblical texts different from their historical meanings (*IBC* II.B.1-3). This is possible because the biblical texts reveal the plurality of meanings and potential for

[235] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 132

actualization in new circumstances (*IBC* II.B.2-3). As *IBC* points out, the multi-leveled meaning in some cases was intended by the authors (in poetry, parables, or Psalms), however recent discoveries in the field of hermeneutics show that the written text, in general, has the capacity to gain additional meaning when it is read in the new context (*IBC* II.B.2). Even the biblical books themselves use the older biblical texts and "create 'rereadings' (relecture) which develop new aspects of meaning, sometimes quite different from the original sense" (*IBC* III.A.1). The Scriptures were many times interpreted in a new and creative way by communities of faith (*IBC* III.A.2-3). Therefore, it is also justifiable today to discover a new meaning of the inspired text that refers to circumstances not predicted by an author.

Nevertheless, *IBC* warns against confusing the spiritual meaning with "subjective interpretations stemming from the imagination of intellectual speculation" (*IBC* II.B.2). The document states that there are three controlling principles of avoiding a purely subjective interpretation: paying attention to the historical meaning of the biblical text, seeing the text in the light of the paschal mystery of Christ, and leading a life influenced by the Holy Spirit (*IBC* II.B.2). Regarding, the first principle, the instruction says that the historical meaning should be the foundation of the spiritual one and the relationship between them should be characterized by "continuity and conformity" (*IBC* II.B.2). Also for Christians, it is always necessary to interpret everything in the light of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ. Moreover, the circumstances in which the believer wants to re-read the biblical text should be "the circumstances of the life in the Spirit" (*IBC* II.B.2). Following those three principles gives a sense of control in various spiritual, pastoral, and personal readings and makes them legitimate interpretations within the Church.

Sandra Schneiders, examining the spiritual (or existential, transformative) meaning of the biblical texts,[236] claims that referring to faith claims (as in the case of the two principles from *IBC*) is legitimate, but such perspective "is entirely outside the realm of public discourse about the text."[237] Schneiders in her hermeneutical theory aims to make points similar to *IBC*, but in the context of more secular methods that will allow her to avoid appearing unscholarly or fostering spiritual interpretation that is merely "pious eisegesis and exegetical fantasy."[238] She claims that the text itself can provide "the objective pole of interpretation" that "grounds and governs interpretation"[239] and at the same time, it can lead to transformative religious experience.[240] She proposes the concept of "the ideal meaning" which will be the controlling principle for valid interpretations. [241]

Schneiders employs "the ideal meaning" using the hermeneutical theory of Paul Ricoeur and makes use of the distinction between "sense" and "reference" in the theory of Gottlob Frege. "Sense" is the proposition of a sentence (or a larger text) and the reference is the reality to which the sentence refers.[242] After we understand the proposition correctly we can then compare it with reality. This dialectic between sense and reference creates "the ideal meaning" as "a mental structure that governs the interaction between the subject matter of the text and the interpreter."[243] Schneiders illustrates her concept of the ideal meaning with analogies to the game of tennis played by an infinite number of players or a piece of music that can be played in many different performances.[244] Similarly, to a game of tennis or a music piece, which are subject to certain

[236] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 3.
[237] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 145.
[238] Schneiders, Revelatory Text, 2.
[239] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 145.
[240] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 14.
[241] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 146.
[242] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 146.
[243] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 146.
[244] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 146.

rules and structures, there is a structure within the text that decides whether an interpretation is a valid one.[245]

The dialectic between the sense and the reference in a biblical text requires the use of the traditional methods of historical exegesis, with additional analysis of structure and semiotics.[246] It is similar to what *IBC* states about the first controlling principle of interpretation (conformity with the historical meaning). However, one can ask whether Schneiders's method includes two other principles: faith in the paschal mystery of Christ and the circumstances of life in the Spirit. Schneiders's hermeneutics gives answers to this question through her way of seeing the content (the reference) of all of the New Testament text, which, according to Schneiders, is the revelation of Jesus who is proclaimed as Christ.[247]

Schneiders argues that the New Testament texts are witnesses of the experience of the encounter with Christ.[248] The reference is not only to the historical facts but also to the transhistorical faith statements about the resurrected Christ.[249] The dialectic between the literary structure of the New Testament texts and historical facts with the transhistorical statement that the texts refer to can produce the ideal meaning that controls interpretations.

Regarding the third principle of *IBC* (the circumstances of the life in the Spirit), one can find a similar principle in Schneiders's third step of interpretation: "the world before the text." Schneiders states that after establishing the ideal meaning as the objective pole of interpretation, the task of the interpreter is not done. The ideal meaning is the necessary background for the stage where one seeks appropriation of the meaning in the new context.[250] The reference in this

[245] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 146.
[246] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 146.
[247] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 133.
[248] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 152.
[249] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 147.
[250] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 147-148.

stage is no longer the circumstances of the New Testament writers or their audience but the contemporary experience of the Christian faith and "the existential horizon for the individual and the community."[251]

According to what was said, in order to discover a valid interpretation for people in the context of adverse childhood experiences one should first find the ideal meaning of the chosen metaphor. Hence, I will focus now on the dialectic between the structure of the metaphors and their historical meaning (concerning Paul's background, his theological and transhistorical statements, the first Christians' experience of the Spirit, etc.). For this purpose, I will use the discoveries from Chapter One and introduce a specific metaphor theory.

Metaphor Theory

In his book *Metaphor, Morality, and the Spirit in Romans 8:1-17*, William Robinson states that analyzing Paul's metaphoric language in Romans 8:1-17 requires using a theory of rhetoric.[252] He criticizes the traditional Aristotelian theory. According to Robinson, the Aristotelian theory has been used for a long time in interpreting biblical metaphors but it is less fruitful and accurate than the recently discovered alternatives. He introduces and works on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and the Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT). [253]

Erik Konsmo, who analyses Paul's metaphor of the Holy Spirit, briefly presents a panorama of the ancient metaphor theories which could have been known by Paul.[254] As an educated man of his epoch, Paul was certainly aware of different metaphor theories, and even if it

[251] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 154.

[252] William E. W. Robinson, *Metaphor, Morality, and the Spirit in Romans 8:1-17*, (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 3.

[253] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 17.

[254] Erik Konsmo, *The Pauline Metaphors of the Holy Spirit: the Intangible Presence in the Life of the Christian*, (Studies in biblical literature; v. 130) New York: Peter Lang, 2010, 29., 31.

may be impossible to classify which theory he preferred, it is possible that he used deliberately the most common features and functions of metaphors.[255] Konsmo mentions the following trends in understanding metaphors during the time of Paul: 1) metaphors economized the language in explaining difficult concepts, 2) metaphors could be ornamental and used to enrich the speech, 3) metaphors were a natural part of the speech, and were not limited for the elites, 4) metaphors could be used to provoke emotions in the audience.[256] Some of those features are also found in modern concepts of the metaphor. Therefore, it seems correct to replace Aristotle's theory with the CMT and CIT.

The Aristotelian theory distinguishes three main features of metaphor: it is grounded in the language; it has an artistic function; and it is translatable into the abstract language.[257] According to Aristotelian tradition, metaphors are created by analogy and similarities between words.[258] The artistic function is connected with a nonliteral usage of the metaphoric word.[259] Metaphors in Aristotelian theory are unnecessary and can be translated into a more precise language to communicate an understandable message.[260]

Robinson points out that contemporary scholars like Ivor Richards and Max Black have challenged the Aristotelian theory.[261] Richards indicates that restricting the metaphor only to the words is wrong because entire thoughts are metaphoric, and people use metaphors all the time while thinking, speaking, or writing.[262] Richards also points out that a metaphor produces

[255] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors*,
[256] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors*, 39-40.
[257] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 18-20.
[258] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 19.
[259] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 19-20.
[260] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 20.
[261] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 20-25; Ivor A. Richards, *The Philosophy or Rhetoric*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1965); Max Black, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy,* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962).
[262] Richards, *Philosophy or Rhetoric*, 92.

additional meaning to a sentence, so translating a metaphor into abstract language reduces its meaning.[263] Black criticizes the traditional metaphor theory because he thinks that the meaning created by a metaphor surpasses the meaning of abstract language.[264] Although he believes that some metaphors can be translated into abstract words, most of them cannot be translated without reducing the meaning.[265] In order to counter Aristotle's theory, Robinson introduces another metaphor theory created by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in the book *Metaphors We Live By*.[266]

According to the CMT, metaphors help us understand reality because they present complex and abstract ideas in more familiar terms.[267] Their primary function is to help understand one thing in terms of others.[268] Robinson states that to analyze the metaphor according to the CMT, one must use a procedure called mapping. The mapping requires identifying the source domain, which is expressed in a more concrete language or image. Then, the target domain, which is more sophisticated, should be analyzed and attached to the elements of the source domain.[269]

The CMT also distinguishes two different metaphors: conceptual and image schema.[270] The image schemas are the basic structure for metaphors. They are less detailed and can underlie the conceptual metaphor. They usually seem simplistic, like the image of part-whole, center-periphery, cycles, motion, etc.[271] Robinson indicates that image schemas derive from everyday

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[263] "In the simplest formulation, when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction." Richards, *Philosophy or Rhetoric*, 93.

[264] Black, *Models and Metaphors,* 41-44.

[265] Black, *Models and Metaphors,* 33, 41.

[266] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 26-35.

[267] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 25.

[268] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 272.

[269] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 29.

[270] Robinson, *Metaphor,* 31.

