

The Pastoral Epistles in (very) Recent Study

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It is impossible for me to write the present article¹ without my taking account of the fact that I published a lengthy commentary on the Pastoral Epistles in 1999 and warning readers that this may influence the objectivity of any judgments expressed here; Christian authors are exposed to the common human temptations to deny that any other books on the subject can be as good as their own or that their expressed opinions need any revision in the light of other scholarly work!

Surveys of scholarship up to earlier dates exist.² This one deals with work published since 1999 (and occasionally with works published previously that I did not take into account in my commentary).

Commentaries

For a long time there had been little attention paid to the letters by commentators and then all of a sudden there has been a flurry of major publications in commentary form. By 1999 J. D. Quinn's work on Titus had already been published posthumously, and it was known that his materials on 1 and 2 Timothy were being edited for publication by W. C. Wacker. The Word Commentary by W. D. Mounce had already been announced and appeared soon afterwards. Then came the Anchor Bible

¹ Works referred to are listed in the bibliography at the end of the article. In writing it I have adapted material contained in reviews published in various journals. L. T. Johnson, "The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary," in *Biblical Interpretation* 10:1 (2002), 100-02; J. M. Holmes, "Text in a Whirlwind: A Critique of Four Exegetical Devices at 1 Timothy 2.9-15," in *Evangel* 20:2 (Summer 2002), 60f.; H. Stettler, "Die Christologie der Pastoralbriefe," in *European Journal of Theology* 8:2 (1999), 186-88; R. F. Collins, "1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: A Commentary," forthcoming in *Bulletin for Biblical Research*; W. A. Richards, "Difference and Distance in Post-Pauline Christianity. An Epistolary Analysis of the Pastorals," forthcoming in *Evangel*.

² I. H. Marshall, "Prospects for the Pastoral Epistles," in D. Lewis and A. McGrath (ed.), *Doing Theology for the People of God. Studies in Honor of J. I. Packer* (Downer's Grove: IVP, 1996), 137-55; idem, "Recent Study of the Pastoral Epistles," *Themelios* 23:1 (1997), 3-29. M. Harding, *What Are They Saying About The Pastoral Epistles?* (New York, Paulist, 2001).

on 1 and 2 Timothy; the publishers had evidently decided not to use Quinn's material for this, and a fresh treatment was provided by L. T. Johnson. Finally, so far as the "heavyweights" are concerned, a new series, *The New Testament Library*, was inaugurated with the volume on the Pastoral Epistles by R. F. Collins.

On a lesser scale we have the NIV Application Commentary from W. L. Liefeld and the New Interpreter's Bible from J. D. G. Dunn. Nobody can say any longer that the Epistles have been neglected. Inevitably there are considerable overlaps in treatment between these works, but equally it is fair to say that each of them contains material or points of view that you will not find elsewhere, and therefore the specialist student will need to look at them all! And there have been monographs and articles as well, the most important of which are conveniently listed by Collins.

W. D. Mounce

Mounce did his doctoral research on "The Origin of the New Testament Metaphor of Rebirth" (Aberdeen, 1981), paying particular attention to Titus 3:5, and through this he was well prepared to take on a broader study of the Pastoral Epistles. His commentary follows the established pattern of the series in which it stands. This means that, like that of Marshall, it is geared to the Greek text, but Greek-less readers who are prepared to learn the Greek alphabet (consisting of 24 letters, 8 of which have the same forms as in English, and a few others which should be known from elementary mathematics, so learning the rest is no great task!) will be able to cope with the most part of it. An introduction of roughly one hundred pages is organised around the topic of authorship. Mounce's distinctive is that he defends a theory of authorship by Paul himself with the aid of an amanuensis over against all theories that the letters are post-Pauline. The theology of the letters gets only five pages, but some aspects of it are briefly mentioned in summarizing the response to the heresy combated in the letters and the alleged theological differences from Paul. There is no overall discussion of the structure of the letters, but this matter is attended to in the introductions to each section of the commentary that specifically deal with "Form/Structure/Setting." Each section also offers translation, textual notes, detailed exegetical comments and a final "Explanation," which is supposed to deal with the passage's "relevance to the ongoing biblical revelation" but is sometimes more of a summary of the exegesis. This commentary offers careful exegesis, interacting with other commentaries and reference works but not to any great extent with periodical literature (despite the extensive listings of it). There are five excursuses, three of them dealing with church leaders and widows in the post-apostolic

church (valuable in showing that the Pastoral Epistles do not come close to the developed systems found in the second century), but none on specifically theological issues. The approach is Reformed and conservative, especially with regard to the place of women in the church. The “Explanation” of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 is concerned simply to stress that worth is not determined by role (and therefore a woman’s role is not lessened if she is not allowed to exercise authority over men and teach them), but the question regarding the applicability of Paul’s teaching in the modern world is not raised.

J. D. Quinn and W. C. Wacker

Some twenty-five years ago I published a critical commentary on the Greek text of Luke in which I followed the practice of many previous commentators in eschewing the use of footnotes; partly, it must be confessed, because in the days of typewriters the organization of the material would have been a mammoth task. But at least readers could go straight to the passage they were looking for thanks to the running heads which indicated which verses were being treated on any given page. Reviewers of the book duly criticized it for its lack of readability and user-unfriendliness (only that term had not been coined at the time!), and we took the hint and altered the guidelines for subsequent volumes in the New International Greek Testament Commentary series. I can now speak as a converted sinner. Sadly not all subsequent producers of commentaries have seen the light! It is deeply regrettable that the magnificent resource provided by Quinn and Wacker on 1 and 2 Timothy is so unfriendly to the reader. The body of the commentary has only two different running heads: “Notes and comments on First Timothy” and “Notes and comments on Second Timothy,” so there is nothing to tell the reader what is the subject-matter on any given page (apart from consulting the list of contents). Following the pattern of the Anchor Bible (for which it was originally destined), the commentary on each section of text consists of a translation followed by “Notes” and “Comments.” The “Notes” are evidently concerned with points of detail; the “Comments” are more in the nature of a running commentary. But Wacker was evidently faced with a task of almost insuperable difficulty in that what he had inherited was a continuous exposition (with masses of added annotations) with no indication of how the material was to be divided up, and for half the commentary he himself had to create the “Notes.” But the rationale for apportioning material to “Notes” and “Comments” is not clear, and the reader has a hard struggle with material split up in this way. The result is that, if you open at random almost any page of the commentary, you do not know what chapter and verse is being discussed, and whether what is before you is a “Note” or “Comment.” Nor will you

find any introductory material on matters pertaining to a pericope as a whole. The commentary rambles on from one point to another leaving the reader bewildered and overwhelmed. This is tragic because there is a wealth of useful comment here particularly on the usage of the words in ancient literature. But one feels that there is a lot of unnecessary detail, as when the contents of a concordance are unfolded regardless of whether the information is relevant. All this is to say that this is a reference book that will be indispensable to the advanced student, but it is virtually unusable by the majority of us. It is deeply regrettable that this book could not have been better edited and typeset. Fortunately, Quinn's work on Titus in the Anchor Bible is less opaque, but it too suffers from the same tendencies which appear to be in part due to the peculiar format of the series.³

L. T. Johnson

What then of the volume on 1 and 2 Timothy that did appear in the Anchor Bible series? Johnson's work follows the familiar format of the series in which the text is divided into sections for each of which there is provided a translation, "Notes" on matters of detail (textual, linguistic and exegetical), and a "Comment" on the section as a whole. There is a general introduction to the Pastoral Epistles and short introductions to each of 1 and 2 Timothy, reflecting the author's conviction that the Pastoral Epistles should each be studied in their own right with due regard to their individuality. The strengths of the commentary include a history of the interpretation of the two letters (although there is very little reference to the harvest to be gleaned from a study of these past writers in the actual commentary) and the provision of a great deal of lexicographical material on the vocabulary of the letters (particularly listing the parallels in Hellenistic moral writers); here Johnson (like Quinn and Wacker) stands firmly in the traditions of C. Spicq and of his teacher, A. J. Malherbe. Johnson eschews virtually all reference to other commentators and does not enter into interaction with them on controversial points of exegesis. What we have is an exposition of the author's own interpretation of the letters with very little presentation and evaluation of other possible exegetical positions. This is a weakness in that there are places where the arguments in favor of other interpretations are not sufficiently stated and answered.

