1 TIMOTHY RECONSIDERED

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The Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum held its nineteenth meeting from Tuesday morning, September 26 until midday on Saturday, September 30, 2006 (with a public evening lecture at 6 p.m.) in Rome at the Benedictine Abbey of St. Paul outside the Walls. The first Colloquium was held in 1968 at the Abbey in Rome and the group continues to benefit greatly from the support and generous hospitality of the Abbot and the entire Abbey community. The Colloquium devotes an entire week to the detailed and critical study of a Pauline text within the precincts of the Abbey surrounded by the peace and the prayers of the community. The Colloquium has produced seventeen volumes published by the Monographic Series of “Benedictina”, Biblical-Ecumenical Section; we are very pleased that this volume on 1 Timothy will be the first published by Peeters in Leuven under a new agreement with the Abbey.

This nineteenth meeting of the Colloquium focused on 1 Timothy and followed tradition by dividing the given letter into chapters as a plausible way to sequence our discussions; with 1 Timothy this worked out quite nicely (1,1-20; 2,1-15; 3,1-16; 4,1-16; 5,1-6,2; 6,3-21). Each of the six presenters was asked to provide a copy of their paper in advance of the Colloquium and then had thirty-minutes to summarize their argument at the session devoted to their paper. Following each oral summary, the group of about thirty-five divided into three language groups for an hour and fifteen minutes of discussion followed by a plenary discussion of the paper for approximately one hour and ten minutes. Following the Colloquium each presenter was given the liberty to revise their papers in light of the discussion; the introductory essay and the final response by the President is based on these final, revised essays. A reading of the essays in this volume will allow all to recognize the many insightful contributions that this extremely competent group of very amiable and supportive colleagues have contributed to the world of Pauline scholarship.

Members of the monastic community led both the opening and closing worship in the Basilica of St. Paul and at the beginning of the other mornings we were deeply grateful to have Professors Ioannis Karavidopoulos (Thessaloniki), Jean-Michel Poffet (Jerusalem), Raymond Collins (Washington D.C.) and Gerd Häfner (Munich) preside at the morning prayers. In addition the members of the Colloquium were very
pleased both to welcome Professor Giorgio Filippi, an archaeologist of the Vatican Museum, who presented a lecture on “Saint Paul’s Basilica: the Latest Discoveries” in connection with a guided tour of the area related to the tomb of Paul and also to benefit from an extended meeting with His Eminence, Walter Cardinal Kasper, the Prefect of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. To all of these persons we extend our most affectionate gratitude.

Deep appreciation must also be expressed to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, for his strong support over many years for the work of the Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum. His anticipated call for a Pauline Year from 28 June 2008 to 29 June 2009 was presented to and discussed by the Colloquium; the response was one of great pleasure, strong support and firm encouragement. We are also indebted to His Eminence, Andrea Cardinal di Montezemolo, the Archpriest of the Pontifical Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls, for his help and many courtesies in preparation for and during our visit. Outstanding in every possible way was the collaboration, cooperation and partnership of the Benedictine community of St Paul and its new Abbot, Edmund Power. The embrace of warm hospitality, marked with the highest possible caliber of administrative efficiency, facilitated so significantly by Frère Irénée Compagnon, allowed all of us to concentrate on the academic dimensions of our gathering.

I speak for all members of the Colloquium when I say that we have profited enormously from our participation over the years. Where else is one able to devote an entire week to a single Pauline document in the company of international and ecumenical colleagues of the highest caliber and in the peaceful and worshipful setting of the Benedictine Abbey of St Paul? We have been truly gifted in so many ways.

The Rev. Professor Karl P. Donfried, Dr. theolog.
President, 19th Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum
December 31, 2007

1 TIMOTHY RECONSIDERED
A Review of the Major Issues
Karl P. Donfried

Luke Timothy Johnson

Before presenting an exegesis of 1 Tim 1.1-20, Luke Timothy Johnson in his essay “First Timothy 1.1-20: The Shape of the Struggle,” insists that interpreters must be cognizant of their presuppositions, particularly whether 1 Timothy was produced “in the apostle’s lifetime under his authorization” or as a pseudonymous writing of a later generation. Further, it is critical to describe how one understands the relationship of this letter to that of 2 Timothy and Titus. Is it to be interpreted in its own right or as part of a broader amalgamation into the “pastoral epistles”? Where one stands with respect to these fundamental issues will effect one’s interpretation of 1 Timothy. Do we have here the “forger’s ideological position” or a Pauline letter similar to other authentic letters written to concrete situations in real communities with which it is possible to make literary and thematic linkages? For Johnson the pseudonymity of the “pastoral epistles” was to become a virtual “dogma” of modern scholarship since its introduction by Schleiermacher in 1807 and one that he, as a critical scholar, cannot defend. Not only are the criteria for pseudonymity “formally problematic and materially insufficient” but also the “theological implications deriving from pseudonymity,” viz., that the “pastoral epistles” are “increasingly moved to the edge or out of the canon of Scripture.”

Essential for Johnson is that the distinctive character of 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus be recognized and, based on his extensive analysis of these letters, he concludes that their “collective character” is no

more distinct than that exhibited by any of the other obvious clusters within the Pauline corpus? In order for the unique contours of each letter to be recognized particular attention must be given to four factors: "the shape of Paul’s ministry, the character of Paul’s correspondence, the role of Paul’s delegates, and the literary form of the respective letters". With regard to the second of these, the character of Paul’s correspondence, Johnson focuses on the critical issue of what one means by the term "authorship" when discussing a Pauline letter and he argues for a "more complex model for the composition of Paul’s letters, one in which ‘Paul’s School’ is present and active in his correspondence during his lifetime." While the hypothesis of a “Pauline School” after the death of the Apostle has been entertained from time to time, Johnson is more concerned with a “school present with Paul throughout his ministry.”

Since theories of authorship, as urgent as these questions remain, can, in fact, “block a close reading of the actual text because we assume we know already what the text is doing,” Johnson will follow a methodology that will allow for “the self-presentation of the Greek text” and only in a secondary way “reflect on the implications of its argument for the issue of historical placement.” I Tim 1.1-20 is approached from this perspective.

Johnson understands 1 Timothy to be a mandata principis letter and the passage under consideration to be an appropriate introduction to the more specific mandata that appear following 2.1. The rhetorical situation throughout is one of sharp contrast, signaled by the language of battle in 1.18, between certain people (1.3, 7, 19) who “teach other” (1.3) and those, including especially Paul (1.12) and his delegate Timothy (1.18), who are committed to “the healthy teaching according to the good news.” Those who “teach other” miss the intention of τις παραγγελιάς (commandment/instruction; 1.5). The goal is “the cultivation of moral dispositions internal to humans” exactly as expressed in 1.5 ("love from a pure heart and a good conscience, and sincere faith"); also reiterated in 1.19 and not the imposition of some heteronomous norm ("law") or extraneous realities ("myths and genealogies")

Paul opposes such speculations with the οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ τῆς ἐκ προδέσεως, a phrase that Johnson translates as "God’s way of ordering [or, disposing] things." The entire passage is dominated by two interrelated contrasts “between God’s dispensation and human ambition, and that between internal disposition and external norm.” These contrasts are actualized all through 1 Timothy; here, as in other Pauline writings, the opening verses announce themes that need to be articulated at other points as well.

Given this overall perspective, the specific challenge is to explain the relationship between Paul’s statement about the law in 1.8-11 and the description of his call in 1.12-17. The explicit linkage in this dyadic contrast is to be found in the vice-list, 1.11-12, and the recognition that Paul’s superior knowledge of the law results from the Lord’s outpouring of grace (1.14) that allowed him to be δικαιούς ("a righteous one," 1.9). Only God’s grace, not the law, can enact moral transformation. Jesus is at the center of Paul’s thanksgiving precisely because "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1.15), the very people referred to in 1.9-10 and with whom he identifies as "the first among them!" A return to a legal norm “for behavior would amount to a rejection of the experience [of grace] itself, and lead to becoming shipwrecked with respect to faith (1.19).”

The final focus in this remarkably provocative and insightful exegetical essay on 1 Tim 1.1-20 is the comparison of major themes analyzed in 1 Timothy with other Pauline letters. Whether the contrast between external norm and internal moral dispositions, i.e., law and grace, coheres with other Pauline writings is answered with a cautious affirmation after a review of Romans 7-8, 2 Corinthians 3-4, Philippians 3 and Galatians. Following a comparison of the account of Paul’s conversion in 1 Tim 1.12-17 with Gal 1.11-16, this as well, despite differences, is found to be "remarkably similar."

Margaret Mitchell

In her presentation, “Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis: The Teaching on Prayer in 1 Tim 2.1-15,” Margaret Mitchell moves
in directions quite different from Luke Timothy Johnson arguing that 1 Timothy shares the same pseudopigraphical author as do the other two pastoral epistles. This "Paulinist author" is understood to be a "Pauline reader" who had a multi-letter corpus on which to draw, and who appears to read the whole, and individual letters, in some sense contextually. In arguing for a later author, also referred to as the "Pastor," who is "correcting" Paul for a different situation, Mitchell recognizes that her approach and that of Johnson’s are in conflict and concludes with the observation that "I am not sure there is any way beyond that methodological impasse." 

Although the concentration of this paper is the prayer found in 1 Tim 2,1-5, Mitchell is significantly influenced by the work of Annette Merz and her interpretation of 2,8-15, that in turn provides the hermeneutical basis for Mitchell’s own interpretation of 2,1-7. The author of the pastoral epistles is involved in a "fictional self-interpretation" of the now-dead Paul by adopting Paul’s persona and through the explicit use of "Eigentextreferenzen" seeks to interpret the existing corpus Paulinum. Mitchell suggests that Paul himself initiated "the task of Pauline interpretation through self-interpretation" as can be seen, for example, "in the remarkable succession of missives amid misunderstanding written to Corinth." It is the historical Paul himself who inaugurated a process of "epistolary self-explanation, self-correction, and expansion." The Pastors continue this dynamic by seeking to "lock in a single chosen (frozen!) iconic version of Paul and his teaching" and by having "Paul" correct "his own legacy... against views the pseudopigraphical author deems mistaken." Merz's exegesis of 1 Tim 2,9-15 is presented in considerable detail as a way of demonstrating how such "corrective composition" works: the silent submission of women in 1 Cor 14,33-36 is "underscored" by "erasing" the possibility of women’s teaching or prophesying as presented in 1 Cor 11,2-16 and by "augmenting" the reference to creation in 1 Cor 11,2-16 with a "confute hermeneutic" involving 2 Cor 11,30.

19. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, pp. 43-44. 
20. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, p. 50. 
23. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, p. 44. 
24. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, p. 44. 
25. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, p. 44. 
26. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, p. 47.

Turning now to 1 Tim 2,1-8, Mitchell asks: "What elements in Paul’s own teaching on prayer did this author think required correction (both emendation and emphatic underscoring) for this present context?" In 1 Tim 2,1-4 the focus is on the beneficiaries of prayer and so at the very outset the emphasis is on "everyone" (2:1) followed by the appositional phrase in the next verse "for kings and all who are in high positions." Given the context of the second century the Paulinist author desires Paul to be seen "as having commanded his followers to place highest priority on standing in complete alignment with the forces of the imperium." Building on Rom 13,1-7, this prayer in 1 Timothy 2 not only wishes to "reinscribe" the reference to "all people" but also to make reference to "kings." Among the ways that this addition is made Pauline is by an "Eigentextreferenz," i.e., the exact citation of the oath formula in 1 Tim 2,7 taken over from Rom 9,1: "I am speaking the truth [in Christ] - I am not lying."

Not only is 1 Tim 2,1-7 interpreted as a corrective reading of Romans 8,13, but also 1 Tim 2,5-6a ("For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself as a ransom for all") as a corrective of 1 Cor 8,6 ("yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist"). Not only is there a shift from "all things," no doubt related to the problems created by idol meat in 1 Corinthians, to the "all" of humanity, but there is also the removal of "for us" from 1 Cor 8,6 which makes clear that God is no longer an "intractably religious possession" but rather a "universal ontological predication." In these ways the 1 Timothy text is made more "inclusive" due to later circumstances that Paul had not anticipated.

Included among the circumstances unforeseen by Paul are that some would call upon his letters to accuse those who follow Christ of treason; as a result it was important to modify 1 Tim 2,1-8 in order to make very clear that Paul was not opposed to prayer for kings/emperors and rulers. Paul, presented in this way, is in agreement with "imperial values" not only here but also with regard to his teachings on the role of women in the church that follow in 2,9-15. In this way, argues Mitchell, "Accommodation with the public order, in the polis and in private, through prayer

27. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, p. 48. 
28. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, p. 49. 
29. MITCHELL, "Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegesis," in this volume, p. 55.
and ἐποίησις which reflect domestic and civic piety, is ordained by Paul, and by God himself."30.

Thomas Söding

Thomas Söding’s paper, “1 Timotheus 3: Der Episkopos und die Dia
kone in der Kirche,”31 concentrates on the various dimensions of ecclesiology described in 1 Timothy 3, including specific descriptions of the church such as “the household of God” and “the pillar and bulwark of the truth” as well as the various ecclesial offices outlined in that chapter. But before proceeding to this discussion he engages with what we have already seen is an overriding concern for interpreters, viz., the authenticity of the Pastoral and their relationship to Paul. Söding attempts to overcome the current interpretative conflict between authentic and pseudepigraphic by arguing for a new methodological possibility. By concentrating on the canonical context it is possible to recognize the Pauline/non-Pauline tension within the text while simultaneously viewing “die Pastoralbriefe neu als Paulusbriefe…”32, new Pauline letters not historically but rather in terms of their reception and representation of Paul. “Dass die Pastoralbriefe paulinische Kontinuität inszenieren, schließt Abbrüche, Modifikationen und Innovationen ein, gibt sie aber als lebendige Tradition zu verstehen.”33 There are two immediate consequences of this canonical approach: 1. The ecclesiology of the Pastoral sheds light on the main Pauline letters as well as developing further the Apostle’s ecclesiology for a later period; additionally, Söding observes that whereas the Pauline letters intended to bridge geographical distances the Pastors bridge chronological ones.34 2. The ecclesiology of the Pastoral do not represent the entirety of Pauline ecclesiology but only a part and must always be seen as dependent upon and augmented by the letters of Paul as well as Colossians and Ephesians. “Dann wird deutlich, dass die Charismen lebendig bleiben müssen, wenn das Amt Konturen gewinnt, und dass der Geist sich nicht im Amtcharisma erschöpft; dann werden auch der Dienstcharakter des Amtes und die Aktivität aller Glaubenden am Aufbau der Kirche deutlicher.”35

30. MITCHELL, “Corrective Composition, Corrective Exegetis,” in this volume, p. 56.
32. Söding, “1 Timotheus 3,” in this volume, p. 65.
33. Söding, “1 Timotheus 3,” in this volume, p. 66.
34. Söding, “1 Timotheus 3,” in this volume, p. 67.
35. Söding, “1 Timotheus 3,” in this volume, p. 66.

Before one can properly understand the function of leadership roles in 1 Timothy it is critical to see how these functions within the context of the entire letter; here it is not irrelevant, for example, to observe that the prayer for the entire church in 1 Tim 2,1-7 precedes any discussion of the specific office of bishop and deacon. The fact is that these offices are not distinct from the church but belong to its very core and especially to its life of prayer; thus they are only discussed following the elucidation of the church’s mission. Also, the reference to “church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth” that follows in 1 Tim 3,14-16 connects the new, multifaceted role of these leaders with the very essence of the church. The letter known as 1 Timothy is written to Timothy, and through him to the entire church (cf. note the plural ὄνομα in 1 Tim 6,21, “Grace be with you”), precisely because “Timotheus ist die Brücke der Gemeinden mitsamt ihrem Episkopos, ihren Presbyteroi und Diakonoi zu Paulus – und deshalb eine Gestalt, die der Kirche Zukunft eröff
tet.”36

Following a discussion of the relationship between the differing functions of bishop and presbyter, terminology already found in Philippians 1, as well as those between bishop and deacon, it is proposed that the primary focus of leadership in 1 Timothy is the office of the bishop who serves as leader of the local church. Although deacons do not have this same role of leadership they bear important responsibilities for worship and acts of mercy. It is likely that bishops were selected from the circle of presbyters and prepared for this office by the laying on of hands, as was Timothy himself for his special role.37 With regard to the particular mandate that a bishop only be married once, it is urged that this is neither directed against either celibacy nor polygamy but rather against divorce and remarriage.38

As Söding moves toward the conclusion of his essay he once again refers to the theme of ecclesiology and specifically to the meaning of the phrase “house of God” located in 1 Tim 3,15. Whereas the term ἐκκλησία in 1 Tim 3,4 and 5,16 denotes the local church, here in 3,15 it signifies the “una sancta.” The phrase “house of God,” further described as the “church of the living God” and as the “mystery of faith” (3,16), has less to do with the patriarchal structures of a household than with the Temple. Such dominant language as truth and glory, mystery and confession, proclamation and faith, revelation and glory clearly

37. Söding, “1 Timotheus 3,” in this volume, p. 72.
38. Söding, “1 Timotheus 3,” in this volume, p. 78.
move in the direction not of the profane but of the sacred. All this calls attention to the relevance of the Temple imagery for understanding the portrayal of the church in 1 Tim 3,15-16, imagery dominant throughout the Pauline letters. The ἐκκλησία of 1 Timothy 3 "ist nicht nur von Gott gegründet; sie ist göttlicher Natur in dieser Welt"; 39 much like the Temple, the ἐκκλησία participates both in earthly and heavenly realms. And it is precisely this that drives the Pauline "Missionsdynamik" to proclaim the Gospel to the Gentile world. "Die Verkündigung Jesu Christi geschieht grundlegend durch den Apostel; der Glaube soll jetzt durch die Ordnung der Kirche und eine ihr gemäße Lehre auf Dauer gesichert werden." 40 Building on a canonical exegesis, Söding has attempted to bring to the forefront the apostolic continuity between the Pauline and the Pastoral letters.

