

CHAPTER FIVE

THE 'HEAD' (ΚΕΦΑΛΗ) METAPHOR

5.1 USE IN EPHESIANS 5:21-33

5.1.1 *Ephesians 5:23*

There has been an extensive scholarly discussion regarding the use of the term κεφαλή in Eph 5:23. The passion with which the discussion is pursued reflects the deep divisions within the Christian churches over the interpretation of this passage. For this reason the matter will need to be treated in some detail. We will begin by asking, 'What evidence is there that the word κεφαλή in Eph 5:23 is being used as a (living) metaphor?'. We will then discuss the question of the sense of the term in this context. Beginning with a critique of the the current debate, we will conduct a brief examination of the use of this term in near-contemporary medical writers, before arriving at a conclusion.

5.1.1.1 κεφαλή: *Metaphorical or Literal?*

We have seen that the argument of Eph 5:21-33 is an argument from analogy, and that the two levels of that analogy are held together by the use of the terms κεφαλή ('head') and σώμα ('body'). In the first part of the argument—the exhortation to the husbands in vv 22-24—it is the term κεφαλή which is used to associate the husband with Christ, being predicated of both. We may therefore begin by asking: in what way is the term κεφαλή predicated of the husband and Christ? Is the predication literal or metaphorical?

We might begin by calling to mind the difficulty of identifying metaphorical uses of language. As the discussion of chapters one and two has made clear, a word can have a range of uses within a particular language community. The two ends of this spectrum are, on the one hand, living metaphor (where the process of semantic interaction between tenor and vehicle is still active) and, on the other hand, dead metaphor (where the interaction has ceased and the metaphorical sense of the word has become yet another established, or 'literal', sense). For instance, a word such as 'see' in the

phrase 'I see your point' may have been originally a living metaphor, but for most users of English it now has the established (and therefore 'literal') sense of 'understanding' with the mind. The point on this spectrum at which a word is being used will depend—to a very large extent—upon the particular speaker and upon the particular context of utterance.

Central to the notion of metaphor (as we have seen) is a sense of the deviation of a word from its literal meaning in a particular context. This means that the literal sense of a word will simply not 'fit' a context in which the word is being used metaphorically. In this sense I have spoken of 'semantic impertinence' as a sign of metaphorical use. If the word is being used in such a way that taking it literally would result in an odd meaning, we may suspect it is being used as a metaphor. This criterion of metaphoric use is certainly fulfilled in 5:23: it is very difficult to see in what sense 'head' could be predicated literally of either the husband (in relationship to his wife) or of Christ (in relation to the Church).

But this observation will hardly suffice to settle the question. In the section which follows I will suggest that κεφαλή is being used in Eph 5:23 to convey the idea of authority. But the question remains: is κεφαλή being used in this context a *living* metaphor? It may be that 'authority over' was already an established sense of the term κεφαλή in contemporary Greek, and that the author of Ephesians is merely making use of a well-known manner of speaking. If this is the case, the author may be unaware of the original force of the metaphor, and could be applying the term to both Christ and the husband without sensing any 'semantic impertinence'. Therefore, to be confident that the metaphor is 'alive', we need to find a further criterion of the metaphorical use of language.

In chapter one I argued that a further sign of metaphorical use would consist of indications that the word is being used 'dependently'. For while the metaphorical sense of a word is different from the literal, it emerges only by reference to the literal. To take the time-honoured example, one can understand the expression 'Man is a wolf' only if one knows something about wolves. We may therefore pose our question a little more precisely and ask: are there any indications that the use of the word κεφαλή in Eph 5:22-24 is dependent upon the word's literal denotation? A moment's thought will show that this criterion is also met: on these grounds, too, there

is reason to believe that the author of Ephesians is using κεφαλή in such a way that the word has retained its (original) metaphorical force.

To support this claim I need only recall the argument of the previous chapter, where I suggested that the author of Ephesians has used, not a series of isolated metaphorical terms, but rather a series of terms which are linked by reference to a single imaginative construct or 'model' (that of the body). As we shall see, on every occasion on which the term κεφαλή is used within Ephesians (1:22, 4:15 and twice in 5:23) it is used in conjunction with at least one other term derived from the same model. In 1:22 and here in 5:23 it is the term σῶμα and in 4:15-16 it is not only σῶμα but also two other terms derived from the imaginative construct of the body, namely ἄφῃ ('joint') and αὐξησις ('growth'). This association of κεφαλή with other words closely linked to that which it literally denotes is a sign that its metaphorical sense is still very much alive.¹

5.1.1.2 κεφαλή: Authority or Source of Life?

While most scholars will readily agree that κεφαλή in Eph 5:23 is a metaphor, there is far less agreement regarding its metaphorical sense. This discussion has taken the form of a debate over the possible meaning of κεφαλή in the Greek of New Testament times.² On the one side are those who claim that the word could be used in contemporary Greek to indicate 'authority over'. Foremost among the defenders of this position is Wayne Grudem, who claimed (in his 1985 article on the topic) to have surveyed 2,336 instances of the use of the term 'in 36 authors from the eighth century B. C. to the fourth century A. D.'.³ Grudem suggests that on 2,034 of these occasions, the word means the 'actual physical head of a man or animal'.⁴ Of the remaining 302 uses, which he classes as metaphorical, Grudem cites 49 which – he suggests – mean 'person of superior

¹ One is reminded of the third of Janet Martin Soskice's 'rough guidelines' (*Metaphor*, p. 73) for distinguishing live metaphor from dead, namely that 'an originally vital metaphor calls to mind, directly or indirectly, a model or models'.

² Wayne Grudem ('The Meaning of κεφαλή ["Head"]': a Response to Recent Studies' *Trinity Journal* 11NS [1990], pp. 42-71) offers a helpful summary of articles on this subject published between 1985 and 1990, as well as replying to his own critics.

³ Wayne Grudem, 'Does κεφαλή ("Head") Mean "Source" or "Authority Over" in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2336 Examples', *Trinity Journal* 6NS (1985), p. 49.

⁴ *Ibid.*

authority or rank, or "ruler," "ruling part".⁵ Grudem also claims that 'no instances were discovered in which κεφαλή had the meaning "source, origin"'.⁶

On the other hand, Jerome Murphy O'Connor, for instance, states boldly that 'Gk *kephalē* never denotes authority or superiority'.⁷ On this side of the debate it is argued that in passages like 1 Cor 11:1-3 or Eph 5:22-24 the word should be read as indicating 'source'. The promotion of this point of view seems to have begun with Stephan Bedale's 1954 article, 'The Meaning of κεφαλή in the Pauline Epistles'.⁸ Bedale does not deny that κεφαλή 'carries with it the sense of "authority"', for instance, in 1 Cor 11:3.⁹ But he qualifies this by noting that 'such authority in social relationships derives from a relative priority (causal rather than merely temporal) in the order of being'.¹⁰ Richard S. Cervin holds a similar view, opposing in particular Wayne Grudem's claim that the word is frequently found outside the New Testament with the sense 'authority over'.¹¹ A more radical version of this position has been taken up and promoted by Catherine Clark Kroeger,¹² who insists that κεφαλή regularly has the sense 'source' in the Greek texts of this period. (We will return to Kroeger's arguments shortly.)

The one thing on which both sides in this debate seem to be agreed is that the issue can be decided by surveying the existing

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁷ Jerome Murphy O'Connor, '1 Corinthians', in *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), § 49:53.

⁸ Stephen Bedale, 'The Meaning of κεφαλή in the Pauline Epistles' *Journal of Theological Studies* 5NS (1954), pp. 211-15.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Richard S. Cervin, 'Does κεφαλή mean "Source" or "Authority Over" in Greek Literature?' *Trinity Journal* 10NS (1989), p. 112. We might note in passing some weaknesses of Cervin's argument. With regard to St Paul's usage he concludes: 'I think he is merely [*sic*] employing a head-body metaphor, and that his point is *preeminence*'. But 'preeminence' in a context which commands submission surely implies some sort of 'authority over' (cf. Grudem, 'κεφαλή: a Response', p. 38), and the words 'merely a head-body metaphor' (also used of an instance in Philo [*ibid.*, p. 92]) show little awareness of the fact that many of the senses attributed to the word κεφαλή are (or originally were) metaphoric.

