

*Interdisciplinary Journal of
Research on Religion*

Volume 1

2005

Article 10

Purity and Anger:
Gentiles and Idolatry in Antioch

Magnus Zetterholm*

Research Fellow in New Testament Studies

Lund University, Sweden

*Magnus.Zetterholm@teol.lu.se

Copyright © 2005 *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. The *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* is freely available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.religjournal.com>.

Purity and Anger: Gentiles and Idolatry in Antioch

Magnus Zetterholm

Research Fellow in New Testament Studies

Lund University, Sweden

Abstract

The so-called Antioch incident (Galatians 2:11–14) has puzzled New Testament scholars for a long time. Some scholars have suggested that the problem in Antioch was related to Jewish purity regulations and that Jews during antiquity considered Gentiles to be ritually impure, which complicated social contacts between Jews and Gentiles. The Jewish Jesus-believers in Antioch are usually assumed to have stopped observing the traditional purity regulations as a consequence of their general repudiation of the Torah, and this is generally believed to have been the underlying source of the conflict. However, the most recent research on Jewish purity regulations and Jewish views of Gentiles suggests that Jews in general considered Gentiles to be not ritually but morally impure, mainly because of their involvement in Greco-Roman religion. Furthermore, an increasing number of scholars argue that it is unlikely that Jewish Jesus-believers ceased to observe the Torah. This article suggests a radically new way of picturing the relations between Jewish and non-Jewish adherents to the Jesus movement. It argues that some parts of the Jesus movement began to consider non-Jewish adherents to the Jesus movement to be holy and morally pure in spite of these Gentiles' sociopolitically motivated involvement in Greco-Roman cultic activities. The fact that Jews within the Jesus-believing community in Antioch began to consider the Jesus-believing Gentiles to be covenant partners affected the *degree of commensality*, which was the real source of the conflict in Antioch.

In his letter to the Galatians (2:11–14), Paul relates an incident that occurred in Antioch-on-the-Orontes, probably in the beginning of the 50s, when Paul, Peter, and, to some extent, Barnabas were involved in a serious argument about how to relate to Gentile adherents to the Jesus movement. Previously, Paul had described (Galatians 2:1–10) how he, Barnabas, and Titus went to a meeting with the apostles in Jerusalem, where Paul presented his view on the gospel he preached to non-Jews. Apparently, there had been some discussions about the status of non-Jews within the Jesus movement. One major issue concerned whether non-Jews had to become Jews first to be saved. Acts 15 informs us that some Jews within the Jesus movement thought that salvation through Christ was only for Jews and that to be saved, non-Jews had to convert to Judaism. As is well known, Paul—the apostle to the Gentiles—thought differently, and according to Acts 15 and Galatians 2, it seems that the leaders of the movement agreed with him: Gentiles did not have to become Jews to be saved. However, even if these leaders did agree with Paul, this did not settle all the details about how Jews and Gentiles within the Jesus movement should relate to each other. In Galatians 2:11–14, Paul writes that Peter (Cephas) acts in a way that, at least for Paul, indicates that Peter had broken with the agreement that had been reached in Jerusalem:

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; for until certain people came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But after they came, he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision faction [φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς]. And the other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews [εἰ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἔθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς, πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις Ἰουδαίξειν]?”

This incident can be described as a kind of exegetical kaleidoscope. Despite enormous efforts to come to terms with what really was the problem in Antioch, there is virtually no consensus about what caused the incident, the identity of those who caused the problems, or the outcome of the conflict. Depending on how we understand the different roles of the actors, their specific ideologies, and internal relations, new possible solutions come to light. The Antioch incident is an excellent example on how dependent we all are on extratextual assumptions in interpreting texts from antiquity. The answers to our questions are unfortunately not revealed in the text but are the result of the interaction between the text and the interpreter’s specific set of assumptions.

In modern interpretations of the incident in Antioch, one common set of assumptions includes concepts of purity. Just to mention a few examples, in Hans Dieter Betz's commentary on the Galatians, it is said that Peter once again started to take up a Jewish way of life, "especially the part of ritual separation from the unclean," which is later specifically defined as dietary and purity laws (1979: 104, 108). In 1983, James Dunn suggested that the issue at stake in Antioch was connected to the laws concerning ritual purity and tithing, and in Ronald Fung's commentary on Galatians, food regulations and dietary laws play an important role in his argument (1988: 110–111). Philip Esler also has suggested that Jewish purity regulations created an impermeable boundary between Jews and Gentiles with regard to social contacts in general and table-fellowship in particular and argued that this caused the problems in Antioch (1987: 71–109, 1998: 93–116). Finally, in her recent study of the church in Antioch, Michelle Slee (2003: 28) states that Gentiles were considered intrinsically impure and that fear of idol food contamination was the major issue at stake.

Other scholars have been less inclined to accept the idea that Jewish dietary laws or purity regulations were a major part of the problem. In a 1990 article in which both Dunn and Esler are criticized, Ed Sanders argued that ritual purity or tithing had nothing to do with the incident in Antioch and that table-fellowship between Jews and Gentiles in the right circumstances was fully possible. Mark Nanos (2002: 300) explicitly states that the Antioch incident did not involve a purity aspect, and in my previous studies of the conflict, I too rejected the idea that ritual purity or purity laws concerning food were an issue and argued that different views on covenant theology were the underlying source of the conflict (Zetterholm 2003a: 169–188, 2003b: 129–164).

However, from a general point of view, it would be surprising if purity notions were not relevant in this context. The dyad of purity/impurity has traditionally been an important way of relating to the world, to the sacred, and to other people and is, of course, still operative in many contemporary societies. In fact, even in modern Western society, purity concepts are part of our symbolic way of arranging reality (see Douglas 2000: 35–41).

In ancient Israel, purity regulations were part of a vital symbolic system that served the purposes of creating a specific Jewish self-understanding and upholding the cultural and religious boundaries between themselves and other peoples. In this respect, purity terminology was frequently used to construct an ethnic identity in opposition to Gentiles. Concepts of purity were, of course, not a specific Jewish feature but were part of a cultural discourse that was shared among the ancient civilizations. Like the Jewish people, the Greeks used purity concepts for constructing group boundaries and for approaching the sacred (Burkert 1985: 76).

An inscription from around the 1st century B.C.E. on a stone erected in the sanctuary of Athena at Pergamum illuminates the features of ritual purity shared by Jews and Greeks:

Citizens and all other people who enter the temple of the female god shall be pure, having washed themselves clean from their own wife or their own husband for one day, or from another woman or another man for two days; similarly from a corpse or from a woman in labour for two days. But those who have cleansed themselves from a funeral and carrying out of the corpse and have passed back through the gate where the means of purification are placed shall be cleansed on the same day [in Price 2002: 176–177].