Yann Redalé

As the title of Yann Redalé’s essay reveals, "...Sois un modèle pour les croyants Timothée, un portrait exhortatif, 1 Tim 4," 41 a theme central to 1 Timothy 4 is that Timothy should "set the believers an example." This goal is accomplished with enormous skill in this letter addressed to the Apostle’s young delegate that simultaneously addresses the Christians in Ephesus including those who are creating the various difficulties. It is a letter marked by careful structure and thus, for example, sections marked by polemic (1,3-20; 4,1-6; 6,3-16) alternate with those giving instructions related to the ongoing ordering of the community (2,1-3,13; 5,3-6,2). A closer examination of the exhortations in 1,3,18-20; 4,6-16; 6,11-14 reveals not only a dynamic relationship between them but also the careful use of the τόπος theme. Thus, the exhortation to Timothy in 4,12 that he become an example ("Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity") is preceded by the example of Paul himself as described in 1,15-16. Similarly the call to Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith" (6,12) is based on the prior example of Christ Jesus "who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession" (6,13). And one should not only note the close relationship between the exhortation to Timothy in 1,18 to the prior example but also its

repetition in the center of the letter, 3,14-15, as well as in 4,14, which demonstrates both Pauline normativity as well as the continuity of Timothy’s ministry with that of Paul.

For Redalé chapter 4 is critical for a proper understanding of 1 Timothy. “Dans la dynamique de ces exhortations,” he argues, “1 Tim 4 occupe une place centrale, et donne une certaine épaisseur à la figure de Timothée, contre-modèle des adversaires et modèle pour la communauté, en lui indiquant ses tâches comme enseignant dans une situation d’hérésie croisante.” 42 This chapter contains three essential components:

1. vv. 1-5 in which Paul refutes the false teachings of the opponents and counters their ascetic teachings with the goodness of God’s creation;
2. vv. 6-11 in which Timothy, in contrast to his opponents, exercises a piety (εὐσεβεία) that gives access to the true life promised by the living God to all humans;
3. vv. 12-16 in which Timothy, as a result of personal virtue and communal responsibility, will indicate the path that leads not only to his salvation but also the salvation of those who follow his example.

The central theme of 1 Tim 4,1-5 is the proper use of God’s creation and is given considerable attention. The argument of these verses is developed theologically in a typically apocalyptic style, viz., the “last times” are now, and by urging that Timothy must defend the community of believers against this threat led by some who have a “cauterized conscience” because of their distorted teaching concerning abstinence. Three related alterations advocated by these false teachers lead to a three-fold affirmation of God’s intentions concerning creation: what God created is to be received with thanksgiving (v. 30), it is good and is not to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving (v. 4) and “sanctified by God’s word and by prayer” (v. 5). Following a discussion of the terms μετάλημνης, καλόν, and ἀγιασμένα, Redalé draws the conclusion that to recognize God’s goodness in creation is related to a positive attitude toward the world and society: “Ces trois termes sont autant d’indices de l’extension à la socialité du jugement positif sur la création. L’évaluation positive de la création s’étend au monde compris comme vie sociale et citoyenne. L’attitude requise est un usage «pieux» du monde. Dans un monde où la distinction entre nature et culture n’est pas encore élaborée, il y a continuité entre le monde naturel et la société. L’ordre social est naturel. Or, pour qui reconnait dans la nature la création bonne de Dieu,

39. SÖDING, "1 Timotheus 3," in this volume, p. 83.
40. SÖDING, "1 Timotheus 3," in this volume, p. 86.
1 Tim 4," in this volume, pp. 87-108.

42. REDALÉ, “Sois un modèle pour les croyants,” in this volume, p. 90.
ceste évaluation positive s’étend à une attitude positive envers le monde et la société.243

Turning to vv. 7-10, emphasis is given to σεβαστον – “train yourself in godliness” (v. 7) and the significance of this theme in 1 Timothy, including 4,16 (ἐγείρετε σεβαστofile), 4,14 (ἐν σοί χρηστότητος), 4,15 (σου ἡ προκοπή), all of which are intricately related to exhortation τύπος γίνον in 4,12. Redalé correctly notes that the author of 1 Timothy, by accenting reflexive pronouns and stressing Timothy’s personal qualifications, is not engaging in the broader philosophical theme of “becoming oneself” but rather encouraging him to become “a good servant of Christ Jesus” (v. 6)46.

The third and final section of chapter three includes v. 11-16 and is marked by ten exhortations to Timothy as well as the necessity for him to serve as an example by the quality of his personal life.42 The use of ἐν ἀναστροφή in v. 12 links this concentration of responsibilities with the central passage in 3,14-16 about “how one ought to behave (ἀναστροφήθη) in the household of God” (v. 15)46. By conducting himself in such a manner, Timothy will serve as the representative of Paul and in this way Paul will be present in this post-Pauline situation. Redalé summarizes this dimension of 1 Timothy succinctly and with insight: “Oh l’a vu, dans la progression de 1 Tm, l’expression «modèle (τύπος) des croyants» renvoie à 1 Tm 1,16, où Paul était présenté comme «prototype (ὑποτύπωσις) de ceux qui allait croire». [...]. Le «type» renvoie d’abord au «prototype», à Paul, origine historique unique dont la «présence / absence» est signalée par un «jusqu’à ce que je vienne» (1Tm 4,13) qui qualifie Timothée comme présence de Paul, comme son représentant.”47

Redalé concludes his analysis by linking 1 Tim 4,15 (“Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress”) with the ἐνδείξεσθαι of 1,16 (“But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display ἐνδείξεσθαι the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life”). As Jesus and Paul made the Gospel visible in word and deed, so must Timothy; in fact, he marks the moment of ecclesial “visibility” during the interval between

44. REDALÉ, “Sois un modèle pour les croyants,” in this volume, p. 98.
47. REDALÉ, “Sois un modèle pour les croyants,” in this volume, p. 104.

Paul and the final coming. “En fin de compte, c’est une exhortation à la manifestation. L’éthique est ici communicative avant d’être morale.”48

David Horrell

As the title of David Horrell’s paper, “Disciplining Performance and ‘Placing’ the Church: Widows, Elders and Slaves in the Household of God (1 Tim 5,1-6,2),”49 already reveals the themes of “performance” and “space” are central categories in his analysis of 1 Tim 5,1-6,2. Before proceeding to specific application of these means of analysis, Horrell makes reference to various controversial issues in the analysis of 1 Timothy. First, there is the divide in scholarship concerning authenticity and pseudonymity. He himself inclines toward the latter, even to the point of including Timothy as a device of pseudonymity. Second, there is the “contrasting reading stances”50 that have been applied to 1 Timothy as a result of conflicting theological positions. In this context he makes particular reference to Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza’s influence on “subsequent feminist scholarship with her depiction of the Pastorals as evidence of ‘patriarchalisation’ in the early church, a transformation away from the early model of ‘the discipleship of equals.”51 Third, there is the degree of confidence that one places in the author’s rhetoric. If one agrees, for example, with William Mounce and Bruce Winter, that among some widows there is an acceptance of an Ephesian heresy as well as more promiscuous behavior that needs to be corrected then one will have a very different reading of 1 Timothy 5 than does Jouette Bassler who understands the widows “as representative of an ascetic lifestyle” characteristic of the apocryphal Acts.52 Even though Horrell sides with those who read the author’s rhetoric with a degree of suspicion and resists taking it at face value, his goal, nevertheless, is to transcend these “options of sympathy and suspicion” by turning to the theme of “performance”53.

Relying on anthropological studies that view culture “as something that is performed,”54 Horrell suggests that one can approach 1 Timothy
by inquiring how both its author as well as his opponents conceive that the roles of elder, widow and slave should be performed. "One advantage of this approach is that it offers an alternative conceptualization to one which casts the author in the role of either defender of orthodoxy or power-wielding patriarch."55 A second and closely related theme in this essay is the theme of "place" and, specifically, that space is constructed in particular social and ideological ways that lead to the "making of place." To illustrate this point reference is made to the study of S. C. Barton dealing with 1 Corinthians that distinguishes "οἰκος-space from εκκλησία-space"56. Key for Horrell is this premise of "making place" and particularly how the author of 1 Timothy constructs ecclesial space and its relationship to household space.

Following these preliminary and methodological comments, the essay turns to the individual sections of 1 Timothy 5, beginning with the first two verses and the initial question about the meaning of the term πρεσβυτέρος? It represents neither an office nor simply the question of age but rather a "senior social position." Already here the linkage between seniority in the household and in the church reveals "the author’s tendency to construct the church as οἰκος-space" where the church "is regarded as a family, a fictive kin-group or extended household."57

Verses 3,5-16 are concerned with the question about who should count as a "genuine widow." If one translates τίμη as to "give financial support," then this becomes the church’s dominant goal with regard to these widows. First, however, it must be stated that the primary responsibility for this must rest with the widow’s family. Once it has been determined that this is not possible then follow questions about the status and conduct of the widow herself; she must be at least sixty years old, she must be a ἀνδρικός γυνή, "a one-man woman," and her character must be marked by good works. Once a widow is found to be genuine, what does it mean that she will be "enrolled" (καταλέγεται) or included in a list? Are they enrolled into a formal office with specified duties? No, urges Horrell, since the list of formal duties cited in these verses belong to what these persons have done in the past and does not mark a new set of future responsibilities on behalf of the church. This position is supported by the distinction between Stand and Αmt that has been made by Jürgen Roloff: "widows constitute a Stand in that they form an institutionalised group with specific conditions of entry and patterns of life, but


not an Αmt, or office, for which established functions would be appropriate."58

The author of 1 Timothy is apprehensive about two tendencies among potential widows: that younger widows, despite a possible ascetic tendency toward celibacy, may at a later point wish to marry and, further, that they are promoting an interpretation of the "faith that the author finds objectionable and heretical"59 and for this reason they are described by 1 Timothy as "going after Satan" (1,15). For Horrell the "author’s response is therefore to direct (βούλομαι is strong here) younger widows to reintegrate themselves into the structure and activities of the (male-dominated) household: to marry, bear children, and οἰκοδομοῦσαι."60 In this way the role of the widow can be appropriately performed.

1 Timothy 5,17-25 deals with a variety of issues concerning the elders – their support, discipline and method of appointment – as well as some other apparently unrelated pieces of advice including that Timothy no longer drink only water (μηκέτι διδριστότετι, v. 23), probably a sign of asceticism that the author wishes to counter and appears to be part of a larger anti-ascetic concern of this letter. The final verses of this section of 1 Timothy are addressed to slaves and the need for them to show respect for their masters. What is at issue is that believing slaves who share a common identity as δομοί with their masters were more inclined to treat them as family equals rather than demonstrating the respect requisite to their superior social position. Agreeing with Margaret Mitchell’s use of the terminology “corrective exegesis,” Horrell argues that this exhortation to slaves involves a “corrective exegesis” of what Paul himself had urged in his letter to Philemon. With this in mind, as well as aspects of his previous analysis, Horrell concludes that all “this and more shows how deeply the author’s sense of ecclesial space is formed by a household ideology, and how this household model is seen as the appropriate basis for the disciplining of role-performance in the church and the world. ‘Placing’ the church as household shapes the instruction the author gives, and helps to explain its particular character.”61

Vasile Mihoc

The focus of Vasile Mihoc’s essay, “The Final Admonition to Timothy (1 Tim 6,3-21),” is to provide an analysis of the final chapter of 1 Timothy. Rather than simply comprising a collection of miscellaneous instructions and exhortations, 1 Tim 6,3-21 repeats the letter’s basic themes—opposition to the opponents and support for Timothy—and thus serves as an appropriate conclusion to the letter. The first of these themes occupies 6,3-10 and the second, with its concluding charge to Timothy to “guard the deposit,” is contained in 6,11-21a, followed by a final blessing intended for the entire congregation in v. 21b. Before proceeding with a more detailed analysis of the chapter, Mihoc pauses to identify a number of parallels and similarities within 1 Timothy as well as other passages in the Pastoral. Possible connections include a) the correlations found in the first and last chapter of 1 Timothy; b) the antithetic relationship between 6,3-10, with its negative portrayal of the opponents, and 3,1-13, requiring the opposite qualities for leaders in the church; and, c) the linkages connecting the doxologies in 1,17 and 6,15-16 as well as those in 1 Tim 6,12-14 and 2 Tim 4,6-8. For Mihoc “there is a clear progression and a natural flow of thought in this final section of the epistle” and he maintains that 6,3-21 is structured according to an alternating A B A’ B’ pattern:

- false teaching, especially on riches 6,3-10; 6,17-19;
- Timothy’s own attitude and behavior 6,11-16; 6,20-21a.

Turning now to 6,3-10, verses dealing with false teaching, it is pointed out that v. 3 contains a threefold test of orthodoxy; proper teaching agrees with Paul, conforms to the sound words of the Lord Jesus Christ and must be in accordance to ἐνορθήσει. Translating ἐνορθήσει as “godliness,” Mihoc proceeds to challenge those who hold that the appearance of this word in the Pastors indicates that they have succumbed to a secular morality, a compromise with the world and an attachment to a “bourgeois” ethic. Quite the contrary! ἐνορθήσει is filled with a new Christian meaning in the Pastors despite its common and secular usage in the Roman world and 1 Tim 3,16 “magnificently expresses this new meaning, making evident that ‘godliness’ is theologically anchored in the Christ-event itself”.

The Pastors ἐνορθήσει belongs to a word-group related to “the knowledge of God and such related concepts including gospel and truth (1 Tim 6,3,5,6,11; Tit 1,1)”⁶⁷. Ἐνορθήσει defined in this way stands in marked contrast to the superficial form of ἐνορθήσει of the false teachers that is marked by arrogance, ignorance and disputatiousness. These teach not from knowledge but from “knowing nothing”⁶⁸. In addition, Mihoc emphasizes, “‘pure faith’ or ‘doctrine’ expressed in ‘righteous life’—this is indeed the meaning of ἐνορθήσει as used in the Pastors”⁶⁹. Since the righteous life is of such importance to the author of 1 Timothy he must not only expose the false teachers’ erroneous claim that godliness is a means of financial gain but he must, in the complement to this section (6,17-19), provide instruction to the rich about using wealth in such a manner that it will lead to the reception of eternal life.

The next section, 6,11-16, follows the critique of false teaching by once again providing encouragement to Timothy as well as an exhortation “to keep the commandment (τὴν ἐνορθῶσιν) unstained and free from reproach until ‘the manifestation’ of Christ (v. 14)”⁷⁰. The exact meaning of the term ἐνορθῶσιν is unclear, although Mihoc inclines with Cyril of Jerusalem to interpret it as “the totality of the ethical demands of the gospel”⁷¹. The counterpart to this section, 6,20-21a, also contains a term that is not immediately apparent: παραθηκή. Timothy is instructed to “guard the deposit entrusted to him” (v. 20a); but what is the content of this παραθηκή? This term, urges Mihoc, is being used metaphorically and refers to the “entire apostolic teaching. This ‘deposit’ is therefore synonymous with other terms employed in the Pastors, such as τίτως, ‘the faith’ (3,9,13; 4,6,12,21), or ἀληθεία, ‘the truth’ (1 Tim 2,4,7; 3,15; 4,3; 6,5; 2 Tim 1,15,18,25; 3,7,8; 4,4; Tit 1,1,14), and somewhat analogous to ἐνορθῶσιν, ‘the commandment’ (6,14)”⁷². This exhortation to “guard the deposit” and the renewed warning about the perilous consequences of false teaching allow Paul to bring to a conclusion the concerns “with which he opened the letter (1,3ff), concerns that are sustained throughout (1,18-20; 4,1ff; 6,3ff) and which unambiguously demonstrate the unity of 1 Timothy”⁷³.

⁶². Vasile Mihoc, “The Final Admonition to Timothy (1 Tim 6,3-21),” in this volume, pp. 135-152.
FIRST TIMOTHY 1,1-20: THE SHAPE OF THE STRUGGLE

LUKE TIMOTHY JOHNSON

The letters to Paul’s delegates seem to require a declaration concerning one’s presuppositions concerning the nature of the compositions as a whole before undertaking the examination of any part, because the basic options concerning the historical placement of these letters appear to demand quite different strategies of reading. One must, it seems, choose between regarding these letters as authentically Pauline – produced in the apostle’s lifetime under his authorization – or as pseudonymous productions of a later generation.

Among contemporary scholars – and those taught by them – the view that “the pastoral letters” are pseudonymous has the status of a virtual dogma. In the face of such overwhelming opinion few are willing to risk embracing them as authentic Pauline compositions. Such was not always the case. Indeed, for eighteen centuries all readers of these compositions assumed that they were by Paul. Such widespread acceptance is the more notable because of the willingness to challenge the authenticity of other NT compositions. The Pauline character of Hebrews was challenged very early, and in the period of the Reformation, the apostolic authorship of James was questioned1. Yet, until the 1807, when Schleiermacher issued the first public challenge to Paul’s authorship of 1 Timothy and in the course of the nineteenth century a completely different consensus was forged2, all three letters were read as Pauline in every respect3.

1. Eusebius reports on the doubts concerning the authorship of Hebrews expressed by Origen (Historia Ecclesiastica 6.25.11-24) and others, including the church at Rome (Historia Ecclesiastica 3.3.5). The apostolic authorship of James was challenged by Erasmus in Annotationes in Epistolam Jacobi [1516], Thomas de Vio (Caetani) in Epistulae Pauli et aliorum Apotorum ad Graecam Castigata [1529], and Martin Luther, Preface to the New Testament [1522].