¹² Catherine Clark Kroeger, 'The Classical Concept of *Head* as "Source"' in *Equal to Serve*, ed. Gretchen Gaebelein Hull (London: Scripture Union, 1987), Appendix III (pp. 267-83).

senses of the word. Therefore both sides comb ancient literature for occasions on which κεφαλή is used. But the present study calls this assumption into question. For by attempting to decide this issue by reference to what was the common or established sense of the word at the time of the New Testament, these authors fail to take into account the manner in which a metaphor functions. In chapters one and two we saw that a metaphor creates meaning by making use of the literal sense of the words used. 'Man is a wolf' is a metaphor which makes use of the (presumed) characteristics of wolves. Furthermore, a living metaphor is by definition creative of meaning: it gives a new twist to the established sense of a word.¹³

When interpreters fail to think about the way in which metaphors function, they fall into some serious errors. These errors may be illustrated by an analysis of Stephen Bedale's claim that in Col 2:19 and Eph 4:15 κεφαλή should be translated 'source' (equivalent to ἀρχή), since 'it is very difficult to make any sense at all so long as κεφαλή is regarded as "over-lord"'.¹⁴ The confusion here arises first of all from a failure to distinguish two operations. The first is the translation of a word. The second is the spelling out of the sense of its metaphorical use. If the word is a living metaphor, it can (and should) be translated as 'head'. But this does not preclude the possibility that, if the *sense* of the metaphor in this context were spelt out, it would be suggesting (*inter alia*) that Christ is the 'source' of the Church's life. To *translate* the word as 'source' is to prejudge an important issue: it is to imply that in this context the word is functioning as a dead metaphor. It implies that a contemporary reader would have understood the word in the same way as he or she would have understood ἀρχή, that is, independently, without any reference to that which the science of anatomy would describe as a 'head'. To prove this claim, one would have to establish that the use of the word κεφαλή to mean 'source' had become so common in contemporary usage that this was an established and independent sense of the word.

One could, of course, argue that in Col 2:19 and Eph 4:15

¹³ Another way of expressing the same point would be to note the failure in these discussions to distinguish between what Cotterell and Turner (*Linguistics*, p. 139) term 'lexical senses' and 'word usages'. While 'source' (for instance) may not yet be an established (lexical) 'sense' of the word κεφαλή, that does not mean that the word may not be used in this way. If it is, it will be a fresh, living (or 'active') metaphor.

¹⁴ Bedale, 'Meaning of κεφαλή', p. 214.

κεφαλή is being used to speak of Christ as the source of the Church's life *without* arguing that this is an established meaning of the word.¹⁵ For (as we will see shortly) the metaphor is able to convey that idea. But if it is living metaphor, then this meaning of κεφαλή ('source of life') arises by reference to the literal sense of the word (the 'head' of a body). In other words, the reader understands that Christ is the source of the Church's life precisely by thinking of him as 'head'. Therefore the word should be *translated* as 'head' (and not as 'source'), for to translate it as 'source' is to lose the metaphor.

Yet there are still more problems with Bedale's article. For if κεφαλή is being used metaphorically in, say, Eph 4:15, the particular sense of the metaphor arises from the interaction of this word with its 'frame' (or, if one prefers, with the particular 'metaphorical sequence' of which it forms a part). Meaning is determined by context, never more so than in the case of metaphor. Therefore the use of the word to refer to Christ as 'source of the Church's life' in Eph 4:15 does not prevent the same word from being used with a different metaphorical force in a different context. Bedale may well be right to note that in 4:15 'it is very difficult to make any sense at all so long as κεφαλή is regarded as "over-lord"'. But that does not mean that κεφαλή cannot carry the metaphorical sense 'over-lord' elsewhere.

To put it bluntly, if κεφαλή is (as we will argue) a living metaphor throughout Ephesians, it does not 'mean' 'over-lord'. Nor does it 'mean' 'source'. It means 'head', and should be translated as 'head', but with the understanding that 'head' can be used as a metaphor. If a metaphor is (as Monroe Beardsley writes) 'a poem in miniature',¹⁶ then it is unlikely that it will have only one possible meaning. The interaction of the same word with different contexts will create a variety of metaphorical uses. Thus in Eph 1:22 κεφαλή does seem to have the sense of 'over-lord' (as Bedale himself notes),¹⁷ but this sense, too, is bound to the particular context in which it is used. It does not mean that it will have that sense elsewhere.

Bedale's article illustrates the existence of these misunderstand-

¹⁵ Indeed I will make this suggestion in the analysis which follows.

¹⁶ Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, p. 144.

¹⁷ Bedale, 'Meaning of κεφαλή', p. 214.

ings on one side of the debate. On the other side of the debate, Wayne Grudem is determined to prove that κεφαλή (always) has the sense of 'authority over'. Therefore he, too, overlooks the significance of context. We see this in his discussion of an important example of the use of κεφαλή from the work of Catherine Clark Kroeger.¹⁸ Kroeger analyses the use of κεφαλή in a quotation from Cyril of Alexandria. Cyril writes (in Kroeger's translation), 'Because head means source [ὅτι δὲ ἡ κεφαλή σημαίνει τὴν ἀρχήν] Ἦε [God] establishes the truth for those who are wavering in their mind that man is the head of the woman, for she was taken out of him'.¹⁹ Wayne Grudem criticizes Kroeger's analysis of this passage on several counts. He suggests (rightly) that even here the term κεφαλή retains the sense of authority, and that a passage like this needs to be read in its historical context (the Trinitarian controversies of the early Church). But his argument that ἀρχή could also be translated as 'ruler' or 'leader' or 'beginning' in this passage is a little misleading. Although these are possible translations of the word ἀρχή, Kroeger may well be right to suggest that in this passage authority is related to the idea of origin. Therefore her translation of ἀρχή as 'source' cannot be so simply dismissed. Grudem's error, an error which he shares with his opponents, is his neglect of the fact that different (metaphorical) senses of a word are possible in different contexts. But all these senses arise by way of the literal sense, that is, by way of that which the word denotes.

However, Grudem's article also offers some hints of a more helpful approach to the question of the meaning of the term κεφαλή. He writes that '[i]t is proper... to ask exactly which characteristics of a physical head were recognized in the ancient world and were evident in those contexts where people were metaphorically called "head"'.²⁰ To begin with 'which characteristics of a physical head were recognized in the ancient world' is to begin in the right place. For it is the 'characteristics of a physical head' which determine the possible metaphorical uses of the term κεφαλή. These characteristics constitute the 'system of associated commonplaces' (Max Black) or set of perceived properties (Monroe Beardsley) of the object denoted by the word which are available for transfer to the primary

¹⁸ Grudem, 'κεφαλή: a Response', pp. 67-68.

¹⁹ Kroeger, 'Classical Concept', p. 268.

²⁰ Grudem, 'κεφαλή: a Response', p. 61.

subject of the metaphor. Which of these characteristics the metaphor is intended to highlight will be determined by the context of its use, the particular metaphorical frame. Finally, we should note that the fact that the word has never been used metaphorically of a person in that sense before does not mean that it could not be used in that sense in a new context. For fresh metaphors are creative of meaning.

5.1.1.3 Head and Body in Greek Medical Writers

How did the ancient world regard the relationship of 'head' and 'body' (in the literal sense of these words)? What characteristics of the 'head' could the writer of Ephesians have been aware of (and which were therefore available for metaphorical use)? A useful starting point may be the views of Greek medical writers, for—as Markus Barth writes—'as an educated man living between the times of Hippocrates [460–380 BC] and Galen [ca. AD 130–200], he [the author of Ephesians] could hardly avoid reflecting some views held by the doctors of his time'.²¹ Now both Hippocrates and Galen held that the brain (ὁ ἐγκέφαλος) played a central role in the functioning of the human body. Amongst the works attributed to Hippocrates, for instance, we find the treatise generally known by its Latin title, *de morbo sacro* ('on the sacred disease'), treating of what we would call epilepsy. In chap. 17 of that work we read:

Men ought to know that from the brain, and from the brain only, arise our pleasures, joys, laughter and jests, as well as our sorrows, pains, griefs and tears. Through it, in particular, we think, see, hear, and distinguish the ugly from the beautiful, the bad from the good, the pleasant from the unpleasant... It is the same thing which makes us mad or delirious, inspires us with dread and fear, whether by night or by day, brings sleeplessness, inopportune mistakes, aimless anxieties, absent-mindedness, and acts that are contrary to habit. These things that we suffer all come from the brain (καὶ ταῦτα πάσχομεν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου πάντα)...²²

Nor—it seems—was this picture of the relationship of head and body new at the time of Hippocrates. Hermann Diels cites reports

²¹ Barth, *Ephesians* I, p. 187.