Here, as in Judaism, we find that sexual intercourse and contact with corpses create a state of ritual impurity that prevents the individual from contact with the divine sphere and can be removed only by means of purification rituals. As was the case within Judaism,¹ the most important means of purification within Greek religion were water and the passage of time.²

We may conclude that the Jewish community of the Diaspora in Asia Minor shared many features with the larger, predominantly Greek society regarding purity, impurity, and purification rituals. In this respect, it is probably safe to assume that Jews and Gentiles had a common understanding of the need for purity in order to enter into contact with sancta. Therefore, it would be highly unlikely if Jews and non-Jews who embraced similar concepts of purity interacted without involving any purity aspect.

IMPURITY IN ANTIQUITY

In her detailed and carefully executed study *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities*, Christine Hayes (2002) has reached conclusions that differ in important respects from those of previous scholarship and are of utmost relevance for our understanding of what was going on in Antioch. Using her basic ideas and taking the sociopolitical situation into consideration, I intend to suggest that concepts of purity might indeed have been operative in Antioch.

Hayes uses the very helpful distinction between ritual purity and moral purity already suggested by Jonathan Klawans (1995: 289–201, 2000: 22–31) but moves the discussion significantly forward by inferring a third mode of impurity, namely, *genealogical* purity (Hayes 2002: 19–34). Thus, according to Hayes, purity in ancient Judaism could have ritual, moral, or genealogical applications.

¹ On Jewish purification rituals, see Sanders (1992: 214–230).

² See Burkert (1985: 75–84) for an overview of Greek purification rituals.

For our discussion, the most important result of Hayes's study is one that is emphatically pointed out throughout the study: that Jews in general did not consider Gentiles to be intrinsically impure during Second Temple times. Hayes argues convincingly that the ritual impurity laws of Leviticus 12–15 did not apply to Gentiles in biblical or Second Temple times (see also Klawans 2000: 290). Furthermore, Gentiles were considered not intrinsically impure—but intrinsically profane (Klawans 2000: 292). Accordingly, interaction between Jews and Gentiles was not hindered by an alleged Gentile impurity or by the fear of contracting ritual purity by contact.³

According to Hayes, the types of impurity that were applied to Gentiles were moral and genealogical. Gentiles could indeed be considered morally impure—for instance, by committing immoral deeds or performing what would be considered idolatry from a Jewish perspective. In this respect, a Gentile differed in no way from a Jewish person, who could also perform deeds that generated moral impurity. Moral impurity, to be distinguished from ritual impurity, is not communicated to others and cannot be removed by means of purification rituals.⁴ To be sure, a morally impure person can influence others also to commit immoral deeds, but that is another thing—moral impurity itself does not contaminate. Furthermore, moral purity is connected to behavior, and in Second Temple sources, as in the Bible, it is assumed that Gentiles can follow a pure path and abstain from idolatry and other immoral deeds.⁵ The Jewish philosopher Philo, for instance, seems to have taken for granted that Gentiles were able to live a righteous life (*De Specialibus Legibus* 2.44–45):

All who practise wisdom, either in Grecian or barbarian lands, and live a blameless and irreproachable life, choosing neither to inflict nor retaliate injustice, avoid the gathering of busybodies and abjure the scenes which they haunt, such as law-courts, council-chambers, markets, congregations and in general any gathering or assemblage of careless men. Their own aspirations are for a life of peace, free from warring.

Genealogical purity as a distinct way of defining Jewish identity was, according to Hayes, introduced by Ezra-Nehemiah, who democratize the priestly requirements for genealogical purity and claim that Gentiles and Jews are

³ Hayes (2002: 22–23, 47–54) argues, for instance, that the fact that Gentiles were allowed to offer sacrifice (e.g., Numbers 15:14–16) shows that they were not considered intrinsically impure. Another indication is that resident aliens provided certain basic labors, of which some were even connected with the temple (1 Chronicles 22:2; 2 Chronicles 2:16) (see also Sanders 1977: 172–176).

⁴ With the possible exception of the Qumran community (see Hayes 2002: 63–66).

⁵ On “righteous Gentiles” during the first century C.E., see Donaldson (1997: 65–69).

inescapably distinct, which makes conversion virtually impossible. Not even Ezra-Nehemiah consider Gentiles intrinsically impure. While priests who engage in sexual intercourse with Gentile women are defiled, as are their offspring, lay Israelites and their progeny are simply profaned. Thus, even though Ezra-Nehemiah create an impermeable boundary between Jews and Gentiles, the rationale for this is not that Gentiles are considered intrinsically or ritually impure but that they are intrinsically profane (Hayes 2002: 27–34).⁶

During the Second Temple period, this “holy seed” ideology is taken to its extreme in a few texts: Jubilees and a text from Qumran (4QMMT). In these texts, the genealogical argument is taken even further: Intermarriage between foreign women and lay Israelites and intermarriage between foreign women and priests are considered sexual sins, which generate moral impurity and defile Israel and are therefore prohibited. However, not even in these texts is a ban on intermarriage attributed to an alleged Gentile ritual impurity (Hayes 2002: 73–91). In the majority of texts from the Second Temple period, it is the moral-religious rationale that is used in warning against intermarriage, as in the following text from the Jewish historian Josephus (*Antiquitates Judaicae* 8.191–193):

[N]ot satisfied with the women of his own country alone, he [Solomon] married many from foreign nations as well, Sidonians, Tyrians, Ammanites and Idumaeans, thereby transgressing the laws of Moses who forbade marriage with persons of other races, and he began to worship their gods to gratify his wives and his passion for them—which is the very thing the lawgiver foresaw when he warned the Hebrews against marrying women of other countries lest they might be entangled with foreign customs and fall away from those of their fathers, and worship the gods of these women while neglecting to honour their own God.⁷

To sum up: Gentiles were considered not intrinsically impure but intrinsically profane, and ritual impurity was never the rationale for avoiding social contacts with Gentiles.⁸ Warnings against contact with Gentiles were motivated predominantly by moral-religious concerns: Gentiles (as well as Jews) could

⁶ Hayes points to the fact that Nehemiah 13:28–30, which deals with priestly intermarriage, states that intermarriage defiles the holy seed of the priesthood, while Nehemiah’s description of lay intermarriage (Nehemiah 13:23, 25–27) shows that exogamy is considered a desecration or sacrilege but not a defilement. Hayes suggests that this shows an awareness that the Torah does not universally prohibit intermarriage between lay Israelites and foreign women but prohibits it predominantly with the seven Canaanite nations (Deuteronomy 7:3–4; Exodus 34:15).