2. J.E.C. Schmidt had three years earlier questioned the possibility of placing 1 Timothy into the ministry of Paul (Historisch-Kritische Einleitung ins Neue Testament, Giessen, Tasche und Muller, 1804), but it was Freidrich Schleiermacher who explicitly challenged the Pauline authorship of 1 Timothy – partly by contrasting it to the other Pastoralis – in his public letter to J.C. Gass, Über den sogenannten Ersten Brief des Paulus an den Timotheus: Ein Kritisches Senschreiben, Berlin, Realschulbuchhandlung, 1807. Despite extensive and vigorous rebuttals of Schleiermacher, the adoption of his position by such prominent
Each option has its own angle of vision: if the letters are authentic, we hope to learn something about Paul’s thought in response to first-generation ecclesiastical situations; if they are pseudigraphical, then we expect to learn something about late first or early second century ecclesiastical conditions and a forger’s ideological position with respect to them. Each position has its corollaries: if regarded as authentic, the letters can be read in the same manner as Paul’s other missives, that is, as real letters written to actual situations in specific communities, with literary and thematic connections possible with all the other letters; if regarded as inauthentic, they are read not as real but as fictive letters, pieces of a single literary enterprise, and to be interpreted, not in the context of Paul’s other letters, but with respect only to each other.

The passage I consider in this essay sharply exposes the two basic options. In 1 Tim 1.1-20, do we find the first-century Paul instructing his delegate Timothy about real opposition that has arisen in the church at Ephesus in the form of those seeking to be teachers of law? Read this way, the passage enables the interpreter to pose questions about an actual reader and real opponents. The context for answering these questions, scholars as J.G. Eichhorn (1812), F.C. Baur (1835), and W.M.L. de Wette (1844) swung scholarly opinion toward his position. By the end of the century, the massive authority of H.J. Holtzmann Lehrbuch der historisch-kritisch Einleitung in das Neue Testament, Freiburg, Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1892, established the pseudonymity of all three writings as the only scholarly position. For this history, see L.T. Johnson, The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 35A), New York, Doubleday, 2001, pp. 42-54.

3. Martin Luther began a series of lectures on 1 Timothy in 1535, in which he finds nothing that he does not recognize as Pauline. He considers Paul’s words in the law in 1:8, for example, “a fine passage about the understanding, or knowledge of the law. Paul explains it more fully in Rom 7.” See Luther’s Works 28:228. And in a sermon devoted to 1 Tim 1:5-7, he says, “Now these are deep and genuinely Pauline words, and besides they are very rich, so we must explain them somewhat in order that we might understand it a little and become accustomed to his language” (Luther’s Works 5:1267).


5. Unfortunately, one of the effects of the near-universal acceptance of the pseudonymity hypothesis is that even the few scholars wanting to assert Pauline authorship fall into the trap of reading these letters in isolation from the other Pauline letters.

6. The “Timothy” to whom the letter is addressed would be constructed from the evidence provided by Acts 16, 1:18, 5; 19:22; 1 Thess 3:2; Phil 2, 19; 1 Cor 4, 17; 16, 10-11; Rom in turn, is provided by Paul’s ministry as we know it from Acts and his other letters. Read from the perspective of pseudonymity, in contrast, the passage appears to establish a framework of Pauline authority to ground a set of ecclesiastical directives that are thought to be pertinent to Pauline churches in the late first or early second century. The literary presentation is to be understood as a form of code: these are not three letters but a single composition in the form of three discrete letters; the “opposition” (a composite drawn from all three letters) is not set against the Paul and Timothy of the first century, but against unnamed second-century leaders represented by the “Timothy” of the composition who remain loyal to “Paul” in changed circumstances.

When I began to learn biblical criticism as a young monk, I had absolutely no difficulty accepting the dominant hypothesis, in part because I did not have any reason to question the superior judgment of recognized scholars when delivered with such unnamable and authority, in part because I found no theological difficulty associated with pseudonymity; the letters remained part of the canon and therefore part of Scripture, whether they were by Paul or not. I began to break from the scholarly majority only when I began teaching theology students New Testament Introduction at Yale Divinity School in 1976.

I found that, however much energy and intelligence I put into the task, I could not convincingly defend the reasons adduced for the hypothesis, discovering at the same time that most scholars who asserted the position offered at best only the evidence in favor of the scholarly consensus and none of the evidence that a considerable and substantial body of scholarship had adduced against it. More troubling, I began to see that for many scholars and students alike, there were theological implications...
deriving from pseudonymity. If not Pauline, then the letters were not considered authoritative, and were increasingly moved to the edge or even out of the canon of Scripture. The main argument against authenticity today is the sheer weight of scholarly consensus. Many commentaries and New Testament Introductions do not even bother arguing the case, contenting themselves with a short recitation of selected data that supports the hypothesis of pseudonymity with no consideration of counter-evidence; the position is not presented as a hypothesis or theory but as a scholarly dogma. Scholarly monographs simply assume the dominant hypothesis and build upon it as though it were solid rock. Yet the criteria for testing the authenticity first developed by Schleiermacher (placement within Paul's ministry, consistency in style and teaching, nature of opposition, degree of institutionalization) have not significantly been developed over the centuries nor have they gained in plausibility; if anything, the opposite is the case. The criteria are both formally problematic and materially insufficient. Above all, the hypothesis is shaky because of its dependence

11. As A. Schweitzer acutely noted in Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History, W. Montgomery (trans.), New York, Schocken Books, 1964 (reprint of 111), p. 27, the rejection of six letters as inauthentic meant that for discussions of Paul and his theology, even those advocating authenticity were forced to use as evidence only those letters agreed by all to be by Paul. An revealing example is found in V.P. Fuwowski, Pauline Studies in the New Testament and its Modern Interpreters, E. J. Epp and G.W. MacRae (eds.), Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989, p. 326. Furnish accurately reports that the Pastors are not regarded by most as authentic and gives them no more attention. Fair enough. But whereas the volume contains essays on Coptic writings, apocryphal gospels and acts, and the other NT writings (at least in clusters), it has no essays devoted to the disputed Pauline letters. Out of Paul means out of canon, and even out of mind!

12. On scholarly construals achieving the status of dogma, see the remark of B. Weiss concerning the majority position on the Letter of James: "The newer critics also have their unshakable dogmas and tenacious traditions!" See Der Jakobsbrief und die Neuere Kritik, Leipzig, Dietz'sche, 1904, p. 30. I provide a list of the overwhelming number of contemporary histories, introductions, and commentaries, in which the majority position is stated with virtually no genuine argument in support, in The First and Second Letters to Timothy, pp. 50-53.


14. The premise that an ancient author should reveal a consistent Greek style – to be determined by word-statistics or use of particles – is one that flies in the face of common sense (diction alters according to subject matter) and the actual evidence – Lucian's Satires reveal a wide spectrum of styles, Luke-Acts demonstrates distinct styles in different settings, there are real differences within the undisputed letters), but ignores the fact that in ancient rhetoric, the stylistic principle of prospopopisis (writing in character or according to circumstance) was paramount.

15. It is certainly the case that these letters are difficult to "fit into Paul's ministry" – especially Titus – but the same can be said of the majority of letters ascribed to Paul, and the analysis is not made easier by the insistence that all the letters have to come from the same setting. Using Acts and the entire Pauline corpus, we can with some degree of certainty locate 1 Thessalonians and (if authentic) 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans. Galatians is notoriously difficult to locate either geographically or temporally. And the captivity letters (including Philemon, Philippians, 2 Timothy, Colossians and Ephesians) are all capable of being placed in diverse times and places. The fact that scholars invent an Ephesian captivity untested in any source in order to account for the (equally dubious) theory of multiple notes written to the Philippians, should indicate that the situation with respect to 1 and 2 Timothy is not more severe.

16. The principle that the Pastors must rise or fall together with regard to authenticity was enunciated by J.G. Eichhorn, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, vol III, 1, Leipzig, Weidmann'schen Buchhandlung, 1812. Eichhorn in fact claims that he had questioned the authenticity of the Pastors in his lectures before Schleiermacher's book appeared.

17. Not least do they differ with respect to their genre. Contrary to common opinion, 2 Timothy is not a form of testamentary literature (which by its very nature demands pseudonymity), but it is the New Testament’s most perfect example of a personal parastic letter – in form with elements of proteptic as appropriate to the situation of addressing a delegate. 1 Timothy and Titus, in turn, are mandata principis letters, mixing the entolai concerning community life that the delegate is to enforce, and advice directed to the moral character of the delegate; see Itohson, The First and Second Letters to Timothy, pp. 137-142, 320-324.
arguments against authenticity in general — is that the distinctiveness of this particular Pauline cluster can be accounted for on grounds other than the passage of time, circumstance, and author. In fact, they can be accounted for in much the same manner as the distinctive Thessalonian or Corinthian correspondence.

In my own work, I have tried to assess the particular character of the three letters to Paul’s delegates in terms of four factors: the shape of Paul’s ministry, the character of Paul’s correspondence (with particular attention to the meaning of “authorship” as applied to any of his letters), the role of Paul’s delegates, and the literary form of the respective letters. Then, I try to consider the specific situation and rhetoric of each letter as I would with any other Pauline epistle, entering into comparison and contrast with other compositions only when the self-presentation of each letter has been given full weight.

The most important adjustment is the critical assessment, not of the “authorship” of the Pastoral, but what we mean by “authorship” in the case of all the Pauline letters. Several aspects of recent scholarship on Paul converge (or ought to converge) to suggest a more complex model for the composition of Paul’s letters, one in which “Paul’s School” is present and active in his correspondence during his lifetime. Paul’s “authorship” should be seen as a form of “authorizing” compositions that in all likelihood involved the efforts of his fellow-workers as well as himself. When all of these factors are taken into account, it is possible to make perfectly good sense of these particular letters as authentically Pauline, that is, as written under Paul’s authorization during his ministry.

Having stated the inevitability of dealing with the issue of authenticity in the case of these letters, and having stated my own position on that question, I need to assert as well the importance of bracketing that issue if we are to read these letters freshly and learn anything new from them. Here, I return to my earlier point concerning the importance of dealing with each letter individually in terms of its self-presentation. Theories of authorship are of little help when we seek to engage the logic of a specific passage in these or any other letters ascribed to Paul. If we seek historical information, for example, we realize that the two options are less distant than might be supposed. The “historical” Paul, after all, did not report the facts as they were but constructed a rhetorical situation from his own perspective — there is, inevitably, some “fictional” element in all of Paul’s letters. Similarly, a pseudopigrapher’s fictional literary construction may have had a basis not only in contemporary but also in earlier experience.

Similarly, if we seek understanding of a letter’s rhetorical character or religious convictions, theories of authorship seem even less pertinent. They can, in fact, block a close reading of the actual text because we assume we know already what the text is doing. Rather than beginning from the perspective of authorship and date, then, the reading of specific passages should start as much as possible with the self-presentation of the Greek text, and only secondarily reflect on the implications of its argument for the issue of historical placement. This is the procedure I follow in my reading of 1 Tim 1:1-20.

I. Preliminary Observations

Some aspects of this introductory passage are clear and require little comment. The personal and filial language Paul addresses to Timothy, them; over the course of time, there is give and take between the executive and his staff, with each proposing wording or examples, and with the president, perhaps even at the last minute, adding his own phrasing. However the complex the process, when the president addresses the joint houses of congress, it is his speech; he has “authorized” it from beginning to end, even if many minds and hands have contributed to its shaping.

22. Timothy is addressed as “genuine child” (γυνής τέκνον) in 1:2 and in the vocative as “child Timothy” (τέκνον Τιμοθέου) in 1:18. Paul speaks to him directly, using the second-person personal pronoun (τοι, του) in 1:3 and 1:18.
the identification of the would-be teachers, and the recollection both of Paul’s and Timothy’s call to ministry, make this passage an appropriate introduction to the specific mandate that Paul begins to enumerate in 2,12. Paul and Timothy are together called to a noble battle (καὶ λόγου στρατεύματι, 1,18) for the faith that joins them to each other (γιὰ τῆς τέκνου ἐν πίστες, 1,2) in the shared hope (τῆς ἐλπίδος ἡμῶν, 1,1) which is Christ Jesus. After the greeting, the passage is neatly framed on one side by Paul’s exhortation that Timothy should command (παραγγελίας) certain people not to advance other teaching (1,3) and on the other side by Paul’s imposition of the commandment (παραγγελίαν παρατηθεῖσαν) on Timothy that he engage in battle (1,18). These personal exhortations stand in contrast to the communal instructions that Paul begins to elaborate in 2,1-3,13, and serve to authorize Timothy as Paul’s delegate to the Ephesian church.

The immediate context of this passage (στρατεύμα, 1,18) is appropriate, for Paul constructs the rhetorical situation in terms of a stark contrast — indeed a contest — between those certain people (τινὲς, 1,3,7,19) who “teach other” (ἐπισκέπτεσθαι, 1,3),26 among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander (1,20), on one side, and, on the other side, “the healthy teaching according to the good news” (ἡγιάσασθαι διακοσμηθῆναι κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, 1,10-11), to which both Paul (1,12) and his delegate Timothy (1,18) have been committed.

The description of the opposition bears marks of the stereotypical slander found in fights among ancient philosophers. Little specific can be learned from the charge that they are devoted to myths and endless genealogies (1,4) that give rise to speculations (1,4), or that they are foolish in speech (1,6), or that they are ignorant, knowing neither the things they are saying or upon which they insist (1,6-7). Such charges, like those found later in the letter, are standard items in antiquity’s catalogues of polemic.27

23. The author characterizes the behavior of “some” (τινὲς) to avoid in 1,4-7 and 1,19, and provides the names of Hymenaeus and Alexander in 1,20.
24. Paul speaks of being placed in service in 1,12 and of Timothy being commissioned by prophetic utterances in 1,18.
25. For the understanding of 1 Timothy as a mandata principis letter, see JOHNSON, The First and Second Letters to Timothy, pp. 137-142.
26. The use of ἐπισκέπτεσθαι in 1,3 and 6:3 is a word of Schleiermacher (pp. 90-91) with his point of entry for the questioning of the diction throughout 1 Timothy, since he could find no attestation of the term as early as Paul, and that it was attested in patristic literature after Paul. Anticipating other selective displays of evidence, he does not mention Paul’s fondness generally for ἐπισκέπτεσθαι (see 1 Cor 14,21; 2 Cor 6,14; 11,4; Gal 1,6).

That Paul uses stereotypical slander in the manner of other ancient philosophers is no surprise. There are, however, some aspects of the description of the opposition that suggest a specific profile. Paul does not suggest that these are people outside the community, for example, who are “from the circumcision party” (see Titus 1,10) or who are “sneaking into households” (2 Tim 3,6); rather, they appear to be completely within the range of Paul’s and his delegate’s authority; Timothy can “command” them (1,3) and Paul can excommunicate them (1,20).29 Similarly, the charge of ignorance gains some specificity from three further aspects of Paul’s depiction. The first is that they have intellectual ambition: they seek or want to be “teachers of law” (θεολογοί ἐλάχιστον νομοδιδάσκαλοι, 1,7). The second is that they have “missed the mark” (ἀποτέλεσμας) concerning essential things and have “turned aside” (ἐξετάσθησαν) to foolishness (1,6), have “spared” (ὑποκρίσθησαν) the essentials and have “suffered shipwreck” (ἐκβιάσθησαν, 1,19). The third is that Paul has handed them over to Satan precisely so that they might be “instructed” (παιδευθῶσιν, 1,20). The opposition, in short, is long on ambition but short on talent, and because they fail to understand the basic truth, fall away from it themselves. They miss, Paul says, the τέλος τῆς παραγγελίας (1,5), which we might translate as the “point” or the “goal” of the commandment.

This point of the commandment, Paul says, is not the knowledge of extraneous realities (“myths and genealogies”) but the imposition of a heteronomous norm (“law”), but the cultivation of moral dispositions internal to humans. In 1,5 he speaks of this τέλος as “love from a pure heart and a good conscience, and sincere faith,” and in 1,19 speaks of engaging the noble battle with “faith and a good conscience.” The occurrence of “faith” (πίστευς) in each statement to characterize the response of Paul and his delegate does not surprise, since, as we have seen, he has called Timothy his genuine child ἐν πίστει (1,2) and speaks of the mercy shown him by Christ as an example “for those coming to have faith in him” (τῶν μετὰ ἐπιστεύσαντας ἐπὶ ἀφετέρου, 1,16).

Indeed, in 1,5 Paul opposes a preoccupation with myths and genealogies that give rise to speculations with the ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ τῆς ἐν πίστει (1,4). Both the text and translation of this sentence are difficult.

28. As in Rom 15,17-19; 2 Cor 10,13-15; Phil 3,19; Gal 6,13; 1 Thess 1,3-6.
29. I am assuming here that the “handing over to Satan” for instructional purposes is more like 1 Cor 5,5 than not.
and disputed. I take the phrase ὀξυνομία θεοῦ as the preferred reading, and translate it as "God’s way of ordering [or, disposing] things" (note the echo of ἐν πίστει θεοῦ in 1,1). The phrase ἐν πίστει, in turn, can modify either the character of God’s dispensation — it is all about faith — or the character of the human response — it is to be received in faith — or even both. But that Paul here sets "faith" (with its internal dispositions) over against the pretenders’ understanding of "law" (as a heteronomous norm) is made clear by his conclusion in 1,19 that the spurning of faith and good conscience by some has meant suffering shipwreck περὶ τῆν πίστιν. Two interrelated contrasts, therefore, dominate the passage, that between God’s dispensation and human ambition, and that between internal disposition and external norm.

II. The Exegetical Challenge

The relative clarity of these contrasts throws into greater relief the difficulty presented by the two elements that form the heart of the passage, namely Paul’s “clarifying” statement concerning the law in 1,8-11, and his description of his conversion and call in 1,12-17. Each section poses severe problems. In the first, what does Paul mean by calling the law good, ἦν τίς τις νομίμους χρήσει (1,8)? For that matter, what does ἔχει ἐν χώρᾳ by the law (ό νομος)? What is the precise significance of the word-play κεῖται / ἀντικεῖται in 1,9-10? Why is the vice-list of 1,9-10 personal, and why are the characterizations so extreme? Why does the conclusion to the list shift from wicked persons to impersonal vice (τί ἐπέτρεψε) opposed to the healthy teaching according to the good news (1,10-11)?