²² Hippocrates, 'De morbo sacro' in *Hippocrates*, vol 2, transl. W. H. S. Jones; Loeb (London: Heinemann, 1952), pp. 174-75. Despite the title of this treatise, Hippocrates opposes the idea that this disease is somehow divine; rather it has a natural cause, which is to be looked for in the brain.

of the writer Aëtios (ca. AD 100) who claims that the Pythagorean philosopher Alcmaeon of Crotona had already attributed a 'ruling' function to the brain ('Αλκμαίων ἐν τῷ ἐγκεφάλῳ εἶναι τὸ ἡγεμονικόν).²³ Now according to Aristotle, 'Alcmaeon was in the prime of life when Pythagoras was old'.²⁴ Therefore we may date this opinion to about the end of the sixth century BC.

Some time after the probable date of the writing of Ephesians, another medical writer, Galen, was to develop these early insights. A more extended treatment of Galen's views seems to be in order, for not only does Galen offer the most complete treatment of this topic among all the writers of antiquity, but he expresses a view of the relationship of the head to the body which comes very close to that which seems to underlie the use of the κεφαλή metaphor in Ephesians.²⁵

In his treatise entitled 'On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato', Galen opposes the then common claim that the heart is the place from which the nerves emanate. He sets out to demonstrate that 'the source of all the nerves is the brain' (ἀρχὴν πάντων τῶν νεύρων ὑπάρχειν τὸν ἐγκέφαλον).²⁶ A little further in the same work he writes that 'a nerve... grows from the brain (ἐξ ἐγκεφάλου) or spinal cord and conveys sensation or motion or both to the parts to which it is attached'.²⁷ Similarly we read in book seven that 'all the sensory powers, having as they do their beginning in the brain (ἀπ' ἐγκεφάλου τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐχουσῶν), have this in common, that they are carried through the nerves all the way to their proper organs'.²⁸

²³ Hermannus Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* (1879; repr. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1958), p. 407.

²⁴ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, transl. Richard Hope (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1952), 986a (p. 16).

²⁵ It is true that Galen speaks of the 'brain' (ἐγκέφαλος) rather than the 'head' (κεφαλή), but—as he writes (*de usu partium* VIII, 4)—the brain has this name 'because it lies ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ' (*The Usefulness of the Parts of the Body*, transl. Margaret Tallmadge May [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968], vol. 1, p. 394). For the full Greek text (with accompanying Latin translation), see *Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia*, ed. C. G. Kühn (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964), vol. III, p. 628.

²⁶ Galen, *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*, First Part (Books I-V), transl. Phillip de Lacy; *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* v 4,1,2 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981) I 7:55 (pp. 90-91).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, I 9,2 (pp. 94-95).

²⁸ Galen, *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*, Second Part (Books VI-IX), transl. Phillip de Lacy; *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* v 4,1,2 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1984) VII 5:13 (p. 457).

This relationship between the head and the body is succinctly expressed in book twelve of another of Galen's works, 'On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body' (Latin title *de usu partium*). In discussing 'the joint of the head' Galen writes:

This joint is so important for the animal that it is the only one of them all that cannot endure for a moment even a chance displacement, not to mention a serious dislocation. In fact, the animal is instantly deprived of all respiration, voice, motion and sensation, because the root itself of the nerves has been affected. Now the source of the nerves is the encephalon, the rational soul being sowed in it as in a fertile field. The outgrowth from it of the spinal medulla, like a trunk stretching up into a great tree, a trunk that extends the whole length of the spine, gives off a very large number of nerves like branches dividing into countless offshoots, and so the whole body receives through these first and foremost its share of motion and afterward its share of sensation.²⁹

It is true that we cannot attribute to the writer of Ephesians the detailed medical knowledge which we find in Galen, some one hundred years or so after his time. Nonetheless, as we have seen, Galen's picture of the relationship of head to body is not altogether new: mention of the controlling function of the ἐγκέφαλος is found in earlier writers. If the writer of Ephesians of our letter shared this understanding, even in the most general terms and as part of 'the popular understanding of anatomy of those days',³⁰ he would certainly see the head as having a controlling function within the body. On this basis it seems reasonable to suggest that the word κεφαλή could be used as a metaphor indicating authority.³¹ If this is the sense which the context seems to demand, it is a sense we may accept.

Could a first-century writer have used κεφαλή as a metaphor for 'source of life and growth'? That the head is somehow a source of

²⁹ Galen, *de usu partium* XII, 4 (*On the Usefulness of the Parts*, vol. 2, p. 554).

³⁰ Kōshi Usami, *Somatic Comprehension of Unity: the Church in Ephesus* *Analeceta Biblica* 101 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1983), p. 142.

³¹ The role of the head in Greek medical writings demonstrates that 'authority over' was available as a potential metaphorical sense of the term. That it was in fact used metaphorically in this way seems to be more than adequately demonstrated by Wayne Grudem's cited articles. Joseph Fitzmyer's conclusion (in regard to 1 Cor 11:3) may also be cited ('Another Look at κεφαλή in 1 Corinthians 11.3' *New Testament Studies* 35 [1989], p. 510): 'The upshot of this discussion is that a Hellenistic Jewish writer such as Paul of Tarsus could well have intended that κεφαλή... be understood as "head" in the sense of authority or supremacy over someone else'.

life for the body seems to be implied in Galen's statement that a dislocation of 'the joint of the head' results in the creature being 'deprived of all respiration, voice, motion and sensation'.³² This is not too far removed from the picture of the relation of head to body which we find in Eph 4:15-16 (as we shall see).³³ In fact the recent discussion has unearthed an even clearer statement of the life-giving relationship between the human head and its body. This is to be found in the work of the late second-century AD author Artemidorus Daldiani on the interpretation of dreams:

Another man dreamt that he was beheaded. In real life, the father of this man, too, died; for as the head... is the source of life and light for the whole body, he was responsible for the dreamer's life and light. ... The head... indicates one's father. ... The head resembles parents in that it is the cause... of one's living.³⁴

As Grudem admits (commenting on this example), '[b]ecause Artemidorus, in speaking about the physical head of a human body, says that "the head resembles parents in that it is the cause (Greek αἰτία) of one's living" (literally, of life, τοῦ ζῆν), we must recognize that there was an awareness that the physical head was in some sense the cause (or one might say "source") of life'.³⁵ Such an awareness would be consistent with the picture of the vital relationship of the head to the body which we find in Galen.

An interesting example of 'head' as a metaphor indicating 'source' (in this case 'source of wellbeing') is to be found in Seneca's letter *De Clementia*, addressed to the Emperor Nero (ca. AD 55-56). This example has been overlooked in the recent discussion, perhaps because it is in Latin rather than Greek. Seneca writes:

Tradetur ista anima tui mansuetudo differunturque paulatim per omne imperii corpus, et cuncta in similitudinem tuam formabuntur. A capite bona valetudo: inde omnia vegeta sunt atque erecta aut languore demissa, prout animus eorum vivit aut marcet.³⁶

³² Galen, *de usu partium* XII, 4 (*On the Usefulness of the Parts*, vol. 2, p. 554).

³³ Barth, *Ephesians* I, p. 191.

³⁴ Cited in Grudem, 'κεφαλή: a Response', p. 51.

³⁵ Grudem, 'κεφαλή: a Response', p. 53. Similarly Catherine Clark Kroeger, 'Head' in Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), p. 376.