[271] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 31.

interactions with the world and other people.[272] Having a physical body determines the experience of the world in a certain way.[273] The primary experiences of human beings are similar, and people use them while describing or understanding other experiences and concepts. Therefore, some metaphors are common in almost every language (like the metaphor of knowledge as seeing). This feature of the metaphor makes the texts or speeches from certain times and cultures understandable in different circumstances.[274]

Robinson employs also the Conceptual Integration Theory created by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner.[275] The theory explains how metaphors are used by human beings in the cognitive process of understanding and decision-making.[276] According to the theory, conceptual integration is an everyday operation that helps to construct meaning, creativity, and understanding.[277] The theory speaks about some basic units (domains) in our mental space that can be divided into (1) source domain, (2) target domain, and (3) blended domain. The networks and schemes from one domain are joined with the elements of another and create the blended domain. The image of one domain also becomes the image of another domain.[278] The essential assumption of the CIT is that the brain produces connections between ideas that are easily understood with concepts that are less common, new, and complex. Metaphors help people understand complex realities and new experiences.[279] Moreover, they also affect humans

[272] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 32.
[273] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors*, 49.
[274] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 32.
[275] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 35-42.
[276] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 35.
[277] Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*, (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 102.
[278] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 38.
[279] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 41.

emotionally and help them in the decision-making process. Therefore, metaphors can guide the feelings and behavior of people.[280]

The contemporary metaphor theory described above seems very promising in attaining new levels of the meaning of the text. Schneiders, however, does not allow violation of the objective structure of the text by the interpreter. Hence it is important to ask in the first place whether the phrase or sentence is metaphorical. Erik Konsmo presents a procedure that allows attaining this goal: 1) check whether the author uses the same metaphor somewhere else in his or her writing, 2) determine whether there are other metaphors used in the immediate context, 3) test if the literal meaning of the word, phrase or image is absurd, nonsense or contradiction.[281] Those criteria do not give a certainty of whether a particular text is a metaphor but give enough support to accept this possibility.[282]

Summing up, the CMT and the CIT allow analyzing metaphor phrases as conceptual and based on experience. From the CMT and the CIT point of view, metaphors are helpful for understanding new experiences and concepts and having emotional dimensions that affect behavior and convictions. This theory seems to be the right approach for understanding the metaphors in Romans 8 in the historical context of early Christianity and then interpreting them in the situation of people recovering from trauma.[283]

William Robinson analyzes the following metaphors about the Spirit and the flesh in Rom 8:1-17: the metaphor of walking (Rom 8:4), the container metaphor (Rom 8:8-9), the moral accounting metaphor (Rom 8:12), the reward and punishment metaphor (Rom 8:3,6,8,13), a

[280] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 41.
[281] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors*, 56.
[282] "Once the interpreter understands that the statement is false in a literal sense, then one must determine whether the author intended to use metaphorical language. The interpreter is left with the possibility that either something false, or something metaphorical, has been proposed by the author." Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors*, 56.
[283] Dunn, *Theology*, 428.

metaphor of courtroom (Rom 8:1-4, 13), execution (Rom 8:13), the journey metaphor (Rom 8:14), and lastly the metaphor of adoption (Rom 8:14-17).[284] In this paper, I will limit my focus to only three of them: the metaphor of walking, the container metaphor, and the adoption metaphor.

The ideal meaning

The context of the metaphors in Romans 8

Romans 8 presents the solution to the problem of humanity being enslaved by sin. The word νῦν (Rom 8:1) indicates the new era that began with the event of Jesus's death and resurrection.[285] The new era brings a novelty and although it has begun with the death and resurrection of Christ (and this mystery is always central for Paul) the Spirit now plays a crucial role in the experiential reality.[286] As Frank Matera points out Paul develops in Romans 8 three themes: (1) the Spirit is a defining characteristic of the believer, the new "identity mark," (2) the Spirit is the dynamic norm that empowers the believer to live the new life in the likeness of Christ, (3) the Spirit is the first fruit of the eschatological life after the resurrection.[287] Those themes are presented by Paul through the metaphors he used in chapter 8.

If we consider the immediate textual context of our metaphors we can decide what part of the text constitutes an intended unit. Fee states that it is Romans 6:1-8:39 which answers two questions: (1) what is the relation to sin of those who believed in the Gospel (Rom 6:1, 15)? (2) how to understand the purpose of the law if the Christian life is "under grace" and not "under the

[284] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 43.
[285] Stegman, "Romans," 1261.
[286] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 516.
[287] Matera, *Romans*, 210.

law" (Rom 7:7, 13)?[288] Paul responds to both questions firstly by implying that the former immoral life of believers under the slavery of Sin (Rom 6:16-17) has definitely ended (6:4; 6:18), and secondly, it happened not through the law (7:4; 10-11) which is nevertheless holy and spiritual, but through faith and the Spirit (Rom 8:1-2).[289] In contrast to Gordon Fee, Frank Matera proposes that the unit starts earlier in Romans 5. Matera agrees with Fee's conclusion about Paul's answers to the two questions about the relation of law and sin and the solution to the problem, which is the life of the Spirit. However, Matera claims that including chapter 5 in the section, which focuses on the work of Christ, demonstrates how life in the Spirit is the continuation of Christ's paschal mystery.[290]

In chapter 6 Paul counters the objection against his gospel. The suspicion was that Paul's convictions led to the wrong understanding of Christian freedom and resulted in the indulgence of the believer in sinful practices. Paul passionately clarifies that his gospel does not mean undermining the moral life, but urges the Christians to lead a life "that accords the demands of God's righteousness."[291] In order to convince his audience he employs two metaphors: death (Rom 6:1-11) and slavery (Rom 6:15-23). The death metaphor refers to the practice of baptism (Rom 6:3). Paul's "baptism theology" (seeing baptism as death with Christ) was not necessarily familiar to his audience,[292] nevertheless its meaning is clear: Christians have died to sin with Christ (Rom 6:2); hence they now can no longer "obey the passions of the body" (Rom 6:12) or "give they members to sin as instruments of wickedness" (Rom 6:13), but rather live the life of righteousness (Rom 6:13). Similarly, Paul uses the slavery metaphor, which probably had a

[288] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 499.
[289] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 515.
[290] Matera, *Romans*, 121-123.
[291] Matera, *Romans*, 145.
[292] Matera, *Romans*, 147.

strong impact on the many Christians who were slaves or former slaves;[293] his aim was to convince his audience that there should be no continuity of the sinful practices performed before accepting the Gospel (Rom 6:16-22). In both metaphors, Paul emphasizes the radical conversion of Christians that manifests itself in participation "in the divine dynamic of self-giving love."[294] It is noteworthy that neither σάρξ (with exception of Rom 6:19 where Paul refers to the weakness of human understanding) nor πνεῦμα occurs in chapter 6. The absence of πνεῦμα could be understood as the literary techniques that prepare for hearing the solution for the problem of sin that is laid down fully in chapter 8.[295] With regards to σάρξ, there are other expressions like τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας, ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι or παριστάνετε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὅπλα ἀδικίας τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ that express the similar meaning as σάρξ in the context of antinomianism.

In chapter 7 Paul addresses the issue of the status of the law in his gospel.[296] This topic certainly interested the nomists and generally all Christians who still observed and revered the Jewish law. At the outset, Paul clearly states that for him the law is sinless (Rom 7:7), holy, and spiritual (Rom 7:12, 14). Nevertheless, he is faithful to one of his main convictions "that no man is justified before God by the law" (Gal 3:11). In Rom 7:7-12 Paul explains how it is possible that something that is holy and coming from God could bring death and condemnation. Moreover, in Rom 7:14-25 he describes the experience of someone who is tormented by this situation.

In Rom 7:7 Paul writes that knowledge of sin comes through the law. However, such knowledge did not bring salvation but made humans' situation even worse: the rise of covetousness (Rom 7:8).[297] Paul immediately points out that the real culprit of this situation is

[293] Matera, *Romans*, 147.
[294] Stegman, *Romans*, 1257.
[295] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 500.
[296] Matera, *Romans*, 164.
[297] As Stegman indicates "covetousness" refers to the whole list mentioned in Exodus 20:17 and Deuteronomy 5:21): the neighbor's wife, house, field, slaves, animals, possessions. Paul's crucial point is that the giving of the commandment gave (personified) sin the "occasion" or, even better, a "base of operations" (aphormē)

Sin,[298] the personified cosmic power, which is symbolized by the serpent from the books of Genesis (Gen 3:1-7).[299] The echo of Genesis[300] allows us to understand how Sin used the law for its evil purpose. The serpent twisted the purpose of the commandment and led Adam and Eve to disobey God (Gen 3:4-5). In the same way Sin "convinced" people revering the law to reject the power of the Gospel and turn to the written law, which "prescribes but cannot empower"[301] and in consequence leads to living contrary to God's will.[302] Such a way of life imitating that of Adam and Eve is precisely what Paul calls σάρξ.[303]

In chapter 7 Paul begins to use σάρξ in his technical sense as the human condition without the help of God.[304] He does this both with regard to Gentiles (the sinful passions) and law-observers (who focused on circumcision and other identity markers). Although in chapter 7, Paul addresses the question of the Jewish law in relation to the Gospel[305] and alludes to σάρξ more in the context of discussion with the nomists, it is also true that he understands the concept of σάρξ here more generally (Rom 7:14-15, 21-24).[306] If one takes into account Paul's eschatological imagination, one can see σάρξ in a more general way as life in the manner of the passing age.[307]

In Rom 7:14-25 Paul describes the dramatic experience of the human plight. Stegman points out that there are two symptoms of this kind of life: (1) perplexity and total lack of

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from which to produce all sorts of passions and desires, whether for sexual pleasure, wealth and possessions, or power." Stegman, "Romans," 1259.

[298] Stegman, "Romans," 1259; Matera, *Romans*, 177.

[299] Stegman, "Romans" 1259.

[300] Stegman points out that the word ἐξαπατάω in Romans 7:11 is the same word used by LXX in reference to the serpent. See: Stegman, "Romans," 1259.

[301] Stegman, "Romans," 1259.

[302] Stegman, "Romans," 1259.

[303] Stegman, "Romans," 1258.

[304] Stegman, „Romans," 1258.

[305] Fee argues that the main point of chapter 7 is not a presentation of the experience of being outside the grace, but showing that Torah (the Law) is good. See: Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 511. And Matera adds that Romans 7 defends the law as holy, good and spiritual See: Matera, *Romans*, 175.

[306] Stegman, „Romans," 1260.

[307] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 512-513.

understanding of one's own actions and (2) internal divisions and incapacity to exercise one's own will.[308] Those symptoms can refer either to those who know the Jewish law (Rom 7:22) or to those who know God's law through the use of reason (Rom 2:14-15; 7:18, 23). In either case, the experience of the subject shows the internal struggle to live according to the good intentions that one envisions in the mind. The source that leads to evil actions comes from Sin that dwells in the flesh, which is evident through such phrases as "Sin that dwells in my members/within me" (Rom 7:17, 20, 23) and "nothing good dwells within me" (Rom 7:18). It is the personal, cosmic power of Sin which exercises its evil powers by the domination in the realm of σάρξ. An individual through the machinations of Sin wrongly identifies him or herself with σάρξ. Such attitude can be understood as the description of someone who lives according to the values of the passing age.[309]

However, treating Romans 7:14-25 as the description of life according to the flesh in the passing age can raise the question of why Paul writes in the first person and present tense. Naturally, it may imply that Paul describes his struggles with the flesh and Sin after his conversion. Such an interpretation was held through ages of interpretations by important Christian theologians (Augustine, Abelard, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Barth, and Dunn).[310] But as many scholars recently indicate (e.g., Fee, Matera, Stegman) such a view obscures and reduces the joyful message delivered in Romans 8.[311] As Fee rightly states the traditional interpretation makes it hard to reconcile Paul's statements from chapter 7 ("sold under sin" [Rom 7:14] "captive to the law of sin" [Rom 7:23] "having sin dwelled in him" [Rom 7:17] or "being in need of rescue from the body of death" [Rom 7:24]) with the Good News from chapter 8 ("the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" [Rom 8:2], "the

[308] Stegman, "Romans," 1260.
[309] Fee, *Presence*, 513-515.
[310] Matera, *Romans*, 166.
[311] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 513; Matera, *Romans*, 165-167; Stegman, "Romans," 1258-1259.