In the second section, why does Paul speak of himself not only as a persecutor but also as βλέψαμεν and ὀδηγείται, and why does he connect his former ἐγνώσει with ἀπειθήσθα in his explanation for God’s mercy toward him (1,13)? Why does he speak of the χάρις God showed him as an “empowerment” (1,12), and as an outpouring of the “faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (1,14)? Why does he include (as a “faithful saying”) a statement about Jesus’ coming into the world to save sinners, and speak of God’s gift to him as an example for those coming to have faith (1,15-16)? And why is this entire section framed as a thanksgiving to Jesus that concludes with a doxology to God (1,17)?

I cannot hope to answer all these questions in a single essay, but I do want to suggest that progress can be made by placing this entire central part of the first chapter within the framework of dyadic contrast that Paul establishes on either side of it, and then by reading these two sections in light of each other. The approach is as old as Augustine: facing difficult passages, move from the more to the less certain. The premise, the list of vices in Col 3,8; Eph 5,3-4; Gal 5,19-21; and 1 Tim 6,4 are all impersonal. The list in 1 Cor 6,5-10 is personal, and that in Rom 1,29-31 is mixed, beginning impersonally and shifting to the personal.

31. Κιλίδος & νόμος echoes Rom 7,16, σώμα της νόμος ὅτι καλός, while the adverb νομίμως finds a parallel in 2 Tim 2,5. The verb χρήσει occurs also in 1 Cor 7,21; 31; 9,12; 15; 2 Cor 1,17; 3,12; 13,10 as well as 1 Tim 5,23, with much the same meaning of "put to use" in each instance; apart from Acts 27,3,17, the verb is restricted in the NT to Paul.
32. Note that the adjective "Ισορροπῆς is not used here or with reference to "myths and genealogies" in 1,4, in contrast to the Ἰσορροπῆς μήδες in Tit 1,14. That νόμος here means at least the commandments in Torah is an inference drawn from two things: the ability to discern the frame of the Decalogue beneath 1,9-10, and Paul’s usage elsewhere.
33. That the word-play is deliberate is supported by the play on νόμος/νομίμως in the same sentence; precisely the fact that the paired terms are rhythmically matched, however, cautions the reader against excessive precision in their translation, particularly when trying to draw conclusions concerning the status of the law for believers generally. Here the application of the terms is made more complex by the disparity of the two phrases in the dative case, διὰ τῆς (1,9) and τῇ ἐπιστήμη τῆς διάκοσμος in 1,10; in my Anchor Bible translation, I have "is not laid down for a righteous person" and "opposed to the healthy teaching."
Paul is deliberately identifying himself in his former life with those who, in their faithlessness and ignorance, now wish to be teachers of law. This deliberate linking helps account, in turn, for three further features of the vice-list. First, Paul lists “persons with vices” rather than abstract vice-designations (“lawless people,” ἄνομοι, rather than “lawlessness,” ἄνομία), because the issue raised by the opponents who wish to be teachers of law is how to be a “righteous person” within the community. It is for this reason that Paul puts the argument on the level of persons and their character. Second, Paul’s list of unrighteous persons focuses entirely on religious and moral qualities rather than ritual obligations. The suggestion that the ten commandments serves as a loose organizing principle for this vice-list has merit. Third, throughout the list, Paul chooses words that express extremely negative moral dispositions or characters: they do not simply commit the act of killing, they are “people who kill mothers” (μητρολόγις) and “people who kill fathers (πατρολόγις);” they do not commit adultery, they are “people who fornicate (πόρνος) and are sexually perverted (αὐτοκόιτας);” they not only steal, they are “people who sell into slavery (ἀνθρωποδιοίκηται).” These dramatic examples match the extravagant characterization of Paul in his former life as a persecutor, blasphemer, and violent man. Paul was, in short, much as the people he lists in his faithlessness, ignorance, violence, and blasphemy.

In light of his own (and, he assumes, Timothy’s) experience, Paul can declare of the law “this thing” (τοῦτο), namely that it is not laid down (κέται) for the righteous person, but rather for those who act in a way contrary (ἀντίκειται) to the healthy teaching of the good news from God. What he means, I think, is that the law can identify wicked behavior, but the law cannot generate positive righteous dispositions, and, by implication, if the righteous dispositions are in place, then the law can add nothing to them. The essential moral transformation has already been accomplished, not by the keeping of law but by God’s gift.

The point of Paul’s thanksgiving, in turn, is to assert that, in his case, remarkably, God worked such a moral transformation as an example of what God through Christ offers all sinners. Note that God accomplishes this, not through a verbal revelation, but through the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus dominates Paul’s thanksgiving. Paul states the faithful saying that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (ὑμωρφολόγοι σώσαται)” (1,15) since Jesus’ existence was directed to rescuing humans
from their condition of alienation from God and their alienating behavior. He came for the sort of people identified in 1:9-10, and like Paul, who says, 'I am the first among them!'

Jesus' salvific will reached Paul, to be sure, through the power of the resurrection. That Jesus now shares God's power is clear from the greeting, where Paul connects his apostolic authority to "God our savior and Christ Jesus our hope," and sends Timothy grace, mercy, and peace "from God Father and Christ Jesus our Lord" (1:1-2), as well as from the use of "our Lord" in 1:14. It is because Christ Jesus shares God's rule over the ages (1:17) that his power can reach across any time or place to transform humans in their dispositions and behavior. So Paul gives thanks to Christ Jesus who "has empowered me" (ἐνθονυμισθησαν με, 1:12) in three ways: Jesus "reckoned" (ἡγήσατο) Paul faithful (πιστόν) by putting him in his service; he "poured out abundantly" (ὑπέρεπιλεύσαντες) his grace; and, he showed Paul mercy (ἡλεκθήσαν, 1:13; 16). Most remarkable, the gift of the Lord to Paul consisted in the very moral dispositions found in Jesus himself: "the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus" (μετὰ πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ 1,15). Precisely the internal moral dispositions that Paul identifies as "the goal of the commandment" (1,5,19) are activated within him through Christ's gift.

The mercy that Jesus showed toward Paul was itself a form of proof of what God could do. It was a "demonstration" (ἐνδειχθάτω) in the first of sinners of Christ's ἀπεστάλη μνημοσυνὰ ("all encompassing patience," or "all possible forbearance")45, so that Paul stands as an example (ὑποτύπωσε) both of the sinner Christ came to save, and as the one brought "to believe in him onto eternal life" (1,16). Paul's coming to faith and apostleship was through the ὁσιομοίωτα θεου (1,4); it was an expression of Christ's faith in him (see ἀπετευθυνεν 1,11 and πιστὸν με ἠγέσατον 1,12), generated faith and love within him (1,14) and called for a continuing response of faith and thanksgiving (ἐν πίστει, 1,4). In light of this powerful personal experience of transformation - shared in some degree, Paul intimates, by Timothy (1,18) - a return to a legal norm for behavior would amount to a rejection of the experience itself, and becoming shipwrecked with respect to faith (1,19). It would mean, in fact, a rejection of the power of God to save through Christ, a return to the attitude Paul formerly had as persecutor and arrogant man, who was also a blasphemer. Not by accident, then, is the handing over of the pretend-teachers to Satan intended to "instruct them not to blaspheme" (ἳνα παρακληθῇσαν μὴ βλασφημήσην, 1,20).

III. Further Connections

I have tried to provide a fresh reading of 1 Timothy 1,1-20 that takes seriously its rhetorical crafting and its religious argument, which retain their integrity, I submit, whether we consider the letter to have been written by Paul or by a successor. I have tried to identify the heart of the author's argument in a double contrast between, on one hand, the work of God and human ambition, and, on the other hand, a manner of life guided by conscience and one guided by law. I have suggested that the very difficult heart of the argument in 1,8-17 becomes clearer when read in light of this double contrast, and when Paul's statements about the law and his own conversion are seen as interconnected.

If this approach makes good sense of the opening of First Timothy, four questions arise. First, does this contrast between the experience of the living God and human ambition pervade the rest of 1 Timothy, so that 1,1-20 may be regarded not only as an authorization of Paul's delegate but also as the announcement of the composition's main point? Second, is the focus on character and moral transformation through the gift of Christ, in contrast to human effort, an important or even central preoccupation of the other letters to Paul's delegates? Third, to what degree can we consider this theme, if it is demonstrated to be so pervasively present in the Pastorals, also a preoccupation of Paul's other letters, especially in places where Paul also discusses the law? Fourth and finally, is it possible to ask whether Paul's other major statement with respect to his calling in Galatians 1,10-24 has a paradigmatic function within the argument of that letter, as the thanksgiving in 1 Timothy 1,12-17 clearly has? In this essay, only the most preliminary and sketchy response can be provided for each of these questions.

A. The contrast between external prescriptions and internal dispositions continues throughout 1 Timothy. In the discussion of bishops (supervisors) and deacons (helpers), the focus is entirely on moral qualities rather than administrative or ritual functions (see 3,2-4,8-9,11). Much of the letter is taken up with specific mandates concerning worship, leadership, wealth, and community support for widows, but in the sections of the composition that continue the contrast between Paul's delegate Timothy and the opponents, the same distinction observed in 1,1-20 holds.

45 For μνημοσυνά as God's disposition, see Rom 2,4 and 9,22.
In the sections of the letter that provide direct advice to Paul’s delegate, the positive exhortation of Timothy has as its foil the negative characterization of his opposition, in much the same terms as in 1:1-20. Thus, in 4:2-3, they are said to have their conscience scared, and they seek to forbid the eating of certain foods and the practice of marriage. However strange it might seem for teachers of Jewish law to forbid marriage⁴⁶, the more important point is that they are advocating an external set of observances. Timothy, however, is trained in godliness as he responds to the living God (4:7,10), sets an example in his speech and conduct of the internal dispositions of love and faith and purity (4:11-12), in accord with the gift that was given him through prophetic utterance (4:14).

Similarly, at the end of the letter, Timothy’s healthy teaching in godliness (6:3) is called a good fight for the faith (6:12) — echoing 1:18 — that demands of him such internal dispositions as righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and gentleness (6:11). Against him stand those who focus on controversy and disputes, “from which come envy and strife and reviling speech, evil suspicions” (6:4). Their constant wranglings are the manifestations of “corrupted minds” (6:5) that have been “deceived from the truth.” Insistence on a heteronomous norm, we see once again, not only fails to transform humans through moral virtue, it exacerbates their vice. The conclusion of the composition forms a perfect inclusio with 1:1-20: the opposition’s profane chattering and contradictions reflect only their “so-called knowledge” (τῆς ψευδογνώσεως), and show that they have “missed the mark concerning faith” (περὶ τῆς πίστεως θρησκείας; see 1:19, περὶ τῆς πίστεως θρησκείας). In sum, the contrast between internal disposition in response to God and external norm as expression of human ambition carries through 1 Timothy, showing that, as in other Pauline compositions, the opening lines set the agenda for the whole⁴⁷.

B. Can the same be said for 2 Timothy and Titus? Is the contrast between the work of God that effects internal transformation and the

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⁴⁶. The combination of elements is found — so far as we know — only among practitioners of Merkabah mysticism: they did not forbid marriage, but did combine observance of law, temporary sexual abstinence, and fasting as preparation the heavenly ascent. See E.O. Francis, Humility and Angelic Worship in Col 2:18, in ST 16 (1963) 109-134. The caution, “so far as we know,” however, must be taken seriously. Scholars must avoid the conceit that identifies reality with the information that they happen to possess.

C. To ask whether the contrast between internal moral dispositions and external norm is a characteristic of other Pauline letters is to ask a large question, whose tentative and cautious answer here must be a partial "yes." In at least four of the compositions that all agree come from Paul (Romans, 2 Corinthians, Philippians, and Galatians), and in two that are disputed (Colossians and Ephesians), the contrast appears with greater or lesser emphasis. Since part of my interest in regenerating conversation about the authenticity of the Pastorals is restoring them to the larger Pauline conversation, and setting them individually into more useful comparisons across the Pauline corpus, I will briefly state here how I see this contrast at work in the four undisputed letters I have named 48.

In Romans 7-8, Paul states the contrast in powerful terms. Even though he acknowledges that the law is good (Rom 7,16), holy (7,12), and spiritual (7,14), and the commandment is holy and righteous and good (7,12), he states that it is powerless to actually change him. But what the law cannot do, the spirit of life that comes from Christ can do, change humans in their moral dispositions so that they can walk according to the spirit but not according to the flesh (8,1-11). The imperative that flows from this spirit-empowerment -- "grace" (5,2) -- is the transformation of the mind so that it can discern "the will of God, the good thing, and the pleasing and perfect thing" (12,1 2); those who have been so empowered have "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" and can therefore "walk decently" rather than in vice (13,13-14).

In 2 Corinthians 3-4, Paul again establishes a strong contrast between "the letter that kills" and "the spirit that gives life" (2 Cor 3,6). In this argument, the stress is placed not so much on the inadequacy of the law -- it had its own "glory" (3,7-9) -- as on its being eclipsed by the power of life given by the "spirit of the living God" (3,3), with the contrast focused specifically on the external nature of the law ("written on stone tablets") and the internal character of the spirit's imprinting ("written on tablets of fleshly hearts"). Here Paul makes the bold statement that the spirit (who is the Lord) transforms them from glory to glory into the image of the one on whom they gaze (3,17-18). The issue for Paul in this letter is less that the Corinthians will be seduced by an external measure.

48. That Paul exhorts the Corinthians in his first letter to them to live by the Spirit that comes from God and to measure their behavior according to the "mind of Christ" (2,16) and exhibit transformed moral dispositions (6,9-11) is patent, but in that letter, the contrast is not drawn between such interior qualities and heteronomous norms.

for morality, than that they will fail to demonstrate their transformed character in action 49.

The contrast between law and grace in Philippians 3 has still a different emphasis. Here, Paul elaborates the "confidence in the flesh" he enjoyed in his former life because of his heritage and observance; he was, he declared, "according to righteousness found in the law, blameless" (Phil 3,6). But he regards all of this as nothing compared to "the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," for in that relationship, he has found "not a righteousness on the basis of law, but through the faith of Christ, the righteousness that comes from God, based on faith" (3,9). Paul cites his own turn from law to faith as the last in a series of examples he presents to the consideration of the Philippians as "looking to other's interests more than one's own" (2,4); the kenoic Christ (2,5-11), the delegate Timothy -- whose proven character they know (2,19-24), and the self-giving Epaphroditus (2,25-30). All these display the moral qualities that are found also in Christ and are available to them because of the "fellowship of the Spirit" (2,1-2).

Galatians bears a remarkable resemblance to 1 Timothy with respect to the contrast between those advocating observance of law as a measure of righteousness and Paul's insistence on those who live in the Spirit also walking according to the Spirit (Gal 5,25). As in 1 Timothy, Galatians speaks of actual individuals (πᾶνες) who are upsetting the communities (1,7) because they "want to be under law" (οἱ ἐπὶ νόμον θέλοντες ἐννυσά, 4,21) and are "bewitching" Gentile believers (3,1) into seeking circumcision (5,3-12). As in 1 Timothy, Paul suggests that the "child of the slave girl" (meaning those who are "according to the flesh" rather than "according to the spirit") be cast out of the community (4,30). And as in 1 Timothy, Paul establishes a sharp contrast between the "works of the flesh" associated with a life without the power of the spirit, which cause strife and conflict in the community, and those deep moral dispositions that he calls "the fruit of the Spirit," which include love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control -- exactly the sort of virtue list that characterizes 1 Timothy (Gal 5,19-23). Paul declares, "against such [dispositions] as these there is no law" (5,23) a statement that strikingly resembles 1 Tim 1,9, "law is not laid down for a righteous person."
D. The character and function of Paul’s conversion account in Gal 1,11-16 is remarkably similar to that of his account in 1 Tim 1,12-17. In both, the contrast is drawn between Paul’s former life and his call. In both, his persecution of the church is noted. In both, his conversion is cast in terms of a call or appointment to preach the good news. In both the change is ascribed to grace or gift (Χρήστης). In 1 Timothy it consists of an empowerment by “Christ Jesus our Lord” with “the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 1,12,14), and in Galatians it is the “revelation of [God’s] son in [or to] me.” There are, to be sure, differences as well. In Galatians, Paul elaborates that aspect of his former life that was dedicated to the keeping of the law, whereas in 1 Timothy Paul emphasizes his former faithlessness, ignorance, and arrogance as a blasphemer. Galatians focuses on Paul’s mission to preach the good news, whereas 1 Timothy focuses on the demonstration of God’s forbearance. Gal 1,15 contains an allusion to a prophetic call (“called from the mother’s womb”, see Is 49,1 and Jer 1,5) that 1 Timothy lacks. Apart from the specific fiction found in each account, however, it must be granted that they are more alike than different.

Even more impressive is the way in which Paul’s account of his call/conversion in both letters serves an exemplary function. I have already indicated how this works in 1 Timothy: Paul is an example not only of how God shows patience with sinners but above all how God’s grace can transform them. Within the context of 1 Timothy 1, Paul’s empowerment from God changes him from an arrogant, blaspheming and persecuting human being filled with faithlessness and ignorance to one put in God’s service, gifted by the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

In Galatians, the lesson to be drawn is slightly different: Paul’s entire opening narrative serves as a model for his Galatian readers who are in danger of being seduced by the proponents of law: Paul was once like them – and he persecuted the church! But once Paul was commissioned by God as an apostle, he did not look back, did not give in, and claimed the authority given him by the experience of Christ in him. The point is that his readers also should not now, having been lavishly gifted by the Holy Spirit (3,1-5), go back precisely to the place Paul formerly occupied, measuring righteousness by the law. As in 1 Timothy, Paul identifies the supposed “advance” represented by the opponents as a “reversal” to a condition that he formerly shared, and from which he was himself an opponent of the living God.