⁷ See also Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* 12.187 and Philo, *De Specialibus Legibus* 3.29.

⁸ On the contrary, the Torah urges good relations between Israelites and resident aliens (see Exodus 22:20, 23:9; Jeremiah 22:3) and in some instance also equality before the law (see Exodus 12:48–49; Leviticus 7:7, 24:22; Numbers 9:14, 15:15, 15:29–30, 35:15).

become *morally* impure by committing immoral deeds such as idolatry, murder, and different sexual violations, as stated in Leviticus 18 and 20 (Hayes 2002: 22–24).

GENTILE IMPURITY AND THE JESUS MOVEMENT

From this perspective, let us take a look at a text that has traditionally been used to prove that Jews considered Gentiles to be ritually defiling and intrinsically impure (Alon 1977: 154; Dunn 1996: 139; Fitzmyer 1998: 461; Larkin 1995: 161; Neyrey 1986: 100; Slee 2003: 28; Witherington 1998: 353). In Acts 10, Luke describes the encounter between Peter and Cornelius. In v. 28, Peter comments on the fact that he has entered into the house of a Gentile and states: “You yourselves know that it is unlawful [ἀθέμιτόν] for a Jew to associate [κολλᾶσθαι] with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean [κοινόν ἢ ἀκάθαρτον]” (cf. Acts 11:2–3.). Reluctantly, Peter has been convinced that Cornelius is to be considered “pure” and “holy.” In a vision (Acts 10:9–16, 11:4–10), he has been shown “all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air” three times and been admonished to “kill and eat.” When he refuses, a heavenly voice declares that “what God has made clean” he “must not call profane.” Interestingly, despite the context of slaughtering and eating forbidden animals, Peter does not reach the conclusion that he is now free to eat whatever he wants. Instead, he now understands that he must relate to Gentiles in a new way. Unless we are to assume that Peter was part of a hitherto unknown cannibalistic sect, this text has nothing to do with food.

But the text from Acts does raise a question that has a direct bearing on the situation in Antioch: In what way did Peter’s vision convince him that Cornelius was no longer to be regarded as “profane” (κοινόν) or “unclean” (ἀκάθαρτον)? It is most likely that the fears concerning Cornelius’s impurity originated from his involvement in Roman religion. Although Acts 10:2 presents him as a pious god-fearer who “gave alms generously to the people and prayed constantly to God,” the information in Acts 10:1 that he was a Roman officer makes it impossible to imagine that he was not involved in any way in cultic activities that, from a Jewish perspective, must have been defined as idolatry.⁹ Is it possible that Acts 10 reveals an important shift in attitude toward the Gentiles within the early Jesus movement, necessitated by the sociopolitical circumstances? Let us for a moment consider some important aspects of the sociopolitical situation in the Roman Empire.

⁹ On the religious system of the Roman army, see Beard et al. (1998: 325–328).

Ordinary inhabitants in the Greco-Roman cities,¹⁰ with the exception of Jewish people, were obliged to participate in the official cult of the city. This usually meant participation in frequent festivals, sacrifices, and acknowledgment of the Roman emperors as deities. To fail in duties related to *polis* religion, even for an adherent of a foreign cult,¹¹ was considered impiety and could have devastating consequences for the individual, who could suffer confiscation of property or, in some cases, the death penalty. The Greco-Roman historian Dio Cassius mentions in his *Roman History*, for instance, how Emperor Domitian took action against his own relatives (67.14.1–2):

Domitian slew, along with many others, Flavius Clemens the consul, although he was a cousin and had to wife Flavia Domitilla, who was also a relative of the emperor's. The charge brought against them both was that of atheism, a charge on which many others who drifted into Jewish ways were condemned. Some of these were put to death, and the rest were at least deprived of their property. Domitilla was merely banished to Pandateria.

In addition to different public manifestations of religion, we must not forget those connected to the family and the household, such as sacrifices at the hearth, libations, and rituals in connection to the beginning and end of life (Bruit-Zaidman and Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 13; Burkert 1985: 254–256; Price 2002: 8, 89–101). All in all, religion, which was inseparable from what we would call civic aspects of society, was to be taken seriously. From the perspective of the authorities, proper cult observation and participation guaranteed a positive relationship with the divine sphere (Burkert 1985: 64–68, 72–75, 254–260; Turcan 2001: 5–6).

These sociopolitical circumstances certainly affected relations between the Jewish communities and Gentile god-fearers who interacted with Jews in some synagogues.¹² It is reasonable to assume that participation in synagogue activities did not affect the cultic obligations of the Gentile god-fearer. As Martin Goodman suggested, Jews probably had a tolerant attitude toward Gentile worship of their ancestral deities, as long as this worship was kept outside the Land of Israel (Goodman 1994: 49–59). In the Diaspora, I assume, the Jewish communities

¹⁰ As was pointed out by Millar (1993: 238), Greek cities of the Roman period are more correctly described as Greco-Roman.

¹¹ The introduction of new cults was possible but required the approval of the authorities (see Cicero, *De Legibus* 2.8.19). For the situation in Athens, see Garland (1992: 100) and Parker (1996: 152–198, 214–217).

¹² We cannot assume that all Jewish communities were positive toward having Gentile guests participating in their activities but must allow for a wide range of attitudes toward Gentiles (see Zetterholm 2003a: 53–90).

actually urged Gentile god-fearers not to neglect their commitment to the official cult, since accusations of having led Gentiles astray could easily affect the Jewish privileges (Mitternacht 2002: 431–432; Nanos 2001: 257–271). Therefore, it is likely that Gentile god-fearers maintained their cultic relationship with the *polis* and the empire.¹³

Against this background, I would suggest that the story of Peter and Cornelius indicates that at least some of the participants in the early Jesus movement agreed to consider Gentile adherents to the movement as holy and (morally) pure, even though they technically and for sociopolitical reasons still may have been involved in cultic activities that, from a Jewish perspective, traditionally would be defined as idolatry.

I have previously argued that Gentile adherents to the Jesus movement hid their Gentile status by claiming to be Jews in relation to the authorities, and I still hold this to be true in many cases (Zetterholm 2003a: 174; 2003b: 194–195). But the weakness of this hypothesis is that it does not take into consideration the social reality of everyday situations. We need to ask questions like: Was it possible for every Gentile connected to the Jesus movement to refrain from cultic activities in everyday situations, in relation to family, relatives, patrons, or business colleagues? And what happened to Cornelius? Did he resign from his job as a Roman officer? What about ordinary Gentile adherents to the Jesus movement in Antioch—did they refrain from libations when socializing with fellow Gentiles?¹⁴ Did they avoid paying respect to the divinities located outside houses and in shrines on virtually every street corner? Probably not. On the contrary, I find it likely that parts of the early Jesus movement developed a halakhic system to adjust to the present situation, a system that took into consideration the vulnerable social situation of Gentile god-fearers, who had now turned to Christ and were to refrain from “idolatry.”