Spirit dwells in you" [Rom 8:9], or that "your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness" [Rom 8:10]).[312] In fact, Paul employs the rhetorical technique called *prosopopoeia* (literally: "to make a mask of someone's face;" a character from the text speaks about him or herself) or *paradeigma* (an example or a pattern of behavior to imitate or avoid).[313] He writes on behalf of the unredeemed person making a literary device "the catalyst to turn to God, to depend more on him, and to beg for greater openness to the loving, guiding presence of the Holy Spirit."[314]

Before discovering the ideal meaning of the chosen metaphors from Romans 8, one can ask the question of whether Paul uses here metaphorical language at all. First, it should be stated that there are good reasons for Paul to use metaphors. As it was stated by Dunn, the experience of the Spirit was a novelty for Paul and for Christians and so it was not easy for him to find the proper language to describe it. As it was stipulated by Robinson in his metaphor theory, it is precisely the function of the metaphor as a literary device to comprehend new concepts and experiences.[315] As Konsmo states, metaphors economize language by explaining a difficult concept in simpler language.[316] It is probable that Paul who struggled to present his gospel and the gift of the Spirit from the perspective of the eschatological imagination and in the context of the debates within Christianity may have been very keen to use the metaphoric language that perfectly suited his needs. Also, other criteria of Konsmo's[317] are met. Paul uses similar metaphors elsewhere (adoption in Galatians 4:6; the walking metaphor in Galatians 5:25, the container metaphor in 1 Cor 3:16; Rom 5:5). In the immediate context, there are other metaphors

[312] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 513-515.
[313] Richard Longenecker, *Introducing Romans: Critical Issues in Paul's Most Famous Letter*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 187.
[314] Stegman, "Romans," 1260.
[315] Robinson, *Metaphors*, 38.
[316] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors,* 25.
[317] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors,* 56.

(the metaphor of death and slavery in chapter 6). As it will be explained in the following sections it is absurd or in contradiction with other Paul's views to interpret literally the chosen statements. Summarizing, one can safely assume that the statements that are going to be analyzed are metaphorical.

The walking metaphor

Through the walking metaphor,[318] Paul wants to support his preceding statement in Rom 8:1-2 about the absolute novelty of the new eschatological era, which began with the transhistorical event of the paschal mystery of Jesus.[319] The Spirit's activity that enables the believer to fulfill "the just requirements of the law" is grounded in what God has done through Christ.[320] Sin, the personal cosmic power, no longer enslaves those who are "in Christ" because Christ "condemned sin in the flesh." The just requirements of the law, "the real aim of Torah,"[321] which is coterminous with the love commandment (Rom 13:8-10), can be now attained by those who "walk (περιπατοῦσιν) not according to the flesh (κατὰ σάρκα), but according to the Spirit (κατὰ πνεῦμα)."[322]

As Konsmo rightly states it would be ridiculous to claim that Paul intends to refer "to the way that a person puts one foot in front of the other as some sort of spiritual exercise."[323] The metaphorical meaning is quite obvious here. As Robinson claims that "walking" is a well-known cross-cultural metaphor of religious and moral behavior that was known for Paul's original

[318] "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Rom 8:3-4).
[319] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 528.
[320] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 528.
[321] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 536.
[322] Stegman, "Romans," 1261.
[323] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors,* 101.

audience and also for the contemporary reader.[324] The image of moral conduct as walking is prevalent in the Old Testament (Gen 5:22; 6:9; 17:1; 24:40; Deut 30:15-19; Jer 15:6; Hos 11:3; Wis 6:4; Sir 24:5).[325] It is also present in the New Testament (Mark 7:5; John 11:9-10; 12:35; Acts 21:21; Heb 13:9; 1 John 1:6-7; 2:6, 11; Rev 3:4; 21:24).[326] Additionally, the metaphor is current in modern usage, for example, as in the English proverb: "If you're going to talk the talk, you've got to walk the walk."[327] The understanding of the metaphor is so widespread in contemporary contexts that some English translations (e.g., NIV, NABRE), which probably intend to avoid confusion do not want to use the verb "to walk" (they use the verb "to live") for περιπατέω seem to overreact. In fact, the more literal translations (NRSV) help to appreciate the richer meaning of Paul's text.

As Robinson states, the image of walking provides the structure for Paul's statement and controls the interpretation.[328] The image comprises the following elements: (1) the person that walks (or rather the group of people who walk), and (2) the act of walking.[329] However, Robinson also links this metaphor with Rom 8:14 ("For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God") and changes the metaphor of walking into the metaphor of the journey, which adds another three elements: (3) the itinerary, (4), the destination, and (5) the guide.[330] Such an interpretation seems justified by the structure of the text itself since the act of walking and leading belongs to the same semantic field.

Using the mapping procedure, Robinson juxtaposes the source domain, the act of walking, with the target domain, the religious-moral behavior under the empowering influence of the

[324] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 52.
[325] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors*, 102-103.
[326] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 48.
[327] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 50.
[328] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 60
[329] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 51.
[330] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 56-57.

Spirit.[331] The image of walking is blended with the elements of his target domain which are: (1) the believer (or believers), (2) the religious and moral behavior, and (3) the Spirit (or the flesh). The word κατά (which can be translated as "along with" or "in conformity with") suggests that something influences behavior through religious and moral bonds.[332] According to Paul's statement, believers can experience the freeing love of God if they abandon their former ways of living and begin to follow what comes from the experience of the paschal mystery of Christ and the gift of the Spirit.[333] The eschatological temporal dualism marks a turning point. Paul wants to show that the "old way" of life in the passing age, whether associated with the observance of the external manifestation of the law[334] or with the earthly values of honor and pleasures, is useless in the new era that began with the death and resurrection of Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit.[335] The dialectic between sense and reference reveals the ideal meaning of the metaphor. This ideal meaning can be summarized in the following way: the religious-moral transformation of believers is associated with new patterns of behavior and a new orientation of life.

The phrases (with the words ὄντες and φρόνημα) in the next verses (Rom 8:5-6) explain more fully the contrast between two lifestyles based on the eschatological dualism. The phrase with the word ὄντες (Rom 8:5) quite literally implies that there is an absolute difference between life according to the Spirit in the new age and according to the flesh in the old age.[336] The word φρόνημα explains how this living κατὰ σάρκα or κατὰ πνεῦμα occurs. NRSV uses the phrase

[331] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 51-52.
[332] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 53.
[333] Stegman, "Romans," 1261-1262.
[334] "In 7:7-24 he [Paul] has grappled with the failure of the Law at the very point of its inability to do something effective with regard to sin." Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 531.
[335] "To be "in Christ Jesus" (8: 1-2) means not simply an ideological decision about the importance of an event in Jerusalem some 20-30 years earlier, but an experience of power-power which released believers from that false perception of the law which made it possible for sin to dominate even the people of the law so completely, power that Paul had found more than sufficient to break the vicious circle of dependence on the satisfaction of merely human desires, the vicious circle of presumption of national prerogative." James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1*-8, (Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1988), 440.
[336] Matera, *Romans*, 194.

"setting the mind" to translate φρόνημα. Stegman defines it as "a mindset, a fundamental orientation of thinking and willing that eventuates in certain behaviors."[337] It seems that it is a complex attitude towards something, either "worldly, doomed to perish" or "spiritual and eternal."[338] Since φρόνημα comprises not only thoughts but also the will, it is possible that the "setting mind" can also be understood as convictions and motivation empowered by the experience.[339] Therefore, the phrases in Rom 8:4-6 illustrate how the transformation and empowerment by the Spirit make the life of believers distinct from those who did not experience the Spirit.[340]

Dunn argues that the Paul in Rom 8:4-6 does not mean that there is a clear demarcation between the believers who live κατὰ σάρκα or those who live κατὰ πνεῦμα.[341] He claims that in fact Paul is a realist and knows that sometimes the believer "walks" one path and sometimes the other, and aims at delivering a parenesis encouraging his audience to choose more frequently "to walk according to the Spirit."[342] On the contrary, Fee points out that Paul is truly a realist and knows that the believers sometimes choose the values of old age (if everything in the Christian communities was ideal Paul would have not written his letters at all), but he underscores that Paul has in mind not only the behavior but rather what "lies behind all life and behavior – a mind set on God and his ways."[343]

Moreover, Robinson points out that Dunn misses the fact that in the metaphor of walking Paul uses the plural form, which suggests that Paul does not speak about the internal struggle of

[337] Stegman, "Romans," 1262.
[338] Stegman, "Romans," 1261.
[339] Fee states that the „peace" is yet another effect of the experienced Spirit. See: Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 542.
[340] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 537.
[341] Dunn, *Romans*, 441.
[342] Dunn, *Romans*, 441.
[343] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 541.

the believer and that the community could have supported each other in the community to follow the "paths" of the Spirit.[344] Of course, it is possible there could be Christians who in terms of Paul's language "walked according to the flesh," but the enthusiastic attitude of Paul and the first Christians who saw themselves as the redeemed people, freed from the law and sin,[345] support rather Fee's and Robinson's than Dunn's thesis.

The metaphor of life as a journey that comes about through merging the "walking metaphor" with the phrase in Rom 8:14 ("all who are led by the Spirit") emphasizes the distinction between life κατὰ σάρκα and life κατὰ πνεῦμα.[346] Life as a journey shows that the flesh and the Spirit as presented in Romans imply two different mutually exclusive itineraries (life plans), and destinations. The σάρξ-life journey is "hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law" (Rom 8:7) which ends with death (Rom 8:6), and the πνεῦμα-life journey is "life and peace" (Rom 8:6) for which final aim is the resurrection and eternal glory (Rom 8:11, 17).[347]

The element of the guide dramatically underscores eschatological dualism.[348] The Spirit is the guide that leads the believer in the new eschatological age, but in the passing age and on its way there is another guide.[349] As the structure of the metaphor implies, the believer cannot have two guides at the same time.[350] In the πνεῦμα-life journey, it is God himself, God's presence that leads the believer (as it was demonstrated in the previous chapter), and in the σάρξ-life journey, the guide seems to be the personal, cosmic power of Sin.[351] A person is helpless when he or she

[344] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 59.

[345] Dunn himself states that the experience of the Spirit "ensured a combination of intellectual appeal, embracing experience, and motivated ethic, which evidently made the earliest Christian missionary outreach so attractive and compelling to a wide range of nationalities and social classes." (See: Dunn, *Theology*, 414).

[346] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors,* 106.

[347] Robinson, *Metaphor*,

[348] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 57.

[349] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 68.

[350] Robinson, *Metaphor*,

[351] Stegman, "Romans," 1261.

stays on the σάρξ-life journey because, as chapter 7 demonstrates, Sin effectively deceives a person even using the commandment or the law as a tool. However, in an eschatological way, the Spirit is a true helper and savior who guides the believer on the paths that lead to life, fulfilling the righteous statuses of the law.[352] The ideal sense leads to the interpretation that only God's presence (experienced as God the Father, Christ, the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity) can bring salvation, whereas other ways of attaining salvation can be interpreted as being led and deceived by Sin in the realm of the flesh.