³⁶ Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Moral Essays*, transl. John W. Basore; Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1928), pp. 432-33: "That kindness of your heart will be recounted, will be diffused little by little throughout the whole body of the empire, and

Given the view of the relationship of the head and the body expressed by (more or less) contemporary medical writers, and given these examples, we cannot discount the possibility of a metaphorical use of the term κεφαλή to mean 'source of the body's life and growth'. Even if one were to argue that such a metaphorical use were unprecedented, it would not have been incomprehensible.³⁷

One methodological conclusion which emerges from this discussion is that one should beware of searching lexica in an attempt to discover the possible senses of the word κεφαλή. Paul Ricoeur perhaps overstates the case a little when he says that 'the dictionary contains no metaphors; they exist only in discourse'.³⁸ It is true that a dictionary will record the established metaphorical uses of words, and not all of these established metaphorical uses will be 'dead' metaphors, at least, not for all speakers. Nonetheless in at least two respects Ricoeur is correct. Firstly, if κεφαλή in a particular context is a newly-coined metaphor, it will be creative of meaning. Since a lexicon reflects the established meanings of words, this newly-created meaning will not be found in lexica of contemporary Greek.³⁹ Secondly, we need to call to mind once again that the meaning of a live metaphor emerges from the interaction of 'focus' and 'frame', the word and its context. Therefore the particular nuances which a living metaphor conveys will emerge only from a study of the word in its context. A study of previous uses of the word (which is what a lexicon records) will be of limited value.

all things will be moulded into your likeness. It is from the head that comes the health [of the body]; it is through it that all the parts are lively and alert or drooping according as their animating spirit has life or withers'. As W. L. Knox notes ('Parallels to the N.T. use of σῶμα, *Journal of Theological Studies* 39 [1938], p. 245) 'Seneca is here using a convention in which the... ruler can be either the "mind" or the "head" of the state'.

³⁷ As indeed Grudem admits in his conclusion, writing ('κεφαλή: a Response', p. 71): 'There are some texts which indicate that the physical head was thought of as the source of energy or life for the body, and therefore the possibility exists that the word κεφαλή might have come to be used as a metaphor for "source" or "source of life"', although he claims that there are 'no unambiguous examples' of this use before or during the time of the New Testament. For a further defence of this sense of the term κεφαλή ('celle de principe vital, moteur, nourricier') see Benoit ('Corps, tête et plérôme', p. 27).

³⁸ Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, p. 97.

³⁹ For this reason, it is actually *not* impossible that 'Paul... would use a common word in a sense never before known in the Greek-speaking world and expect his readers to understand it' (pace Grudem, 'Head', p. 58). For every time an author creates a new metaphor that is precisely what she does, she gives a new 'twist' to the meaning of an old word.

5.1.1.4 *The Sense of the Metaphor*

Now, whatever other senses the word κεφαλή may have had, the context in which it is used in Eph 5:22-24 demands that the meaning 'authority over' be adopted.⁴⁰ For in vv 22-24 the word is used (as we have seen) to reinforce the case for the 'subordination' of wives.⁴¹ It can only fulfil this function if it carries with it some sense of authority.⁴²

In coming to this conclusion we should concede one point to the opponents of this view. It is true that we need to beware of confusing the metaphorical use of 'head' in English with the metaphorical sense of κεφαλή in Greek. This seems to be the point being made

⁴⁰ So also Knight ('Husbands and Wives', p. 169), and Schlier (*Der Brief an die Epheser*, pp. 253-54). Joachim Gnllka (*Epheserbrief*, p. 277) notes that 'auch den κεφαλή-Begriff wird man aus dem Kontext des Briefes heraus deuten müssen'. In the light of Christ's role as 'head' vis-à-vis the Church (cf. 4:15-16) we can see that 'headship' of the man means a commitment to the well-being of the woman, 'nicht nur eine Über-, sondern auch eine Hinordnung'. While this may be true, it is a deduction from the idea of headship which is not made by the author of Ephesians: 'headship' is appealed to only in support of the wife's subordination, not in support of the husband's love (vv 25-31).

⁴¹ It is not without significance that, in defending the view that κεφαλή has the sense 'source' in the letters of Paul, Catherine Clark Kroeger ('Classical Concept', p. 281) must also propose another sense for ὑποτάσσειν, suggesting that it means 'to attach one thing to another or to identify one person or thing with another'. The author of Ephesians, she suggests, was opposing the practice of *sine manu* marriage, in which the woman remained attached to her own family: 'just as the husband was asked to leave his family [cf. Gen 2:24], the wife was asked to leave hers and attach herself to her husband, to be identified with him'. But this is to attribute a sense to the verb ὑποτάσσειν which the other New Testament uses fail to support (as is evident from Kroeger's desperate attempt to read this sense into the use of the verb in Luke 2:51). What would she make of the use of the same verb in Eph 1:22, where it occurs in an allusion to Psalm 8 with a clear sense of 'subordination' (ὑπὸ τοῦς πόδας αὐτοῦ) or in 1 Pet 3:5, where it is applied to wives? In this second instance, the example of Sarah which follows uses the verb ὑπακούειν ('obey'), which certainly suggests the idea of authority. I will return to the sense of ὑποτάσσειν in chapter eight.

⁴² Again, even if one maintained that this was the only use of the word in this sense in Greek literature, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that this is the sense demanded by the context, in which case one would have to suggest that the word is here a very 'live' metaphor indeed, creating a new meaning. Stephen Bedale ('Meaning of κεφαλή', p. 215) suggests that κεφαλή in Eph 5:22-33 also carries with it the sense of 'source': it implies that 'Christ is κεφαλή in relation to the Church, as Adam in relation to Eve', namely "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh". However, we have seen that the only words from the quotation from Genesis that are used in the argument are the words 'one flesh'; it is unwise to allegorize this text by suggesting that 'the Church is the Eve of the Second Adam' (ibid). Perhaps it is, but this is not the argument of Eph 5:21-33. See also the comments which follow, on the very similar claims made by Marlis Gielen.

(in a rather confused manner) by Richard Cervin when he writes that because, 'for English-speaking theologians, at least, English, Hebrew and Latin all share "leader" as a common metaphor for head [*sic*]',⁴³ one can too easily assume that the Greek word will be used in the same way. However, it is not the carrying over of the established senses of the English word, but the context of the word's use in Eph 5:22-24 which demands that κεφαλή be given the sense of 'authority over'.

Marlis Gielen takes a somewhat different approach to the question of the metaphorical use of κεφαλή in Eph 5:23. Gielen suggests that, though the use of κεφαλή in Eph 5:23 is dependent on its use in 1 Corinthians 11,⁴⁴ the meaning of the word in this new context is significantly different. In 1 Corinthians 11, she notes, the reference to the creation account of Genesis 2 implies 'daß er [der Mann] κεφαλή der Frau insofern ist, als in ihm – in Blick auf die Erschaffung des ersten Menschenpaares – die Existenz der Frau begründet ist, er also ihr **Ursprung** ist'.⁴⁵ Therefore the sense to be given to the use of this term in 1 Corinthians 11, is not so much that of 'Überordnung' so much as that of a certain 'Vorordnung'.⁴⁶ However, the author of Ephesians goes further than Paul in demanding a subordination from wives, a subordination which is nonetheless still grounded in the idea that the woman owes her very being to the man (cf. Gen 2:21f).⁴⁷

Gielen thus shows an admirable awareness of the fact that it is the context which determines the meaning of a word. However, if one admits that the term κεφαλή is used in Eph 5:21-33 in such a way that its implication is the subordination of wives, it surely follows (*pace* Gielen) that the primary sense of the word in this context is that of 'Oberhaupt' or 'Herrscher' (that is, 'authority over'). It is not enough to derive the sense of the word from its apparent origin, to say, for example, that 'der Eph-Verfasser greift nun in Eph 5,23a eben diese paulinische Kennzeichnung des Mannes als Haupt der Frau auf, wobei davon auszugehen ist, daß er zugleich der damit verbundenen, auf Gen 2,21f beruhenden inhaltlichen Interpreta-

⁴³ Cervin, 'κεφαλή in Greek Literature', p. 87. Presumably he means that 'head' is a common metaphor for 'leader' in these languages.

⁴⁴ Gielen, *Hausteilethik*, pp. 243-44.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 251.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 252.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 254.

tion von κεφαλή als Ursprung zustimmt und sie für seine Aussageintention rezipiert.⁴⁸ If the term κεφαλή in 1 Corinthians 11 does have the sense 'Ursprung' (as Gielen claims), then this comes from the reference to Genesis 2 later in that same chapter. Such a reference is missing in Eph 5:22-24. Genesis 2:24 is cited in Eph 5:31, but (as the analysis of chapter three has shown) it is cited in order to reinforce the exhortation to the husbands and not that to the wives. Even if κεφαλή in 1 Corinthians 11 does have the sense 'source', one cannot presume that the sense of the word in the one context will be carried over into the other.