In a commentary that is intended to be clear and accessible to lay readers, I am not sure what is the rationale for including discussion of a

³ M. Prior's article is essentially an appreciation of Quinn's work, commending its detailed study of the texts but expressing reservations towards its overall hypothesis that the letters were intended to rehabilitate Paul at a later date. Prior reasserts his view of the authenticity of 2 Timothy.

mass of textual variants which have no claim to originality or of providing a host of references to the usage of Greek words in Classical and Hellenistic writers (which the average user of the commentary is not going to be able to access), helpful though it may be to be reminded once and for all that the New Testament writers share much of the vocabulary and ideas of the Hellenistic world.

The exegesis proper of the letters is generally sound and informative. For the most part I found myself in fairly close agreement with the author's decisions. There is, however, some tendency to leave debatable issues open without coming to a firm decision.

This is a significant commentary in that the author reads the letters on the hypothesis of Pauline authorship and seeks to demonstrate the greater likelihood of this reading. He is able to list at least twenty-seven twentieth-century commentaries that espouse the Pauline authorship of the letters and numerous other works that take the same line; he rightly claims that there is not the unanimity of opinion among scholars in favor of pseudonymity that some writers tend to assume. A major part of the introduction is devoted to this matter. His thesis is that (like Titus) 1 and 2 Timothy are letters to one of Paul's "delegates"; 1 Timothy takes the form of a "mandate" in which Timothy is given his instructions for his work in Ephesus in the form of a letter which is also meant to be read by the congregation so that they will know what their overseer is meant to do; in 2 Timothy we have a personal paraenetic letter meant primarily for his own encouragement in a difficult situation. The genre of the letters can explain why Timothy is given instruction concerning matters about which he might be presumed to be already well informed. It is impossible to prove that the letters are genuine, but the case against their authenticity can be shown to be seriously flawed and thus less convincing.⁴

The difficulties in the way of authenticity are resolved by appeal to the role of Paul's colleagues and the use of traditions (some acknowledgment and evaluation of E. E. Ellis's work on this point would have been apposite). The question of style is sidestepped by claiming that the style in the acknowledged letters is not uniform. Attention is drawn to the methodological weakness of considering the Pastoral Epistles as a whole rather than as separate letters (although this point rather underrates the degree of common style and content in the Pastoral Epistles when

⁴ Johnson makes use of P.Tebt. 703 as an example of a "mandate" in establishing the genre of 1 Timothy. Here he follows the suggestion of C. Spicq. However, his argument is subjected to a detailed critique by M. M. Mitchell. Briefly, she argues that this third century B. C. papyrus is not a letter but a memorandum and that it does not establish the existence of a genre of "*mandata principis* letters" to which 1 Timothy belongs, and further that Johnston's claim that this supports the authenticity of it as a letter of Paul is flawed. But Johnson's argument is not tied to his use of this papyrus.

compared with the acknowledged letters of Paul). We know too little of Paul's movements to be able to exclude the possibility of the Pastoral Epistles fitting into his career as narrated in Acts.

Johnson's arguments against the alternative hypothesis of late pseudonymous composition are well rehearsed. My own solution to the question of authorship is to argue for compositions soon after Paul's death carried out by close colleagues on the basis of what Paul was known to have said and written to his delegates. This is not far from Johnson's theory, and it is clear that we stand fairly close to one another in recognizing the undoubted presence of Pauline material and of material that would appear to have been framed by other hands; where we differ is in the assessment of the significance of the differences in literary style and the way of arguing and theologizing compared with the rest of the Pauline corpus. Both Mounce and Johnson make important observations on the questions of vocabulary and style, but neither in my view really faces up to the cumulative effect of a distinctive style of writing, rhetoric and theologizing.

The result of this attitude to authorship is a critical reading of the letters which provides a solid case for understanding them consistently in the context of Paul's own mission and superintendence of the congregations that he founded. Time and again the exegesis confirms the plausibility of placing the letters within this general period rather than later.

Johnson published his *Letters to Paul's Delegates* (Valley Forge: TPI, 1996) before this major work. The reader, pressed for time and/or not wanting the technical details, will find all the essential material in the author's actual interpretation of the two letters in this smaller volume together with his interpretation of Titus.

R. F. Collins

Collins' commentary is the first volume to appear in *The New Testament Library*, published by Westminster John Knox. There are short introductions to the corpus of letters and then to each of them separately. Each section of commentary begins with a brief introduction followed by the author's own translation, notes on major textual variants, and then detailed verse-by-verse exposition. There are ten excursuses picking up on major themes of the letters. The commentary is essentially exegetical,⁵ and little is said about the relevance of the text to the contemporary church and world; preachers must do their own work in

⁵ Collins also has an article expounding the three theological sections in Titus on the same lines as in the commentary.

applying the text (but this is true of most of the works under review, my own included).

The commentary includes a useful bibliography which majors on works published since 1999. However, there is an almost complete absence of references to them in the commentary and the student will not easily discover where Collins is giving us his own opinions or drawing on those of others, and what his verdicts on their work are. This means that the commentary is mildly unhelpful to students, but it avoids the clutter of references to other scholars that may make other works less easy to read; instead of discussing a variety of exegetical options, it tends to offer simply the author's own well-considered understanding. Occasionally varying scholarly views are presented but with scarcely any evaluation (4f.; cf. 214).

By contrast, the commentary majors on placing the text in its contemporary background by offering a very full set of examples of agreements and contrasts with writings from the Hellenistic world.⁶ Where other commentators sometimes tend simply to give references, leaving the poor student to hunt for them, Collins frequently summarizes or quotes the material, and in this way he does a magnificent job in helping the reader to get the feel of the world of thought in which the Pastoral Epistles were composed. There is a complete index of ancient sources. Sometimes, however, I felt that the discussion tended to ramble on without a clear thread or goal, making it hard to summarize its general thrust.

The interpretation of the letters contains few surprises and generally follows current trends. Pseudonymity is virtually taken for granted, and the letters are dated some time after A. D. 80. Among points of interest I note Collins' evidence that 1 Timothy 2:8-15 is concerned with women adopting the acceptable social standards of the day rather than with the possibility that they were promulgating false teaching. In 1 Timothy 3 he rightly insists on referring to the leaders as "overseers" and "servers" rather than "bishops" and "deacons," since the latter terms are anachronistic (as is the use of "ordination" to describe Timothy's commissioning). He takes "husband of one wife" to indicate remaining single after widowhood or divorce. "He was manifested in the flesh" is more likely to be a reference to resurrection appearances. Unusually, it is argued that the laying on of hands in 1 Timothy 5:22 has to do with forgiving sinners rather than appointing elders. Timothy is seen as Paul's designated successor in 2 Timothy. But the proposal that Paul's books and cloak are "the symbols of office" (283f.) is surely fantasy. To say

⁶ For detailed work of this kind see J. A. Harrill's article on the background to the term "kidnappers" (1 Tim 1:10), i.e. "slave-traders," a group held in low-esteem even in a slave-owning society for all manner of vices.

that “comparable biographical notes” to those in 2 Timothy 4 are not found in the authentic letters of Paul (276) is at the very least an exaggeration, and the suggestion that the church at Thessalonica is damned by its association with Demas (279) needs some justification.