The container metaphor

Romans 8:9 comprises the following statement: "But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit if, in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." As it was pointed out in the previous chapter, although the phrases ἐν σαρκὶ, ἐν πνεύματι or πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν, could have been understood literally in the context of the Stoic philosophy, it seems improbable based on Paul's background that he had a such understanding. In Paul's writings (Rom 8:1-2; 8:10) and other places in the New Testament (e.g., J 10:38) similar phrases with the preposition ἐν express "a close personal association or relationship" and are container metaphors, which designate "two opposing, figurative spheres or realms of existence or spiritual states."[353] It is also important to add that the phrase πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν is in the structure of the sentence the condition of being ἐν πνεύματι.[354] As we shall see later, the verb οἰκέω is not only the container metaphor but first of

[352] Matera, *Romans*, 210.
[353] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 92
[354] Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 489.

all an echo of the Old Testament's vision of the temple which refers to the prophecies about God's dwelling among the people.[355]

The container metaphor is based on the basic container image, which comes from the mundane experience of holding something in a vessel or being in a building or a vehicle. The external object designates the boundary of the other object or liquid that is inside.[356] The structure of the metaphor comprises four elements: (1) boundaries, (2) control, (3) protection, and (4) transition of traits from the inside object to the whole container.[357] It is important to notice that the metaphors ἐν πνεύματι and πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν, although they both conjure up the image of container, differ when it comes to the blended domain: in case of ἐν πνεύματι (or ἐν σαρκί) the image of container blends with the Spirit (or the flesh), and in the phrase of πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν the believer is the container. Robinson claims that this is the reason why only the first three elements of the container can be applied to the phrases ἐν πνεύματι or ἐν σαρκί and the fourth only to the phrase πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν.[358] It would be hard in the context of what was said about Paul's background and the eschatological imagination to interpret the element of boundaries, control, or protection if the believer was the container (in such a case the Spirit would be bounded, controlled, or protected by the believer), and the same could be said about the transition of traits if the Spirit was the container (the believer would give the Spirit his or her traits). As Robinson claims, it is rather the Spirit who gives boundaries, protects, and influences, and the traits are transitioned from the Spirit to the believer, and not the other way round. Also, the phrase ἐν σαρκί blends only with the three elements of the container metaphor (boundaries, protection, and control) and not with the transition of traits.

[355] Stegman, "Romans," 1262.
[356] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 93.
[357] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 83-93.
[358] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 92.

In terms of reference, as was demonstrated above, Paul in his other letters developed σάρξ into an eschatological, technical term. On the basis, of what was said of Paul's attitude toward the body that comes from his Jewish background, one should not think that he intended the meaning of οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκί to mean that the Roman congregation was "out of the physical flesh" in the form of "disembodied spirits."[359] As was demonstrated earlier, Paul shows the intrinsic goodness of embodied existence.

Dunn states that ἐν σαρκί in Romans has some connection with physical existence because σάρξ should be understood as "the weakness and appetites of the mortal body."[360] He argues that Paul presents in Romans 8:9 the internal conflict of the believers and the statement οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐν σαρκί is only an exhortation.[361] Dunn expresses his "eschatological hesitation" by seeing Paul's understanding of eschatology as "already and not yet" and claiming that the life ἐν σαρκί described in Rom 7:14-25 still refers to the situation of the believer,[362] because even if σάρξ is not "a decisive factor" but it "still a factor."[363]

Conversely, Fee and Jewett claim that the radical change of the believer was visible in his or her self-identification with the new eschatological age in opposition to the age characterized by σάρξ. The analysis of Paul's usage of σάρξ made by Jewett demonstrates that even though Paul was to some extent influenced by the Stoic criticism of self-indulgence, he places this criticism in the context of the eschatological dualism. Paul criticizes a certain behavior or attitude as something characteristic of the passing age, and he did not criticize the physical body itself. It does not mean that Paul required recipients of his letters to never sin again. In the container

[359] Dunn, *Romans*, 370.
[360] Dunn, *Romans*, 370.
[361] Dunn, *Romans*, 371
[362] Dunn, *Romans*, 387-412.
[363] Dunn, *Romans*, 428.

metaphor, he rather presents the "difference between two kinds of existence,"[364] two different ways of self-identification.

The problem with Jewett's interpretation is that even though he argues that σάρξ was used in the discussion against the libertinistic tendencies (in Galatians and the Corinthians correspondence) and for this reason, it comprises some influences of the Stoic ethics, the usage of σάρξ in Romans has no Hellenistic connotations at all. In his earlier book *Paul's Anthropological Terms* Jewett claimed that Paul uses ἐν σαρκί in Romans with the reference exclusively to the problem of nomism.[365] He later amended his views, arguing in his commentary on Romans that ἐν σαρκί also indicates a life that is preoccupied with gaining honor (compulsion to gain honor).[366] According to Jewett, striving for honor was present in Roman society and it was yet another lifestyle that lured believers to live in conformity with the old age.[367] Living ἐν πνεύματι is, on the contrary, a different mindset that is based on the experience of the personal presence of God, in Jewett's opinion, especially visible in the charismatic gifts.[368] On the basis of what was said about Paul's background and his audience and reasons for Romans, it is not entirely clear why Paul in his usage of ἐν σαρκί could not refer to the nomism, antinomism, and the desire for honor at the same time. The common denominator of those ways of life is that they belong to old age. The element of boundaries in the structure of the metaphor means a total identification with the relational systems of this age. People who chose to identify with those different systems end up in the situation described in Rom 7:14-25. The enslavement and machination of Sin can be seen in many human spheres whether it is the Jewish law, the system of honor, or "sexual

[364] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 547.
[365] Jewett, *Anthropological Terms,* 155-156.
[366] Jewett, *Romans,* 489.
[367] Jewett, *Romans,* 51.
[368] Jewett, *Romans,* 489.

pleasure, wealth and possessions, or power."[369]The reader of Romans is presented with the vision of life that should be characterized by the religious and moral boundaries that come from the relationship with the Spirit (ἐν πνεύματι). In other words, there can be no overlapping territories of life in the flesh and life in the Spirit.[370] A human being chooses and identifies with either one way of life or another.

The element of control is grounded in the image of the container filled with liquid. It shows the dynamic control over liquid when the container is moved from one place to another.[371] When the vessel is taken from one place, we naturally expect that what is inside also will be moved. Robison argues that this characteristic of the container image allows one to see how the Spirit (or Sin in the flesh) works in the believer.[372] The Spirit or Sin influences (or control) the life and behavior of the believer. However, Robinson states that in the case of the Spirit, the notion of control is not exact.[373] If the understanding of ἐν σαρκί as being under the manipulative control of Sin fits well with Paul's description of such a state (especially in Rom 7:14-25), with regards to the Spirit it is better to say about the influence or empowerment (as Rom 8:15 where the Spirit is not "the spirit of slavery"). In other words, the reference is associated with the eschatological imagination: the life ἐν σαρκί is controlled by the personified Sin, and in the life ἐν πνεύματι God influences or empowers the believer. The ideal meaning reveals that God through the Spirit wants to help Christians to live a life of obedience.

The container image projects on the blended domain the element of protection from outside forces. Robinson invokes the experience of being in a house saying that everyone

[369] Stegman, "Romans," 1259.
[370] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 94-95.
[371] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 95.
[372] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 95.
[373] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 95.

understands that being in the house protects from the external forces of wind or rain.[374] Through this element, the phrase ἐν πνεύματι means that Christians are protected by the Spirit from the external forces of Sin and Death,[375] while the life ἐν σαρκὶ is being left alone in the realm which is dominated by the hostile superhuman powers. The reference is the cosmic aspect of eschatological dualism. The ideal meaning produced from this element of the container metaphor is that it is God (through his presence in the life of the believer) who makes the moral and religious life of Christians possible.

To analyze the function of the phrase "the Spirit dwells in you," Robinson refers to the fourth element of the container metaphor: transitivity of traits ("if B is *in* A, then whatever is *in* B is also *in* A").[376] An example is the situation of someone who is in a room of a house – if a person is in a room of the house, therefore also the person is in the house. Robinson claims that this metaphor refers to the qualities of the Spirit, which are "life and peace" (Rom 8:6). Those qualities of the Spirit are supposed to become also the qualities of the believer.[377] However, Konsmo points out that the phrase "the Spirit dwells" (οἰκέω) is more the metaphor of the temple.[378] As Stegman indicates, it echoes the tradition of God making a home in Israel (Exod 25:8; 29:45.46; Deut 14:23; 16:2.6) and the promises given by God through the prophets (Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:26-27).[379] As we saw in the previous chapters, believers experienced the fulfillment of the eschatological promise.[380] The experience of God's presence became for them the new identity mark, which was the condition of being entirely in conformity with the new era that is characterized by the life ἐν πνεύματι. We can conclude from this reference that it is the

[374] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 96.
[375] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 96.
[376] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 96.
[377] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 99.
[378] Konsmo, *Pauline Metaphors*, 114.
[379] Stegman, "Romans,"1262.
[380] Matera, *Romans*, 133.

experience of God's presence that leads to the real transformation of the believer (the ideal sense).

It is also important to note that the second sentence of verse 9 ("Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.") reminds the reader of Romans that the experience of the Spirit in Paul is tied up with the experience of the resurrected Christ. The Spirit that dwells in the believer is "the Spirit that God bestowed upon Christ during ministry and preeminently at the resurrection."[381] As Stegman indicates the transformation of the believer should be done into "the likeness of Jesus," into the "mind of Christ," through attaining "the virtues of Jesus."[382] It is also associated with the next metaphor of adoption where we will learn that believers are "fellow heirs with Christ" (Rom 8:17), which means that the eschatological glory received by Christ will be given also to the after the resurrection of the dead.[383] The fluid language of the Spirit demonstrates the fact that Christians did not necessarily distinguish the experience of resurrected Christ and the experience of the Holy Spirit.[384] The implication in terms of the ideal meaning is that the experience of the Spirit is strongly associated with the experience of the resurrected Christ.

The adoption metaphor

The metaphor of adoption develops the theme of the new identity of the Christians in their transformed relationship with God. Rom 8:15-17 states: "For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if

[381] Matera, *Romans*, 195.
[382] Stegman, *Written*, 59.
[383] Matera, *Romans*, 198.
[384] Dunn, *Theology*, 433.

children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ." From the text, the reader of Romans learns that during the cry "Abba! Father!" (αββα ὁ πατήρ) the Spirit that is called the spirit of adoption (υἱοθεσία)[385] bears witness together with the human spirit that believers are the children of God and the fellow heirs with Christ. In this section, we will look at the structure of the metaphor of adoption and the possible historical and transhistorical reference for it.