IV. Conclusions

In this essay I have tried to show how 1 Tim 1,1-20 establishes a contrast between the experience of God and human ambition, expressed on one side by internal moral dispositions and on the other side by disputes centering on observance of law. When the clarification concerning the law and the vice list of 1,9-11 is read in connection with Paul’s account of his conversion in 1,12-17, the two sides are shown in the person of Paul himself. In his former life he was under the law, yet he was a violent persecutor; now he is an example of God’s power to fill a sinner with faith and love. His personal recital therefore bears his argument within itself. I have further tried to show that the conflict between heteronomous norm and transformation of character runs through both the other letters to Paul’s delegates and a substantial portion of his undisputed correspondence, most strikingly in Galatians. Finally, I have suggested that the account of Paul’s call in Galatians and of his commissioning in 1 Timothy not only have much substantively in common, but they serve similar exemplary functions. It is my hope that these simple observations will at least serve to show that putting the respective letters to Paul’s delegates into sustained conversation with his other writings is neither frivolous nor without point.
A glance at this manuscript page\(^1\) of 1 Tim 2,2-6 reveals a text dramatically in flux. The initial sixth-century inscription on the parchment leaf in distinctively large uncial letters in short stichoi\(^2\) was hardly enough, it seems. It is very difficult – even if one tries – to leave a text

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2. It is perhaps worth observing that the lines do not correspond with the "hymnic" disposition of the lines in the Nestle-Aland 27th ed.
as it is. Later hands have made corrections, including additions (and interpretative diacriticals), erasures, and corroborative re-tracings over the letters later judged sound. Ink once harmoniously joined to leather began in later years to eat away at its host. The entire codex in which this page was set wound up in unanticipated places: after it lost its vigor and began to deteriorate in the air of medieval Mt. Athos, the leaves were used to bind and protect other works. Among the forty-one leaves that have been rescued from that practical task3 is an important scribal postscript which informs the reader that

\[\text{ἀντιβιβλιαίς δὲ ἢ βιβλοος·}
\]

πρὸς τὸ ἐν Καστορίᾳ ἀντιγραφον

tῆς βιβλιοθήκης τοῦ ἁγίου Παμφίλου-

χριστίν γεγραμένον (αὐτοῦ)

the book "was corrected

from the copy in the library of Caesarea,

written by the hand of the holy Pamphilus himself."4

Like all colophons, this one is tensively poised in relation to its responsibility: it invokes the esteemed authority of the greatest Christian library of antiquity and its head, Pamphilus, the successor to Origen and teacher of Eusebius, while in the same breath acknowledging that only by the collocation with that reliable text was this one saved from its own mistakes5. The work of the scribe (or possibly a successor) was not just to copy, but also to "correct" the text. He assures the readers of his work that he has set his manuscript down alongside (ἀντιβιβλιαίς) a reliable exemplar (naming the "hand" responsible for it), and made sure it conforms. The assumption behind this is that secure readings come from correcting out or correcting over the bad or inferior ones by comparison with a touchstone of reliability. In this respect the sixth-century scribe has something strikingly in common equally with the original author and with later exgetes of this text, both of whom—in some intersecting and some divergent ways—engage in work that we might rightly call "corrective." The purpose of this paper is to explore this process of "correction" in the Paulinist paraenesis about prayer in 1 Tim 2,1-15 and its early interpretation.

In a significant recent study,6 Annette Merz has argued that in the Pastoral Epistles we find a Paulinist author crafting a text filled with intertextual echoes that both evoke the person of the historical, now dead, Paul, and that move the interpretation of his letters and wider legacy in a particular direction. The Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy among them) represent a self-conscious attempt, not to replace the existing corpus Paulinum, but to enlarge it and interpret it7. They do this through overt and self-conscious "Eigentextreferenzen," which not only add to the verisimilitude of authorship by evoking passages the readership will recognize as having come from the historical author, but which also give the justification for this fictional writer who adopts Paul’s persona to assert the hermeneutical power of the author himself to seek to control the meaning of his previous utterances8. "Es ist daher prinzipiell mit der Möglichkeit zu rechnen, dass Verfasser pseudonymer Paulusbriefe versehen, mit dem Mittel der fiktiven Eigentextreferenz die Bedeutung der alludierten phn Originalaussagen neu zu bestimmen, ohne den Wortlaut des Paulustextes selbst verändern zu müssen."9

I agree completely with this approach to the hermeneutics of pseudography in the Pastors, as depending upon and referencing in various ways a published corpus Paulinum known to the author, and presumably also to his readership10. Coming from a different direction in my own


5. This is valuably explored by Murphy, "On the Text of Codices H and 93," pp. 235-237.


7. "Die Pastoralbriefe wollen die früheren Paulusbriefe nicht ersetzen, sondern einerseits ergänzen um Traditionen, die aufgrund veränderter Gemeindeverhältnisse benötigt werden, andererseits interpretieren, wo dies aufgrund aktueller Herausforderungen insbesondere durch konkurrierende Paulusauslegungen nötig zu sein scheint" (Merz, Die fiktive Selbstauslegung, p. 242).

8. "Die fiktive Eigentextreferenz eröffnet dem Verfasser eines Pseudographons literarisch alle Möglichkeiten, die ein Autor selbst hat, der sich auf frühere eigene Ausserungen bezieht, also etwa Begründung, Prämisse, Mediation, Korrektur bis hin zur Retraction." (Merz, Die fiktive Selbstauslegung, p. 234).


10. I also find myself in a Chicago tradition in this respect, inaugurated by Edgar J. Goodspeed, New Solutions of New Testament Problems, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1927, that is not reticent to note explicit use of the Pauline homologomena in the composition of the Pastors: "The letters to Timothy and Titus are so clearly modeled upon the original letters of Paul, under the influence of Acts, that they need only be mentioned here, as part of the flood of letters that the Pauline corpus evoked... The influence of the original letters of Paul upon the group is too manifest to call for description..." (p. 39). Goodspeed’s view was developed by his student, Albert E. Barnett, Paul becomes a Liter-
previous research, I have explored how Paul himself had inaugurated the use of Pauline interpretation through self-interpretation, especially as we can see him do this in the remarkable succession of missives amid misunderstanding written to Corinth. There the historical Paul had set in motion these same dynamics of epistolary self-explanation, self-correction, and expansion. And in a different study on early Christian "epiphanic logic," I sought to explain the phenomenon of pseudographographical Pauline letters as carrying on the phenomenon of textual epiphanies that Paul himself set out to generate through his letters. The Pastoral, by their attempt to conscribe the παραθήκης ("deposit"); 1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1,12,14) of authentic Pauline tradition as known through some published corpus of letters, are attempting to fix the dynamic epiphanic medium of the genuine Pauline letters in two senses: 1) to lock in a single chosen (frozen!) iconic version of Paul and his teaching; 2) to have this Paul "correct" his own legacy (cf. Paul himself on his παραθήκης in 1 Cor 11,2 and 15.3ff) against views the pseudographographical author deems mistaken. The author engages in self-correction (though he is not that self) which has in mind correction of others (who also make claims on that Pauline self).

Merz’s study laudably attempts to give more theoretical sophistication to existing arguments about the pseudonymity of the Pastoral Epistles, and the function and impact of that literary posture as a platform for fictional intertextual self-reference. Her monograph includes a full discussion of modern "intertextuality" theory and its implications for the hermeneutical assessment of the phenomenon of pseudography. Then she approaches the intertextual relations of the Pastoral Epistles in two directions: first, their later reception in the letters of Ignatius and of Polycarp, and, second, their own status as part of the reception-history of pre-existing Pauline tradition in the author’s time, decades after the death of Paul (sometime up to, but not beyond, the first decade of the second century, on her reckoning). As the heart of her case Merz provides two exegetical demonstrations of this form of Pauline-reception in 1 Timothy, the most extensive of which is part of the chapter which I have been assigned for our Colloquium: 1 Tim 2,9-15.

This text fits well Merz’s overall argument about the Pastoral Epistles as employing "fiktive Selbstauslegung," "fictional self-interpretation" of the now-dead Paul. She convincingly demonstrates in an impressively detailed treatment the use of this strategy in the argument about women in 2,9-15, as the author crafted new instructions which draw upon and reinterpret historically Pauline (and in his day published and disseminated) statements about women’s liturgical participation in 1 Cor 14,33ff., and Paul’s interpretations of the Adam and Eve narrative (1 Cor 11,8ff. and 2 Cor 11,3)). Merz postulates a direct literary relationship between 1 Tim 2,9-15, at least in part, and 1 Cor also her use of "Korrektur" in the quotes in notes 8 and 13 above). The term can encompass both emendation and confirmation of the text.

* 15. I am less convinced by her argument that Ignatius knew the Pastoral Epistles (Die fiktive Selbstauslegung, pp. 141-187, esp. the weak instances of verbal connections adduced on pp. 159-161), but that judgment does not substantially affect the present argument.

16. This date is based on the traditional, or Eusebian dating of Ignatius in the reign of Trajan (h.e. 3.36). Merz is not convinced by the recent attempts to redate the Letters of Ignatius to the later second century (Joly, Lechner, Hübner), The original form of her Heidelberg dissertation included her argument in refutation, but it does not appear in the published version, though she promises to publish it separately (Die fiktive Selbstauslegung, p. 73 n.9). I have not yet seen this appear.

17. her second test case is the treatment of slaves in 1 Tim 6,1-2 in relation to Philenmon, but we shall not be engaging that directly in this paper.


19. Merz terms this the "Referenzexzerientielle Funktion von Inter textualität" which leads to a "relectura" (Die fiktive Selbstauslegung, p. 234).
14.33ff.20, based upon the significant lexical parallels21 and argumentative force of unmistakable reiteration, recombination, and reinforcement of the prohibitions of women’s liturgical speech from the vague λαλέω of the Prætext22 to the more precise διδάσκειν of the revision, with the filling out of the “empty footnote” of 1 Cor 14,34 (καθοδός καὶ γόνος λέγετ) with the Torah-interpretation from Genesis 3. Most striking is the recasting of Paul’s divine passive o έπιτρέπονται ακολουθειν into a first person active prohibition διδάσκειν δέ γυναικεί καὶ άπειτρέπον κ.τ.λ. (1 Cor 14,34; 1 Tim 2,12).23 As a form of “fictional self-correction,” I would argue it attempts to set straight precisely the problematic legacy of 1 Corinthians where women are concerned: an apparent self-contradiction between Paul’s assumptions about women praying and prophesying in 1 Cor 11,2-16 and his outright prohibition of women speaking in 1 Cor 14.33ff, with commands that are as imprecise as they are urgent (these issues continue to confound readers of 1 Corinthians down to today, of course)24. The problem is not merely exegetical in his day, but also a practical measure for which different Christians (who hold Paul commonly in esteem) are appealing to various parts of the same authoritative letter, 1 Corinthians, in support of their views25. In the language of the present paper (using the analogy to scribal practice), in 1 Tim 2,9-15 a pseudographical author engages in “corrective composition,” by underscoring with emphatic reiteration Paul’s call for silent submission of women in 1 Cor 14,33-36, by erasing the possibility of women’s teaching or prophesying that could be visible in his words in 1 Cor 11,2-16 (esp. v. 5)n, and by augmenting Paul’s appeal to the order of creation (1 Cor 11,2-16) through a conflate hermeneutic with 2 Cor 11,13 (including even the terminology of the composite verb εξασκοῦντας for Eve’s sin27), that in effect transforms a metaphorical reference to the entire έκκλησία at Corinth (men and women) into an ontological indictment of female humanity in particular28. In so doing this author fashioned a whole new angle on Paul’s soteriology (though whether that was the main intent or a collateral result remains unclear) by strategically plugging τεκνογνωσία29 into the formula for salvation, perhaps by influence of 1 Cor 7,14-1630. He set a seal of approval on this corrective composition by pronouncing his argument πιστος (3,1a)31.

Building on Merz’s conclusions about 1 Tim 2,9-15, I would like to turn my attention to the first half of the chapter, 1 Tim 2,1-8. Are there discounts (p. 335 n. 222 and p. 337 n. 239) as “nicht sehr plausibel,” but the reasons for this dismissal of a position so readily compatible with her methodological approach remain unclear.

25. We should add also 1 Corinthians 7, in relation to 1 Tim 2,15, and the justification for celibacy as child-bearing, respectively. The connection with traditions behind the Acta Pauli et Thecae, which Dibelius-Conzelmann pronounce “very relevant to this context” (Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles [Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbrough trans.], Philadelphia, Fortress, 1972, p. 48), have been vastly explored by Dennis Ronald MacDonald, The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1983.

26. “der Verfasser nicht nur gegen Frauen argumentiert, die lehren, sondern gegen solche, die ihr Recht auf Lehre auch argumentativ vertreten” (Merz, Die fiktive Selbstauslegung, p. 320).

27. As is well known, Greek translations of Gen 3,13 all use the simplex, δυνατόν.


29. That this is the author’s particular concern is clear from 5,14, τεκνογνωσία.

30. Merz considers three options for the Prætext in play in 1 Tim 2,15: Gen 3,16; Eph 5,22ff, and 1 Cor 7,5,14-16 (also the marital theology of Tobit), but does not think a definite decision can be made among them (Die fiktive Selbstauslegung, pp. 395-372).

31. But note the corrective emendation in the D text: θηλησύνοι (It is also possible that 3,1a points forward to the teaching on the Θηλησύνοι which follows, of course, but Merz, Die fiktive Selbstauslegung, p. 272, makes the trenchant observation that also in 1 Tim 1,5; 4,9; 2 Tim 2,11; Tit 3,8, as in 1 Tim 2,15 the phrase certifies a soteriological statement.)
fictional self-references to Pauline passages in 1 Tim 2,1-8, also, and, if so, what elements in Paul’s own teaching on prayer did this author think required correction (both emendation and emphatic underscoring) for his present context? The opening Παρακαλῶ οὖν in 1 Tim 2,1 immediately rings bells with Rom 12,1; 1 Cor 4,16 and Eph 4,1, even as the pleonastic piling up of prayer terms – δέχεσθε, προσευχή, ἐνέκυρος, εὐλαβεία – imitates and further multiplies a common Pauline motif found across the letters. This characteristic feature of Pauline diction – of amassing terms for prayer – was recognized and replicated in other deutero-Pauline texts, such as Eph 1,16 (οὐ παύομεν εὐγαρθενίων ἕπερ οἷς μενεται ποιομενον ἕπερ τῶν προσευχῶν μου) and especially 6,18 (διὰ πάσης προσευχῆς καὶ δεήσεως προσευχόμενοι ἐν πνεύματι). In 1 Tim 2,1ff, too, Paul is reinscribed as one who made prayer a first priority, both by his customary verbal amplification, and in the form of his letters and explicit paraenesis. So there was need for there to be further “correction” of this legacy of Paul on prayer? The emphasis in 1 Tim 2,1-4 (or even to v. 7) is not on the types of prayer but on the beneficiaries of it. The author’s intention is signaled at the end of 2,1 – ἑκάστῳ πάντων ἀνθρώπων. This universal statement is immediately narrowed by the appositional phrase ὑπὲρ βασιλέως καὶ πάντων ἐν ἑπετείου ἑκάστων in 2,2. The justification offered for prayer

32. Raymond F. Collins, I and II Timothy (NTL), Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2002, p. 52 rightly terms this “the literary device of repetitio,” and sees that goal as amply justified. The fact that the Pastor urges Timothy to pray in the best way possible, I would add, is the observation that such repetitious language about prayer was characteristic of the historical-epistolary Paul, who doubled up εὐγαρθενίας/εἰων and προσευχῆς (see, e.g. 1 Thess 1:2; 5:17-18; Rom 1:8-10), and εὐλαβείας/εἰων and δέψεως (2 Cor 1:11; Phil 1:3-4).


34. This did not prohibit Origen from later making the list into a kind of prayer curriculum, however (de oratione 14.2-6). On the other hand, perhaps there is a deliberate omission from the list “divine ψάλτης,” or “sorcerer,” were not to be made in the name of the emperor or his geniuses (as Origen argues in c. Cels. 8.60-67).

35. This is nicely appreciated in the medieval catechesis, in which the καθολικα λίστα gives 1 Tim 2,1-7 the subtitle: Περὶ εὐλογίας, ἵνα ἑκάστῳ πάντων, πτωχοῖς παντούς, ἀδιάφοροις, σαρκοπασί. (J.A. CAMER, Cateches in Sancti Pauli Epistolod ad Thimiethum, Tübin, Philomena et ad Hecaroen, Oxford, 1843, p. 2). The second δὲ clause appears to refer to 2,8. Among modern commentators Jerome D. QUINN, with William C. WACKER, The First and Second Letters to Timothy, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2000, p.172, poetically observes that “the changes are rang upon various aspects of universality throughout 2:1-3:1a, where forms of παρ are heard eight times in the first eleven verses.”
outsiders: Kai ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀλλῶν δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἀδιαλέγετος προσεύχετος. Ignatius’ "other-referenced" prayer in Eph 6,18, as we have seen, is 1 Thess 5,17, perhaps read in conjunction with 5,15: πάντοτε τὸ ἀγαθὸν διόκετε καὶ ἐλς ἄδικους καὶ ἐλς πάντας.

Toward the same end, perhaps the author of 1 Timothy drew upon a different conjunction of Pauline prayer texts that did not originally point in the direction of prayer for Gentiles. He may, for instance, have turned for authoritative guidance on prayer to the Paulinist text Eph 6,18, which as we have seen imitated and expanded Paul’s own vocabulary of prayer. If so, we can surmise that he found its staunchly in-group focus in need of emendation, and has leapfrogged prayer for outsiders – for kings and people in authority – to the front of “Paul’s” prayer paracresis, which in the Ephesian texts explicitly used the ὑπὲρἐπισκόπη formula for “all the saints” and “for me.”

But we need not and should not narrow our investigation to the search for any single pre-text. The Paulinist author of 1 Timothy was also a Pauline reader, one who had a multi-letter corpus on which to draw, and who appears to read the whole, and individual letters, in some sense contextually. Of vital importance to the prayer paracresis of 1 Timothy 2 is the Letter to the Romans, especially Rom 13,1-7, which does not exactly refer to prayer for “kings” but does call for submission and obedience to worldly authorities, as envisioned here, and with some cognate language (ἐξοούσια ὑπερέχουσι; cf. ὑπὲρ ὑπεροχῆς ὑμεῖς).

43. See also Rom 12,18: εἰ δύνατον τὸ εἴρημα, μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων εὐφρενοῦς, and other commands about prayer in the context, such as τῇ προσευξῇ προσκαταρτισθέντος in 12,12, and εὐλογητοὶ τοις διὸκοις κ.λ.π. in 12,14.