Above all, the student who wants to actually see the usage of much of the moral vocabulary of the letters in a judicious selection of Hellenistic texts will find this volume a boon.⁷

I. H. Marshall

Only since the editor of this journal asked me to refer to my own work do I mention the volume in the International Critical Commentary. This commentary with its approximately nine hundred pages is very similar in scale and manner of treatment to that by Mounce. The one hundred-page introduction inevitably focuses on the questions of authorship and situation but it also discusses the genre and structure of the letters in some detail and the character of the theology. The difficulties in accepting direct Pauline authorship are acknowledged and an acceptable alternative is sought in the hypothesis of allonymy, i.e. the letters are put together on the basis of Pauline materials and traditions by a later compiler without any intention to deceive the audience (by contrast with theories of pseudonymity which regard the letters as later attempts to deceive the audience). In each section of the commentary there is a general discussion of the pericope as a whole, followed by text-critical notes and then verse-by-verse exegesis that aims to cover all questions and sources of information that can illuminate the meaning of the text; important issues are discussed at greater length in eleven excursuses, mainly on significant theological, ethical and ecclesiological themes. There is considerable interaction with other scholarly literature on the letters, and possibly some danger of over-citation of other scholars. The author saw no need to add to the plethora of English translations of this part of the New Testament. The commentary is (I think) unique in treating the letters in the order: Titus, 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy; this is not necessarily the order of composition (on my hypothesis 2 Timothy may have been the earliest written), but it brings Titus out of the shadow of its bigger brother and allows it to speak for itself. One conservative observer has commented that my exegesis is at times flawed by my theory of authorship; I strenuously reject this somewhat tendentious assessment (a) because it assumes that my theory of authorship is wrong; and (b) because I do not think that at any significant point is my exegesis

⁷ The teaching on the Christian attitude to wealth in the context of Hellenistic ideas is explored by P. J. Byrne, arguing that the author of 1 Timothy takes over the concept of self-sufficiency from the ancient world but simultaneously endeavors to implant the gospel in the life of the world.

incompatible with a more conservative hypothesis regarding authorship. Another reviewer says that I list exegetical options but do not come to decisions on them; I find this comment puzzling because I tried to come to decisions wherever possible. J. Murphy-O'Connor criticizes the commentary for assuming that the three letters are by one author over against his own view that 2 Timothy is authentic and the others are pseudonymous, and argues that this leads to some flawed exegesis of texts in 2 Timothy.

W. L. Liefeld

All of the commentaries discussed so far are primarily exegetical with little concession to the needs of the preacher or Bible study leader who wants to find out what the Pastoral Epistles have to say to the contemporary reader as the word of God. This need is supplied by the NIV Application Commentary. Here the treatment of each section of text is organized into three parts: Original Meaning; Bridging Contexts; and Contemporary Significance. The rationale is that exposition is based on sound exegesis of the original meaning; then comes the attempt to discern what is timeless in the timely word spoken in its original context; and finally there is the attempt to apply the timeless word to the contemporary context. Although this basic hermeneutical procedure has been subject to some criticism, I believe that it is fundamentally sound. Certainly it is put to good use in Walter Liefeld's work here. He adopts Pauline authorship and offers a non-technical exegesis that is primarily concerned with the theological and ethical teaching of the letters. This is a down-to-earth treatment that picks up the important themes in the Pastoral Epistles and encourages preaching about them.

Looking to the Future

Prophecy is no part of my role here, but I can confidently announce on the basis of knowledge that we can expect further commentaries in the not too distant future from A. J. Malherbe (*Hermeneia*), A. J. Köstenberger (*Baker*), P. H. Towner (who gave me considerable help with my own volume) (*New International Commentary*), and R. Wall (*Two Horizons*).

Aids to Study

A volume that is intended to be a helpful reference book for students is Reuter's synopsis in which he presents the Greek text of the Pastoral Epistles with parallels from the rest of the Pauline corpus arranged in parallel columns (like a gospel synopsis). The author's working hypothesis is that the Pastoral Epistles are pseudonymous and the

author(s) had access to a collection of Pauline epistles. The synopsis is then a tool for study in making comparisons between the Pastoral Epistles and the other letters and is usable whatever your critical assumptions for that purpose. Full indexes enable the reader to know what parallels exist to each verse in the Pastoral Epistles and also what verses in the corpus have parallels in the Pastoral Epistles. The parallels are assigned to three categories, apparently in terms of relative closeness, but unfortunately the system is not explained for the reader (as presumably it was in Vol. 1 of the series to which this volume belongs). The compiler transgresses on the side of inclusion of all remotely possible parallels and the resemblances are underlined with great precision. I am not sure how useful it all is, but it has its points, such as placing together texts containing *eōpifa/ncia* and its virtual synonym *parousi/a*.

Literary Approaches

W. A. Richards

A number of literary studies of aspects of the Pastoral Epistles deserve attention. In *Difference and Distance in Post-Pauline Christianity. An Epistolary Analysis of the Pastorals*, W. A. Richards applies literary methods to the study of the letters with the aim of exploring them as individual compositions, each with its own character, rather than as three parts of a single literary enterprise. He wants to place them individually in their broader contexts in the early church, and therefore to free them from being seen in the light of their relationships to the authentic Paul or to one another. He concludes that the three letters were independent projects by three different authors over what may have been a lengthy period of time; they belong to different contexts in the early church.

Positively, Richards argues that they are best understood as (fictitious) letters rather than belonging to some other genre. He then analyzes some of the phenomena relating to letters: the *dramatis personae*, the patterns for opening and closing, the forms found within the body, such as the use of what are called “clichés” (recurring qualifying phrases) and “topoi” (frequently discussed themes), the characteristic structures (opening lines, summing ups, transitional phrases, use of traditions and stock material), and the various kinds of letters. This material can be profitably used in analysis of any New Testament and early Christian letters, whether real or fictitious. Consequently, the resulting analysis of the Pastorals is of great value, whether or not one shares the author’s general understanding of them.

The analysis of Titus begins by setting it in the broad limits of the period 50–150 C. E. (which applies to all the Pastorals). There is helpful

comment on the introduction and conclusion, establishing that the conversation between Paul and Titus is meant to be overheard, as it establishes the authority of Titus, and introduces Paul to the congregations. Paul writes to Titus as to a subordinate. Richards has difficulties with the descriptions (“virtue lists”) of the elders/bishops and thinks that 1:7-9 may be an addition. In chapter two he argues that probably the Christians in the community were not slave-owners, since this category is not addressed. In discussing the two “hymns,” as he calls them, he draws interesting parallels (as he does elsewhere) with the Odes of Solomon. Titus is seen as being like an official deliberative letter akin to Pliny’s letter to Maximus. Part of its aim is to replace a traveling prophetic type of local church leadership with a presbyterian one. This assumption, that the existing ministry came from traveling prophets, is not provided with any backing and is speculative.

2 Timothy has a large cast of actors, partly intended to show how Paul has lots of supporters as well as opponents. A remarkable number of imperatives are in the letter and Paul is presented as a model for Timothy to follow. The tone is warmer and friendlier than in Titus. This, then, is not an official deliberative letter like Titus, but more like a literary deliberative letter akin to the pseudonymous letters of Socrates. It is not a “testament,” and it is not clear that Paul is about to die. The references to Timothy as a third-generation Christian suggest that the letter is two generations later than Paul.

1 Timothy is more concerned with conflict between groups and classes. The importance of the final imperative in 6:21 is emphasized and the links between the opening and closing are noted. This letter has a high incidence of third-person imperatives, stating what Timothy is to teach and urge. Chapter five is concerned to replace a system of stipends for widows serving in the community to a system of pensions for those with no other form of support. The real problem in the church emerges clearly in chapter six, *viz.* the existence of wealthy members who are acting as patrons and sponsoring the false teachers, and it is this which has skewed the life of the church. Timothy himself is treated not so much as a subordinate or deputy of Paul as rather a successor. The letter has an “apostolic parousia” in 3:14-16, and Richards argues for a triplicate structure (1:3-3:13; 3:14-6:2; 6:3-19), where each section has denunciation of opponents, authorization of Timothy in a “charge” given to him and instructions that he is to convey (e.g. 6:3-12; 13-16; 17-19). All of this suggests that it is a “letter-essay,” akin to such essays by Epicurus. It speaks to the community on its own authority. It summarizes Paul’s earlier teaching, so that Paul himself has by now “become ‘scripture.’” It is something like a “covering letter” for the Pauline correspondence.

There are thus three types of letters, with three different types of named recipients from three different kinds of “Paul,” and intended in reality for three different sorts of implied recipients. Paul is portrayed as elder, pastor and teacher. The letters are seen as by different authors since it is hard to see these roles as compatible with one another. The letter to Titus is concerned with restructuring the community; 2 Timothy faces a community in danger of dissolution under threat of persecution; 1 Timothy collects advice for a church leader faced with a church where wealth is creating problems. Titus can be placed with Colossians and 1 Clement; 2 Timothy with 2 Thessalonians and 1 Peter; 1 Timothy with Ephesians and 2 Peter.