¹³ On the Aphrodisias inscription (from the third century C.E.), nine people are called “god-fearers” but are at the same time identified as members of the city council (see Reynolds and Tannenbaum 1987: 34–35). They seem to have managed to combine their relationship to the Jewish community with having an official position on the city council that involved cultic activities, such as public sacrifices at the openings of all council meetings (see Price 2002: 76). This makes sense only if one assumes that the Jewish community did not oppose involvement of Gentiles in the official cult as long as they remained Gentiles. City councilors as patrons are known also from Sardis (see Levine 2000: 350), and it is possible that an inscription (*Corpus inscriptionum judaicarum* 766), in which Julia Severa is said to have built a synagogue, indicates the same. From another source (*Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* 6.263), she is known to have been a high priestess in a local cult (cf. Feldman 1996: 310; Levine 2000: 350; Rajak, 1999:168).

¹⁴ On the varied use of libations within Greek religion, see Burkert (1985: 70–73).

PAUL AND IDOLATRY IN CORINTH

Paul's discussion of "food sacrificed to idols" in 1 Corinthians 8–10 might very well represent exactly such a halakhah for Gentile Jesus-believers (cf. Tomson 1990: 216–220).¹⁵ In 1 Corinthians 8:4–13, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to refrain from participation in cultic meals in a temple context. However, in 1 Corinthians 10:25, he states that one may eat "whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience," and in 10:27, he says that one may eat whatever is served when invited to dine with an unbeliever. These recommendations seem strange considering Paul's earlier prohibition against idolatry (1 Corinthians 10:1–22). The food sold at the market in Corinth had most certainly been involved in some cultic activity, and the context in which many, if not all, meals were eaten was no doubt religious (Cheung 1999: 28–38; Garland 2003: 494; Stambaugh and Balch 1992: 129; Thiselton 2000: 783; Wallace and Williams 1998: 103).

The reason why Paul deals with this at all is probably because the issue had been brought up in a previous letter from the Corinthians (Cheung 1999: 108–111; Garland 2003: 263–264; Thiselton 2000: 616–617; Witherington 1995: 186; but cf. Mitchell 1989: 229–256). Peter Tomson (1990: 193) has suggested that Paul in 1 Corinthians 8–10 addresses those in the Corinthian community who have raised doubts about a previous prohibition against food offered to "idols." This corresponds well to the suggestion above that the Jewish community did not oppose Gentile involvement in the official cult. If we assume that the Gentiles within the early Jesus movement were recruited among former god-fearers, which is sociologically most likely (Stark 1996: 14–18),¹⁶ and that these god-fearers simultaneously had been involved in Greco-Roman religious cult activities, their reluctance to refrain from this custom is understandable.

We need to take seriously the fact that the Greco-Roman religion was the natural religious orientation of god-fearers and Jesus-believing Gentiles. Gentile adherents to the Jesus movement were socialized into a religious system in which various rituals in a multitude of contexts were considered the normal and proper way of relating to gods, humans, and the world. Furthermore, we cannot assume that all Gentile adherents to the movement were completely satisfied with the need to give up all other divinities apart from the god of Israel (Garland 2003: 354; Witherington 1995: 186).

¹⁵ For overviews of the problems in 1 Corinthians 8–10 and of previous research, see Cheung (1999: 85–108) or Garland (2003: 350–362).

¹⁶ Stark here emphasizes the importance of interpersonal attachments in connection to religious conversion, and while he reaches quite a different conclusion (see pp. 49–71), his general way of arguing could be applied to Gentile god-fearers and their relationship to Jewish communities.

As Shaye Cohen (1999: 136–137, 140–162) has pointed out, the idea of abandoning all other deities for the god of Israel must have been considered preposterous and unnecessary by the majority of Gentiles. Some god-fearers and Jesus-believing Gentiles might simply have incorporated the god of Israel into their pantheon together with their other gods. Thus, Gentiles within the Jesus movement probably had different ways of relating to the god of Israel, and we must also reckon with various degrees of commitment. These sociopolitical aspects have been almost completely neglected in discussions of 1 Corinthians 8–10 but provide, in my view, an important background to the whole section.

Hence, Paul's reference in 1 Corinthians 8:10 to people within the community who are "reclining in an idol's temple" (ἐν εἰδωλείῳ κατακείμενον [my translation]) is presumably not to be taken as referring to a hypothetical situation but is likely to represent quite common behavior among Jesus-believing Gentiles (Fee 1991: 385–386; Fisk 1989: 68). If this is correct, it is interesting to notice how Paul characterizes the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 6:11:

And this is what some of you used to be [namely, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, etc.; see 6:9–10]. But you were washed [ἀπελούσασθε], you were sanctified [ἡγιασθητε], you were justified [ἐδικαιώθητε] in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.¹⁷

The language here clearly alludes to a purity/impurity concept, but it is quite apparent that it is not an intrinsic impurity that Paul has in mind. The reason why the Corinthians were in need of being purified is obviously that their *behavior* was considered immoral. As a result of having been "washed," the Corinthians are now "sanctified" and "justified."

It is evident that Paul, in principle, does not object to the Corinthians' continued relations with people outside the community. His statement in 5:9–10, that the Corinthians are to abstain not from contacts with "the immoral of this world" (τοῖς πόρνοις τοῦ κόσμου τούτου) but from contacts with people within the community who do not live up to the moral standards (5:11) shows that Paul, on the one hand, legitimizes continued social contacts with ordinary Gentiles and, on the other hand, defines a clear dividing line between what is acceptable and what is not. Similarly, Paul's consent in 10:27 for the Corinthians to accept dinner invitations from Gentiles who do not belong to the community reveals the same attitude: a general recognition of the Corinthians' right—within certain limits—to continued social contacts with people outside the community.

¹⁷ See also 1 Corinthians 1:2, 3:17, 6:1, 2, 6:11, 7:14.

It is virtually impossible that such gatherings in private homes did not involve any pagan cultic activities (Cheung 1999: 28–38; Garland 2003: 494; Thiselton 2000:783; Wallace and Williams 1998: 103). Paul is aware that the Corinthians participated in social situations in which Greco-Roman cult activities occurred and that they socialized with Gentiles outside the community and is, in fact, to some extent, legitimizing such behavior.