44. ROUFF, Der erste Brief an Timotheus, p. 124, places the parallel among a list of passages in 1 Timothy “an denen die Bezugsnahme relativ eindeutig ist.” Others in that list (pp. 39-40) include:

2,1: 1Kor 4,17
1,8-10a: Röm 3,21,28; 7,12
1,12f: 1Kor 7,25; Phil 4,13
1,20: 1Kor 5,5
2,6f: Röm 9,1 (“Hier ist direkte literarische Abhängigkeit anzunehmen” (p. 112))
2,11-15: 1Kor 14,33b-36
4,6-10: Kol 1,24-29
5,18: 1Kor 9,8-14
6,4f: Röm 1,28-30

Roff’s commentary on usage of the Pauline corpus in 1 Timothy is: “Die Hauptbelege des Verf. sind dennoch der Röm und der 1Kor. Daneben sind ihm aber offensichtlich auch der 2Kor, Eph 3,7-13 (v. 13 Titus), Phil, sowie der von ihm für paulinisch gehaltene Kol bekannt, möglicherweise auch der Phlm” (p. 40). Direct literary dependence in this case is also detected by HOLTZMANN, Die Pastoralbriefe, p. 110 (“Um so deutlicher charakterisiert sich die unmotivierte Parenthese [1 Tim 2,1] als wörtlich aus Röm 9,1 abgeschrieben” [he notes that Schleiermacher made the same judgment]; BARNETT, Paul Becomes a Literary Influence, pp. 257-258, and COLLINS, 1 and 2 Tim, p. 62 (“Paul’s oath in Rom 9:1 appears to be echoed in 2:7?”). TRUMMER, Die Panhiertradition der Pastoralbriefe, pp. 120-121 sees a strong reminiscence; DÖBNER-CONZELMANN, The Pastoral Epistles, p. 43, regard it as possible: "The passage (1 Tim 2:7) is perhaps modeled after Rom 9:1-2."

45. Although one might suspect that this is a common expression, a search of the entire TLG (Thesaurus Linguae Graecae) shows no other use of the phrase ἀλλήλωνι πέσαντα, ὃς γέλοιοι πρὸς βασιλέα; every use thereafter is a quotation of his statement, here or in Romans (including the jibe of Porphyry that only a liar would have to say such a thing! [in MACAREUS Magnes, apocritus = Porphyry, c. Christianos 28,16]).

46. Rom 9,1: ἀλλήλωνι πέσαντα ἐν Χριστῷ, ὃς γέλοιοι. The witnesses to the 1 Tim 2,7 text are divided on the presence or absence of ἐν Χριστῷ (with: Δ B* D F G Π P P’ minuscules and versions). BRUCE M. MEITZER (A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, London/New York, United Bible Societies, 1971, although it oddly (and inconveniently, from the perspective of the early second century) circumvented the term μαθητής in favor of metaphorical terminology. Yet the fuller context of that instruction, in Rom 12,18, emphasizes in particular a peaceful stance toward “all people” (προονοομένων καλα ἄνωτον πάντων ἀνθρώπων), precisely the position our author wishes to reinscribe. But there is even stronger evidence that the Pastor’s reading of Romans was actually attuned to the argumentative flow and accumulative power of that extensive argument.

The most clear “Eigentextreferenz” in 1 Tim 2,1-8, as some previous scholars have noted, is the oath formula in 1 Tim 2,7, which is an exact citation of Paul’s dramatic utterance in Rom 9,1: ἀλλήλωνι πέσαντα ἐν Χριστῷ ὃς γέλοιοι. The allusion to Rom 9,1 here (whether originally of four words or six) is more than a repetition of an oath formula
out of context, for that passage can be read as exemplary instruction on precisely the topic the Pastor engages: on behalf of whom (ὑπὲρ τιμων) should one pray? Indeed, that issue is raised overtly in Rom 8,26: τὸ γὰρ τὸ προσεπέσβεθα καθὼς δει οὐκ οἴδαμεν. The immediate answer to the question of “for what we should pray as we ought” is the intercession of the spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα), who intercedes ὑπὲρ ἄγιου (Rom 8,26). The correspondence with Paul the exemplum is clear, because the spirit is also precisely the agent of Paul’s prayer in Rom 9,11f. (ἐν πνευματι ἁγίῳ)47. And he prays there “as he ought” – on behalf of unbelievers, in that instance for Jews who do not have faith in Christ: θηρίζομεν γὰρ ἄνθρωποι εἰς τοὺς αὐτούς ἐγὼ ἀπό το ἱδρυμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁπάντων ἐγὼ ἀπό τῶν συνεκκοινόν μου κατὰ σάρκα 48. Paul offers the oath of truth-telling to affirm an inner, private reality that has no public verification, other than the work of the spirit. And in the fuller context of the argument (which is widely recognized to extend through chapter 11) Paul insists that his heart pours out in prayer on behalf of the salvation of the Jewish unbelievers: ἢ μὲν εὐδοκία τῆς ζημίας καρδίας καὶ ἢ δέσποινας πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰς σωτηρίαν (Rom 10,1). Their affliction, as he identifies it, is lack of proper ἐπίγνωσις (Rom 10,2). And yet Paul even avers to his Gentile readers in 11,13-14 that it is paradoxically in his status as apostle to the Gentiles (ἐπὶ ἐγὼ ἄνδρον ἀπόστολος) that he can pray for those who are outside his missionary activity, but still within the sphere of his prayerful concern for their salvation (ἐπὶ ποι ἄνδρον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις). This prayer for their salvation – acclaimed to be utterly genuine – is amplified on in the crescendo to the subargument: Rom 11,26: πᾶς Ἰσραήλ σωθήσεται; cf. Rom 11,32: συνεκκλείστω τῆς γὰρ τοὺς πάντας εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐπείθης ἐν τοῖς πάντας ἐλέησον.

The author of 1 Tim 2,1-7, unlike the historical Paul, is unconcerned with whether or not Christians should pray for Jews. His question is relations of Christ-believers with the wider Gentile (non-believing) world. He finds in the pre-text of Romans a resource he can cite and p. 639 favors the shorter reading [ranked B] on the grounds that “it cannot be adequately explained on the supposition that the longer reading was original.” The variant readings on ἐν Χριστῷ, with such split witnesses, demonstrate how difficult it is to differentiate intertextual “corrective” acts by authors from those of scribes, for it is possible either that the author quoted the full Romans passage himself, or alluded to it partially, a work that was completed by the scribes.

47. THUMM, Die Paulustradition der Pastoralbriefe, p. 121 n. 60, points also to the connection between μη καταστήσειν in 1 Tim 2,6 and μη καταστήσεις in Rom 9,1.

48. I have always read the ὑπὲρ as constraining with ἁπάντως, but it could also be taken with the verb, προσεπέσβεθα ("I would pray on behalf of my brothers, my kin according to the flesh, that I myself become athenia from Christ").

adapt to represent Paul as the champion of prayer for outsiders, but now for Gentile unbelievers, especially those archetypal figures, emperors and authorities49. Strikingly we see in 1 Tim 2,1-7 the same ingredients of prayer paraenesis as in Romans 9-11: a ὑπὲρ formula which self-consciously extends to those presumed to be “outside the fold,” an appeal to the enactment of the divine plan for their salvation as the purpose of that prayer (δὲ πάντας ἄνθρωπος θέλει σωθῆναι), an expression of hope that they will overcome their lack of ἐπίγνωσις (καὶ ἐπίγνωσιν ἁλσθεῖς ἔλθεις)50, and an iterative oath linking the author’s truthfulness with the truth of Paul’s gospel tradition51, which stands in service of a recasted version of Paul’s self-appellation in Rom 11,13. The title in 1 Tim 2,7 (ἐν τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἀπόστολος ... διδάσκαλος ἀθόνν) shows the same pleonastic Paulinist impulse we saw in his adaptation of Paul’s language of prayer52. It retains Paul’s ἀθόνν ἀπόστολος but adds the initial honorific κυριος53, which places Paul in the same mediatorial position vis a vis the gospel message as Christ is placed vis a vis the divine salvific intent (μετατίθεις θεος καὶ άνθρωπον), and the third term, διδάσκαλος, which serves to authenticate the specific role of the “Paul” who writes this letter – to teach the proper Pauline παράδειγμα54. Striking corroboration of this interpretation of 1 Tim 2,1-7 as a corrective recasting of Romans 8-13 is given by the fact that the Pastor makes exactly the same transformation of the Pauline persona earlier in the letter (1,12-16), from Jewish persecutor of Jesus-believers to proto-typical Gentile convert who acted in ignorance and faithlessness55. The pseudepigrapher’s...
Paul is both exemplum and guarantor of the salvation offered to Gentiles\footnote{56}. But what of 1 Tim 2,5-6, which we have not yet discussed? If we take seriously the results of Merz’s investigation of 2,9-15, then we turn to 1 Tim 2,1-8 with confidence that the author knew 1 Corinthians (and likely 2 Corinthians)\footnote{57}. This, and the fact that 1 Corinthians is the earliest and best attested Pauline letter in the developing early Christian literary tradition\footnote{58}, increases the probability that we should hear an intertextual echo of 1 Cor 8,6 in 1 Tim 2,5-6a. How does 1 Tim 2,5-6a read, if viewed as a corrected version of 1 Cor 8,6?

\begin{equation}
\text{Εἰς γὰρ θέος, ὁ λοιπὸς ἡμῶν εἰς θεός ὁ πατήρ, εἰς οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτοῦ.}
\end{equation}

\textit{kai eis kóros 'Iρηνος 'Ιωρηνος καὶ δοὺς εὐπνοοῦν ὑστέρ πάντων}

If a deliberate rewriting of 1 Cor 8,6, the Pastor has in 1 Tim 2,5 underscored and retained the formal parallelism of one God/one Jesus Christ, but in each case changed the theological predicate from the creation language so pertinent to the idol meat controversy Paul faced in 1 Corinthians\footnote{59}. This involves the shift from relating the divine to πάντων.


57. See Merz, p. 242 on “die intertextuelle Präsuppositionskonstruktion der Pastoralbriefe“ in the knowledge of the written and oral Pauline tradition known to the intended readers.” Dazu zählen auf jeden Fall die folgenden Paulusbriefe: Rom, 1/2 Kor, Phil, Phlm.” She is less sure about literary dependence on Colossians and Ephesians (‘Nicht eindeutig zu entscheiden ist leider, ob eine Kenntnis von Kol und/oder Eph intendiert ist oder ob sich die Berührungen mit deuterausalinischen Positionen und Termini mittlirder Paulustradition verdanken“ (ibid.).

58. It is indisputably known to the author of \textit{1 Clement}, who refers to it directly in 47,1-3, and to Ignatius of Antioch, who quotes literally from it (the author of Ephesians also knew 1 Corinthians, in my view).

59. See below, n. 65, for the Galatians parallel.

60. Though the author of \textit{1 Timothy} understands the connection Paul made in 1 Cor 8,6 (and in 10,26-30) between divine creation and human right to eat (see 4,3),

61. Later authors like Origen find it very important that the instruction on prayer is to pray for others, but not to their gods (see \textit{c. Cels.} 8,64, and the full argument). This is the distinction the Pliny-Trajan correspondence conforms as critical to identifying Christians in Bithynia ca. 113 (the test Pliny invents involves \textit{cum praevenire me deo adiuvantem}, in addition to making offerings to the emperor’s statue, which Trajan rerates in his reply: \textit{id est suppuricating dis nostris} (Pliny, \textit{Ep.} 10,96,5 and 97,2).

62. The qualifying relative clause on God is in the preceding verse (v. 4).

63. We may see the same type of πάντως replacement if we regard the final clause, \( δοὺς ημῖν αὐτόπληρον ἐπέφευρον, \) as a “correction” of Gal 1,4, τοῦ δόμου ημῶν ἐπέβαλεν τοῖς ἀμαρτούσις ημῖν. This is another place where scribal “correction” and pseudo-graphical “corrective composition” are so difficult to differentiate (see the better-attested variant m.p. [cf. 1 Cor 15,3]).

64. That, too, might have been generated by a canonical reading of Paul, for a similar turn with a εἰς statement is found in Paul’s 2 Cor 5,14, with its emphasis, so similar to 1 Tim 2,5-6, on the death of the one for all: εἰς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων.
The Pastor may have had and learned from Ephesians itself (certainly so if the suggestion above about the influence of Eph 6,18-19 is convincing)\textsuperscript{65}. The phrase seems to evoke the same emphasis echoed in the literary movement of 1 Tim 2,1-6, that prayer ὑπὲρ πάντων matches the divine plan for salvation for πάντες ἐνθρόνοι by means of the mediatorial activity of the one who gave himself ὑπὲρ πάντων.

The bottom line, for the author of 1 Tim 2,1-8, is that Paul was not against prayer for emperors and rulers, but actually commanded it to be performed, both to ensure a peaceful life, and because it is consistent with his gospel – a universal soteriology that is far from suspicion of exclusive sectarian, and hence reasonable, religious separatism. This presentation of Paul as in line with “imperial values” is fully consistent in the teaching on women’s prayer and participation which follows in 2,9-15\textsuperscript{66}. The Pauline letters, the pseudoepigrapher seeks to show by Eigentextreferenzen and corrective composition of his own, support such prayer for both practical and theological reasons that no reader should doubt. Those who draw upon the Pauline letters either to accuse the Christian cult of treason\textsuperscript{67}, or, from within, to justify a refusal or reticence to devote prayer to emperors or anyone not in the circle of faith\textsuperscript{68}, he argues, are contravening the truth of the apostle himself, and have misunderstood the very testimony of the gospel. Accommodation with the public order, in the polis and in private, through prayer and εὐσεβεία which reflect domestic and civic piety, is ordained by Paul, and by God himself.

\textsuperscript{65} See \textsc{Barnett}, \textit{Paul Becomes a Literary Influence}, p. 257, who finds “the predication of acquaintance with I Corinthians and Ephesians... warranted here [2,4-7]”, but argues that in v. 5 “the emphasis on unity [v. 5] does not sound like I Cor. 8:6... but rather, like Eph. 4:5, 6...” (p. 256).

\textsuperscript{66} See \textsc{Standhartinger} and \textsc{D’Angelo} (cited above, n. 37). Unfortunately, one cannot ameliorate the problem by simply stating that “Diese Tradition ist keineswegs genuin christlisch” (as does \textsc{Rolfes}, \textit{Der erste Brief an Timotheus}, p.127) on the grounds of this influence of “imperial family values,” because this passage builds equally on Pauline texts, as we have seen, and because Christians were part of the larger society in which they lived, for good and for bad.

\textsuperscript{67} Just what were the \textit{libri et epistolae Pauli scriba iusti} doing at the trial of the martyrs of Scillii (\textsc{mirScil}, 15, ed. \textsc{Herbert Musurillo}, \textit{The Acts of the Christian Martyrs}, Oxford, Clarendon, 1972, p. 88)? That was of course later (July 17, 180), but can we assume the Pastoral Epistles could not have had a wider, non-Christian audience in view already in the earlier decades of the second century?

\textsuperscript{68} \textsc{Rolfes}, \textit{Der erste Brief an Timotheus}, p. 110: “Ein solcher Hinweis mochte sich gegenüber den Adressaten vielleicht schon deshalb empfehlen, weil unter ihnen das Recht des Gebets für diese Obrigkeit umstritten war.”

Thus far I have argued that 1 Timothy’s author’s procedure of “corrective composition” can be perceived as vigorously active in 1 Tim 2,1-8, even as Merz has demonstrated its sure presence in the latter half of the chapter (2,9-15). The pseudo-Pauline author is, as we have seen, a Pauline reader and interpreter. In the final pages of this paper I would like to extend the concept of “correction” into exegesis proper, by which I mean interpretation by a third-hand party, rather than one adopting a fictional first person pose, such as the pseudoepigraphical Pauline author. Even when the Pauline interpreter is not claiming to be Paul himself, we discern other vigorous means of textual “correction” at play.

Early attestation of 1 Timothy appears to show consonance with the Pastor’s wish to “fix” the Pauline παραθηκη on prayer as unambiguously extended to emperors and authorities (less a focus on “all people,” however). Most striking is the \textit{peroralio} to Athenagoras’ προσεβέλει περὶ Χριστιανῶν (ca. 177), which is cast as a petition to a pair of βασιλεῖς, Marcus Aurelius and Commodus.\textsuperscript{69} In his final appeal for the emperors to “nod their heads to our request” (τίνι βασιλικήν κεφαλὴν ἐπινέγκασθε), Athenagoras asks rhetorically “for who more justly should receive what they ask than we, who pray for your rule” (οὕτως περὶ μᾶς τῆς δικαιότητος τῆς ὑμετέρας εὐχόμεθα). This is an ironic inversion of 1 Tim 2,1-7, for the ἐνεπεξερευνημένος is not to God ὑπὲρ βασιλέως, but rather to the βασιλεῖς ὑπὲρ Χριστιανῶν. But the principle of reciprocity (\textit{do ut des}) remains. After listing the specific things involved in this prayer Christians make on behalf of the empire (son succeeding father, increase and aggrandizement as all people come under their power), Athenagoras points out, by quoting 1 Tim 2,2, that this will accrue also to the benefit of the Christians, ὡς ἡμοι καὶ ἡμῖν ὄνομα βιόν διάμοιραν. Then he adds as a final word his own telling double entendre to the Paulinist purpose clause: ἀντί δὲ παῦντα τὰ κεκελευθερομένα προθέμενον ὑπερτεροίμας (“and we ourselves might eagerly perform as service all the things that have been commanded”). In this way he underscores the letters of the Pastor’s instruction and extends them to coalesce the commands of the emperors with the commands of his forebear “Paul” to pray on their behalf.