Robinson points out that although the section of Rom 8:14-17 is usually recognized by scholars as the adoption metaphor, the complex meaning of its structure, however, is rarely discovered.[386] He claims that the conceptual structure of the metaphor is built on the image of the well-known procedure of the adoption of a son (υἱοθεσία) in the Greco-Roman culture, which comprises the following elements: (1) the figure of the father of the Roman family (*paterfamilias*), (2) the natural son, (3) the adopted son, (4) the two witnesses, and (5) the moral code of the family.[387] The procedure of adoption in ancient Rome was used when a head of the family did not have a male heir. In order to protect his legacy he made a young man from another family (and sometimes even a male slave) his adopted son. The procedure required two witnesses. The status and identity of the adopted son changed radically. The adoptee became not only the legal heir but was treated as the natural son. The new son was also supposed to take care father's and the family's honor by embracing the moral code of the family.[388] According to Robinson, the structure of the procedure is blended with the target domain that focuses on the relationships between God and the believer revealing the changed status of Christians in the new era.

[385] υἱοθεσία means literally "place one as a son" or "sonship" but because Paul clear does not address only male members of the Christian communities it would be better to translate υἱοθεσία as adoption. See: Stegman, "Romans," 1262.

[386] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 125.

[387] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 126.

[388] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 126

The target domain comprises the following elements: (1) the believer, (2) the Spirit, (3) God as the Father, (4) Christ, and (5) the new religious and moral behavior conformed with the new eschatological era. The elements of the source and the target domain create the blended domain. According to Robinson the meaning of the blended domain reveals the radical transformation of the identity of the believer and his or her relationship with God.[389] The believer not only receives the promise of eternal life but also becomes a son or a daughter[390] of the heavenly Father according to the image of Christ.[391] The new identity also entails an obligation to live and behave in the likeness of Christ.[392] Rom 8:14-17 is an adoption metaphor that has a moral dimension but it contains a complex and multilevel message that can speak to Jewish and Gentile Christians referring to various spheres of their lives.

One of the references (the realities that the passage speaks about) is the life of prayer in the community. Dunn suggests that the cry "Abba! Father!" refers probably to a charismatic experience, "a spontaneous expression of this sense of sonship in a cry of exultation and trust – an inspired utterance."[393] He supports the thesis by pointing out that the verb κράζω is a very strong expression and is used in the NT to indicate "a solemn proclamation" (Rom 9:27) or "the screams and shrieks of demoniacs" (Mk 5:5; Lk 9:39).[394] Moreover, he adds that Paul in another place in Romans (Rom 8:26) certainly refers to the charismatic prayer, so it is also possible that he also does it in verse 8:15.[395] The word "Abba" is the way Jesus prayed to God during his

[389] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 133-134.

[390] Although the adoption metaphor reflects the patriarchal model of the society Paul's language clearly indicates that the inheritance of the eschatological glory has nothing to do with the gender and will be granted to women and men. The word τέκνα θεοῦ in Romans 8:16 includes both women and men. Thereofore, it is justified to translate υἱοθεσία as adoption rather than "sonship" and υἱοὶ θεοῦ as "sons and daughters of God" rather than only "sons of God." See Matera, *Romans*, 197. Stegman, "Romans," 1262.

[391] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 137.

[392] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 137.

[393] Dunn, *Jesus*, 240.

[394] Dunn, *Jesus*, 240.

[395] Dunn, *Jesus*, 240-241.

ministry (Mk 14:36), so it would not be impossible that the communities alluded to this tradition and made the calling of God "Abba" an important element of their prayer during which they had profound spiritual experiences.[396] Dunn states that Paul writing the passage thought about the divine power that uplifts the consciousness of the believer and makes him or her confident of being God's child.[397] However, it is not only an enthusiastic experience that Paul expresses but also empowerment to change behavior and lifestyle.[398]

Another scholar, Mark Wreford argues that Romans 8:14-17 refers also to the emotional experiences of Christians because it expresses the intimate father-son relationship.[399] To support his thesis Wreford points out that the emotional experiences in contrast to the purely intellectual elaboration of a doctrine were crucial for the Christians in the first century.[400] The expressions of God as the father connotes intimate and intensive emotions of being loved as a child and reflects the holistic experience of the first Christian communities.[401] Moreover, in Rom 8:15 the reader learns that the believer does not possess "the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear" but the Spirit (or spirit) of adoption. The language of the passage itself indicates that the Spirit causes an emotional change in the believer.[402] People who used to be bounded and led by fear in their life after the experience of the Spirit can feel and behave like children of God. Those emotional aspects of having the new familial relationship with God demonstrate that Romans can be used to affect feelings and influence behavior.

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[396] Stegman, "Romans," 1262.
[397] Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 453.
[398] Dunn, *Jesus*, 240.
[399] Wreford proposes three features that characterize the religious experience of the first Christians: (1) it was recognizable and communicable, but different from other, mundane experiences, (2) experience had a strong emotional impact on the believer that changed emotions, patterns of thought and actions, (3) even though the early Christianity was focus very much on the eschatological expectations, the religious experience was for them also accessible "here and now." Mark Wreford, "Diagnosing Religious Experience in Romans 8," in *Tyndale Bulletin* 68, no. 2 (2017): 221.
[400] Wreford, "Diagnosing," 221.
[401] Wreford, "Diagnosing," 208.
[402] Wreford, "Diagnosing," 209.

Apart from the charismatic, emotional experience and the moral consequences of such experience, the metaphor of adoption also refers to a transhistorical reality, the belief that after the resurrection those who have the Spirit of Christ will inherit the eschatological glory that Christ has already received from the Father.[403] There is a question of whether the glory of the believers will be the same as Christ's, and what will be the ontological status of the believer according to the language of the metaphor. On one hand, from a Trinitarian perspective, Christ is the unique Son of God (the preexistent God), and the believers will inherit the glory as part of creation, always in relationship with Christ. On the other hand, some scholars say that Paul saw Christ's sonship not as ontological but rather as eschatological, which would emphasize the equality between Christ and the Christians.[404] Of course, it would be anachronistic to assume that Paul had a developed trinitarian concept of God, but the structure of the metaphor itself supports the view that believers have a different ontological status than Christ. Christ in the blended domain is the natural son of God, and believers are them through adoption. So, there is a qualitative difference between the ontological status of Christ and believers. Only in Christ, believers will inherit the divine sonship.

To sum up, the ideal structure of Rom 8:14-17 focuses on the radical change of the believer in the relationship with God. As Fee indicates, the metaphor of adoption does not only expresses the relationship with the Spirit but it includes in the picture God the Father and Christ. Believers under the influence of the Spirit can call God the Father and be fellow heirs with Christ as his brothers and sisters. Such a paternal image of God "connotes tenderness and intimacy."[405]

[403] Stegman, "Romans," 1263.

[404] "God sent Jesus not to be incarnated and born but rather to be crucified and resurrected. God sent him to Golgotha—not Bethlehem." Michael Peppard, "Adopted and Begotten Sons of God: Paul and John on Divine Sonship" in *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 73, no. 1 (2011), 99.

[405] Stegman, "Romans," 1262-1263

The presence of God the Father results in removing the feeling of fear.[406] It leads to the intimate dialogue with God[407] in which the Spirit tenderly empowers the believer to love others. This multilevel experience led the early Christians to the strong conviction that they will inherit eternal life and glory in union with Christ, the unique Son of God. The language of inheritance reminds the reader to take into account this promise of the eschatological gift.

Conclusions

This chapter was one more step in achieving the goal of interpreting Paul's metaphors of σάρξ and πνεῦμα from Romans 8. As it was demonstrated that even apart from the literal meaning of a biblical text, which can be discovered through historical research, there may also be an additional spiritual meaning that appears in the interpretation in a new context. However, such interpretation needs some controlling principles. Sandra Schneiders presents the concept of the ideal meaning, which can play a controlling role in the interpretations. The ideal meaning is created through the dialectic between the senses (the proposition of the sentence or a passage) and the reference (the reality to which the proposition refers). Since I chose to interpret the three metaphors (the metaphor of walking, the container metaphor, and the adoption metaphor) from Romans 8 I used the basic concept of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory and the Conceptual Integration Theory that revealed the linguistic structure and the propositional statements of the chosen metaphors. Subsequently, I compared those structures with Paul's original context (his background, audience, the debates he partook in, and his transhistorical convictions about Christ and the Spirit) as a reference point. From the dialectic of sense and reference, I was able to create

[406] Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 1566.
[407] Matera, *Romans*, 199.

my version of the ideal meaning of the metaphors. This chapter showed that the concept of the ideal meaning fits well in the case of interpretation of the metaphorical language from Romans 8.

The immediate literary context of the metaphors is Romans 5-8. This section of the letter placed in the context of the paschal mystery of Christ (chapter 5) presents the main obstacles in embracing the Gospel fully and authentically (chapters 6 and 7) and the solution to those obstacles which is life in the Spirit (chapter 8). The metaphoric expressions that contrast σάρξ and πνεῦμα in the context of the eschatological dualism demonstrate how deep and thoroughly Paul saw the transformation of the believer who experienced the Spirit, God's empowering presence. The sense and the reference of the metaphors have many elements associated with the relationship with God, making this aspect the central element of the interpretation.

The walking or the journey metaphor (according to σάρξ or to πνεῦμα) expresses first of all the radical transformation in lifestyle and the religious as well as moral behavior of believers. The structure of the metaphor emphasizes the difference between living in conformity with one of the two eschatological ages. The source domain with its elements (the walker, the act of walking, the itinerary, the destination, and the guide), blends with the target domain creating an image of two radically different ways of life. The old age is characterized by the wrong ways that human beings chose to find happiness and salvation; those ways led them astray and they found only sin and death. The new way of life is built on the experience of the Spirit and makes itself visible in the religious and ethical decision that leads to life and peace. The ideal meaning demonstrates that the religious and moral transformation of the believer begins with the experience of God's presence. This experience assumes that between the believer and God is a relationship that leads to the transformation of the lifestyle and moral or religious behavior.

"The world behind the text" in the first chapter made it apparent that in the verse 8:9 Paul does not mean physical existence when he uses the phrase ἐν σαρκὶ, nor that πνεῦμα is material

when he writes ἐν πνεύματι or πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. In fact, those phrases are container metaphors through which Paul develops further the theme of the radical difference between existence in the two eschatological ages. The phrases ἐν σαρκὶ and ἐν πνεύματι designate spiritual states and focus less on the behavior and more on the self-identification of the person. The structure of the metaphor of container with its reference reveals that there are no overlapping territories between the realm of σάρξ and πνεῦμα and one can identify him or herself with either the experience of the presence of God or the old human systems of values that lead away from life and peace. The elements of control and protection in the source domain of the metaphor indicate that people can be either manipulated by sinful structures or influenced and empowered by the experience of the Spirit. The phrase πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν treated as a condition through which one can be sure that he or she lives ἐν πνεύματι underscores the fact that the whole transformation of a person is based on the experience of the presence of God. As the last stance of Rom 8:9 states, this experience does not necessarily clearly distinguish the experience of the resurrected Christ or the experience of the Holy Spirit but it certainly focuses on the relationship with God.