Gielen goes further and on the basis of her analysis suggests a shift in the sense of κεφαλή as it is applied first to the husband and then to Christ.⁴⁹ For she interprets the use of κεφαλή of Christ with reference to 'das ekklesiologische Zentrum des Eph', namely Eph 2:14-18, where 2:15 speaks of Christ's 'creation' of the Church. She argues that the term κεφαλή used of Christ and the Church in 5:23b therefore has the sense 'Ursprung', already (it seems) from the parallel with 5:23a, but certainly from an implied reference to Eph 2:15: 'In Eph 5,23b greift er [der Verfasser]... diesen Gedanken aus Eph 2,15b auf und bringt jetzt den Begriff κεφαλή ins Spiel, der nun jedoch durch die Parallelisierung mit 5,23a die semantische Valenz von "Ursprung" erhält. Damit entspricht κεφαλή 5,23b sachlich dem Verb κτίζειν 2,15b'.⁵⁰ This interpretation is apparently reinforced when Gielen also interprets Eph 5:23c (a statement which—as we saw—refers exclusively to Christ) in the light of Eph 2:14-18.⁵¹ In this sense the σωτήρ of v 23c may be said to correspond to the verb ἀποκαταλλάσσειν ('reconcile') in Eph 2:16.⁵²

However, while these alleged associations are seductive, they remain on the level of broad theological themes. It is true, for instance, that in the light of 2:14-18 the Church may be said to owe her entire existence to Christ.⁵³ But where in Eph 5:22-24 do we

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 253.

⁴⁹ Richard Batey (*Imagery*, p. 21) also notes of Christ and the husband that 'each is head, but of distinctly different objects' and that therefore 'the headship shared by Christ and husband is not identical, but is capable of comparison'.

⁵⁰ Gielen, *Haustafeltheik*, p. 255.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 257. In this Gielen is following the example of Helmut Merklein (*Christus*, pp. 65-66), as she herself notes (*Haustafeltheik*, p. 256).

⁵² Gielen, *Haustafeltheik*, p. 257.

⁵³ Cf. Gielen (*Haustafeltheik*, p. 255): 'Am Kreuz wird er [Christus] so zum Ursprung der Kirche; die Kirche verdankt ihm allein ihre Existenz'.

find any clear reference to this idea? Where do we find an explicit allusion to Eph 2:14-18?⁵⁴ Nowhere in these verses, not even in the extended description of Christ's work in Eph 5:25-27, do we find a reference to the idea that Christ is the creator of the Church. Therefore while this interpretation of the sense of κεφαλή in 5:22-24 is theologically imaginative, it lacks a clear textual foundation.

We may sum up the discussion to this point. If the first question to be asked is, 'How is the term κεφαλή being used in Eph 5:23?', we may answer (a) that it is being used as a (live) metaphor, and (b) that it is being used as a metaphor to indicate authority.

5.1.1.5 *The Tenor of the Metaphor*

This raises a second question. What is the 'tenor' of this metaphor, to what does it refer as its 'principal subject'? Given the analogical nature of the argumentation in these verses, there is something unique about the use of the metaphor of the 'head'. For it is being used in such a way that it has two principal subjects, referring to both the husband (v 23a) and to Christ (v 23b). In this way (as we have seen) the one term is used to associate the two realities with one another.

By choosing the word κεφαλή to link the husband with Christ in vv 22-24, the author has highlighted some aspects of both realities, downplayed others and caused a third group of qualities to simply disappear (for—as we have seen—this is the effect of every metaphor). The aspect which has been highlighted is that of authority: it is this which the husband and Christ are seen to have in common when viewed through the 'filter' of the metaphor.⁵⁵

We should remember that this use of the term κεφαλή to associate the husband and Christ as figures of authority is balanced in vv 25-32 by the use of another term which is used of both. This is, of course, the verb ἀγαπᾶν (to 'love'). The love of husband is to be 'like' (an explicit analogy: 'just as', καθὼς καὶ) that of Christ. Thus Eph 5:21-33 compares Christ and husbands in two quite different ways. The first point of comparison (the metaphor of 'headship') is found in the exhortation to the wives. The second point of compari-

⁵⁴ A similar question may be asked of Merklein's claims (*Christus*, pp. 65-66) of an association of the two passages.

⁵⁵ For the image of metaphor as a 'filter', see Black (*Models*, p. 39).

son (the term ἀγαπᾶν) is found in the command which is directed to the husbands.

What does this mean? It means that in the words which are addressed to husbands (vv 25-32), the husband is invited to compare himself to Christ, not under the rubric of 'headship' (as a metaphor for authority), but rather under that of 'love' (in the sense of the love of Christ).⁵⁶ In this way (and as many commentators have noted) at least one possibly misleading implication of the 'headship' metaphor is avoided: the implication that the authority of the husband could be tyrannical.⁵⁷ As our final chapters will show, this is not the only way in which the sense of the κεφαλή metaphor is modified. But first we must compare its use here with its use elsewhere in the letter.

5.2 USE ELSEWHERE IN THE LETTER

The term κεφαλή occurs at two other places in the letter: that is within 1:15-23 (in v 22) and within 4:7-16 (at v 15). There is what might be considered a third usage in the opening eulogy (at 1:10), namely the phrase ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ ('to unite all things in Christ'), if we believe that ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι is intended to call to mind the cognate term κεφαλή. Because of the difficulty of this last question, we will begin our survey with the first unambiguous usage of κεφαλή, namely that which is to be found in Eph 1:22.

⁵⁶ So also Knight, 'Husbands and Wives', p. 171.

⁵⁷ I cannot, however, accept David M. Park's claim ('The Structure of Authority in Marriage: an Examination of *Hypotasso* and *Kephale* in Ephesians 5:21-33' *Evangelical Quarterly* 59 [1987], p. 122) that vv 25-31 give a new sense to the term κεφαλή. Park writes: 'Thus, the Apostle equated κεφαλή to ἀγάπη and Christ's atoning death, thereby redefining κεφαλή not structurally in terms of one person dominant over another but Christologically in terms of servanthood, sacrifice and love'. 'Servanthood, sacrifice and love' are indeed demanded of the husband, but not on the basis of his being κεφαλή τῆς γυναίκος; as the analysis of chapter three has made clear, the argument to the husbands is not based on the term κεφαλή, but on the term σῶμα.

5.2.1 *Ephesians* 1:15-23

This first use of κεφαλή occurs in the context of the author's thanksgiving and prayer (Ephesians being the only letter in the New Testament to open with both a eulogy and a prayer).⁵⁸ Within these verses, a definite progression can be discerned: the opening thanksgiving (vv 15-16a) merges into a prayer for the readers (vv 16b-23).⁵⁹ This prayer asks that they may be given knowledge of the hope of their call, the richness of the glory of their inheritance and the surpassing greatness of God's power toward those who believe (vv 18-19). This last phrase leads into a statement of what God's power has done: raising Christ from the dead, seating him at his right hand, putting all things under his feet and giving him 'as head over all things to the Church, which is his body...' (vv 22-23).⁶⁰

The first thing that emerges from the context is that here, too, the word κεφαλή must have the sense of 'authority'. This is clear from the allusion to Ps 8:7 in the same verse ('he has placed all things under his feet'). The allusion to the psalm is linked with the use of the κεφαλή metaphor by the repeated use of τὰ πάντα: God has put 'all things' under Christ's feet (Psalm 8: v 22a) and it is as head over 'all things' that he has been given to the Church (v 22b).⁶¹ The sense of authority which we find in the use of the allusion to the psalm is thus transmitted to the word κεφαλή. This observation leads to a second question: is the word κεφαλή being used here as I have claimed it is being used in 5:23, that is, as a living metaphor?

Again, we return to the question of the established lexical senses of the term. If 'authority over' is one of the established senses of

⁵⁸ Cf. Schnackenburg, *Ephesians*, pp. 70-71.

⁵⁹ As Chrys C. Caragounis notes (*The Ephesian 'Mysterion': Meaning and Content* Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series 8 [Uppsala: CWK Gleerup, 1977], pp. 54-55), 'the present passage is not a Thanksgiving as is usually assumed, but a prayer, or more correctly, an abstract of a prayer, in which reference is made to a giving of thanks'.