Despite much useful observation, the main thesis fails to convince. The author has taken little account of the resemblances between the letters; much of what he sees as characteristic of the individual letters is paralleled in the others. In particular, it seems to me that the theologies expressed in the letters and the way in which they are presented are recognizably the same, even if there are some puzzles in it (like the curious total absence of *ku/rioj* from Titus). No explanation is given as to how letters so like one another could be produced by different people over so long a period of time. It is right to establish the different contexts and purposes of the letters, leading to the different styles of presentation, but this could equally well be explained as the work of one person addressing different situations and colleagues in appropriate ways. Richards’ thesis simply does not come to terms with the resemblances between the letters and offer a satisfying explanation for them. At times he makes unsupported assumptions on which a major part of his overall thesis rests. His understanding of the situation in Titus is not supported by the text, and his proposal that 1 Timothy is a sort of “covering letter” likewise rests on silence. If the letters are dated as late as he proposes, the functions of Timothy and Titus as the named recipients becomes all the more puzzling.

S. C. Martin

S. C. Martin’s work appeared in 1997 but escaped my notice earlier. It is concerned purely with 2 Timothy, regarded as a pseudonymous writing, and its thesis is that it is to be understood as Paul’s “testament” in the same way as Deuteronomy is to be seen as Moses’ testament, handing over his authority to Joshua and summarizing his teaching. Martin sees a deliberate typology being worked out. He notes the references to Moses in 2 Timothy 2:19 and 3:8f., where his authority is challenged (like that of Timothy), and he compares Moses’ laying hands on Joshua (Num 27:18-23; Deut 34:9) with Paul doing the same to Timothy. The titles of “Servant of the Lord” and “man of God” are held to be evocative of

Moses, and the admonition to “be strong” (2 Tim 2:1) is to be seen in the light of Deuteronomy 31. The testamentary form of 2 Timothy as a whole lends strength to the argument. In the following chapters the picture of Moses in Judaism is researched at length, showing how he is seen variously as prophet, lawgiver and suffering intercessor. In the final chapter it is argued that Paul is seen in these three ways in 2 Timothy. Paul functions as a prophet rather than being given this title. It is proposed that Paul (rather than Jesus) is to be seen as the “prophet like Moses” (Deut 18). His teaching is placed over against that of the “teachers of the law” who are his opponents, claiming positions of leadership over against him.

Collins (181-85) also accepts the categorization of 2 Timothy as testamentary, but has not picked up on the Moses/Joshua typology that is distinctive to Martin’s position; he has evidently been working independently of Martin. Martin’s position is noted by Johnson (321) in the course of a discussion in which he identifies 2 Timothy as a personal paraenetic letter (so Marshall, 12f.), rather than a farewell discourse or testament. There is a clear difference in categorization here. Certainly Paul is facing the prospect of death in this letter, but he still expects to see Timothy again. On the hypothesis of Pauline composition this is a paraenetic letter. But if the letter is post-Pauline, then although the compiler knows that Paul is dead, nevertheless he still uses the form of the paraenetic letter and maintains the scenario of Paul dealing with an ongoing situation.

M. Harding

Mark Harding is a scholar who has been converted from the traditional view of Pauline authorship to the view that the epistles are pseudonymous. However, he views them positively as attempts to preserve the Pauline legacy and reformulate it for a new situation. Harding is especially concerned with how the Pastor does what he does. He wants to appreciate the Pastor “not just as a theologian of the Pauline tradition, but as a creative and persuasive *communicator* of the Pauline heritage in his social context.” In this approach he has been strongly influenced by his doctoral supervisor, J. C. Beker, who has also attempted to explore the strategies used by the “heirs of Paul,” but he holds that Beker’s evaluation of the letters underestimates them and he believes that a more positive assessment is possible. So he is concerned essentially with the persuasive rhetoric of the letters. The Pastor had available the whole corpus of ten letters, including the other post-Pauline examples (Eph, Col, 2 Thess) and he made the attempt “to bring to speech and mediate to the church of his day the Paul of the whole corpus—the Paul of a wider tradition.” What he did can be relevant for

attempts to bring Paul to life for the contemporary church. Harding wants to compare the epistles with “the traditions of epistolary moral exhortation and the rhetoric of persuasive speech.”

The epistles are shown to follow the pattern of Pauline letters in their general framework, since it was necessary for the Pastor to express his pastoral care for believers in the same form as Paul had done. The theology is different from that of Paul in various ways; the realization of the possible delay of the epiphany of Christ for a long time required that the church develop a virtuous and commendable life based on God’s saving intervention in Christ. He also created an image of Paul in which he is recognizably authoritative and therefore the teaching given in his name is to be accepted by the churches.

Next comes a detailed survey of the use of letters for moral instruction and encouragement. The important features that emerge here are: the superior status of the writer; the existing relationship of friendship; the device of “reminder”; the use of examples, both positive and negative, including the writer himself; the use of various subsidiary modes of exhortation, notably protrepsis, admonition, rebuke and consolation. These traits are then traced in the epistles. Although Timothy and Titus are “apostolic delegates,” they appear in the Pauline corpus as subordinate fellow-workers of Paul. The friendly tone is conspicuous. All three letters use reminders of instructions previously given, and Timothy is to remind his congregation of what they have already been taught. The actual instruction, however, is governed more by the need to co-exist with secular society than by the expectation of the parousia. Paul and the Pastor have different ethical agendas; here Harding is more sympathetic to Dibelius’ understanding of the letters than are some contemporary scholars (Schwarz; Towner; Kidd). He sees more of a strategy for survival than a commitment to mission. Nevertheless, there is no capitulation to secular values and mores: although it was doubtless the wealthier members who became leaders, the stress is on their moral and spiritual qualities for office. The use of examples, particularly with respect to suffering, is very clear. As for other modes of persuasion, straight exhortation or paraenesis is prominent. The prospect of reward is held out. In a broad sense 2 Timothy in particular conforms to the testamentary genre, and various characteristics are seen paralleled in such documents as T. Simeon. The characteristics include: historical review of the author’s life; ethical exhortation; prediction of the future, and in the NT: imparting of apostolic teaching; moral exhortation; the author as a model of faithful Christian witness and prediction of coming false teachers (cf. 2 Peter).

From written materials Harding turns to the characteristics of hortatory discourse, although he fully recognizes that the epistles are

letters and not speeches. We are given a brief survey of ancient rhetoric and the now familiar three-fold analysis of types of speech, judicial, deliberative and epideictic. Liturgical materials are said to function epideictically, reminding the readers of what they already experience and deepening that experience. Shared liturgical material establishes rapport with the audience. Aristotle analyzed three types of proof, appealing to reason (using examples and also logic), to character (i.e. recognition of the trustworthiness of the speaker and the untrustworthiness of the opponents), and to pathos, i.e. the arousing of appropriate emotions in the audience.

It would be an interesting exercise to compare the undisputed letters of Paul in terms of these several categories, since I suspect that one would be able to document many of the traits that are to be found in the Pastoral Epistles. For Harding, of course, the process going on here is different from what we have in the direct persuasion of Paul to his actual readers since here we have “double pseudonymity” in which a writer (the Pastor) uses an assumed persona (Paul) to address his own contemporaries under the guise of fictitious recipients (Timothy and Titus). Nevertheless, his approach shows that the epistles can be profitably approached from this perspective of examination of their rhetorical methods.

The Structure of the Letters

R. Van Neste

Another type of rhetorical analysis is attempted by R. Van Neste in an unpublished thesis (the general thrust of his approach is visible from his article on Titus).⁸ This was written in part as a riposte to the work of J. D. Miller, *The Pastoral Letters as Composite Documents* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), in which it was argued that there is no coherent argument or clear development of thought in the epistles; they are collections of independent, disparate units loosely stitched together like some of the Jewish wisdom literature; brief fragments of Pauline letters have formed the basis for growing collections of material that are fundamentally incoherent. Miller’s thesis is not persuasive, as the fact that many commentators have found it possible to expound the letters as basically coherent documents shows. Nevertheless, the great variety of analyses of the letters offered by commentators shows that their structure is not always self-evident. Van Neste takes up the kind of tools forged by G. H. Guthrie for his analysis of the letter to the Hebrews, looking for syntactical and rhetorical pointers to continuity and discontinuity, and

⁸ “Cohesion and Structure in the Pastoral Epistles” (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Aberdeen, 2002).

thereby arriving at an analysis of structure which can claim to be based not just on an assumed train of thought but on objective observations of structural devices and therefore to reflect the intention of the author. The results may not appear to be earth-shaking in that no radically different understanding of the discourse structure emerges, but the study confirms that there is a coherence in each of the letters and offers a more refined analysis of it than in any previous investigations.