The metaphor of adoption in Rom 8:14-17 fully develops the shape of the intimate relationship of the believer with God. We learn from the metaphor that the new identity of believers is defined as "the children of God" (τέκνα θεοῦ). The Spirit convinces them that they are sons and daughters of God (υἱοί θεοῦ) and they can freely call God "Abba! Father!" The reference to this meaning is probably a multilevel reality that includes: charismatic prayers, changes of emotional states, moral conversions, and believing in the promise of the resurrection and eschatological glory. The sense of this metaphor and its reference is the most apparent example of the accuracy of the interpretation of the metaphor in light of the relationship with God.

IV. Chapter Three: The world before the text

Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to convey the spiritual interpretation of the text of Romans that may be helpful for people who have experienced childhood trauma in their lives. To attain this goal we must gather historical and literary information about the chosen text (the three metaphors) and compare it with the existential situation of the people who had adverse childhood experiences. Van der Kolk describes the symptoms of the "adverse childhood experiences" (ACEs) and the process of recovery of trauma survivors. Connecting the historical meaning of Romans with van der Kolk's approach to the ACEs seems promising but it can be also challenging at some points. However, using the hermeneutical method of Sandra Schneiders, which is presented gradually in this paper, helps one to find a way to a fruitful interpretation despite differences between the ancient and contemporary circumstances.

Schneiders speaks about two objectives of interpretation: (1) epistemological understanding, and (2) spiritual transformation of the reader.[408] The first objective is the result of the intellectual investigation of the historical and literal aspects of the text. The second objective is associated with the concept of understanding in the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger.[409] In a nutshell, Heidegger claims that understanding the world is also the mode of being in the world and "cannot be restricted to the purely cognitive realm."[410] Following

[408] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 14.
[409] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 17.
[410] "Understanding is our existential participation in the world, our very existence as focus of that network of relations that, though never fully objectifiable, both constitutes and contextualizes us as human. In this sense, understanding is coterminous with human being." Schneiders, Revelatory Text, 17.

Heidegger, Schneiders states that through the interpretation of the biblical text, one can extend, enhance or change the way one understands the world (appropriate the meaning of the text, allow the horizon of the world of the text, and the world of the reader to merge) and in result experience the existential transformation.[411] Such interaction of the biblical text with the reader, reveals "the world before the text"[412] and is created through a dialectic between explanation and understanding.[413]

As Schneiders points out, one approaches the biblical text with certain preunderstandings that may not be accurate.[414] The reader usually needs some kind of explanation of the historical context of the passage. This leads to a better understanding of the original meaning ("the world behind the text") and the ideal meaning ("the world of the text"). Such understanding can also encourage the reader to ask further questions and allow delving into the world of the text more deeply with the result that he or she will have "the experience of meaning," the appropriation of the biblical passage.[415] Schneiders describes such appropriation as the final goal of interpretation in which the reader enters into "the world before the text" and becomes a changed person.[416]

The previous chapter answered questions about the ideal meaning of the three metaphors from Romans 8. In the last step of the interpretation, further questions about the text will be addressed. The questions will focus on the existential circumstances of a person with childhood trauma. The answers can become a step into the appropriation of the text of Romans by those who recover from the effects of adverse childhood.

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[411] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 157, 167.
[412] "[…] the world that the text generates and projects and invites the reader to enter." Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 168
[413] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 157.
[414] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 157.
[415] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 158.
[416] Schneiders, *Revelatory Text*, 158.

Interpretation

The context of people with the adverse childhood experiences

Bessel van der Kolk describes the ACEs as the experience of trauma similar in its symptoms and effects to the wartime trauma of soldiers and victims.[417] In his dealings with patients, van der Kolk noticed that different destructive behavior like addictions, violence, or engaging in toxic relationships had their roots in the body that "keeps the score" of the experienced trauma. Van der Kolk states that such tragic or even immoral behavior of people "is not results of moral failings or signs of lack of willpower or bad character – they are caused by actual changes in the brain."[418] This finding poses the question of whether and how we can use Paul's statement from Rom 7:18-19 οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία and ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου or the whole description of life ἐν σαρκὶ or κατὰ σάρκα as the description of the adverse childhood experiences.

One of the risks of such an interpretation would be to mistakenly identify σάρξ as the physical body and demonization or moral condemnation of the behaviors that come from the effects of trauma. Van der Kolk states very clearly that the healing process of trauma is about accepting, embracing, and even befriending one's own body, not rejecting or criticizing it.[419] It is precisely the physical body "that needs to learn that the danger has passed and to live in the reality of the present."[420] Rejecting the body as the source of sin can bring more problems than

[417] "One does not have to be a combat soldier, or visit a refugee camp in Syria or the Congo to encounter trauma. Trauma happens to us, our friends, our families, and our neighbors. Trauma happens to us, our friends, our families, and our neighbors. Research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has shown that one in five Americans was sexually molested as a child; one in four was beaten by a parent to the point of a mark being left on their body; and one in three couples engages in physical violence. A quarter of us grew up with alcoholic relatives, and one of eight witnessed their mother being beaten or hit." Van der Kolk, *Body*, 1.

[418] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 3.

[419] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 99.

[420] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 21.

solutions in the life of trauma survivors.[421] The destructive behaviors, compulsions, and addictions that feel like something sinister and evil, from the point of view of the psychiatrist, are the way the body itself learned how to survive and deal with the memory of trauma.[422] As van der Kolk points out, there was a time in human history that the aberrational behaviors were treated as the effects of sin, magic, and evil spirits, but it was often a harmful oversimplification and a way of re-traumatization of the survivors.[423]

As was demonstrated throughout this paper, Paul does not criticize the human body. On the contrary, he defends it. This aspect of Paul's background is in agreement with the theoretical underpinnings of the process of trauma recovery. However, it is also true that Paul includes in the σάρξ category the Stoic criticism of self-indulgence. He also operates in the context of cosmic eschatology, in which personal forces of evil (personified Sin) are active in the human spheres labeled as σάρξ. Those elements of Paul's background pose some risks in using the text of Romans for people who experienced trauma. Criticism of self-indulgence could wrongly judge the morality of actions that are the effects of trauma and not moral failures. Moreover, cosmic eschatology can produce more fear in a person (eg., of the devil or possessions). As van der Kolk states, increasing the level of fear is something that trauma survivors should avoid in their recovery. Nevertheless, it is possible to use Paul's language, concepts, and metaphors in the context of the ACEs. The interpretation of the chosen metaphors in the light of the relationship with God helps one to see σάρξ and the cosmic battle in a way that will not trigger the self-

[421] "Self-regulation depends on having a friendly relationship with your body. Without it you have to rely on external regulation – from medication, drugs like alcohol, constant reassurance, or compulsive compliance with the wishes of others." Van der Kolk, *Body*, 99.

[422] "The idea of the problem being a solution, while understandably disturbing to many, is certainly in keeping with the fact that opposing routinely coexist in biological systems." Van der Kolk, *Body*, 150.

[423] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 27.

condemnation or fear of evil forces and is faithful to their ideal meaning (the controlling principle of the authentic interpretation).

The ACEs are caused by neglect and abuse during childhood. Such dramatic events in the early stages of human development become a very strong factor in human behavior, decisions, also mistakes, and failures.[424] The attachment theory that is used by van der Kolk demonstrates how the relationship with the caregiver creates structures in the emotional brain of the child that affects relationships with other people and with his or her body.[425] If the relationship is secure and intimate the person has many opportunities to have "pleasant playmates and have lots of self-affirming experiences."[426] If the relationship is insecure or there was an experience of neglect and abuse, children become endangered by "unstable sense of self, self-damaging impulsivity (including excessive spending, promiscuous sex, substance abuse, reckless driving, and binge eating), inappropriate and intense anger, and recurrent suicidal behavior."[427] Nevertheless, van der Kolk believes that through resilience,[428] abandoning irrational fear,[429] various treatments and also new healthy relationship "adults who were abused or neglected as children can still learn the beauty of intimacy and mutual trust or have a deep spiritual experience that opens them to a large universe."[430] But can a relationship with God help face the effects of the ACEs?

Susan Eastman and Volker Rabens claim that the language about σάρξ and πνεῦμα in Paul can be interpreted in a way that helps recovery from dysfunctional relationships. Eastman interprets the life ἐν σαρκί as "life embedded in the complex social networks that constitute the

[424] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 153.
[425] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 112-122.
[426] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 116.
[427] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 122.
[428] Van der Kolk, Body, 137.
[429] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 131.
[430] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 131.

present evil age."[431] According to Eastman's interpretation, sin that dwells in the body is a relational matrix of a dysfunctional relationship with the caregiver.[432] From the perspective of people who live with childhood trauma the phrases "to be in the flesh" and "sin dwells within me" would be an expression of reducing their personhood and self-identity to their traumatic experiences and the behavioral destructive patterns that harms them and others. However, a new saving relationship with God can be established, which is called life in Christ.[433]

Rabens wants to demonstrate in his model that the Spirit in Paul is primarily associated with the relationship with God and religious-ethical transformation. Rabens argues that the language of the Spirit expresses the transformative and empowering relationships in the life of the believer.[434] The experience of the Spirit is expressed by Paul as the presence of God, love, and peace (2 Cor 3:18; Gal 4:4-9; Rom 5:5; 8:12-17). The deeper knowledge and feeling of intimacy with God as the Father, with Jesus Christ, and with the Spirit as well as with fellow believers create a dynamic process of transformation of the identity that results in the new empowered religious-ethical behavior.[435]

Rabens supports his argument by indicating that modern psychology is in agreement with the results of exegesis. The influence of the relationship was proven to be the most important factor for the development and integrity of the human being. Building on psychological attachment theory and research on the psychology of religion, Rabens states that not only the relationships with caregivers in early life have an effect on the person but also relationships later in life, including our relationship with God, can have a significant impact on life and behavior.[436]

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[431] Eastman, *Paul and the Person,* 159.
[432] "The whole self lives and dies with that matrix." Eastman, *Paul and the Person,* 167.
[433] Eastman, *Paul and the Person,* 153.
[434] Rabens, *The Holy Spirit*, 145.
[435] Rabens, *The Holy Spirit*, 123.
[436] Rabens, *The Holy Spirit*, 130.

The additional support for using the metaphors from Romans 8 in the context of recovery from the ACEs is the fact that van der Kolk suggests that the healing process should include working with patients' imaginations. One of the methods of therapy van der Kolk presents as especially helpful, is based on imaging the painful memories of trauma (dysfunctional relationships) which is contrasted with the images where the patient feels safe, protected, and loved (through healthy relationships).[437] Such sessions can create virtual memories that counter the memories of trauma.[438] The process shows some analogies with the interaction of the reader in "the world before the text" presented by Schneiders. Those analogies encourage the use of the metaphors in Romans 8 as the revelatory text that mediates spiritual, transformative experiences. I want to underscore that I do not claim that the spiritual experience based on the interpretation of Romans can replace a proper therapy to recover from childhood trauma. My goal is only to demonstrate that the language of Romans has the potential capacity to be appropriated by people suffering from the ACEs.