Origen will similarly draw on this text in the peroration of his great apologetic work, \textit{contra Celsum}, to defend Christians against Celsus’
charge of treason. Origen maintains that Christians do not fight as soldiers in the army because they take on the panoplia theou in their prayer, which they carry out πείθομενοι ἀποστολική φωνή, that is, in obedience to the Pauline utterance of 1 Tim 2.1-2, which he quotes (c. Cels. 8.73). Origen claims that by this means Christians do more to hold up the empire than if they enlisted and fought in the front lines: 'Ἡμεῖς καὶ μᾶλλον ὑπερμοχύνειν τὸν βασιλέα καὶ οὐ συμπαραδίψαμεν μὲν αὐτῷ, κἂν ἔπειτ' εὐρέως ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἵνα συμπαράξοιν εὐσεβείας συγκατάζοντες διὰ τὸν πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἐντελέχειαν (c. Cels. 8.73). This, too, via a clever play on ὑπέρ, is "corrective" exegesis, in that the 1 Timothy text is summoned as proof-text evidence against a public impression (given expression by Celsus) of Christian disloyalty, and so the text's command to pray is reinscribed to address a new specific context: that of Christian military service. Moreover, it may be a contextual reading of 1 Timothy, in that it appears to bleed the metaphorical injunction of 1 Tim 1.18 (ἵνα συμπαράξῃ ἐν αὐτῷ τὴν καλὴν συμπαράξεαν) over into the teaching on prayer for all, including emperors and authorities, which becomes the means of that faithful soldiering.

Yet the emphatic reinscription of this text in apologetic contexts in the late second and mid-third centuries was not to be left untouched, either, because the referents of βασιλεᾶς and οὐ ἐν ἐπερήμω ψυχῶν could not be held in check. As time went on, and in particular with the rise of the Christian imperium in the Constantinian period, the supplicatory attitude would itself require correction from another direction. In the late fourth century, John Chrysostom reacts with shock at this earlier command, first because of his sense of historical distance:

Why then does Paul say, "on behalf of emperors"? For at that time emperors were not pious [θεοσέβεις=Christians], but they progressed to such a degree that the impious [ησύχασις] succeeded the impious!71

70. The homilies on 1 Timothy have traditionally been dated to his Antiochene period (386-398), i.e., before he became bishop of Constantinople (and hence, the ecclesiastical official closest to the imperial family). I have explored the hermeneutics and contexts of Chrysostom's Pauline interpretation in Margaret M. Mitchell, The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation (HUT 40), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2000/ Westminster, John Knox, 2002.

71. hom. in 1 Tim. 6.1 [Field 6.48; PG 62.530-531] I cite the Greek text of Chrysostom from the critical edition of Frederick Field (ed.), Sancti patris nostri Ioannis Chrysostomi, interpretatio omnium epistolarum paulinorum, 7 vols, Oxford, J.H. Parker, 1849-62, with cross-references to Mine, Patrologia Graeca, because it is more widely accessible.

In a context where prayer for the Christian emperor is routine and utterly expected, the idea that Paul would have commanded it for "pagan" emperors could be seen as scandalous. John is especially worried about this instruction smacking of κολάσεως, shameful flattery. Against this impression he engages in "corrective exegesis" of his own, to protect his beloved apostle from enjoining such a servile vice:

Then, so that the act might not be flattery (ἐν καὶ κολάσεως τοῦ πράγμα ἢ), Paul said first "on behalf of all people," and then "on behalf of emperors." For if he had said only "on behalf of emperors," then one would rightly suspect this (ὅτι ἐν τις τοῦτο ἡθελατείν)72.

John acknowledges that such an interpretation of the text could be possible, but he presses the details of the text in order to forestall that (mistaken) impression. In his day, with a Christian emperor in place in Constantinople, prayer for the emperor takes on different proportions than it had for the Pastor, or even for Athenagoras. As often in John's sermons, he attributes great skill to Paul's paraenesis, praising his shrewd awareness that the appeal to the incentive of living a quiet life was required, lest the hearer might not attend to this instruction to pray for the Gentile (ἐν στέφανος Ἡρακλησίως) without some promise of a reward for himself. This also allows John to admonish his own audience against the kind of selfishness Paul had to deal with, for "[the unbelievers] salvation is not a matter of unconcern for us." Coming ironically full circle to what we have argued was a major source of the composition, John appeals to Rom 13.5 as a "double-attestation" of apostolic intent when it comes to the imperial authorities. This leads to a long discussion of the opposite of prayer ὑπέρ ("for" – prayer κατά ("against") a practice which John excoriates thoroughly – in particular prayer against "brothers." He also allows that this principle of praying for "all people" must include the arch-enemies of his own day – not emperors, but "heretics."73 After this general underscoring of the apostle's position, to the effect that one should pray for enemies rather than against
them76, together with an updating of the “enemies,” Chrysostom will exert considerable energy in correction of a possible theological misunderstanding of “Paul’s” words in 2,5, εἰς θεοὺς, to the effect that Christ was not divine:

What, then? Is the Son not God? How, then, does he say “one”? This is in contradiction to the idols, not to the Son. For Paul’s statement is about truth and deception. And the mediator should have a share in both the sides of which he is a mediator.77

In emphasizing that Paul’s Christology was not “heretical,” John attributes “corrective composition” to the author himself, maintaining that the repetition of the numeral εἰς, for both God and mediator, is another indication of the exact precision of Scripture, for Paul intentionally avoided the number two [δύο], since that could be snatched up for use by polytheists or Christian heretics78.

John especially relished underscoring the apostle’s teaching in the rest of 1 Timothy 2. He first quickly “corrects” a possible contradiction between Paul’s injunction in 1 Tim 2,8 for men to pray ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ, and Jesus’ command to pray in secret (Mt 6,5-6)79. But Chrysostom focused much more attention on 2,9-15, scripting his own dialogue with a hypothetical woman of the congregation, whose finery in church he excoriates as inappropriate for a dance performance, drunken wedding reception, or the stage, but hardly for the tasks of prayer that require honest emotion, not ἐπιδραστικής.80 John here stands in for Paul and heavily retraces and emphatically reprises the words attributed to him, including

76. This has the added benefit, of course, of making Paul consistent with Jesus (esp. Mt 5,43-48) (see hom. in 1 Tim. 6,1-2 [Field 6,49; PG 62,531].
77. Τί οὖν; ὁ υἱὸς ὁ θεὸς; Πῶς οὖν φήσιν, εἰς; Πρὸς ἀνθρωποστάσιν τῶν ἐμφάνων, οὐ πρὸς τὸν θεόν περὶ γὰρ αἵρεσιν καὶ πλάνας ἴν αὕτη ὁ λόγος. ὁ δὲ μείζων δουλεῖ αὐτοκεφαλὴς κοινωνεῖν, ὁν ἐστι μείζων (hom. in 1 Tim. 7,2 [Field 6,57; PG 62,536].
78. 7,2 [Field 6,57-58; 62,537]. “Just as in 1 Cor 8,6, Paul here also said ‘one’ and ‘one.’ He did not put two, since he would have been speaking of polytheism, lest someone seize on the number two to advance polytheism (perhaps John has Arians or Aonioeans in mind, as he was previously discussing Christ’s human and divine aspect). So instead he put ‘one’ and ‘one.’ Do you see how the scripture employs words with great precision? For one and one are two. But we will not say this, although reasoning suggests it…”
79. Αὐτὸν ἔδωκεν ἐναντίον εὐκαίριον τούτο, μὴ τένοντες, ἄλλα καὶ σφόδρα συνδέον. He resolves the contradiction by seeing both Jesus’ and Paul’s teachings on prayer to be “corrections” of Jewish practice: Jesus against κεννοδοξία, and Paul’s command of prayer “in every place” as a direct counter (ἀντίδιπτοστάσιν) to the confinement (as John puts it) of Jewish prayer practice in the temple (hom. in 1 Tim. 8,1 [Field 6,63; PG 62,539].
80. See esp. hom. in 1 Tim. 8,1 [Field 6,64-65; PG 62,541].

CORRECTIVE COMPOSITION, CORRECTIVE EXEGESIS 61

— giving more exact detail about eye-make-up, jewelry, etc81. But despite this whole-hearted reiteration and reinscription of Paul’s teaching, John also has questions about the final formula σωθήσεται διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας:

But why [is she saved] not also through her own virtue? Eve hasn’t prevented the others [from virtue] has she? Then what about the virgins? What about the barren? What about the widows whose husbands died before they bore children? Are they lost? Do they have no hope? Virgins are indeed the most highly esteemed.

What in the world, then, does he mean to say here?82

Ultimately, Chrysostom evades an answer to these good questions (though he acknowledges that there are logical problems in the implied appeal to female φύσεως in the passage), but, ever the pastor himself, he is content to counsel “bon courage!” (Μηδέν οὖν ἄλλειτε). However, even despite his unqualified assent of the earlier injunctions against women teaching (on the basis of his shared assumption of women’s inferiority to men), when it comes to 1 Tim 2,15, Chrysostom engages in his own “corrective composition,” as he deftly elides the Pastor’s term τεκνογονία with παιδοτροφία83, which includes both fathers and mothers, and exhorts both parents to raise their children properly: Ἀκούσατε ταύτα, καὶ πατέρες καὶ μήτερες, ὃς ὁδὸς ἁμαρτεύσει· ἤδη ἡ παιδοτροφία84. Apparently tying women’s salvation exclusively to τεκνογονία was too much even for this ardent Pauline admirer to repeat without some considered correction.

This paper has investigated the role of “correction” in both composition and exegesis of 1 Timothy 2. The line between the two acts is more fuzzy than first appears, as the Pastoral Epistles, pseudepigraphical texts, are acts of Pauline interpretation, the fruit of reading as well as recasting. And their exegetical work, carried out through the fashioning of

81. hom. in 1 Tim. 8,1-2 [Field 6,64-69; PG 62,541-544].
82. hom. in 1 Tim. 9,1 [Field 6,72; PG 62,545]. Διὸ τί γὰρ καὶ διὰ τῆς ὁλόκληρης ἀφής; μὴ γὰρ διὰ εὐεργείαν τῶν ἄλλων ἐκλέπτει; τί δὲ πρὸς τὰς στερεὰς, τί δὲ πρὸς τὸν χρήματος, τὰς πρὸς ἢ τεκνεῖν τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀποβολάσσας; ἄπαξ εἰς ὅλην· καὶ μὴν αἱ παρθένους εἰς ἀνάλογα ἑδομόθησιν. Τί ποτε οὖν δουλεύετε εἰς αὐτόν.
83. This is how John understands 2,15b: ἄν χείρισθην ἐν τοῖς καὶ ἡγάστε καὶ ἡγιάσατο μετὰ σωρφοσύνης (taking τὸ σέκανας as the subject of μείκνυαν, and assuming they will only do so by parental direction).
84. hom. in 1 Tim. 9,2 [Field 6,73; PG 62,546]. “Heed these instructions, both fathers and mothers, since childbearing will not be without its reward for you.”
new letters which engage in “fictional self-reference and representation” has an eye trained not only on the existing corpus Paulinum of their day, but also on alternate Pauline interpretations and interpreters whom they deem in need of “correction” of the sternest and most direct type, by the author himself. This hermeneutical procedure is evident throughout 1 Timothy 2, a united paraenesis on prayer with two seemingly incommensurate purposes: to “fix” Paul’s legacy on prayer as unambiguously in favor of prayer for Gentiles and emperors in particular, and equally unambiguously against women’s liturgical and didactic participation. The history of Pauline interpretation continues to play the Pauline co-texts against one another in various ways (those who argue for the authenticity of the Pastoralis point to the very same passages as proof of Pauline consistency that I, Merz and others regard as “pre-texts” drawn upon by the pseudepigrapher)85, both to reinforce the text and to challenge it. I am not sure there is any way beyond that methodological impasse86. But one thing is clear: despite his intentions, the Pastor, like the sixth-century scribe of codex H, was not able to “fix” the text indelibly, for it remains always and continually open to various forms of corrective engagement87.

85. See Luke Timothy Johnson, The First and Second Letters to Timothy (AB, 35A), New York, Doubleday, 2001, for whom it is a building block of his interpretation (“The Pauline corpus is assumed to be the appropriate comparative context for each letter” [p. 98]). In practice, for instance, see his comment on 1 Tim 2:1-7: “We see here another expression of Paul’s strong affirmation of the Roman order in Rom 13:1-7” [195; see also many other instances in pp. 188-211 that claim Pauline consistency where we have argued for corrective composition of existing passages by the pseudepigrapher]).

86. The case for or against pseudepigraphical authorship cannot be decided on any single grounds (historical, literary, linguistic, hermeneutical or reception-historical issues), though each may be explored in its own right. I have engaged Johnson’s overall arguments (for genuineness of Pauline authorship in my review in JR 83 [2003] 116-117 [challenging his rhetorical contention that “the main argument in favor of pseudepigraphical authorship]… is the simple social fact of so many scholars having expounded it over so many centuries]” [Johnson, First and Second Letters to Timothy, 81]), I have also offered historical arguments against Johnson’s specific argument by appeal to genre in “Pseudo-Clementine and the Genre of 1 Timothy: The Curious Career of a Pseudoliterate Papyrus in Pauline Scholarship,” in NovT 44 (2002) 344-70. My one regret about our wonderful collaboration on 1 Timothy is that my esteemed colleague Luke Johnson was unable to attend, so we were not able to continue this debate xrrt πρόνοιας.

87. So also Johnson, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 211, that the “only truly viable hermeneutical option… is to engage the words of Paul in a dialectical process of criticism within the public discourse of the church, both academic and liturgical.” But contrast with this his remark on pp. 203-204, that it is since the Women’s Bible in the 19th century that “what contemporary Christians should do or think about the text… has colored the reading of 1 Tim 2:9-15, making a clean exegesis of it difficult.” The force of the present paper is to insist that there was never a time when this was not the case. Pauline exegesis is never “clean.”

I TIMOTHEUS 3:
DER EPISKOPOS UND DIE DIAKONE IN DER KIRCHE
THOMAS SÖDING

I. Die pastorale Ekklesiologie im Corpus Paulinum


T. SÖDING


IM ThEUSES 3: DER EPISKOPOS UND DIE DIAKONE IN DER KIRCHE


kräftige Färbung und scheinen andere Ansichten über den Apostel verdrängen zu wollen; aber sie bringen doch keinen andern als Paulus zur Geltung, wie sie ihn gesehen haben\textsuperscript{15}. Dass die Pastoralbriefe paulinische Kontinuität inszenieren, schließt Abbrüche, Modifikationen und Innovationen ein, gibt sie aber als lebendige Tradition zu verstehen.


\textit{Zweitens:} Aber: Die Ekklesiologie der Pastoralbriefe steht nicht für das Ganze der paulinischen Ekklesiologie. Sie bedarf immer des Rückbezug nicht nur auf den Kolosser- und Epheserbrief, sondern auch auf die Briefe an die Römer, die Korinther, die Galater, Philipper und Thessalonicher. Dann wird deutlich, dass die Charismen lebendig bleiben müssen, wenn das Amt Konturen gewinnt, und dass der Geist sich nicht im Amtscharisma erschöpft; dann werden auch der Dienstcharakter des Amtes und die Aktivität aller Glaubenden am Aufbau der Kirche deutlicher.

II. \textit{Der Kontext}


Zum einen zeigt sich, dass zwar der Schwerpunkt der Ekklesiologie auf das Amt verlagert wird, dass aber die Gemeinde keineswegs aus dem Blick geraten ist, auch nicht beim Gottesdienst\textsuperscript{16}. Zweifellos: Der Unterschied zu den Homologoumena ist mit Händen zu greifen. Aber der Paulus des Pastoralbriefes spricht nach 1 Tim 2,1-7 zuerst das Gebet der ganzen Kirche an, dann differenziert er zwischen verschiedenen Rollen im Gottesdienst; zuerst spricht er von den christlichen Männern und Frauen (1 Tim 2,8-15), dann vom Episkopos und den Diakonen (in 1 Tim 3), von ihnen allerdings mit besonderer Betonung und nachdem den Frauen das öffentliche Lehren in der Kirche untersagt worden ist (1 Tim 2,11-14)\textsuperscript{17}. Die Episkope und Diakonia gehören zur rechten Ordnung der Kirche (cf. 1 Tim 3,14). Sie bilden ihr Herzstück. Aber weder der Episkopos noch die Diakone monopolisieren das christliche Leben und die christliche Lehre; sie sind vielmehr in das Leben der ganzen Kirche, besonders das Gebetsleben, eingebunden. Ihnen gebührt das öffentliche Lehren; dass es daneben die private Lehre gibt, die christliche Erziehung der Kinder z.B., ist von selbstverständlicher Wichtigkeit. Den Episkopos und die Diakone gibt es, damit das Gebet der ganzen Kirche für alle Menschen, dem die Caritas entspricht, möglich und wirksam wird. Allerdings ist dies nicht gesagt, anders als in den authentischen Paulinen, in denen der Apostel bei aller Autorität, die er in Anspruch nimmt, immer wieder auf das eigene Urteil der Gemeinden verweist. Ob das Fehler dieser Motive dafür spricht, dass der \textit{auctor ad Timotheum} solches Urteilen unterbinden will? Der Kontext lässt zögern, die Frage zu bejahen.

Zum anderen zeigt sich, dass die besondere Stellung des Episkopos und der Diakone nach dem Pastoralbrief aus der Bedeutung der rechten Lehre und des Gottesdienstes – mit allen ethischen Konsequenzen – abgeleitet ist. Auf die zur Zeit der Pastoralbriefe akuten Lehrstreitigkeiten kommt der Briefverfasser (in 1 Tim 4) zurück (nach dem Auftakt in 1 Tim 1,3-7), nachdem er (in 1 Tim 3) klargestellt hat, wer diesen Streit im Sinne des Apostels führen soll. Auf den Episkopos und die Diakone kommt er zu sprechen, nachdem er die Kirche an ihre Sendung zu allen Menschen und an ihre Verantwortung für alle Menschen erinnert hat.