The problem for Paul is not *that* the Gentile Jesus-believers participate in social situations in which Greco-Roman cults occur but *how* they do it. A majority of scholars agree that 1 Corinthians 8:4–6 contains quotations from a Corinthian letter (see, for example, Fee 1991: 365 n. 30; Stowers 1990: 276; Thiselton 2000: 628; Tomson 1990: 193; Witherington 1995: 188), and it is likely that the phrases “no idol in the world really exists” and “there is no God but one” represent the Corinthians’ position (Cheung 1999: 114; Fee 1991: 369–376; Garland 2003: 351; Thiselton 2000: 629–630; Tomson 1990: 193; Willis 1985: 83; Witherington 1995: 188). It is important to notice that Paul does not object to the basis for the Corinthians’ behavior, namely, knowledge that there is no other god than the god of Israel and that “idols” in reality do not exist (Fisk 1989: 59–61; Stowers 1990: 278; Witherington 1995: 199). In principle, Paul does not even object to what could be the consequence of possessing this specific knowledge: participation in situations in which Greco-Roman religion was practiced. Bruce Fisk (1989: 60) is quite right in stating that

[A]part from problems arising when the weak are on hand, Paul describes the behavior of those having knowledge without a hint of disapprobation (8:10). It does not appear that reclining in an idol’s temple (ἐν εἰδωλείῳ κατακείμενοι) is synonymous with idolatry.

The point Paul seems to be making is that it is the individual’s belief system that determines whether or not eating in this context is to be considered an act of idolatry. Consequently, “when an individual has no *subjective* difficulty with eating, there is no *objective* defilement” (Fisk 1989: 60). The problem involved in these situations is when people present “still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol” (1 Corinthians 8:7). As Fisk has pointed out, to cause such a person to engage in idolatry is the only sin mentioned in 1 Corinthians 8. Direct sins against Christ, such as actual idolatry, are “conspicuously missing” (Fisk 1989: 61). It is likely that eating in temples would cause some believers to engage in behavior that, according to their belief system, would be regarded as expressions of Greco-Roman religion. This is basically why Paul finds such behavior inappropriate.

A similar way of arguing was prevalent among the rabbis. Tannaitic literature, that is, Jewish writings from ca. 100 to 250 C.E., shows that the rabbis were

involved in extensive discussions of how to define *idolatry* (Cheung 1999: 69–74; Schwartz 2001: 165–174; Tomson 1990: 208–216). In discussing a text from the Mishnah (*m. Sanhedrin* 7:6), Seth Schwartz has pointed out that the Mishnah’s law of “idolatry” is based on two principles: that only cultic actions, including speech, matter and that pagan worship is directed primarily at fetishes (Schwartz 2001: 166). By focusing on the ritual aspects of Greco-Roman religion, the rabbis were able to create an ideological system that made it possible for them to live in the cities of the Diaspora and even participate in public activities to some extent (Schwartz 2001: 164). Images of pagan gods in paintings, in mosaics, and in carvings on households could be tolerated, since they were defined as merely decorations; as long as the individual did not consider those images to be gods, they were perfectly acceptable (Schwartz 2001: 169). Similar systems are likely to have existed during the first century, since the need to relate to the pagan environment for the Jewish communities in the Diaspora was the same.

It is possible that Paul’s way of dealing with Gentile Jesus-believers who are eating in the private home of a Gentile unbeliever (10:27–29) can be explained by a similar way of defining pagan worship. As we noted above, Paul does not regard social intercourse between Jesus-believing Gentiles and unbelievers to be a problem per se, even when it comes to the nature of the food served (Garland 2003: 493). It is probable that he refers to quite common behavior among the Jesus-believing Gentiles, especially since he has already (in 5:9–10) legitimized social relations between Jesus-believing Gentiles and “the immoral of this world.” In addition, his use of εἰ + indicative in v. 27 seems strange if he had wanted to present an unlikely scenario. However, if “someone” (τις) defines the food served as “food offered in sacrifice” (τοῦτο ἱερόθυτόν ἐστιν) (v. 28), the care for this person’s spiritual well-being takes precedence over the theological principle that “idols” in reality do not exist. Again, the grammatical structure (εἰ + aorist subjunctive) indicates an event that is likely to occur.¹⁸

This passage makes the most sense if we assume that the “someone” to whom Paul refers in 10:28 is one of the Jesus-believing Gentiles invited to the dinner.¹⁹ In this case, we have a direct parallel to the temple situation in 8:10 (Thiselton 2000: 787). Someone still thinking of the food as sacred from a Greco-Roman perspective might risk being involved in actual idolatry from a Jewish

¹⁸ Thiselton’s statement (2000: 787) that “[t]he Greek subjunctive εἰ δέ τις... εἴπη projects a scenario that is only hypothetical or at most infrequent” is questionable. Conditional clauses are, of course, grammatically hypothetical by nature, but it is not correct that they generally project a hypothetical or infrequent scenario in reality. The probability that what is stated in conditional clauses should occur in reality is basically determined by the context, but the use of εἰ + aorist subjunctive in the subordinate clause, together with the present imperative in the main clause, generally present a scenario that is likely to occur in the future, even repeatedly.

¹⁹ On the discussion of the identity of the informer, see Thiselton (2000: 787–788) or Garland (2003: 495–496).

perspective, with devastating consequences. Note Paul's choice of words in 10:28: "if someone says to you, 'This has been offered in sacrifice' [ἐρόθυτον], then do not eat it." Paul uses here the word that a Greek would have used to designate sacred food (Garland (2003: 494).²⁰ From this person's viewpoint, the food is "offered in sacrifice," not εἰδωλόθυτον, "offered to an *idol*," and from Paul's perspective, that is what makes the decisive difference. Thus, Paul certainly prohibits idolatry but clearly defines what is considered to be such, namely, conscious involvement in activities that are regarded as Greco-Roman cult rituals by the person involved in them. This connects the individual to the demonic sphere, whose existence Paul does not deny (10:20–21). Idolatry is forbidden, but Paul consents to participation in some social situations in which Greco-Roman cultic activities take place.

The reason why Paul finds food bought at the market least problematic is presumably also the lack of an immediate cultic context, and it is not inconceivable that here Paul draws from a local Jewish halakhah concerning food bought at the market in Corinth when creating a set of rules for Gentile Jesus-believers. Rabbinic literature shows that the rabbis discussed the extent to which the act of selling disconnects objects from a ceremonial context. In the Tosefta, R. Jehuda ha-Nasi is said to have advocated the view that selling in general signified a nonsacral status for an object (see *m. Avodah Zarah* 4:4–5; cf. *t. Avodah Zarah* 5:5; see also Tomson 1990: 217–218). The other rabbis disagreed, but the discussion shows that some Jews could argue in this direction. Therefore, it is not impossible that Corinthian Jews argued that food bought at the market no longer had a ceremonial significance attached to it owing to the act of selling. In fact, Paul's view on this matter might indicate that this was the case.