⁶⁰ Chrys Caragounis (*The Ephesian 'Mysterion'*, p. 62) suggests that vv 20-23 form, semantically, a second paragraph, distinct from the prayer, 'because they do not constitute any new item appropriate in an enumeration of petitions, but an expansion of the thought of God's power which operated in Christ'. Yet grammatically these verses do form part of the same unit and are intimately related to the prayer, as Caragounis also notes.

⁶¹ This is in conformity with the other Pauline use of Ps 8:7, namely that found in 1 Cor 15:27.

the word, this passage too could be read in this sense without recourse to a metaphorical interpretation. But if metaphor is seen as a 'dependent' use of language, and if we test the use of the word in Eph 1:22 against this criterion of metaphorical use, then here, too, the context suggests that the metaphor is indeed 'alive'. For, as in Eph 5:22-24, κεφαλή in Eph 1:22 is not an isolated metaphor. It is used in association with the other term to which it is (in terms of its literal sense) closely related, namely σῶμα, which is used of the Church in the next verse ('which, in fact, is his body').⁶² This use of κεφαλή in close association with a semantically related term once again suggests a dependent use of language and therefore a living metaphor.

What is the 'tenor' of the metaphor in these verses? Although κεφαλή and σῶμα are associated as metaphorical 'vehicles', it is important to note that in Eph 1:22-23 their referents (the 'tenor' of each metaphor) are kept separate.⁶³ In other words, the referents of these metaphorical terms are not associated in the way in which—on the basis of the other uses of these metaphors in Ephesians—one might expect. For the 'headship', the authority of Christ referred to here, is not (or, at least, is not immediately) an authority over the Church (as in 5:22-23).⁶⁴ It is a cosmic authority (ὑπὲρ πάντα).⁶⁵ It is as head over all things that Christ is given to the Church.⁶⁶

⁶² For this translation of ἦτις, see Abbott (*Ephesians*, p. 34). For this sense of the relative (ἦτις) and some warnings about its translation, see also Maximilian Zerwick, *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples* transl. Joseph Smith (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1963), §§ 215-16.

⁶³ See Lincoln's commentary (*Ephesians*, p. 68), where we read that in these verses 'the images of "head" and "body" are kept separate'. It is in reference to this verse (and this verse only) that I would agree with Gosnell Yorke's claim (cf. *The Church*, p. 106) that κεφαλή and σῶμα are being used as separate metaphors. But from this observation one cannot conclude that the two terms are not associated elsewhere in the letter.

⁶⁴ One might argue that the Church is (implicitly) subject to the headship of Christ in being part of 'all things', but v 21 suggests that the point of this phrase is to indicate Christ's cosmic authority.

⁶⁵ The phrase ὑπὲρ πάντα is used in 3:20, at least in a number of manuscripts, in an adverbial sense ('above all'), but this would make little sense in this context, as Rudolf Schnackenburg points out (*Ephesians*, p. 80). As we have just noted, the context (and especially v 21) demands the idea of 'cosmic supremacy' (cf. Lincoln, 'Use of the OT', p. 41).

⁶⁶ I therefore cannot accept John A. T. Robinson's conclusion (*The Body: a Study in Pauline Theology* [London: SCM, 1952], p. 66) that Christ 'is head only of His own resurrection body, in which Christians are incorporate' (which is difficult to reconcile even with his own translation of Eph 1:22 as 'gave him to be head over all things to the church...'). Robinson's argument is that 'the word with which κεφαλή must be taken is

From the point of view of the functioning of the metaphor, this produces a peculiar effect. In v 22 we see the term κεφαλή used of Christ in a description of his relation to the cosmos. What one expects to follow this statement is a description of the cosmos as Christ's 'body'. Yet when the term σῶμα is used, in v 23, it is used not of the cosmos but of the Church.⁶⁷ Thus we see that in this context the author of Ephesians has shied away from using this metaphorical language in a consistent way. In other words, the term 'head' (here as elsewhere in Ephesians) is associated with the related metaphorical term 'body'. But this second term is used not of the cosmos but of the Church. The implication would seem to be that while Christ has authority over all things as their 'head', it is only the Church which is his 'body'. I will return to this point after examining the other uses of κεφαλή in Ephesians.⁶⁸

The metaphor of 'headship' used in relation to Christ and the cosmos has—as does any metaphor—a 'filtering' effect, highlighting some aspects of the principal subject, downplaying some and hiding others. What effect does it have here? The peculiar effect of the metaphors of 'head' and 'body' in these verses is related to the inconsistent use which we have just noted. From the mention of Christ as the 'head' over all things, one expects that the term 'body', if it is used, would be used of 'all things'. In fact the term 'body' is used, but it is used of the Church. The effect is a strong disjunction between the Church and 'all things': the Church has a relationship to Christ which the cosmos does not.⁶⁹ I will return to

σῶμα because 'the head and the body are complementary terms, and every time the headship of Christ is mentioned in Ephesians and Colossians it is in the closest conjunction with His body, the Church'. Again, this is to overlook the significance of the context in shaping the sense of these metaphors.

⁶⁷ Gosnell Yorke (*The Church*, p. 106) cites this passage in support of his claim that 'for Paul, κεφαλή and σῶμα do not function as anatomical complements at all', a claim which I examined and rejected in chapter four. What Yorke has noticed, of course, is the inconsistent use of this language, but that has more interesting implications, as we shall see.

⁶⁸ While George Howard ('The Head/Body Metaphors of Ephesians', *New Testament Studies* 20 [1974], p. 353) correctly observes that 'Christ is head not because the church is his body, but because all things have been subjected under his feet', I cannot accept his suggestion (*ibid.*, p. 356) that this produces a 'feet/head metaphor' which then becomes the central theme of Ephesians (cf. also Yorke, *The Church*, pp. 106-107). The term 'feet' in the quotation from or allusion to Psalm 8 is being used in a way which is quite different from the term 'head': to put it briefly, Christ *has* feet, but he *is* the head.

⁶⁹ Cf. Schweizer, 'σῶμα', in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard

this point in discussing the use of the term σῶμα ('body') in these verses.

5.2.2 Ephesians 1:3-14

We have just seen that Eph 1:22 speaks of Christ's relationship to 'all things', and that it does so by way of the metaphor of the 'head'. A little earlier in the same chapter, Eph 1:10 also speaks of Christ's relationship to the cosmos, and it does so with a term which some commentators believe echoes the term κεφαλή. Therefore we need to ask: 'Does Eph 1:10 shed any light on the use of the κεφαλή metaphor in Ephesians?'

Eph 1:10 plays a central role in the eulogy with which the letter begins (Eph 1:3-14). In vv 3-9 that eulogy has described the work of God on behalf of believers in a number of ways. God has 'chosen' them in Christ, 'predetermining' them for adoption to the praise of his grace, which has been 'lavished' upon them. In that grace they not only have forgiveness (v 7) but also 'wisdom' and 'insight' (v 8). The theme of 'wisdom' and 'insight' is developed in v 9: in 'lavishing' of his grace upon believers God has 'made known the mystery of his will'. Verse 10 then spells out the content of this 'mystery of his will': it is ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ.⁷⁰ What are we to make of this expression? Does it, too, speak of the 'headship' of Christ?

The most common sense of the verb ἀνακεφαλαιόω is that expressed in the English phrase 'sum up'. This use may be illustrated by reference to Rom 13:9, where we read: "do not commit adultery", "do not lie", "do not steal", "do not covet" and whatever other commandment is summed up (ἀνακεφαλαιούνται) in this saying: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself". From this exam-

Friedrich, vol. 7, p. 1079.

