

THE CHRIST PARTY
IN THE CORINTHIAN COMMUNITY

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EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND ITS LITERATURE

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THE CHRIST PARTY IN THE CORINTHIAN COMMUNITY

Ferdinand Christian Baur

With an introduction by Ernst Käsemann

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Preface

Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792–1860) was arguably one of the intellectual architects of modern scholarship on the New Testament.¹ Many of his contemporaries and successors disputed his results, but his method of a thoroughgoing historical approach to the material at hand, his thematization of conflict as an engine for development in early Christianity, and his critical sifting of received opinion all distinguish his work, and even many of those who disagreed with his concrete arguments nevertheless adopted many of his broader assumptions.

This little book contains a translation of Baur's long 1831 essay on "The Christ Party in the Corinthian Community, the Opposition between Petrine and Pauline Christianity in the Earliest Church, the Apostle Peter in Rome."² Why take the time to read an essay that is almost two centuries old? It was not to be Baur's final word on the subject. The essay belongs to a period in his career when he was just beginning to venture into the critical study of the New Testament. Indeed, all of his major works on New Testament themes would be published over the next several decades, and he would even change his mind on details of his presentation of this material by the time he came to incorporate parts of it into his epochal book on the

1. For important studies of Baur in English, with good bibliographies for further study, see Peter C. Hodgson, *The Formation of Historical Theology: A Study of Ferdinand Christian Baur* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966); Horton Harris, *The Tübingen School: A Historical and Theological Investigation of the School of F. C. Baur* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975; repr., Leicester: Apollos, 1990); Johannes Zachhuber, *Theology as Science in Nineteenth-Century Germany: From F. C. Baur to Ernst Troeltsch* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Martin Bauspiess, Christof Landmesser, and David Lincicum, eds., *Ferdinand Christian Baur and the History of Early Christianity*, trans. Robert F. Brown and Peter C. Hodgson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

2. Ferdinand Christian Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des paulinischen und petrinischen Christenthums in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostel Petrus in Rom," *TZTh* 4 (1831): 61–206.

apostle Paul.³ But if it was not a definitive conclusion, it has come, through the passage of time, to mark a new departure in the study of Christian origins.⁴

In Baur's history of theology in the nineteenth century, he offered a retrospective view of his own efforts in this essay:

This is where I may mention my own efforts at research into early Christianity. I started my investigations long before Strauss, and thus began from an entirely different point. My engagement with the two Corinthian epistles first provided the occasion to bring more sharply into focus the relationship of the Apostle Paul to the older apostles. I became convinced that in the letters of the Apostle himself, sufficient evidence is available to see that this relationship was something entirely different from what previously had been assumed—that, where people supposed a thorough harmony of all the apostles is to be found, rather an opposition exists, an opposition that, from the Jewish-Christian side, went so far as to call into question the authority of the Apostle Paul. A closer investigation of the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies, a writing whose importance for the history of the earliest period I had especially noted along with Neander, allowed me to see more deeply into the significance of this opposition in the post-apostolic period. It became increasingly clear to me that the opposition of the two parties, which in the apostolic and post-apostolic periods are to be distinguished much more sharply than hitherto has been the case, the Pauline party and the Petrine or Judaizing party, had a decisive influence not simply on the configuration of the sayings of Peter but also on the composition of the Book of Acts.⁵

3. Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Works, His Epistles and Teachings*, 2 vols. (London: Williams & Norgate, 1873): the section on the Corinthian correspondence incorporates parts of this article (Baur, *Paul*, 1:268–320), as does “Appendix 1: On the Literature of the Legend of Peter” (Baur, *Paul*, 2:291–96). Note also a series of articles on the Corinthian correspondence: Baur, “Einige weitere Bemerkungen über die Christuspartei in Korinth,” *TZTh* 4 (1836): 3–32; Baur, “Beiträge zur Erklärung der Korintherbriefe,” pts. 1 and 2, *ThJb* 9 (1850): 139–85; 11 (1852): 1–40, 535–74.

4. Of course, the essay is not an absolute beginning; for a series of essays that explore predecessors to Baur's argument in this essay, especially as it pertains to the disputed phenomenon of “Jewish Christianity,” see F. Stanley Jones, ed., *Rediscovery of Jewish Christianity: From Toland to Baur*, HBS 5 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012).

5. Peter C. Hodgson, ed., *Church and Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Robert F. Brown and Peter C. Hodgson (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018), 364.

This summary in Baur's own words offers a useful window onto the significance of this essay: where much of previous study of the New Testament or early Christianity had emphasized the unity of the ancient church, Baur's essay cleared the way for exploring the importance of diversity and conflict in the formation of early Christianity.

The introduction that follows, by Ernst Käsemann, takes up Baur's novelty and offers a punchy and sympathetic exposition of Baur's achievement by one of his most notable successors.⁶ This essay by Käsemann originally appeared as the introduction to volume 1 of a five-volume set of Baur's *Ausgewählte Werke*, the volume devoted to his New Testament research.⁷ We gratefully acknowledge the permission granted by Friedrich Frommann Verlag (Günther Holzboog) to translate the essay for this volume.

