

UNITY, MYSTERY, AND TRANSFORMATION: READING EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS IN DIALOGUE WITH HANS KLEIN'S BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

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Abstract. This study examines the evolution of Pauline theology in the transition from the first Christian generation (Homologoumena) to the second (Deuteropauline), focusing on the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians. Employing the methodological framework proposed by Hans Klein in *Entwicklungslinien im Corpus Paulinum*, the study analyzes how the apostolic Tradition was reshaped by the Situation of ecclesiological consolidation and the delay of the Parousia.

The study identifies three major lines of development (Entwicklungslinien). First, in Soteriology, it demonstrates a shift from the Pauline concept of “new life” as an ethical possibility to be realized, to a vision of salvation as a sacramentally present reality (“seated in the heavenly places”), where the terminology of “Justification” is replaced by that of “Salvation” (Soteria) as a fact accomplished by grace. Second, in Christology and Ecclesiology, the analysis reveals a transition from a functional Christology to a cosmic one, in which Christ is the Head who rules over the universal powers, and the Church becomes His “Fullness” (Pleroma), integrating social structures (Haustafeln) to ensure historical stability. Third, the concept of Kerygma evolves from “dynamic power” to “doctrine” and “truth,” with faith becoming loyalty to a deposit of teaching (fides quae creditur).

Methodologically, the study validates these observations through an analysis of the alternation of personal pronouns (Wir / Ihr), demonstrating that the Deuteropauline authors use the “We” style to mark the objective confession of salvation history and the “You” style for its parenetic application. The study concludes that these transformations do not represent a distortion, but rather a necessary adaptation of Pauline theology to ensure the survival and unity of the Church as a universal historical entity.

Keywords: Hans Klein, Deuteropauline, Tradition and Situation, Soteriology, Pleroma, Haustafeln, Wir-Stil/Ihr-Stil.