An intentionality factor similar to the one we find among the rabbis and in Paul was certainly not unknown in the pagan world. When discussing a possible background to the Corinthians' ideology and practice, Stanley Stowers (1990: 277) has drawn attention to Epicurean views on worship of traditional Greek gods:

Epicureans were allowed, and indeed even encouraged to worship the traditional Greek gods as long as they did so with the proper rational understanding that the gods did not involve themselves in this world and that rituals had no effect.

Thus, in both Jewish and Greek reflection, we find ideas that bear a resemblance to Paul's way of dealing with the situation in Corinth. If this interpretation of 1 Corinthians 8–10 is correct, it reveals a far-reaching halakhic

²⁰ Garland states that the term "makes it more likely that the informant is an idol worshiper than a Christian." As we have seen, the combination is not that unlikely.

adaptability that is fully compatible with Jewish hermeneutics. By introducing an intentionality factor with regard to Gentile participation in cultic activities, Gentiles could be considered “pure” and “holy” and be included into the covenant with the god of Israel in spite of still being involved in dubious cultic activities.

GENTILE IMPURITY IN ANTIOCH?

So finally, let us arrive at Antioch. It is likely that the Jesus-believing community in Antioch was basically one among many synagogues but differed from the others in that it regarded Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah (Zetterholm 2003b: 91–96). There is no reason to assume that this changed the community’s relationship to the Torah as an expression of loyalty toward the covenant with the god of Israel. Before it turned into a messianic community, it had probably related to Gentile god-fearers who simultaneously participated in Greco-Roman religion. The belief of these Jesus-believing Jews that they were now living in a period when the Messiah had come, triggered some specific texts from the Hebrew Bible and gave rise to the idea that Gentiles could be included in the covenant of the god of Israel and thus be saved, together with Israel.²¹

The status of the Gentiles in the community suddenly shifted from “god-fearer” to “covenant partner,” and this theological reorientation had dramatic consequences on a social level. As a result of Gentiles’ being regarded as full members in the covenantal relationship with the god of Israel through Christ, Jews could relate to them in a more intimate way than before. In all likelihood, this affected table-fellowship (Nanos 2002: 303–304, especially n. 75).

These Gentiles had presumably adapted to a semi-Jewish life long before they became involved with the Jesus movement, which makes it improbable that there was anything wrong with the food from a Jewish perspective (Zetterholm 2003b: 160–161). In fact, this is precisely what made more intimate social relations possible: These Gentiles could be trusted, they refrained from libations and pagan prayers when eating as guests together with their Jewish friends, and they did not bring anything forbidden to communal meals. In Christ, they were united with Jewish Jesus-believers in worshipping the god of Israel, the god of the nations.

It is sociologically much more likely that Gentiles conformed to a Jewish standard regarding food than the other way around, if for no other reason than that it is much easier to adapt to a diet that excludes certain food than to a diet that includes food that is traditionally considered to be an abomination. Thus, even if the Jesus-believing Jews had ceased to observe the Torah, which is unlikely, they would presumably have continued to eat the same food as before.

²¹ Cf. Sanders (1985: 220): “the overwhelming impression is that Jesus started a movement which came to see the Gentile mission as a logical extension of itself.”

But the close relationship between Jews and Gentiles brought to the fore the purity status of these Gentiles. When they were merely god-fearers, their cultic involvement could be tolerated, and commensality regulations in general could take this into consideration. But when god-fearers became covenant partners, with unrestricted access to the god of Israel through Christ, how would their relationship to Greco-Roman cult be handled? Some Jesus-believing Gentiles, highly motivated to conform to the new regulation to abstain from expressing their native religion, might have found ways of accomplishing that. One way of doing this would be to claim to be Jewish in dealing with the authorities.²² This was probably an option for Gentiles who had recently arrived in Antioch and who lacked social networks. By acting Jewish, they could easily pass as Jews in relation to the world outside the community (Cohen 1999: 66–67). In relation to the community, their identity as Gentiles was of course still stressed, since the dominant groups within the Jesus movement had agreed that Gentiles within the movement should remain Gentiles. But for people who had inhabited Antioch for generations and were involved in *collegia*, had friends, family, and perhaps even official positions within the community, what strategy would they develop and to what extent were they prepared to give up all connection to Greco-Roman religion? The fact that large groups of new Gentile adherents to the Jesus movement may have come from the upper social strata makes this issue all the more important (Stark 1996: 29–47). Equally important is the question of whether the parts of the early Jesus movement that stressed the mission to the Gentiles could afford not to find ways for people even with limited possibilities to avoid idolatry to still be part of the community. Could Paul, the “apostle to the Gentiles,” do this?

Taking into consideration the complicated sociopolitical situation for these former god-fearers, now covenant partners, I suggest that parts of the early Jesus movement agreed to look on Gentile Jesus-believers as holy and morally pure, in spite of their sociopolitically motivated involvement in Greco-Roman cult, on the condition that they did not consider this social behavior to be a true worship of idols.

So from this perspective, what was the problem in Antioch? Paul clearly states that the reason for Peter’s separation from table-fellowship with Gentile Jesus-believers was fear of the “circumcision faction.” It is virtually impossible to know in more detail who they were. They might have been connected to James, or they might have represented the larger Jewish community in Antioch, which was fearful that too close relationships between Jews and Gentiles could affect the vulnerable legal situation of all Jews in Antioch. They might have come from outside and represented groups similar to those mentioned in Acts 15: Jesus-

²² I have previously argued that this was the main strategy of Jesus-believing Gentiles to deal with a prohibition to abstain from idolatry (see Zetterholm 2003b: 194–195).

believing Jews who thought that salvation in Christ was for Jews only. Or the circumcision faction might, of course, have come from within the Jesus-believing community in Antioch.²³

Irrespective of their identity, their demand is clear enough: circumcision of Gentile Jesus-believers. It is apparently the status of these Gentiles that is the problem, a problem that from the perspective of the circumcision faction would be solved if these Gentiles became Jews. The precise rationale for this demand is dependent on the underlying ideology of the circumcision faction and is thus connected to their identity. For instance, if they represented James, who seems to have agreed not to circumcise Gentile adherents to the movement (Acts 15:19–20, 28–29; cf. Esler 1995), the reason for this demand in this situation is different from that of a group that found it necessary to circumcise Gentiles generally. In both cases, however, issues of the moral purity of the Gentiles are likely to have been at stake. Judging from Peter's and Barnabas's reaction to the circumcision faction, the problem was related to the nature of commensality. Assuming that food was not the problem, the most likely conclusion is that it was the circumcision faction that created the reaction against too close relationships between Jews and Gentiles, relationships that could be expressed in a certain form of table-fellowship.