D. J. Clarke

In the same issue of the *Bible Translator* that included Van Neste's article there is another study of Titus which goes straight into discourse analysis and offers a very careful, detailed examination of the syntactical structure. Among its interesting suggestions is the proposal that 1:15a is a quotation from the false teachers with which Paul disagrees. Further, Clarke distinguishes three main sections in the letter: 1:5-13a; 1:13b-3:8a; and 3:8b-11; this is rather different from my own analysis (1:5-16; 2:1-15; 3:1-11) and from that by Van Neste (1:5-9; 1:10-16; 2:1-3:8; 3:9-11) and shows that the debate over structure is by no means over. The main novelty here is the break at 1:13a/b (also made by the New American Bible) on the basis of the new command to Titus in 13b, but at the cost of breaking the link with the description of the opponents in vv. 10-12.

L. A. Jervis

Somewhere on the boundary between structure and theology is the contribution of L. A. Jervis. She argues that previous studies have tended to see the Paul of 1 Timothy as a quasi-forensic authority, laying down the instructions in the letter, or as an ethical paradigm. Rather, she proposes, Paul should be seen as a "poet" who establishes the "story" that is foundational for the community by means of the confessional statements which are closely associated with him (1 Tim 1:15; 2:5-6; 3:16). These confessions tell a story in which Christ is central, referring to his saving work, the place of Paul as the one who passes on this story, and the church as the body that accepts this story and lives by it. The claim, it should be carefully noted, is not that Paul here writes poetry (as opposed to prose) but that he functions like a poet in telling a foundational story. This is a suggestive attempt to explain the underlying rationale of the letter. Jervis begins by looking for the statements that are closely tied to mention of Paul himself in the letter. But since 1 Timothy 1:15 is a "trustworthy saying," the question arises as to whether the other sayings similarly described here and in 2 Timothy may have a similar function or whether their existence might modify the thesis significantly.

K. D. Tollefson

An unusual approach is taken by K. D. Tollefson who has studied the phenomenon of revitalization in the secular world and applied the insights to biblical study: “the past and present values, customs and beliefs—which produce dissonance arising from the distortions that exist between them—are analyzed and recombined into a new synthesis, a new mazeway, or a new Gestalt” (146). A visionary (Paul) experiences a conversion (Titus 1:1-3); he communicates his blueprint for change to the rest of the society (Titus 1:4); he appoints leaders and organizes the followers to implement change (Titus 1:5-9); he devises strategies to counter internal resistance (Titus 1:10-16); the vision is transformed into the ordinary life of the people (Titus 2:1–3:7); and the society is encouraged to integrate these new values into its life and make them routine (Titus 3:8-15). In this way Tollefson argues that the various parts of the letter fit together into a coherent whole.

Authorship

In addition to the discussion in the commentaries there have been a number of studies devoted to the broader question of the use and legitimacy (or illegitimacy) of pseudepigraphy in the early church.⁹

T. L. Wilder

In his yet to be published thesis (summarized in his article) T. L. Wilder raises the hypothetical question: if there were pseudonymous letters in the New Testament, (1) were they not meant to deceive their original readers, but did in fact do so? or (2) were they not meant to deceive their original readers, and did not in fact do so? or (3) were they meant to deceive their original readers, and did in fact do so? The fourth theoretical possibility, that they were meant to deceive, but did not do so, is not an option. Wilder produces evidence that (despite assertions to the contrary) the concept of literary property did play a role in the ancient world. Next, he shows that there are some parallels between the disputed New Testament letters and paraenetical pseudonymous letters in the Graeco-Roman world. Third, he gathers together the evidence that from the second-century onwards Christians did not accept apostolic pseudepigrapha and regarded them as deceptive. Fourth, he shows the importance attached to apostolic authorship and authority, and argues

⁹ On the assumption that the letters are pseudonymous, R. Burnet claims that pseudepigraphy is not “an innocent play on the author’s name” but “a genuine literary technique,” and argues that 2 Timothy shows actualization of a concrete past situation whereas 1 Timothy and Titus demonstrate “anachronism” in which a present situation is transferred into the past to gain the authority of a figure from the past.

that the attitudes of the first and second-century churches were the same (despite the claim of some that the first-century church was less restrictive). Fifth, he argues that the disputed New Testament letters contain personal details and the like which give them the appearance of authenticity; in other words, if they are not authentic, the pseudonymous authors endeavored to give the impression of authenticity. On the basis of these arguments Wilder concludes that it is more likely that, if there are pseudonymous writings in the New Testament, they would have been intended to deceive the readers regarding their authenticity (and succeeded until the era of modern criticism). Wilder himself holds that there are no pseudonymous writings in the New Testament, and what his thesis aims to exclude is the possibility that there were non-deceptive, pseudonymous writings in the New Testament.

J. Duff

These findings are paralleled in the simultaneous, independent work of J. Duff. He also demonstrates the importance of the concept of literary property. He also studies the concept of authorship and shows that there was a close connection between authorship and authority in Judaism. Likewise, he confirms that there was no discontinuity between first and second-century Christianity over the link between authorship and authority, so that pseudonymity would have met with disapproval throughout this period. If pseudonymous works were accepted, it was because they were wrongly believed to be authentic. Such works were intended from the beginning to deceive their readers.

A. D. Baum

A third contribution to the topic is the thesis in German by A. D. Baum. It helpfully includes as an appendix a collection of the significant relevant ancient sources in their original languages and in German translation. He summarizes his work as follows: "a statement was considered authentic if merely the wording did not come from the person to whom the statement was attributed. However, a statement was not considered to be authentic if the content did not come from the alleged author."¹⁰ So a composition by a secretary would be authentic provided that the contents stemmed from Paul and not from the secretary (although the latter might have expressed it in his own words). Baum denies that a composition by a follower of Paul after his death would have been regarded as a composition with no intent to deceive unless the content stemmed entirely from Paul and it was not cast in the form of a letter written in specific circumstances.

¹⁰ From the author's own English summary of his argument (Baum, 195).

The importance of these contributions is that they show good reason to reject the view espoused by D. Meade that the early church was “soft” on deceptive pseudonymity in the first century and that its attitude hardened only later. Inevitably they leave some issues open or capable only of probable conclusions in view of the complexity of the issues. There is not only the phenomenon of Jewish apocalyptic but also the question of the authorship of large tracts of the Old Testament which are anonymous or which are a blend of composite authorship and later editing and expansion. In the latter case, we are looking at works which already in the first century belonged to hoary antiquity and were doubtless generally regarded as being by their “obvious” authors (if there was one). In the former case, there is as yet no clear solution, although Duff argues that intentional “literary fiction” is not necessarily the right answer. Among the views specifically targeted by Baum is the kind of proposal that I myself have offered. His argument is that there is no basis for the practice of allonymity that I have proposed, and that the suggestion of a fluid boundary between works written by a secretary during Paul’s lifetime and compositions by a follower thereafter cannot be substantiated.

What is not provided, however, by Baum is any sort of way of dealing with the situation posed by writings which have found their way into the canon although they were not written by the persons to whom they are attributed. The question is posed even more sharply perhaps by some of the material in the Old Testament which is generally understood not to have been composed by the persons to whom it appears to be attributed.¹¹

Theology, Christology and Soteriology

G. A. Couser

The centrality of *theology*, i.e. the understanding of God (the Father), in the New Testament has been increasingly recognized in a number of recent works. It is the subject of one recent article on the Pastoral Epistles by G. A. Couser,¹² who argues that the descriptions of God in 1 Timothy 1:17 and 6:15f. are not irrelevant descriptions of a distant, transcendent God, but are carefully crafted, corresponding portrayals of

¹¹ I gain the impression that contemporary evangelical scholars recognize that the composition of the Pentateuch was not the work of Moses, even if traditions stemming from him are incorporated. Since the Pentateuch does not identify its author but is strictly anonymous, this may not seem to matter very much and not to be a parallel to the issue at stake here. But the clear implication is that not every statement attributed to Moses (e.g. in the promulgation of laws) necessarily comes from him but may include later revisions and additions, and this raises the same kind of questions regarding authenticity.