The slimness of this book belies the long gestation of this translation. The idea to translate the essay first arose in conversations with Martin Bauspiess in Tübingen in 2008 and 2009, and Martin was a significant encouragement to the project, especially in its early stages. Lucas Ogden subsequently contributed significantly to the translation of Baur's essay. Wayne Coppins and Christoph Heilig retranslated and standardized both the introduction and the main essay and rescued the project from the place where it languished in disrepair. An excellent graduate student in Classics at Notre Dame, William Stover, kindly produced translations of the modern Latin quotations. Throughout, this has been a collaborative venture, and it is gratifying to see the project come to fruition. We express our warm thanks to Larry Welborn for initially accepting the volume into the Society of Biblical Literature's History of Biblical Studies series and for his encouragement along the way. When HBS was discontinued, Larry recommended publication in SBL Press's Early Christianity and Its

6. In Roy A. Harrisville and Walter Sundberg, *The Bible in Modern Culture: Baruch Spinoza to Brevard Childs*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 122, the authors write, "On the wall in Ernst Käsemann's living room study hung a copy of the University of Tübingen's portrait of Baur, a gift to the New Testament scholar upon his retirement. Once outside Baur's direct influence, the one-time pupil of Bultmann finally came to write of Baur as the true 'progenitor' of a criticism at the root, a criticism conceived not merely as a scientific method but as a presupposition for the life of the spirit. One summer day he pointed to that portrait on his study wall and said, 'greater even than Bultmann.'"

7. Ernst Käsemann, "Einführung," in *Historisch-kritische Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*, by Ferdinand Christian Baur, vol. 1 of *Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben*, ed. Klaus Scholder (Stuttgart: Frommann, 1963), viii–xxv.

Literature series. Thank you to Shelly Matthews, general editor of ECL, for welcoming this work to her series. Many colleagues have generously answered queries along the way, and at the risk of unintentionally neglecting to mention someone, gratitude is due to James Carleton Paget, Luca Grillo, Peter Hodgson, F. Stanley Jones, Robert Morgan, Annette Yoshiko Reed, and Johannes Zachhuber. Bob Buller, Nicole Tilford, and the staff at SBL Press performed miracles of editorial oversight and saved the reader from numerous errors. Jen Guo generously produced the indexes with her characteristic acumen, intelligence, and industry.

A few comments about the way we have approached this translation are in order. Any substantive additions to Baur's text have been marked with square brackets. Baur often quotes bibliographic information in the main body of the text, and we have silently relocated this material to the footnotes. When he quotes from ancient texts, we have presented the Greek and Latin as Baur does (rather than standardizing to modern critical editions), unless there is an obvious error, although we have sometimes adjusted Baur's accentuation. On the whole, we have not translated the Greek quotations from the New Testament but have supplied translations for other ancient texts. We have drawn from the Loeb Classical Library, from the Ante-Nicene Fathers, and from other standard English translations wherever possible and have credited translators by name in parentheses after the citation; unattributed translations have been produced for this volume. We have retained the Greek and Latin original text alongside the translation for ancient material, but when Baur quotes from modern Latin sources we have simply supplied a translation without the original (which in any case is available in Baur's German text). Chapter and verse numbers have sometimes been added where Baur neglected to supply them. Where Baur offers interpretative paraphrase rather than direct quotation of his sources, we have indicated this by the use of italics. We have used CE rather than AD but have not updated Käsemann's or Baur's gendered language. References to the original German pagination of Baur's essay have been inserted in brackets throughout the text, as a means of facilitating access to the original.

Abbreviations

Primary Texts

<i>1 Apol.</i>	Justin, <i>Apologia i</i>
1–2 Clem.	1–2 Clement
<i>Ann.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Annales</i>
<i>Apol.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Apologeticus</i>
<i>Bibl.</i>	Photius, <i>Bibliotheca</i>
<i>Dom.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Domitianus</i>
Ep. Clem. Jas.	Letter of Clement to James
Ep. Pet. Jas.	Letter of Peter to James
<i>Fug.</i>	Athanasius, <i>Apologia de fuga sua</i>
<i>Haer.</i>	Irenaeus, <i>Adversus haereses</i>
Herm. Sim.	Shepherd of Hermas, Similitude(s)
Herm. Vis.	Shepherd of Hermas, Vision(s)
<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>
<i>Hist. rom.</i>	Dio Cassius, <i>Historiae romanae</i>
<i>Hom.</i>	Pseudo-Clement, <i>Homiliae</i>
Ign. Rom.	Ignatius, <i>To the Romans</i>
<i>Jejun.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De jejuniis adversus psychicos</i>
<i>Marc.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Adversus Marcionem</i>
<i>Mort.</i>	Lactantius, <i>De mortibus persecutorum</i>
<i>Pan.</i>	Epiphanius, <i>Panarion (Adversus haereses)</i>
<i>Praescr.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De praescriptione haereticorum</i>
<i>Rec.</i>	Pseudo-Clement, <i>Recognitiones</i>
<i>Strom.</i>	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Stromateis</i>

Secondary Resources

ACW Ancient Christian Writers

AEWK	<i>Die Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste</i> . Edited by Johann Samuel Ersch and Johann Gottfried Gruber. 167 vols. Leipzig: Dieterich, 1818–1889.
ANF	<i>The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325</i> . Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–1887. Repr., New York: Scribner's Sons, 1916.
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
HBS	History of Biblical Studies
LCC	Library of Christian Classics
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
NPNF2	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2</i>
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>ThJb</i>	<i>Theologische Jahrbucher</i>
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>TZTh</i>	<i>Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie</i>

Technical Abbreviations

AD	<i>anno Domini</i> (in the year of our Lord)
ad loc.	<i>ad locum</i> , at the place discussed
ca.	circa
CE	Common Era
cf.	<i>confer</i> , compare
ch(s).	chapter(s)
ed(s).	editor(s), edited by, edition
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i> , for example
esp.	especially
etc.	<i>et cetera</i> , and so forth, and the rest
i.e.	<i>id est</i> , that is
N.B.	<i>nota bene</i> , note carefully
n(n).	note(s)
n.p.	no publisher
orig.	original
pt(s).	part(s)
repr.	reprinted

ser.	series
trans.	translator(s), translated by
vol(s).	volume(s)

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