⁷⁰ Chrys Caragounis (*The Ephesian 'Mysterion'*, p. 61), in his detailed analysis of these verses, has come to the conclusion that 'the climax of the eulogy' is to be found here, in the description of the content of the μυστήριον in v 10. Insofar as such a long and complex sentence may be said to have a climax, I would agree. As he writes (*ibid.*, pp. 95-96) of the phrase ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, '[n]ot only is it the last of the acts of God (though not yet transpired) enumerated in the Eulogy, it is moreover the event to which all the previous acts of God look forward to [sic], and in relation to which they may be regarded as preparatory. ... There the climax is reached and there ends the Eulogy proper.'

ple we would expect in Eph 1:10 the sense 'to sum up' or 'to unite' all things in Christ.⁷¹

The question to be addressed here is: do we hear in ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι an echo of that key term κεφαλή? Commentators are quick to point out that the verb ἀνακεφαλαιόω is derived from κεφάλαιον, meaning 'the main point, the sum or summary', rather than κεφαλή ('head').⁷² The word in itself, therefore, should not be taken to have any reference to 'headship'.⁷³ However, it remains possible that the author of Ephesians has chosen ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι (as distinct from, for instance, ἀποκαταλλάσσειν, to 'reconcile', which is found in the parallel verse in Colossians [1:20]) because it does contain a certain echo of the word κεφαλή.⁷⁴ For the thought expressed by this verse is certainly similar to that which we have found in Eph 1:22, that of the cosmic authority of Christ. This suggestion is followed by Romano Penna, who goes so far as to offer as a translation the Italian *intestare* (which is related to the Italian *testa*, meaning 'head').⁷⁵ In some ways the translation seems justified. When it is read in the context of the letter as a whole, v 10 implies (though it does not say) that 'the unification of the universe takes place in its subordination under the Head'.⁷⁶

Nonetheless, because the verb ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι remains—at best—a mere verbal echo of the term κεφαλή, it seems best not to cite it as an example of the metaphorical use of this latter term.⁷⁷ For our purposes it will be enough to recall the fact that the rela-

⁷¹ Markus Barth (*Ephesians I*, pp. 90-91) offers good reasons for rejecting the (rare) sense of the word 'repeat', which has lead—at times—to elaborate doctrines of 'recapitulation'. To Barth's reasons Romano Penna (*Efesini*, p. 98) adds the observation that such a meaning would be difficult to square with the 'cosmic horizon' (*orizzonte cosmico*) of the verse. That τὰ πάντα has a cosmic sense is clear from the phrase which follows (cf. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, p. 34).

⁷² Cf. Abbott, *The Epistles*, p. 18. For this translation of κεφάλαιον, see Lincoln, *Ephesians*, p. 32.

⁷³ So Lincoln (*Ephesians*, p. 33) and Barr (*Semantics*, pp. 237-38).

⁷⁴ Cf. Schnackenburg, *Ephesians*, p. 60. Similarly Schlier (*Der Brief an die Epheser*, pp. 63-64), Hanson (*Unity*, pp. 124-25), Caragounis (*The Ephesian 'Mysterion'*, p. 126), and Gnllka (*Epheserbrief*, pp. 80-81, where we find the translation 'Allzusammenfassung unter einem Haupt').

⁷⁵ Penna, *Efesini*, pp. 82 and 99.

⁷⁶ Schnackenburg, *Ephesians*, p. 60.

⁷⁷ For another point of view, one which sees ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι as a clear echo of κεφαλή and which interprets Eph 1:10 accordingly, see Usami (*Somatic Comprehension*, pp. 117-24).

tionship of Christ to the cosmos expressed in 1:10 is similar to that which is expressed by the 'head' metaphor in 1:22.

5.2.3 *Ephesians 4:7-16*

The use of κεφαλή in Eph 4:7-16 (at v 15) is particularly interesting because (as is the case in Eph 5:21-33) the term occurs in the context of ethical exhortation.⁷⁸ For v 15 comes towards the end of a passage (4:1-16) which deals with the unity of the Church, and with the growth of the body through the exercise of the gifts given by Christ. After an initial exhortation to 'walk worthily of the calling in which you were called' and 'to maintain the unity of the Spirit' (vv 1-3), the nature of the unity which is to be maintained is spelt out (vv 4-6).⁷⁹ It is then noted that Christ has given gifts to each (vv 7-10); some of the roles which emerge from this giving are mentioned in v 11. The theme of growth is introduced in vv 12-13: the aim of this growth is that all should reach 'the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ'. The implications of this growth to maturity are spelt out in vv 14-16: no longer being children, tossed about by human deceit, but rather speaking the truth in love Christians will grow towards him, 'who is the head, Christ' (ὃς ἐστὶν ἡ κεφαλή, Χριστός). What follows is a description of the relationship of the body to its head.⁸⁰

The first observation to be made about 4:15 is that this verse offers the clearest evidence of all the instances of the word in Ephesians that κεφαλή is being used as a living (or active) metaphor. For it is particularly in this context that we witness the phenomenon of the use of semantically related terms in the same context. Once again we may note that such a use indicates a dependent use of

⁷⁸ As Lincoln notes (*Ephesians*, p. 224), 'although the form of direct paraenesis does not shape the whole passage, the writer's depiction of the goals of the Church's unity and maturity in vv 13-15 and of the proper functioning of the Church as a body in v 16 nevertheless constitutes an indirect appeal to the readers to play their part in enabling the Church to become what it should be'.

⁷⁹ See Lincoln's commentary (*Ephesians*, p. 225) for a discussion of the 'structure of thought'. Note that the theme of 'oneness' is one of the points of contact with 5:21-33 and we will return to it below.

⁸⁰ It is probably mistaken, to claim that v 15 suggests 'a growth "toward" the head' (Barth, *Ephesians II*, p. 445): the extended metaphor should be considered to begin from the words ὃς ἐστὶν ἡ κεφαλή.

language, and therefore suggests the presence of (living) metaphor. In other words, the literal sense of κεφαλή is still at work in the creation of the word's figurative meaning, and this literal sense gives rise to the use of related terms.⁸¹ As even Herman Ridderbos (who rejects the idea of a composite head-body metaphor) writes, 'This [growth to maturity] is... elucidated with all kinds of figures borrowed from the organic composition of the human body'.⁸² Not only the word σῶμα (used twice in v 16) but also the terms ἀφή ('joint')⁸³ and αὔξησις ('growth') seem to be drawn from this same underlying model.⁸⁴

Furthermore, once these terms have established the extension of the metaphor, their sense is transmitted to a number of other words in the context (these verses being a particularly good example of the semantic 'interanimation of words'). Thus the participle συναρμολοούμενον which is used in Eph 2:21 in an architectural con-

⁸¹ C. F. D. Moule (*The Origin of Christology* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977], p. 75) cites J. J. Meuzelaar's opinion that the head and body metaphors ought to be understood separately both here and in Col 2:19, on the grounds that the masculine relative pronoun ('from whom') is used in v 16 and not the feminine ('from which'), 'as one might expect if the feminine noun, κεφαλή, "head", was intended to be taken into the body metaphor'. A similar argument is put forward by Herman Ridderbos (*Paul*, p. 380), who (as we have seen) rejects an 'organic' conception of Christ as head and the Church as body (cf. also Yorke, *The Church*, pp. 108-9). But given the other references to 'bodily' growth in v 16, it is difficult not to understand the 'head' here in relation to the 'body': the use of the masculine relative pronoun in reference to κεφαλή merely indicates that the author was thinking of the tenor of the metaphor (Christ) and not simply its vehicle. Similarly R. Y. K. Fung ('Body of Christ' in *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters* ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993], pp. 79-80), who describes the 'from whom' (rather than 'from which') of Col 2:19 (and therefore of Eph 4:16) as 'probably an instance of construction according to sense'.

⁸² Ridderbos, *Paul*, p. 378. The implication of Ridderbos's position is that in a passage which uses a number of anatomically related metaphors ('joint', 'growth', etc), the one term which is used differently is 'head'. But why should this be the case?

⁸³ See Lincoln's arguments (*Ephesians*, pp. 262-63) for choosing this sense of the word.