Is it possible that Paul's response to Peter and further comments contain catchwords from the circumcision faction's accusations and that we are able to reconstruct a tentative version of their allegations? For instance, it is interesting to note Paul's claim not to be a "Gentile sinner" in Galatians 2:15. Was this part of the circumcision faction's critique of Peter, Barnabas, and "the other of the Jews"—that by socializing with impure "Gentile sinners," they run the risk of becoming as "Gentile sinners" themselves? If so, Paul's reference in 2:14 to "live like a Gentile" makes sense as an ironic allusion to the allegations of the circumcision faction. What they pointed out, probably quite persistently, was that intimate relationships with Gentiles who, for whatever reason, were involved in Greco-Roman rituals could generate a state of moral impurity also among the Jews of the community. Out of a concern for the spiritual well-being of the Jews, the circumcision faction highly recommended a status change with regard to these Gentiles if intimate social relationships were to continue.

Several biblical, and postbiblical texts issue warnings against too close contact with Gentiles, a situation that might lead to apostasy and to deeds that would generate moral impurity among Jews. That some Jews considered other Jews to be "idolators" because of their involvement with Gentiles is suggested from the Tosefta (*t. Avodah Zarah* 4:6):

²³ For a discussion of the problems involved in identifying the interest groups in Antioch, see Nanos (2001: 152–154, 2002: 285–292).

R. Simeon b. Eleazar says “Israelites who live abroad are idolators.
 “How so?
 “A gentile who made a banquet for his son and went and invited all the Jews who live in his town—
 “even though they eat and drink their own [food and wine],
 “and their own waiter stands over them and serves them,
 “they nonetheless serve idolatry,
 “as it is said, [*Lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants off the land, and when they play the harlots after their gods and sacrifice to their gods] and one invites you, you eat of his sacrifices (Ex. 34:15).*”

This text clearly represents a Palestinian perspective in relation to the Diaspora and, admittedly, a significantly later period. Rabbinic literature presents R. Simeon b. Eleazar as a contemporary of R. Jehuda ha-Nasi. The statement should not be taken literally; R. Simeon b. Eleazar is not making a halakhic statement but is driving home an important moral point (Hayes 1997: 160–161). Furthermore, we should be cautious in assuming that this discussion is a general Jewish view of Jewish-Gentile relations. After all, both the Tosefta and the Mishnah contain regulations that seem to have facilitated social interaction and even table-fellowship between Jews and Gentiles. Still, the text indicates that it is fully conceivable that some Jews found the behavior of other Jews in Antioch to be blameworthy.

Paul refutes all accusations of being associated with “Gentile sinners” in Galatians 2:15. The reason for this is that *his* Gentiles were considered morally pure and righteous before the god of Israel. Accordingly, there was no risk for Jews and Gentiles to relate to each other in a way that expressed that both groups stood before the god of Israel on equal terms. In Galatians 2:16, Paul continues by showing that the argument of the circumcision faction involves an apparent contradiction. They have just accused Peter, Jew by birth and as such under the Torah, to be morally impure because of his association with Gentiles. If this accusation were correct, which, according to Paul, it is not, it is clear that Peter’s Jewish identity was of no avail to him. According to the circumcision faction, it is precisely his *Jewish* identity that makes his behavior blameworthy—it is as a Jew that they claim him to be impure like a “Gentile sinner.” Consequently, to simply change the identity of these Gentiles would not be a solution to the problem, since “no one will be justified by the works of the law” (Romans 2:16).

Did Jews in general believe that they would be justified by the work of the law? If we are to take Ed Sanders seriously, almost no Jewish group of the Second Temple period believed that.²⁴ Therefore, Paul is not arguing against a common view that understood Torah observance as part of a meritorious religious system.

²⁴ See Sanders’s (1977: 419–428) conclusions about Palestinian Judaism in 200 B.C.E. to 200 C.E.

Paul too believed, I think, that Torah observance represented the expression of the individual's desire to continue living in a covenantal relationship with the god of Israel, who provides righteousness by grace. But the Torah cannot prevent anyone from becoming a sinner, "for through the law comes the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20), and Paul is simply trying to argue that Jewish identity is no guarantee against moral impurity, which is actually proven by the allegations of the circumcision faction.

Regarding Gentile conversion to Judaism, Paul was wrong, of course. Changing the identity of the Gentiles would have solved many problems. By becoming Jesus-believing Jews, Gentile Jesus-believers would have had greater opportunity to avoid participation in Greco-Roman religion. If the Gentile Jesus-believers had been brought into Judaism through conversion, no one could have any objections to the nature of social intercourse. No one could blame proselytes for not participating in the official religion, and any power or value conflict with the civic society would decrease. From Paul's perspective, however, this was not an option. He persistently argued against conversion of Gentiles and advocated a maintenance of genealogical distinction: Gentiles and Jews, in Christ, were to be saved as separate categories (see, e.g., 1 Corinthians 7:17–24.). In all likelihood, this was connected to Paul's belief in the one god—the god of Israel, the god of the nations, as stated in Romans 3:28–30 (Nanos 1996: 184):

For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.

As a result of this incident, it appears that the community in Antioch faced three choices: They could follow Paul and insist on continued close relations with Gentile Jesus-believers, they could follow the circumcision faction and make Jesus-believing Jews out of the Jesus-believing Gentiles, or they could follow Peter in a compromise—to maintain the original status of the Jesus-believing Gentiles but restrict commensality between the groups, which in reality meant to stop treating Jesus-believing Gentiles as equals, instead treating them as ordinary god-fearers. This, I assume, was the final outcome of the social experiment of considering Jesus-believing Gentiles morally pure and taking the social consequences of this.

REFERENCES

- Alon, G. 1977. *Jews, Judaism, and the Classical World: Studies in Jewish History in the Times of the Second Temple and Talmud*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press.