The walking metaphor

The previous chapter showed that the metaphor of walking expresses in its essence the radical difference between two ways of life in the old and new eschatological ages. The structure of the metaphor reveals rich existential and theological content. The human being (the walker) chooses between living (the act of walking) according to the Spirit or according to the flesh. This decision causes a change in his or her entire attitude toward life: evident in plans, goals, and behaviors. The change is also visible from the eschatological perspective through the engagement with the spiritual forces (the Spirit or the personal Sin) that the person chooses to follow.

[437] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 302.
[438] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 310.

In the context of the ACEs, traumatized people also seek this turning point in changing their way of life. Although destructive behaviors caused by trauma are ways of coping with excessive levels of stress they are not ideal states because ultimately they lead to tragic consequences.[439] Hence, even though it would be inadvisable to condemn anyone straightaway for the behavior of trauma survivors, the goal of therapy is after all, transformation, a change of the patient's behavior toward health, responsibility, and love for oneself and others.[440] The walking metaphor shows the solution in the spiritual sphere, which is relying on the experience of God who loves and cares for people. An experience of God as the one who comes to liberate from destructive dependencies may be what people recovering from a trauma most likely seek. A possible appropriation of the walking metaphor is imagining that God, Christ, or the Spirit want to lead them on their paths to life, peace, and love.

One of the dangers in the interpretation of this metaphor is to emphasize that the forces opposed to God arise in the realm of σάρξ. This view derives from the eschatological imagination and cosmic dualism. Imaging the guide in the paths of σάρξ to be personified Sin, Satan or the devil can put traumatized people under more anxiety and stress, which will lead to further entanglements and hinder healing. A person who has had the experience of trauma, however, does not need to emphasize this element in his or her reading. As Eastman points out, one should not see the dysfunctional caregiver who causes the trauma as the epitome of the devil (such a person may himself be a victim of trauma).[441] Christianity itself does not preach metaphysical dualism (for Christians Satan is just a creature) and does not promote a spirituality in which one looks for the devil in all things. Christianity recommends focusing on God, who is always

[439] Van der Kolk, Body, 150.
[440] Van der Kolk, Body, 358.
[441] "I am not suggesting that this troubled mother is a personification of sin in any agential form, including intentional cruelty." Eastman, *Paul and the Person,* 123.

stronger than any evil. This is also in line with the ideal meaning of the metaphor, which focuses on the radical difference between those who choose the ways of the Spirit and those who stay in the ways of the flesh. To sum up, one can interpret κατὰ σάρκα as life according to the dysfunctional relational system or focus on the life κατὰ πνεῦμα as the life influenced by the relationship with God.

Another danger is to condemn too quickly the conduct of a person whose body remembers the effects of trauma. The ideal sense of the metaphor emphasizes the solution to the problem of evil rather than some constant internal struggle between two equal factors. As Stegman writes Paul did not claim that the believer, after accepting faith in Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit, does not become sinless, but is called to renew his or her decision every day.[442] A traumatized person can humbly accept his or her lapses, trusting that God's Spirit in its gentleness and love guide him or her on the path toward healing.

The container metaphor

As was elaborated in the previous chapter, the structure of the container metaphor has four elements: boundaries, control (or influence), protection, and transitivity of traits. By those four elements, the metaphoric expressions ἐν πνεύματι, πνεῦμα θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν and ἐν σαρκί from Rom 8:9 describe two groups of people who identify themselves by different eschatological ages. Regarding historical meaning, the previous chapters demonstrated that the life designated as ἐν σαρκί referred to a total self-identification (boundaries) with different religious, philosophical, or sociological systems that were popular in Paul's times. Anyone who sought in them a sense of security (protection) was also influenced by those systems (control or influence). Paul describes

[442] Stegman, "Romans," 1262.

in Rom 7:14-25 the situation of someone who lives ἐν σαρκί. The passages teach that it is a life of misery, dissatisfaction, internal divisions, and confusion. Conversely, the metaphor of the life ἐν πνεύματι expresses the life that is defined through the experience of the Spirit. God through his Spirit gives a new identity to believers, a real sense of security, and influences their behavior so they may become more in the likeness of Christ.

As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the appropriation of the text of Romans by people affected by childhood trauma can start with noticing the similarity between the description of life ἐν σαρκί in Rom 7:14-25 and their own experience of dissatisfaction, confusion, and internal divisions.[443] The container metaphor in the expression of ἐν σαρκί can be used in the context of the ACEs as an indication of the state of someone who identifies himself or herself through the traumatic experience, who feels the overwhelming control of the effects of trauma and still has not yet tried to find the solution through the therapeutic methods and relationships with others (including God).

The metaphor of container also reveals the potential for appropriation by the people who experienced childhood trauma. In the context of the ACEs, the element of boundaries can express the fact that one does not have to identify himself or herself through the dysfunctional systems of relationship (ἐν σαρκί) but is invited to seek identification through experiences of the Spirit, the new and safe relationship with God (ἐν πνεύματι). The new self-identity that one can receive from the relationship with a loving God can lead toward healing.[444] Also, if one pays to the other elements of the metaphor, the protection and influence, the imaginative prayer or reflection can

[443] Van der Kolk, *Body*, 2.

[444] "The transforming power is drowned from the believer's Spirit-created relationship to God, Christ, and fellow believers." Rabens, *The Holy Spirit,* 129.

offer new and positive memories. Imaging oneself as being surrounded, protected, or empowered by the presence of God can help to face the memories of neglect and abuse.[445]

In interpreting the contrast of life ἐν σαρκί and ἐν πνεύματι, there is a risk to treat these expressions literally as the life of the physical existence in opposition to the life of disembodied spirituality. Such an interpretation would be in total contradiction to van der Kolk's approach to childhood trauma. Van der Kolk states that trauma survivors' goal is not to despise or try to abandon their bodies but rather regain and get in touch with their bodies.[446] In this case, to counter incorrect interpretation it is helpful to look at Paul's historical context. As I demonstrated, Paul does not criticize the physical body; he defends its value and dignity. His intention in using the technical meaning of ἐν σαρκί was to criticize the ways of life that were not in conformity with the new era of the Spirit. Understanding the historical meaning leads to the correct interpretation of the phrase as a metaphorical expression referring to being in the state of total emergence inside various relational systems of the passing age. In the appropriation of the metaphor of container, one can focus on self-identification based on the relationship with God through the Spirit in opposition to life that was led before those experiences.

Moreover, the interpretation of the container metaphor from Rom 8:9 in the light of the relationship with God may help people in the context of the ACEs to remove their fear and self-condemnation. As was stated in the previous chapter, the contrast between ἐν σαρκί and ἐν πνεύματι does not describe an internal conflict inside the believer but two fundamental existential options. The reference, which is the reality of the early Christian communities, confirms that Paul

[445] "In my experience, physically reexperiencing the past in the present and then reworking it in a safe and supportive "container" can be powerful enough to create new, supplemental memories: simulated experiences of growing up in an attuned, affectionate setting where you are protected from harm. Structures do not erase bad memories […]. Instead, a structure offers fresh options – an alternative memory in which your basic human needs are met and your longings for love and protection are fulfilled." Van der Kolk, *Body*, 302.

[446] "In other words trauma makes people feel like either *some body else*, or like *no body*. In order to overcome trauma, you need help to get back in touch with *your body*, with *your Self*." Van der Kolk, *Body*, 249.

accepted the fact that Christians had some moral daily failures and yet they still belonged to those who received the Spirit.[447] The structure of the metaphor reveals that there are no overlapping territories between the old and the new age and it does not refer to moral perfection or imperfection.[448] In the light of a relationship with God, being ἐν πνεύματι does not mean that one cannot fail but that one embraces the life of protection, inspiration, and empowerment that comes from God. The sense of fear, control, and fixation on being perfect belongs to the life ἐν σαρκί that the believer rejects.

The adoption metaphor

The metaphor of adoption is the closest thematically to the context of the ACEs.[449] Rom 8:14-17 depicts the transformation of a believer's identity based on a relationship with God as the father. According to the ideal meaning of this metaphor, through the work of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit, a person becomes a child (a son or a daughter) of God. The structure of the metaphor is based on the procedure of adoption in Roman culture, which emphasizes the fact that the adopted son becomes in a very deep sense a child of the new father. Not only the inheritance, but also the name, and the family's code of honor were passed over to the new son. This image makes the metaphor a powerful message to believers. It can awaken the deepest feelings of love, and a sense of protection, belonging, and healthy pride based on the transformed relationship with God. The image of God as the father taking care of the existential situation of the believer

[447] "[…] Paul is not there dealing with a "flesh/Spirit" tension in the life of the believer, but is spelling out in its starkest form the difference between two kinds of existence: life in the Spirit and life in the flesh, the life of the believer and the life of the unbeliever." Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 547.

[448] Robinson, *Metaphor*, 95.

[449] "The Spirit-inspired 'Abba'-cry is to some extent 'open' and associative language (cf. Rom. 8:23, 26–27) which has the capacity to express the human desires (of what psychologists call the 'inner child') for being parented (cf. the approach of Rezeptionsästhetik outlined in Christoph, Pneuma, ch. 2). It is a channel for giving a voice to the needs left unmet by the deficiency of human parenting." Rabens, *The Holy Spirit*, 230.

removes fear and leads to spiritual healing. People with the experience of childhood trauma who lack a healthy relationship with their caregivers (father or mother) may benefit from such a theological vision. As van der Kolk states, even the imaginative meditation on the ideal parent can bring about the experience felt in the body that will lead a person toward recovery.[450]

Van der Kolk does not write about trauma from the perspective of Christianity but from the perspective of therapeutic methods. However, even from his perspective, one can already see that the adoption metaphor from Romans can be used positively in the context of ACEs. As the language of the metaphor itself indicates, the experience may have been a shift from feeling emotional anxiety (the spirit of fear) to a sense of security and certitude. However, the positive experience of the early Christians from their point of view does not refer only to the imagination but primarily to a spiritual reality. It is the belief that one is a real child of God that can bring enthusiasm and a strong hope for eternal glory. This spiritual experience of the early Christians is also available to believers who suffer from childhood trauma. Although in a different context, contemporary readers are also reminded through the text of Romans that they can always rely on a relationship with God. The metaphor can mediate the experience of allowing God through the Spirit to be a source of the new transformative relationship (God as the "secure base" and "safe haven").

One of the dangers of appropriating the metaphor of adoption could happen if the original trauma was caused by the dysfunctional father. It is difficult to have a positive image of God as the father if one has traumatic experiences with his or her own father. The solution in such a case

[450] "You can direct the role-players to do things they failed to do in the past, such as keeping your father from beating up your mom. These tableaus can stimulate powerful emotions. For example, as you place your "real mother" in the corner, cowering in terror, you may feel a deep longing to protect her and realize how powerless you felt as a child. But if you then create an ideal mother, who stands up to your father and who knows how to avoid getting trapped in abusive relationships, you may experience a visceral sense of relief and an unburdening of that old guilt and helplessness. Or you might confront the brother who brutalized you as a child and then create an ideal brother who protects you and becomes your role model." Van der Kolk, *Body*, 302.

can come from the ideal meaning of the metaphor, which would be that it is the Spirit who shapes in us a positive image of God. As discussed in Chapter One, the Spirit can be understood not only as the presence of God the Father but also of the Risen Christ or the Spirit. The positive experience of God as the loving caregiver can be mediated and brought about by the experience of the presence of either Christ or the Spirit.