¹² Cf. his unpublished Ph.D. thesis, “God and Christian Existence in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus” (University of Aberdeen, 1992).

the God who is Savior (cf. 2:3-7; 4:10) and who is able to act in sovereign power in redemption; he saves in the way described in the letters and not in some other way than that taught by Paul and Timothy.

H. Stettler

H. Stettler, *Die Christologie der Pastoralbriefe*, takes its place alongside two other monographs on the same topic that have appeared recently: A. Lau, *Manifest in Flesh: The Epiphany Christology of the Pastoral Epistles* (Tübingen, 1996); and K. Läger, *Die Christologie der Pastoralbriefe* (Münster, 1996). Where Lau's work concentrated on the concept of epiphany and the use of tradition, and Läger emphasized the Pastor's virtual incorporation of Paul, his conversion and his preaching in the saving event itself, Stettler has undertaken a broader task. She gives a careful exegesis of all the relevant passages (with excellent summaries at each stage) and then attempts a synthesis of the exegetical material; this combination of approaches enables her to do justice to each text in its immediate context and then in the context of the Pastoral Epistles as a whole.

Over against attempts to deny that the Pastor held a Christology of pre-existence and incarnation Stettler argues that this is precisely what he taught, although he has expressed it using fresh forms of language. In response to attempts to show that the Pastor has hellenized Christian theology and drawn up his Christology in terms of contrast with the worship of pagan deities, she shows that his thinking is thoroughly grounded in Hellenistic Judaism, and with this tool he is able to formulate his teaching so that it will get across to the Hellenistic world. The Christology itself is shown to be thoroughly Pauline in its essential structure despite the differences in expression. Here Stettler argues that the Epistles display a considerable degree of dependence on the authentic Pauline Epistles, taking phraseology and teaching and re-expressing it to meet new situations. She argues that the opposition represents an early form of Gnosticism with a docetic emphasis, and the Pastor responds to this with his emphasis on the manhood of Jesus Christ and the fleshly reality of his resurrection. But she also argues that the Pastor makes use of other christological traditions in the early church, and in particular she traces the use of Son of Man traditions (linked to the concept of the Suffering Servant) and also of some Johannine strands of expression. The Pastor has thus drawn much more widely on early Christian traditions than has previously been detected; yet he is not an eclectic collector of material, but rather he takes up traditions and molds them to his own purpose. It emerges that the Pastor generally does not cite traditions, which might be separated by analysis from his own material, but rather is himself responsible for most of the material which has a

traditional flavor, and this flavor is due to his own creative use of the traditions. The stature of the Pastor as a theologian is correspondingly enhanced by this analysis of his methods. Throughout the book there is constant interaction with the work of Lau, with which she is in broad agreement, but it is a pity that she was not able to interact similarly to any extent with the work of Läger and her emphasis on the place of Paul in the saving process.

One or two points may be singled out for discussion. First, the author has rightly raised the question of the relationship of the Pastor to the Pauline Epistles. Assuming, as she does, that the Epistles are by a disciple of Paul, this question is unavoidable. There is a case that the similarities between the Pauline Epistles and the Pastoral Epistles cannot be used to *prove* that the author of the latter was somebody other than Paul himself but knew his work, but if it is held to be probable that the author was not Paul, the question of his knowledge and use of the Pauline Epistles does arise, and echoes which individually may be insubstantial become more likely in the context of the total impression; there remains, of course, the alternative that the author was thoroughly immersed in Paul's own teaching through personal knowledge and contact, in which case the echoes may be based on a broader acquaintance with Paul's teaching than simply a literary acquaintance with the Epistles. This is a point for further discussion.

Second, the author makes out a judicious case that the opposition reflected in the Epistles is docetic-gnostic. There is also a good case that the opposition is rather a combination of a mistaken understanding of Paul's own teaching coupled with a strong Jewish-Christian element that majored on speculative exegesis of the Old Testament associated with ascetical practices; on this view it is not so obvious that there was a heretical or skewed understanding of the person of Jesus. Despite Stettler's attempts to "mirror-read" the Epistles for evidence of a false understanding of Jesus, it is not clear to me that she has succeeded in defending the presence of Docetism in the church.

Third, the author is to be commended for her detailed discussion of numerous significant points. I mention her demonstration that the Pastor's use of "in Christ" is fully in harmony with that of Paul (even if the phrase is not used in such a wide manner). There is also her insistence that the doctrine of justification is essentially that of Paul. She agrees with W. D. Mounce that the background to the use of *palingenesi/a* is not to be found in the mystery religions.

G. Wieland

G. Wieland's unpublished thesis deals with the use of the "salvation" word group in the letters and is a careful exegetical examination of all

the relevant texts; each letter is treated independently so as not to read ideas from one letter into the others without adequate justification.¹³ The author is concerned primarily with synchronic study and does not explore to any extent the development of the ideas and their background. He produces a carefully nuanced exegesis of the material that throws fresh light on the texts. He considers the use of traditional language and Hellenistic formulations. There is some discussion of the views of recent scholars including those who see a decline from the soteriology of Paul, although more might have been done in this respect. The centrality of soteriology in the letters is clearly demonstrated. In 1 Timothy there is stress on the universality of the scope of salvation over against an exclusivist, ascetic heterodoxy; in 2 Timothy the doctrine is closely related to the need to encourage faithful, costly ministry in the face of harsh opposition; and in Titus there is the nurturing of a sense of Christian identity and community based on the appropriation of Old Testament soteriological categories and an emphasis on the consequent ethical transformation. In each case the doctrinal undergirding makes the paraenesis effective.

C. E. Ho

Another unpublished thesis tackles the question of whether the outlook represented in the letters can rightly be termed “missionary.” At first sight this may seem to be a complete misnomer since they are so taken up with the internal problems caused by the opposition in the congregations. Nevertheless, the underlying theology is a theology of salvation, and it is significant that Timothy is designated an “evangelist”; although the stress may be primarily on his pastoral role, it would be wrong to strip this term of its basic significance of being a missionary. The stress on prayer for all people and on God’s will for all people to come to a knowledge of the truth fits in with this; and, although it has been denied, the stress on godly living and adopting a positive attitude towards the surrounding society appears to stem from a missionary motivation rather than simply from the desire to maintain a low, conformist profile in order to avoid persecution.¹⁴

¹³ Wieland, therefore, should not fall under the criticism that Murphy-O’Connor, 632f., directs against H. Stettler.

¹⁴ The same position is taken by P. Trebilco (unpublished paper), who compares the rather different attitude to the world in Revelation. He points out that Titus 2:13 polemicizes against certain features of society—there is no uncritical acceptance of its standards and way of life—but the main motivation for closer relationships with society was missionary (1 Tim 6:1f.).

The Church and Ministry

S. R. North

S. R. North has written a thesis on “*Presbuteroi Christianoi: Towards a Theory of Integrated Ministry*,” which is summarized by the author in a brief report. He wants to date 1 Timothy and Titus as authentic letters of Paul shortly after 1 Corinthians. “Bishop” is a member of the house-church responsible for maintaining order in it, a “first among equals.” “Elders” is a broad term of respect for leaders. “Apostles-prophets-teachers” and “bishops-elders-deacons” were one group and the latter did not replace the former until late in the first century. There is much that is novel and controversial in the reported conclusions of this thesis, but I cannot comment further on a thesis that I have not seen.

L. Oberlinner

L. Oberlinner, author of a profound theological commentary in German on the Pastoral Epistles, has addressed the theme of Hellenism and Hellenization in the letters. He notes how the Pastor wants to hold fast to the Christology which he has learned from a collection of Pauline letters but nevertheless works it out differently. Here he goes over familiar territory with regard to the use of “Savior” and “epiphany.” He distinguishes two questions. First, why is the title of Savior so dominant? Is this due to the influence of the outside world or to an inner-Christian development (or to both)? Second, what difference did it make to the Christian congregations that their preaching now used a term that was current both inside and outside the church? Similar questions arise with the use of epiphany, and here Oberlinner notes the risks that accompany the use of terms current in the ruler-cults of the ancient world.