- Beard, M., et al. 1998. *Religions of Rome: A History*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Betz, H. D. 1979. *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Bruit-Zaidman, L., and P. Schmitt-Pantel. 1992. *Religion in the Ancient Greek City*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Burkert, W. 1985. *Greek Religion*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cheung, A. T. 1999. *Idol Food in Corinth: Jewish Background and Pauline Legacy*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Cicero*, 28 vols. 1969–. Translated by C. W. Keyes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cohen, S. J. D. 1999. *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Corpus inscriptionum judaicarum: Recueil des inscriptions juives qui vont du IIIe siècle avant Jésus-Christ au VIIe siècle de notre ère*. Vol 2. 1952, edited by J. Frey. Rome: Pontificio istituto di archeologia Cristiana, 1952.
- Dio's Roman History*, 9 vols. 1914–1927. Translated by E. Cary. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Donaldson, T. L. 1997. *Paul and the Gentiles: Remapping the Apostle's Convictional World*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Douglas, M. 2000 [1966]. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge.
- Dunn, J. D. G. 1983. "The Incident at Antioch (Gal. 2:11–18)." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 18: 3–57.
- Dunn, J. D. G. 1996. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Peterborough, UK: Epworth Press.
- Esler, P. F. 1987. *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Esler, P. F. 1995. "Making and Breaking an Agreement Mediterranean Style: A New Reading of Galatians 2:1–14." *Biblical Interpretation* 3(3): 285–314.
- Esler, P. F. 1998. *Galatians. New Testament Readings*. London: Routledge.
- Fee, G. D. 1991. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Feldman, L. H. 1996. *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World: Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Fisk, B. N. 1989. "Eating Meat Offered to Idols: Corinthian Behavior and Pauline Response in 1 Corinthians 8–10 (a Response to Gordon Fee)." *Trinity Journal* 10(1): 49–70.
- Fitzmyer, J. A. 1998. *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Doubleday.
- Fung, R. Y. K. 1988. *The Epistle to the Galatians: The New International Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Garland, D. E. 2003. *1 Corinthians: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Garland, R. 1992. *Introducing New Gods: The Politics of Athenian Religion*. London: Duckworth.

- Goodman, M. 1994. *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire*. London: Clarendon Press.
- Hayes, C. E. 1997. *Between the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds: Accounting for Halakhic Difference in Selected Sugyot from Tractate Avodah Zarah*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Hayes, C. E. 2002. *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*. 1989. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
- Josephus*, 10 vols. 1926–. Translated by H. St. J. Thackeray et al. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Klawans, J. 1995. “Notions of Gentile Impurity in Ancient Judaism.” *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 20(2): 285–312.
- Klawans, J. 2000. *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Larkin, W. J. 1995. *Acts: The IVP New Testament Commentary Series 5*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Levine, L. I. 2000. *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Millar, F. 1993. “The Greek City in the Roman Period.” In *The Ancient Greek City-State: Symposium on the Occasion of the 250th Anniversary of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters July, 1–4 1992*, edited by M. H. Hansen, 7–29. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
- Mitchell, M. M. 1989. “Concerning $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\ \delta\epsilon$ in 1 Corinthians.” *Novum Testamentum* 31 (1989): 229–56.
- Mitternacht, D. 2002. “Foolish Galatians?: A Recipient-Oriented Assessment of Paul’s Letter.” In *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation*, edited by M. D. Nanos, 408–433. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002.
- Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*. Vol. 6. 1939, edited by W. H. Buckler and W. M. Calder. London: Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies.
- Nanos, M. D. 1996. *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul’s Letter*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Nanos, M. D. 2001. *The Irony of Galatians: Paul’s Letter in First Century Context*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Nanos, M. D. 2002. “What Was at Stake in Peter’s ‘Eating with Gentiles’ at Antioch?” In *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation*, edited by M. D. Nanos, 282–313. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.
- Neyrey, J. H. 1986. “The Idea of Purity in Mark’s Gospel.” *Semeia* 35:(1): 91–128.
- Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th ed. 1993, edited by B. Aland, K. Aland, et al. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.
- Parker, R. 1996. *Athenian Religion: A History*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Philo*, 10 vols. 1929–. Translated by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Price, S. 2002. *Religions of the Ancient Greeks. Key Themes in Ancient History*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Rajak, T. 1999. "The Synagogue Within the Greco-Roman City." In *Jews, Christians and Polytheists in the Ancient Synagogue: Cultural Interaction During the Greco-Roman Period*, edited by S. Fine, 161–173. London: Routledge.
- Reynolds, J., and R. Tannenbaum. 1987. *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias: Greek Inscriptions with Commentary*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Philological Society.
- Sanders, E. P. 1977. *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Sanders, E. P. 1985. *Jesus and Judaism*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Sanders, E. P. 1990. "Jewish Associations with Gentiles and Galatians 2:11–14." In *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul and John in Honour of J. Louis Martyn*, edited by R. T. Fortna and B. R. Gaventa, 170–188. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.
- Sanders, E. P. 1992. *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE–66 CE*. London: SCM Press, 1992.
- Schwartz, S. 2001. *Imperialism and Jewish Society 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Slee, M. 2003. *The Church in Antioch in the First Century CE: Communion and Conflict*. London: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Stambaugh, J., and D. Balch. 1992. *The Social World of the First Christians*. London: SPCK.
- Stark, R. 1996. *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Stowers, S. K. 1990. "Paul on the Use and Abuse of Reason." In *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, edited by D. L. Balch et al., 243–285. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Thiselton, A. C., 2000. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Tomson, P. J. 1990. *Paul and the Jewish Law: Halakha in the Letters of the Apostle to the Gentiles. Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum Ad Novum Testamentum: Section III: Jewish Traditions in Early Christian Literature, Volume 1*. Assen/Maastricht, Netherlands: van Gorcum.
- The Tosefta: Translated from the Hebrew*, 6 vols. 1977–1986. Edited by J. Neusner and R. S. Sarason. Translated by A. J. Avery-Peck, R. Brooks, et al. Hoboken, NJ: Ktav.
- Turcan, R. 2001. *The Gods of Ancient Rome: Religion in Everyday Life from Archaic to Imperial Times*. New York: Routledge.
- Wallace, R. and W. Williams. 1998. *The Three Worlds of Paul of Tarsus*. London: Routledge.
- Willis, W. L. 1985. *Idol Meat in Corinth: The Pauline Argument in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10*. Chico, CA: Scholars Press.
- Witherington, B. 1995. *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Witherington, B. 1998. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Zetterholm, M. 2003a. "A Covenant for Gentiles? Covenantal Nomism and the Incident at Antioch," in *The Ancient Synagogue from Its Origins until 200 C.E.: Papers*

Presented at an International Conference at Lund University, October 14–17, 2001,
edited by B. Olsson and M. Zetterholm, 169–188. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.
Zetterholm, M. 2003b. *The Formation of Christianity in Antioch: A Social-Scientific*
Approach to the Separation Between Judaism and Christianity. London: Routledge.