Conclusions

The last chapter focused on "the world before the text" and was the third step of the interpretation of the metaphors from Romans 8. The world created by the text of Romans was interpreted in the context of the existential circumstances of childhood trauma survivors. People who experienced neglect or abuse in their childhood are likely to suffer from their effects throughout their lives because their own physical body "remembers" and "keeps the score" of trauma. The interpretation in light of the relationship with God demonstrated that the three metaphors can be appropriated by trauma survivors. The new positive experiences of the relationships with God that are mediated by the text can become a path to recovery.

It was set forth that there are some risks in using the text of Romans in the context of the ACEs. The eschatological dualism in its cosmic dimension can lead to the rise of the level of fear which can be detrimental to the patient. Also, some association of the concept of σάρξ with the criticism of self-indulgence can interfere with accepting the slow pace of recovery from trauma. However, applying Schneider's methodology, especially the concept of the ideal meaning, allows avoiding those mistakes. The ideal meaning reveals that the relationship with God is the lens through which one can look at the text of Romans. Such an approach agrees with Paul's intention and at the same time creates a transformative and saving message for trauma survivors.

The walking metaphor can be appropriated by the person suffering from the ACEs as the image of the radical change and transformation that is brought about by the close and personal relationship with God. The cosmological aspect of eschatology can be also appropriated without referring directly to the personified Sin (Satan, the devil). Σάρξ can be interpreted as the dysfunctional relational matrix with the caregiver. In such an interpretation κατὰ σάρκα would be a state of staying alone in the realm of the dysfunctional relational matrix. Conversely, κατὰ πνεῦμα and ἐν πνεύματι refer to being and identifying with the experience of the personal presence of God (the Father, Son, or the Holy Spirit). The structure of the metaphors does not imply that the destructive and harmful behavior of childhood trauma survivors is expected to go away instantly. The metaphor allows focusing on God who through his Spirit guides us to the fullness of life.

The interpretation of the metaphor of container may respond to the need of the trauma survivors in terms of self-identification. The meaning of the metaphor invites readers to see their lives and selves in the light of the experience of the Spirit, God's empowering presence, and not through the dysfunctional relational matrix they had to grow up with. The element of boundaries expresses the fact that believers identify themselves as people who have a relationship with the Spirit. In the world of the metaphor of container, believers can imagine themselves in the prayer as being safe and protected by the Spirit. Even though they can have still their weakness that are effects of trauma, they are in the Spirit, because they build their life on the experience of the presence of God who gently empowers and heals them. Moreover, during this interpretation, it was discovered that the knowledge of the historical reference (Paul does not criticize the physical body when he uses the concept of σάρξ) helps to avoid the risk of seeing the physical body as the source of sin, which would be detrimental in the therapy from the ACEs.

The adoption metaphor brings a powerful image of God as the Father and his cordial and loving relationship with the believer which could open the reader of Romans to new transformative, spiritual, and healing experiences. It is apparent that the metaphor should be interpreted in the light of the relationship with God. The ideal meaning of the metaphor which is controlled by the structure of the adoption procedure mediates between the experience of the first Christians and the experience in contemporary circumstances. The theme of God as the loving father, who is not someone to be feared but someone who gives a sense of security and pride, can be easily appropriated in the context of the ACEs. The only problem would be in the case when the father is the abusive figure in the life of the trauma survivor. However, thanks to the structure of the metaphor and Paul's background the interpretation can focus on the Spirit, who mediates (witnesses) the transformation of the relationship with God and in the experience can be understood (imagined) differently than the presence of a father. Although in the adoption metaphor, there is no conflict between σάρξ and πνεῦμα present, we can still treat it as the metaphor of the experience of the Spirit. From the structure, we learn that the Spirit plays a pivotal role in the process of becoming God's children and hence it can be used in the interpretation in the context of the ACEs.

V. Summary

At the beginning of this paper, it was pointed out that there is a striking similarity between the portrayal of the person enslaved by sin in Rom 7:14-25 and the description of the effects of childhood trauma presented by Dr. Bessel van der Kolk. This observation led to the question of whether one can use the text of Romans as spiritual guidance in the context of trauma

experienced in childhood. I believe that Romans 8, which is the response to the dramatic circumstances described in chapter 7 can be interpreted in the light of the relationship with God, and then it will be possible to present it to childhood trauma survivors. I defended my thesis by analyzing and interpreting three metaphors of σάρξ and πνεῦμα from Romans 8: the walking metaphor, the container metaphor, and the adoption metaphor. I followed the hermeneutic method of Sandra Schneiders exploring in every chapter one of her three stages of the interpretation: "the world behind the text," "the world of the text," and "the world before the text."

Chapter One ("the world behind the text") dealt with a number of historical issues that helps to understand Paul's background and the context of his audience. From what Paul wrote about himself one could deduce that he was a Jew and a Pharisee but also a Greek with a solid education in both cultures. The chapter demonstrates his indebtedness to Jewish apocalyptic eschatology from which eschatological dualism is the most important concept that influences the meaning of σάρξ and πνεῦμα. The eschatological dualism has a temporal ("the new" and "the old age"), a moral ("the evil, sinful age" and "the age of justice and peace"), and a cosmic dimension (the demonic powers of Sin and Death that exercised their authority in the old age have been defeated by God through Christ and the Spirit). Paul believes that the new era has started but also that believers still await the final fulfillment. Nevertheless, the waiting is a joyful and eager expectation during which the Spirit of God is experienced.

Looking through the lens of apocalyptic eschatology allows us to see that although Paul sometimes uses σάρξ in the same manner as the LXX (the physical existence, the distance between God and the human being, etc.), he gradually transforms it into the pejorative, negative eschatological meaning as an indication of everything that is associated with the old age: firstly, circumcision and the observance of the law, and secondly, the pagan values with uncontrolled

desires. It was the historical debates (with nomism and antinomism) as well as the Jewish and Hellenistic background that provided the context in which Paul created an original meaning of σάρξ. In order to understand that meaning we should not discard any of these factors arising from his background.

However, it is the concept of the eschatological Spirit that shows fully the antithesis of πνεῦμα and σάρξ in the light of the relationship with God. Paul's understanding of the Spirit is associated with eschatological promises from the prophetic books, which say that in the last days, God will be present among His people (through His Spirit). This motif was emphasized in the Second Temple era chiefly in the Qumran and Christian communities. Probably the expectation was provoked by the fact that in these two communities, there was an experience that was interpreted as an experience of the Spirit of God (of God's Presence). Paul's writings indicate a manifold experience that comprised all spheres of a person's life and leads to his ethical and spiritual transformation. The language of the apostle provokes a question of whether it presents a trinitarian concept of God. It is would be anachronistic to think that Paul writes about God in trinitarian terms as understood in the subsequent centuries in the Church. However, as it was demonstrated Paul’s language reveals the structure of his and his audience's experience. Paul, writing about πνεῦμα, describes how he met God, who is experienced as the presence of the Father, the Risen Christ, the Holy Spirit, or those three persons in unity. Understanding πνεῦμα in this way allows one to interpret it as having a relationship with God (and σάρξ as the state without this relationship).

In the second stage of interpretation, I focused on "the world of the text" in which I considered what constitutes the objective principle of interpretation of the text in a new context. The literary structure of the selected metaphors (the walking metaphor, the container metaphor, and the adoption metaphor) and their reference reveals the ideal meaning needed for the

interpretation of the text in the contemporary context of childhood trauma. The walking metaphor (Rom 8:3-4) with its structure based on the image of a journey, and with the eschatological dualism as the reference, shows the radical difference in lifestyles between those who are transformed because of the experience of the Spirit and those who choose another existential option. The metaphor of the container (Rom 8:9) is not a criticism of the physical body, but rather a demonstration of how the experience of God's presence can bring a new identity to the believer. All who live ἐν σαρκί identify themselves by various systems of reference which lack the experience of God, but those who are ἐν πνεύματι are in a different situation. The experience of being in an intimate relationship with God transforms the way believers see themselves. The adoption metaphor describes this new identity as being the children of God. The language of the last metaphor underscores the emotional aspect of such transformation where fear is replaced by the intimate relationship with God as the loving Father. Paul's life and writings testify that it is an authentic experience and everyone is invited to take part in it.

In the last stage of interpretation, I explained how the ideal meaning of the three metaphorical expressions from Romans 8 can lead to a novel interpretation in the context of people who experienced rejection and abuse in their childhood. Traumatic experiences can cause a sense of total powerlessness in the face of their effects on the human being. As van der Kolk points out, those symptoms are brought about by the fact that the memory of childhood trauma is kept and remembered by the physical body. A person may think about her or himself similarly to the subject in Rom 7:14-25. In counterpoint to such hopelessness comes chapter 8, in which Paul uses various metaphors to present a solution to the plight. People with the experience of childhood trauma can use this text in their journey to recovery. The three metaphors interpreted in this paper invite the contemporary reader to experience the Spirit which can bring about change in behavior, self-identity, and relationship with God. Childhood trauma survivors are in

desperate need of healthy relationships that can be a source of their identity and lead them to a good, fulfilling lifestyle. The interpretation of the metaphors in the light of the relationship with God reveals how they can seek it in the text of Romans.

In order to avoid the risk of creating more fear from a vision of the cosmic eschatological battle with evil forces, trauma survivors may focus on the experience of the personal presence of God as Father, Christ, or the Holy Spirit. This experience of relationship through prayer or meditation and the exercise of the imagination can create a sphere where God's grace can bring spiritual and transformative healing. It is the relationship with God that connects both the historical context and the existential situation of people who experienced trauma in their childhood. This interpretation is one of the examples of the relevance and spiritual depth of the letter to the Romans.

In the end, it is worth mentioning other issues and questions that could be addressed with regard to the topic of this paper. First of all, it would be important to develop more fully the relationship between σάρξ and Sin in Paul's theology. I believe it could emphasize the fact that Paul sees that the problem of evil does not lie in the created world or traditions but rather in the spiritual realm. In addition, it would be worth placing those discoveries in the discussion of moral theology about structures of sin, which certainly could be found in the context of childhood trauma. Secondly, it would be interesting to explore the possibility of interpreting the presence of God and the Spirit in its feminine aspects. The Bible presents sometimes God's feminine features as a caring mother (e.g., Iza 49:15, Ps 131,2). Answering the question of whether one can interpret the Spirit as the presence of a mother instead of a father could have a possible positive effect in the context of people who recover from the ACEs. Thirdly, interpreting other metaphors (e.g. the metaphor of law, the metaphor of fruit, the metaphor of seal) from Paul's letters in the light of the relationship with God could provide new and enriching insights. Finally, it would be

profitable to take into account more research from the psychology of religion on the impact of the relationship with God on the person recovering from trauma, and which passages from Paul could be particularly helpful in therapy.

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