The ecclesiology is reflected in the lack of direct address to the church and the use of the concept of the household in which a single person held a position over the others and expected submission from them. The authority of the *paterfamilias* was decisive in the concept of the household in the contemporary world. Whereas in Paul the house is simply the meeting place for the church, now the household controls the structure. The *eOpi/skopoj* has full authority over the congregation.

Finally, he looks at the ethics of the letters. There is a strong tendency to urge conduct that would be approved by the surrounding world, including the subordination of wives and slaves. The aim is not to be different from the world, but to be like the world. The qualities required of wives are similar to those in the Pythagorean tradition. The

commendation of prudence (swfrosu/nh) as a very general quality ties in with ancient ethics.¹⁵

Oberlinner's case fits in with the conclusions that can be drawn from Collins' commentary. It is difficult to deny the degree of Hellenization that is going on. And it may be mentioned in passing that this is one powerful reason for not viewing the Pastoral Epistles as authentic letters of Paul, particularly if they are thought of as letters composed at intervals between his other letters: why should Paul tend to Hellenization only in these letters to his associates? The lack of address to the congregations is adequately explained by the fact that here we have letters to congregational leaders; we should not ignore the fact that Paul himself did exercise considerable control over his own congregations, and his colleagues would behave similarly. The authority of the *paterfamilias* was an accepted datum in the ancient world; its application in the church may be due to the withdrawal of a figure like Paul himself from control over the congregations which he had founded and the increasing role of local leadership. An important question is whether the material about elders implies a plurality of leaders in any given congregation; this seems to me the most natural explanation of the teaching in 1 Timothy 5; the tricky question is whether Titus 1 supposes the appointment of elders (plural) in each town or of one elder per town. The analogy of the synagogue favors the former interpretation, and elsewhere I have argued that the shift to the singular in Titus 1:6f. is natural. The counter-argument is that the imagery of the steward (oi0kono/moj) implies one person in control rather than several, but it should be noted that in Ignatius, *Polycarp* 6, apparently addressed to believers in general, the recipients are described collectively "as God's stewards and assessors and ministers."

D. G. Horrell

D. G. Horrell has a study of the use of a0delfo/j, "brother/sibling", in the Pauline corpus which notes the comparative sparseness of this designation for fellow-believers in the Pastoral Epistles and the development of oi]koj terminology; this indicates a shift from a more egalitarian society to the concept of the church as "a stratified and hierarchical community led by those men who lead their human households well" (309). Horrell is careful to nuance his case and to avoid

¹⁵ In an examination of the virtues associated with eldership, D. A. Mappes has queried whether the qualities desiderated in Christian leaders are essentially those approved in the secular society of the time and insists that they are more specifically Christian and stand in deliberate contrast to the vices castigated in the lives of the opponents. This is a useful cautionary note against over-emphasizing any conformity to secular society on the part of the church.

false absolute contrasts, but he may be in danger of assuming that the concept of brotherhood conveyed a more egalitarian ethos than was actually the case in the ancient world.¹⁶

P. Trebilco

A broader study of the terms used for self-designation is given by P. Trebilco as the first part of a study which will include the Johannine letters and Revelation. Like Horrell, he traces the decline in the use of “brothers” to the development of a more hierarchical leadership and to the development of a household model of the congregation which has a hierarchical structure. He also discusses the development of the term “believer” and links it to the growing importance of the concept of “the faith” as the body of traditional doctrine; what is believed has come to be important as the basis of Christian identity.

I. H. Marshall

I myself may well be in danger of trying to find in the Epistles a picture of the congregation and ministry which is more congenial to my own predilections, and in “Congregation and Ministry in the Pastoral Epistles” I have argued for a somewhat different picture in which there is more stress on the plurality of ministerial and leadership activities and roles in the letters. It is important to remember that congregational structures inevitably reflected the structures of the synagogue and of secular life, and we must beware of reading back our modern patterns of community and leadership and finding justification for them (and them alone) in Scripture; at the same time we should not downplay the elements in the New Testament which were beginning to transcend the contemporary culture.

Women in the Pastoral Epistles

J. M. Holmes

J. M. Holmes has produced a major study of 1 Timothy 2: *Text in a Whirlwind: A Critique of Four Exegetical Devices at 1 Timothy 2.9-15*, significant both because of its wide-ranging critique of other scholars and also because of its own original contribution to the discussion. His broad approach is to emphasize that linguistic, grammatical, literary and contextual considerations are primary and to insist that interpretation must rest on solid grounds rather than a chain of speculations. He is, therefore, fairly critical of much scholarship on the passage. His own contribution is helpfully summed up in terms of what he calls four

¹⁶ I owe this suggestion to an unpublished paper by A. D. Clarke.

exegetical “devices” or tools that help to get at the meaning of the passage. These consist in examinations of (1) the immediate context; (2) the broader context of the passage in the letter; (3) the relevance of parallel teaching; and (4) the nature of the theological foundation. In carrying out his study he makes particular use of recent research into the aspect of Greek verbs.

As regards immediate context, he questions the universal assumption that 1 Timothy 2:1-2, 8-12 deals with activities taking place in the congregation. He holds that the whole of 2:1-3:13 deals with the character of believers (and leaders) and not with what they do in the congregational meeting. The prayer in vv. 1-2 is offered “in every place” and not necessarily in the meeting. The material in vv. 8-12 deals with the character of those who pray rather than with their prayers. In particular, vv. 11-12 do not necessarily deal with learning in the congregation. The aspect of the verbs is significant, and yields the translation, “I also permit a woman neither constantly to direct, nor to dominate a man. She should be tranquil.”

The broader context is to be found in the situation addressed in the letter. The Pastoral Epistles are not church manuals. The primary background is not false teaching (it is rather the foolish chatter and controversy from which heresy emerges). The three letters are not addressed to the same situation, and therefore one cannot arrive at a picture of the false teaching by adding all the information together. 1 Timothy 1:3 does not express the purpose of the letter but only its first concern, and the statements in 1:18 (understood to refer to 2:1ff.) and 3:14f. suggest that the teaching in between is meant to be universally relevant (and not simply a local response to a local problem). As for the heresy, a very diverse picture is to be found, with some passages referring to people who are not within the congregation, or to events still future. In particular, passages about women do not refer to specific local problems unless there is contextual evidence to show that they do. All this leads up to a case that there is nothing to suggest that the teaching in 2:9-15 has anything to do with an alleged connection between the women and false teaching. There is no convincing evidence that the women were deserting traditional female roles. It follows that the teaching in 2:9-15 is of universal and not just local application.

The third section discusses the relationship of the passage to 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. The various interpretations of this passage proffered by recent scholars are weighed and nearly all found wanting. Only two possibilities survive as worthy of consideration. The first is that the passage is a later interpolation in the letter (so, e.g. G. D. Fee; P. B. Payne), a view for which the evidence falls short of being compelling. The second is the much less commonly held view that vv. 33b-35 are a

quotation from a Corinthian letter to which Paul replies with a rejection in v. 36; Holmes thinks that this solution has the least difficulties. It follows that this passage is extremely problematic as background to 1 Timothy 2.

The fourth section tackles vv. 13-15. The author argues that the “for” (ga/r) in v. 13 is a redundant introduction to a citation (as in 2 Tim 2:11), and that 3:1a refers back to this citation as a “trustworthy saying.” Hence the key to interpretation of this section is that it is a citation of Jewish material (Holmes claims that 1 Tim 4:8f. is not necessarily Christian either.). A pointer to this character is detected in the use of the perfect *ge/gonen* in v. 14 which is used to “spotlight” this particular action. It is claimed that this same phenomenon is found in a number of other quotations or expositions of the Old Testament in the New Testament.