⁸⁴ Therefore I cannot accept George Howard's argument ('Metaphors', p. 354) that because 'our author separates "head" from "body" with "Christ"' (that is, because the text reads ὃς ἐστὶν ἡ κεφαλή, Χριστός ἐξ οὗ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα κ.τ.λ. and not ὃς ἐστὶν ἡ κεφαλή, Χριστός ἐξ ἧς πᾶν τὸ σῶμα κ.τ.λ.), then 'the head/body combination is not crucial to his argument'. Similarly it does not seem to me that 'head' and 'body' are separated in Eph 5:23, as Howard goes on to suggest. Indeed the image of the 'body' in 5:23 is introduced in association with that of the head when there was really no need to introduce it. It looks forward, as we have seen, to vv 25-32. Therefore I would reject Howard's conclusion that 'the writer of Ephesians never speaks of Christ as being head over the body' (*ibid.*, p. 355).

text, with regard to the growth of a temple, here takes on a new sense, that of the 'fitting together' of the parts of the body. The same may be said of the linked participle συμβιβασζόμενον ('fitted together'; cf. Col 2:19, where there is a similar use of the same term). The word ἐπιχορηγία, which has a variety of possible meanings (such as 'help' or 'support'; cf. Phil 1:19) now takes on the sense of 'supply', so that 'the writer pictures the ligaments functioning to provide the connections between the various parts and thereby mediating life and energizing power through the body'.⁸⁵ The phrase κατ' ἐνέργειαν ἐν μέτρῳ ἐνὸς ἐκάστου μέρους ('according to the working in the measure of each individual part') suggests the active participation of each part of the body and the ἑαυτοῦ of the last phrase suggests the active role which the body has in promoting its own growth (through ἀγάπη). What we see here is that the evidently metaphorical use of some terms in the passage points to the existence of an underlying model, which then transmits its sense to other terms (which in themselves are ambiguous).⁸⁶

The tenor of the metaphorical use of κεφαλή here is quite explicitly Christ. What, then, is said about him? In other words, what is the sense of the κεφαλή metaphor in Eph 4:15-16? In 1:22, as we have seen, the metaphor of 'headship' is used to highlight the authority of Christ. But the same metaphor with the same principal subject functions differently here. For v 16, with its use of the terms 'growth' and 'supply', indicates that the term 'head' is here being used to indicate that Christ is the source of the body's life and growth.⁸⁷ In this way the thought of these verses is parallel to that

⁸⁵ This ingenious interpretation by Andrew Lincoln (*Ephesians*, p. 263) does make sense of the extended metaphor which otherwise would appear a little incoherent: how can a 'joint' 'supply' things to the body? For other possible interpretations, see Barth, *Ephesians II*, pp. 448-49.

⁸⁶ I must therefore disagree with Markus Barth, who sees in this passage a 'conflation' of 'several images', and claims that 'the vocabulary used here belongs to at least three different realms... building metaphors, the body-head analogy, and the bridegroom-bride simile' (*Ephesians II*, pp. 445-46). Such a reading results from taking the terms in isolation and not noticing how their meaning is determined by the context in which they occur.

⁸⁷ See, for instance, F. F. Bruce's comment (*Ephesians*, p. 353) that 'through all its [the body's] joints or ligaments the means necessary for its development flow from the head into every limb and organ'. Markus Barth (*Ephesians II*, p. 426) even translates, 'he provides sustenance to it through every contact'. Wayne Grudem ('κεφαλή: a Response', p. 18) admits that 'the idea of nourishment and therefore growth coming from the head is present in these verses', but claims that this 'is not sufficient to show that the

found in 5:29 (where it is said that Christ 'nourishes' and 'cares for' the Church, his body, although in that context this sense is not conveyed by means of the κεφαλή metaphor).⁸⁸ From κεφαλή used to highlight the authority of Christ in 1:22, in 4:15 we have κεφαλή used to highlight the organic and life-giving unity of Christ with his body. This makes use, as Pierre Benoit notes, of 'une autre valeur de la notion de « tête », celle de principe vital, moteur, nourricier'.⁸⁹ In other words, in this text Christ as head enjoys a new role vis-à-vis his body, not only that of authority, but also that of animation.⁹⁰

Furthermore, there are a number of other ideas which spring from the extension of the metaphor in these verses, from what we might call the explication and development of the model of the body. Christ is the source of all that the Church has and yet, as Martin Dibelius notes, the 'Subjekt des ganzen Relativsatzes v.16 ist σώμα:'.⁹¹ It is the Church which is the active subject of her own growth. The metaphor, by way of its underlying model, assists in keeping these two ideas together: the body grows but the source of the growth is the head. What the metaphor also highlights, thanks to the mention of 'each part' of the body, is the fact that each individual has a contribution to make. As Markus Barth notes, 'the church's and each member's responsive activity is not only recognized or tolerated but receives an emphasis of its own'.⁹²

5.3 CONSISTENCY AND COHERENCE

Having looked at the use of this term κεφαλή in Ephesians we may ask: how are these different metaphorical uses related to one another?

word κεφαλή itself means "source" (ibid., p. 19). But—as we have noted—this is to confuse the question of the established sense of a word with that of its possible metaphorical use in a particular context. In this context the word could have the sense 'source of life', even if this sense is unusual.

⁸⁸ Barth, *Ephesians II*, p. 448.

⁸⁹ Benoit, 'Corps, tête et plérôme', p. 27.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Martin Dibelius, *An die Kolosser Epheser an Philemon Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*; 3. Auflage, neu bearbeitet von D. Heinrich Greeven (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1953), p. 83.

⁹² Barth, *Ephesians II*, pp. 446-47.

other? Are they (to borrow a distinction from Lakoff and Johnson)⁹³ consistent and coherent? In other words, may they be regarded as forming part of a single model (thus being consistent) or, if not, can they be reconciled through having some common features (thus being at least partially coherent)?

We have discovered two distinct uses of the metaphor of the 'head' in Ephesians: the first in which it conveys the sense of 'authority over' (1:22 and 5:22-24) and the second in which it conveys the sense of 'source of the body's life and growth' (4:15). These uses are consistent insofar as the use of the metaphor of the 'head' is related to an underlying model, that of the body. In other words, just as the head of a human body may be regarded as that which rules the body and as the source of the body's growth, so Christ may be regarded as both the one who has authority over the Church and the source of the Church's life.

One inconsistency has been noted, in regard to Eph 1:22. Here we saw that, while the terms 'head' and 'body' seem to be derived from the same underlying model, they are used in a striking way. They are used in such a way as to distinguish the Church (which is the 'body') from 'all things' (over which Christ is 'head'). If there is an underlying model, it is not consistently developed. Why does the author shy away from a consistent development of the metaphor?

One way of approaching this question would be to note that the κεφαλή metaphor as it is used in 4:15-16 implies an organic link between body and head. The closeness of Christ and the Church is highlighted by the image of a head from which, through its various joints or ligaments, the body is supplied. Now from the letter as a whole it seems that it may have been inappropriate to suggest such an organic union between Christ and the cosmos (particularly between Christ and the 'principalities, authorities, powers and dominations' of 1:21). For while the plan of God is ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ ('to sum all things up in Christ'), this summing up has not yet been brought to completion. Within the Church it has been achieved (as is evident from the union of Jew and Gentile) and the Church thus has a special role in making known this plan of God to the spiritual powers (3:10). Yet (as 6:10-20 makes clear) these powers are not yet brought

⁹³ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, p. 44.

completely under Christ. It is perhaps for this reason—to distinguish Christ's unique relationship to the Church from that which he presently has to 'all things'⁹⁴—that the author of Ephesians will describe Christ as the 'head' of all things, but will avoid describing all things as his 'body'.⁹⁵

We may conclude that the use of the term κεφαλή within Eph 5:21-33 is—from the point of view of its meaning—consistent with the use of the term elsewhere in the letter. As in Eph 1:22, κεφαλή in Eph 5:21-33 is used as a metaphor indicating 'authority over' and (as in 4:15-16) it is reliant upon an underlying model. But we have seen that there is one feature of the use of this word in Eph 5:21-33 which sets it aside from its other uses in Ephesians. On every other occasion when the term κεφαλή is used in the letter, it is used with a single referent: Christ. In Eph 5:23 the same term is used to refer to Christ (in v 23b) and to the husband (in v 23a). In other words, the term has two distinct referents within the one verse, and yet (as we have just noted) it has the same metaphorical sense in reference to both.

⁹⁴ As we saw in our analysis of Eph 1:22 the phrase 'head over all things' in that context is intended to highlight Christ's cosmic supremacy.

⁹⁵ This interpretation fits neatly with Herman Ridderbos's suggestion (*Paul*, p. 383) that the term σῶμα used of the Church 'expresses the entirely unique character of the Church's belonging to Christ, ... in distinction from "all things", of which Christ is indeed the Head, but which nevertheless do not together constitute his body'.