Holmes rejects the usual passages cited as possible background (*Sir* 25:24; *Apoc. Moses*¹⁷). He suggests that the point of the original passage may be different from the use that 1 Timothy makes of it. It is concerned purely with Eve’s entry into a state of transgression. V. 15 belongs to the citation and states that she (Eve) could expect to be saved through the (ongoing process of) child-bearing (culminating in the coming of the Messiah) set in train by her union with her husband, provided that they (Adam and Eve) were to live appropriately in faith.

In short, women “must dress appropriately, learn obediently and tranquilly, and not constantly . . . go on and on [at anyone?] or . . . play the dictator over a man. Having drawn this parallel [sc. between the behaviour of men and women], he is reminded of a saying which captures such mutual male-female responsibility to live godly lives, a saying which recalls that both Adam and Eve must live in faith, love and holiness with good sense if the promise of Gen. 3.15 were ultimately to be fulfilled” (300). Later the passage was misunderstood to apply to congregational meetings, the influence of the teaching rejected in 1 Corinthians 14 worked in the same direction, and the traditional understanding of the passage arose. It follows that Genesis is not used to give a scriptural basis for the silence of women in church.

My general feeling on reading the book is akin to that when I read critiques of the Two-Document Solution of the Synoptic Problem: they show that there are weaknesses in the arguments commonly adduced to support it, but the alternative solution offered appears to have even greater problems and the old solution still commends itself as better. Holmes’ work certainly shows up some weaknesses, not necessarily fatal ones, in the more traditional type of exegesis of the passage, but his own view does depend upon some rather speculative and dubious moves.

¹⁷ On this text see the detailed study by B. Heininger who argues that it does not present Eve as subordinate to Adam.

There are a number of places where he tends to assume points that are important to his thesis without much discussion or to assume that some interpretations have been refuted by other scholars again without discussing the relative strengths of the arguments.

Scholars have always recognized that the chapter is concerned with the behavior of men and women in their ordinary life outside the congregational meeting, but this does not mean that their behavior within the meeting is excluded from consideration (as Holmes seems to come near to saying). Further, the context of the use of “teach” in the Pastoral Epistles does not encourage the very general sense given to it by Holmes. Above all, the stress laid on the aspect of the verb (“constantly to direct”) seems most unnatural. To say that “the Author has chosen to prohibit the *continual* practice of those actions, not the actions themselves” (94) is casuistic and unconvincing. Nor is the nature of the problem that is being addressed exactly clear. Holmes adopts the negative sense of *au0qente/w* rightly in my view but without any detailed discussion of this crucial point over against those who take the word positively.

He has shown the need for care in delineating the heresy, but he is over-cautious about the use of the evidence which seems to me to be more unified than he allows. To suggest that the concern is the foolish chatter arising from heresy rather than the false teaching itself (108) is splitting hairs and does not do justice to the amount of space spent on the latter.

The discussion of 1 Corinthians 14 is very careful and deserves consideration, since it is extremely hard to believe that Paul himself wrote or agreed with the content of vv. 34-35.

The biggest problems concern the novel proposal regarding the origin and function of 1 Timothy 2:13-15; this discussion is very technical and cannot be taken up here. Clearly, the backward reference of 3:1a cannot be used as a foundation for the theory of a citation (and Holmes does not build upon it), since there is at least as strong a case (I think probably stronger) for it having a forward reference. If the passage is interpreted as Holmes takes it, its relevance to the preceding verses is far from obvious, the original interpretation of the “child-bearing” is not likely to have been apparent to the readers, and the reference of v. 15b to Eve and Adam is surprising. Holmes has not done sufficient to make his proposal plausible over against the usual type of understanding of the Genesis reference (surprisingly he does not critique the scholarly interpretations of vv. 13-14 in any detail, confining his attention to the variety of views taken of v. 15).

Other Contributions

Controversy over this passage shows no signs of subsiding. P. H. Towner has given a helpful survey of the radical feminist and the biblical feminist approaches in a rather inaccessible journal and made some pertinent criticisms of each of them. Different views are presented in dialogue by the essayists in Beck and Blomberg. L. L. Belleville presents an egalitarian understanding of the passage. She emphasizes that 1 Timothy is a corrective document in many respects, dealing with specific things that were not right in the church. Calm, quiet behavior is required of the women. She argues that teaching was an activity, not an office, and was required of all believers (Heb 5:12; Col 3:16). The verb *au0qente/w* does not refer to the ordinary exercise of authority but to domination or gaining the upper hand, and what is condemned is not ordinary teaching but teaching in which women were trying to dominate men. The women were being deceived by the false teachers (hence the reference to Eve's deception by the serpent).

The complementarian view is presented in the same volume by T. R. Schreiner, but he offers essentially a repetition of his previously published views.

B. W. Winter has argued that the background to the passage is the rise of a "new" kind of wife in the higher levels of society who claimed for herself the indulgence in sexuality of a woman of pleasure (i.e. the same sexual freedom as her husband claimed) and used forms of contraception and abortion to avoid having to raise children. The letter calls Christian wives not to follow this example. This article is a sample of what we may expect in a forthcoming book which will range over the whole area more widely.

Lastly, K. Giles has advanced the thesis that the complementarian view as it is presented nowadays is not in fact the traditional understanding of the passage in that its appeal to the concept of women having different roles from men is a novelty and is inappropriate for understanding the rationale of the biblical teaching. His critique is answered in detail by A. J. Köstenberger, and Giles responds to his criticisms.

The problems of the passage occur on the levels of both exegesis and exposition. While there is a growing consensus on some aspects of the exegesis, there remain issues where there is still no agreement. It may be suspected that so-called complementarians and egalitarians look for support for those exegetical decisions which favor their own over-all understanding of the place of women in the church today. Answers to questions regarding whether the teaching here is a response to a particular problem or is intended to be of general application tend to be tied to different understandings of the original purpose of the passage. At

the same time, the question as to how the passage is to be applied today is differently answered.

Here the work of W. J. Webb is of great importance with his attempt to produce objective criteria for seeing the teaching of particular biblical passages as culturally relative and to argue for a redemptive trajectory in the Bible that justifies our going beyond Scripture but always in the direction prescribed by Scripture.¹⁸

The whole question of women is placed in a wider context by G. C. Streete in her examination of the motif of asceticism (a1skhsij) as a key to understanding what is going on in the letters. The pattern of behavior advocated in the letters is not opposed to society so much as to individual desire; self-control is inculcated as the way for the church to survive as a corporate institution, and therefore it is understood as submission to the communal rules rather than to a personal ideal of conduct. The asceticism that is advocated is not in regard to food, drink, sexual activity and family life, but rather subjection to the life of the community in which each person has their proper place. But we may wonder whether it is helpful to call this “asceticism”; what is the alternative?

Conclusion

This has been a record of ongoing research and study in which there has been much further illumination of the issues raised by the Pastoral Epistles but we remain as far from a consensus as ever. There is a clear polarity between the two types of interpretation. The more traditional tendency to relate the letters closely to Paul, whether as direct compositions or as material written in his name by another hand, and to see their theology as having essentially Jewish-Christian roots, has been given solid scholarly backing. Streete’s comment that pseudonymity is the view of “nearly all modern commentators on the Pastoral Epistles”¹⁹ is somewhat exaggerated (cf. L. T. Johnson’s comment noted above). Nevertheless, the view that the letters are considerably later pseudonymous compositions continues to have powerful support and cannot be airily dismissed by conservative scholars. There has certainly been a renewed appreciation of the theology of the letters and important explorations of its relationship to earlier Christian traditions side by side with the recognition that much light is shed on the letters by placing

¹⁸ The problems of 1 Tim 5:3-16 are handled by M. Tsuji. He argues that the author’s view is that not all women who were regarded as widows at this time were to receive care from the church. He adopts the view of some earlier scholars that such “widows” included younger women who had never been married at all, and the author was rejecting the ascetically-oriented false teaching which was encouraging them to continue a celibate life as “widows” who were provided for by the church.

¹⁹ Streete, *op. cit.*, 315.

them in the context of Hellenistic moral teaching. The letters bear a clear witness to the ongoing efforts of the early church to bear witness to the gospel despite the opposition in some congregations to the Pauline gospel and with a view to communicating it meaningfully in the wider world. The vital question of how this presentation of Christian doctrine and practice is to be appropriated for our contemporary world is still far from settled.

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