Dem Passus über die Kirche in 1 Tim 3,14-16 kommt eine Schlüsselstellung im gesamten Brief zu. Was im Haus Gottes angemessen scheint, ergibt sich aus dem Wesen der Kirche, „Säule und Fundament der Wahrheit“ (1 Tim 3,15) zu sein; das Wesen der Kirche wiederum ergibt sich aus dem Christusgeschehen, das mit Hilfe einer traditionellen Formel stichwortartig vermergeviert wird (1 Tim 3,16).


In 1 Tim 3,14a, wird Timotheus wieder direkt angesprochen. Alles, was vorher über das Gebet der Gemeinde, über Männer und Frauen, über den Episkopos und die Diakone gesagt worden war, wird jetzt als Teil der kirchlichen Hausordnung identifiziert (1 Tim 3,14). Darüber, dass es einer solchen Ordnung bedarf und worin sie wesentlich besteht, gibt es dem Pastoralbrief zufolge keinerlei Diskussion. Der reale Leser wird Zeuge einer Verständigung des Apostels mit seinem Meisterschüler. Paulus gibt Timotheus danach keine neue Information, sondern erinnert ihn an Bekanntes. Dadurch soll die allgemeine Akzeptanz der Episkope durch einen Episkopos wachsen; es soll gleichermaßen deutlich werden, dass die Kirchen guter Diakone bedarf, um ihre Sendung zu erfüllen. Es wird auch klar, dass sich die Aufmerksamkeit auf die Qualifikation des Episkopos und der Diakone richtet, weil die Aufgaben der Episkopé und der Diakonia in den Grundzügen unstrittig seien.

Die textpragmatische Pointe wird sichtbar, wenn die Adresse vor Augen tritt. Paulus schreibt Timotheus; den Brief lesen aber andere, die im Schluss („Die Gnade sei mit euch“) 1 Tim 6,21; cf. 2 Tim 4,22; Tit 3,15) direkt angeredet werden. Sie sollen ihn als Brief des verehrten Apostels an seinen lieben Sohn Timotheus lesen, der nach den paulinischen Vorgaben die Weichen der kleinasiatischen Kirche so gestellt hat, dass ein lebendiges Glaubensleben der Kirche auch in nachapostolischer Zeit möglich wird. Der Brief zeichnet Timotheus – ähnlich wie Titus – als die entscheidende Figur des Überganges. Er ist der „Sohn“ des Apostels (1 Tim 1,2; 2 Tim 1,2; cf. Tit 1,4); das wird kein Episkopos später sagen können. Timotheus ist aber nicht der „Vater“ der Gemeinden, wie Paulus selbst es ist (1Kor 4,15; 1Thess 2,11). Manche sehen in ihm den Prototypen eines Metropoliten, andere eines lokalen Episkopos. Aber Timotheus hat wie Titus eine kirchengeschichtlich einmalige Aufgabe. Titus könnte als „Metropolit“ gesehen werden, weil er nach Tit 1,5-9 auf Kreta in jeder Stadt Presbyter-Episkopen einsetzen soll. Aber nach 1 Tim 4,9 und Tit 3,12 will Paulus seine Schüler schnell wieder bei sich haben. Mit einer dauerhaften Aufgabe in Ephesus resp. Kreta ist das unvereinbar. Entscheidend ist vielmehr der Kontakt mit dem Apostel. Timotheus gestaltet – wie Titus – den Übergang von der apostolischen zur nachapostolischen Zeit; von diesem Übergang wird die Kirche aller Zeiten bleibend bestimmt sein. Timotheus ist das Bindeglied zwischen dem Apostel, der nach 2 Tim 4,5-8 bald den Märtyrertod erleiden wird, und der nachapostolischen Kirche, in der Episkopen und Diakone sowie Presbyter eine herausragende Rolle spielen werden. Paulus spricht Timotheus erstmals nach 1 Tim 1,18 wieder direkt an. Im Eingangsteil des Briefes hat der Apostel seinem Schüler mitgeteilt, es sei seine wesentliche Aufgabe, die Wahrheit des Evangeliums zu verbreiten, die Verbreitung falscher Lehren zu verhindern (1 Tim 1,3-11), die mit der „sogennannten Gnosis“ (1 Tim 6,20) zu tun haben, und die Christen zu einem Glauben anzeuliten, den sie mit „gutem Gewissen“ und in „ungeheuchelter Liebe“ leben (1 Tim 1,5; cf. 6,17ss.). Paulus hat nach dem ersten und besonders dem zweiten Brief Timotheus vor Augen geführt, dass er dieser Aufgabe nur gerecht werden könne, wenn er den Apostel als Vorbild sähe (1 Tim 1,12-17; cf. 2 Tim 1,6-2,13), dessen Vita das „Evangelium der Herrlichkeit des seligen Gottes“ (1 Tim 1,11) veranschaulicht, und wenn er „eingedenk der prophetischen Worte“ bleibe, die „einst über ihn gesprochen“ wurden (1 Tim 1,18; cf. 2 Tim 1,6). Das unterscheidet ihn radikal von den Gegnern. Timotheus ist die Brücke der Gemeinden mitsamt ihrem Episkopos, ihren Presbyteroi und Diakonoi zu Paulus – und deshalb eine Gestalt, die der Kirche Zukunft eröffnet.

III. Das Ensemble der Ämter

A. Episkope und Episkopos

Mit der Episkopé wird in 1 Tim 3 die zentrale Institution der Kirchenleitung eingeführt. Nur an dieser Stelle begegnet der Terminus neutestamentlich in der klaren Ausrichtung auf ein Kirchenamt nachapostolischer Zeit und auf derselben Höhe der Abstraktion wie der „Apostolat“ (Act 1,25; Röm 1,5; 1Kor 9,2; Gal 2,8)20. Erst in der Alten Kirche verbreitet sich der Begriff21. Er wird aber im Pastoralbrief nicht neu eingeführt, definiert oder geklärt, sondern als bekannt vorausgesetzt22. Episkopé ist ein nomon actionis: Es geht um Aufsicht, Übersicht, Voraussicht. Wahr scheinlich ist an die Aufsicht über die einzelnen Gemeinden in einer Stadt (cf. Tit 1,5ss.) gedacht23. Die Episkopé soll von einem Episkopen (1 Tim 3,2) ausgeübt werden. Der Terminus ist aus dem hellenistischen Vereinswesen bekannt, gewinnt aber in den christlichen Gemeinden, die sich nach der Art von Vereinen organisiert haben, eine neue Bedeutung24. Der Episkopos steht der Ortskirche vor (1 Tim 3,5). Er soll sie auf überzeugende und fundierte, auf ebenso verständliche wie verbind liche Weise lehren (1 Tim 3,2) und dadurch leiten.

20. Es gibt allerdings als Referenztext das Schriftzitat von Ps 109,8 in Act 1,20: Das Apostelamt (διακονεῖται), das „Dienst“ (σεβαστός) ist (Act 1,25), wird mit der denkbar höchsten Autorität der Heiligen Schrift als „Episkopat“ (ἐπίσκοπος) eingeführt.
22. Darauf weist nicht nur die Aussageform des Satzes, sondern auch die Formel: „Das Wort ist wahr“ hin – wenn sie nicht den Passus über die Frauen abschließt (wie nach der Gliederung im Nestle-Aland), sondern den über den Episkopos eröffnet. Dann beteuert sie nicht nur die Richtigkeit, sondern markiert auch die Bekenntnis des Folgenden: dass der Episkopat eine gute Sache sei. Vorausweisende Bedeutung hat die Wendung auch in 1 Tim 1,15 und 2 Tim 2,11; zurückweisende allerdings in Tit 3,8; offen ist 1 Tim 4,9. Hätte die Wendung in 1 Tim 3,1 zurückweisende Funktion, unterstrich sie die Zurückdrängung von Frauen aus dem öffentlichen Lehrraum der Kirche, so JOHANNES M. BASSLER, 1 Tim, p. 61ss.
23. Cf. Lorenz OBERLINER, 1 Tim, p. 114.
B. Episkopos und Presbyter


C. Episkopos und Diakone

Das eigentliche Gegenüber des Episkopos sind nach dem Ersten Timotheusbrief nicht die Presbyter, sondern die Diakone. Ihre Aufgaben bleiben im Brieftext noch undeutlicher als beim Episkopos - weil sie klarer waren? Das Wort selbst ist vielschichtig, innerhalb des Neuen Testaments. Der „Diener“ (diakonos) ist kein „Sklave“ (doulos), sondern gewiss ein Helfer, aber auch ein Repräsentant dessen, dem er dient (2 Tim 4,11; cf. Röm 16,1 [Phoebe]; Kol 1,17 [Archippus]; 4,7 [Markus]; Eph 5,21 [Tychikus]). Paulus selbst hat nach 1 Tim 1,12 von Gott eine „Diakonia“ übertragen bekommen (cf. Röm 11,13; 1Kor 3,5; 2Kor 3,7s; 4,1; 5,18; 6,3s; 11,8 – Eph 3,7); er ist nach 2Kor 3,6 sowie Kol 1,23,25 selbst „Diakon“; nach 2 Tim 4,5 soll Timotheus die ihm seinerseits vom Apostel übertragene „Diakonia“ wahrnehmen. Paulus kennt das Charisma der Diakonie (Röm 12,7; cf. 1Kor 12,5), der Epheuserbrief versteht die Diakonie als grundlegende Aufgabe aller Christen (Eph 4,12). Besonders diese beiden letzten Bedeutungen gehören zum Kontext von 1 Tim 3. Der Name lässt an die Caritas denken; die Qualifikationen lassen aber auch ein Engagement in der Lehre und der Liturgie nicht ausschließen; während keine Rede davon ist, dass die Diakone auch mit dem Vorsitz der Gemeinde betraut sind, so gewiss auch sie zu den führenden und prägenden Gestalten einer Gemeinde oder Ortskirche gehört haben, im Titusbrief werden Diakone nicht erwähnt. Das Paar ist allerdings aus der Adresse des Philippusbriefes bekannt (Phil 1,1), freilich im doppelten Plural und mit einer schon deshalb deutlich anderen Aufgabe als in den

[Continued...]


31. So Norbert BROX, Past, pp. 152f.; KARL KERTHEL, Gemeinde und Amt im Neuen Testament (BHH, 10), München, 1972, pp. 147f.

32. So Jürgen ROLLOFF, I Tim, p. 176; Peter STEULMACHER, Theologie II, p. 39; FERDINAND HAHN, Theologie L, pp. 776f.; JOHANNA BASSLER, I Tim, p. 625f. („... of a region”).

33. So Heinrich SCHUHL, Ordnung (n. 5), p. 144.

34. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Zu Ihrem Gedächtnis... Eine feministisch-theologische Rekonstruktion der christlichen Ursprünge [amerik. 1983], München – Mainz, 1988, pp. 348f.) rechnet unter Benutzung auf 1 Tim 5,16f. damit, dass es nicht nur Diakoninnen, sondern auch

D. Weibliche Diakone?


E. Die geschichtliche Entwicklung

1 Tim 3 zeigt, wie sich die Konstellation entwickelt hat, die Phil 1,1 erstmalig belegt. The Didache hat immer noch den doppelten Plural (Did Pastoralbriefen) und Bischofinnen gab. Aber an der Stelle spricht der Brief, wie der Gegensatz zu den „Jüngeren“ zeigt, nicht Amter, sondern Altersklassen an.

35. Pius (Ep. X 96,8: ministrae) könnte sie für ca. 120 in Bithynien bezeugen.


15,1s.). Im paulinischen Traditionsraum bleibt das Gegenüber und Mit-
- einander von Episkopen- und Diakonenamt erhalten. Aber während die
- Diakone in der Mehrzahl bleiben, rückt der Episkopos in die Einzahl.40
- Dadurch klären sich die Verhältnisse: Die *Episkopos* steht nicht ohne Grund
- bestimmdend am Anfang des Passus: Der Timotheusbrief zielt auf ein epi-
- skopales Amt, und dem andere Dienste zur Seite stehen41. Der Episkopos ist der
- Leiter der Ortskirche; die Diakone gehören nicht zur Leitung der Gemeinde.
- Sie haben aber gleichfalls Aufgaben in der Verkündigung, der Liturgie und der
- Caritas42. Die Presbyter bilden ein Kollegium, das nach dem Ersten
- Timotheusbrief im Hintergrund steht, aber durch die Handauflegung
- bereits den Apostelschüler für seine Aufgabe (1 Tim 4,14) zugerüstet
- hat; 1 Tim 5 kann so gelesen werden, dass aus dem Kreis der Presbyter
- Bischöfe als Gemeindeleiter hervorgehen; die Handauflegung wird auch bei
- der Einsetzung in Episkopamenat eine entscheidende Rolle gespielt haben.

IV. Der Episkopos und die Diakone

Die *Episkopé*, die der Episkopos wahrnehmen soll, ist nach 1 Tim 3,1
- ein „gutes Werk“43. Damit ist weniger die Institution als die Praxis des
- Amtes gemeint. „Gute Werke“ (ausgedrückt mit *kallon* oder *agathón*)
- kennzeichnen nach den Pastoralbriefen das christliche Ethis; der Singular
- bringt eine Grundeinstellung, eine Gesamtübersicht zum Ausdruck44. Von

40. Der Erste Clemensbrief, der von Rom nach Griechenland schaut, spricht im Plural von
- „Bischöfen und Diakonen“, die von den Aposteln in Stad und Land eingesetzt worden seien
(1Clem 42,1-5); aber der Plural der Bischöfe dürfte sich aus dem Plural der Apostel erklären.
41. Die Nähe zur altkirchlichen Ordnung akzentuiert Edouard Gomme, *Les ministères
- ordonnés dans les Pastorales* (1996, in *Exégèse et Liturgie II* (LeeDív. 175), Paris, 1999,
- pp 221-238.
42. Es fehlt ein Äquivalent zur paulinischen und deuteroepiskonischen Charismenlehre.
- Zwar ist das Amt seinerseits Charism. Überdies sind auch jene Christen, die weder Episko-
- pos noch Diakon noch Presbyter sind, sehr aktiv, nicht nur wie die Wirten. Aber in 1Kor 12
- und Röm 12 ist die Pneumatologie leitend, dass die verschiedenen Geistsgaben alleinständig und
- desdenvollen Ursprung haben, vom Apostolat bis zum Zugeordneten, von der Heilkunst bis zur
- Gemeindeleitung.
43. Die „Übersetzer schwanken im Verständnis: „hohe Aufgabe“ (Luther), „große Auf-
- gabe“ (Einhheitübersetzung), „schönes Werk“ (Elberfelder). Am besten scheint die Volgata:
- „bonum opus“. Ihr folgt die King James Bible: „good work“. Lorenz Berklofen (1 Tim, p. 115) ist der Meinung, „Paulus“ müsste für ein wenig attraktives Amt Werben. Aber die
- Briefprafragmatik weist in eine andere Richtung.
44. Fast bedeutungslos sind: Rüdiger Fuchs, *Bisher unbeachtet. Zum unterschiedlichen
- Wichtig, das moralisch Gute zu verknüpfen.
45. Cf. 2 Tim 2,12; 3,17; Tit 1,10; 3,1 vs 3,2 Tim 4,18; Tit 1,16; Plural: 1 Tim 2,10; 5,10;
- 6,18; Tit 2,7,14; 3,8,14; cf. 3,5 vs Tit 1,16.
46. Der paulinische Antiethos zwischen den „Werken des Gesetzes“ und dem „Glauben“
- (Gal 2,16; Röm 3,28) erschließt ein anderes Themenfeld, auf dem die Pastoralbriefe die
- Rechtfertigung lehre auch deshalb fortschreiten, um das christliche Engagement von Lei-
- stungsansprüchen gegenüber Gott zu unterscheiden (2 Tim 1,8f; Tit 3,3). Einige Hinweise
- zur Deutung finden sich in meinen Beitrag: Kriterien der Wahrheit? Zum theologischen
- Stellenwert der paulinischen Rechtfertigungslehre, in *Th. Söding* (ed.), Woron geht es in der
- Rechtfertigungslehre? Die biblische Basis der „Gemeinsamen Erklärung“ von Lutherismus
- Weltbund und katholischer Kirche (JD, 180), Freiburg – Basel – Wien, 1999, pp. 193-246,
- p 215s.
47. Eine gute Auswahl der Vergleichtexte bietet: *Neuer Wettstein. Texte zum* *Neuen Testament aus Griechentum und Heilensmuts*, Bd. II/1, Georg Strecker u. Edi Schnelle (eds.);
48. Ein scharfes feministisches Lich wirft auf diese Bestimmung Mary Rose D’Angelo,
- “Knowing how to preside over your own household”. *Imperial Masculinity and Christian
hinziehen wird. Der sorgfältige Umgang mit Geld wird desto wichtiger, je intensiver ein Episkopos oder Diakon mit den Finanzen der Gemeinde zu tun hat.

Einige wenige Qualifikationen weichen vom Üblichen ab. Dass ein Neubekrehter nicht Episkopos werden soll, weil er zu leicht hochmütig wird (1 Tim 3,6), ist die christliche Konkretion einer allgemein menschlichen Erfahrung, die sich auch in Amtsspiegeln niederschlägt, wenn sie nicht nur davor warnen, allzu Alte, sondern auch, allzu Junge zu nehmen. Bemerkenswert ist die Monogamie (1 Tim 3,2;12; cf. Tit 1,6). Eine hohe Ehealarm wird zwar auch sonst von Führungspersönlichkeiten oft verlangt; die Monogamie aber ist eine typisch christliche Forderung. In ihr spiegelt sich der Monotheismus in seiner jesuansanien Auslegung (Mk 10,1-12 parr.). Die Forderung richtet sich wohl weder gegen die Zölibatsidee noch gegen Polygamie, sondern mindestens gegen die Scheidung und Wiederheirat; wahrscheinlich aber zielt sie darauf, dass ein Episkopos tatsächlich nur ein einziges Mal verheiratet (gewesen) sein soll.

Bei den Diakonen heißt es eigens, sie sollten „geprüft“ werden, bevor sie ihren Dienst beginnen (1 Tim 3,10); das klingt nach einem mehr oder weniger geregelten Verfahren. Der Episkopos fehlt eine vergleichbare Bestimmung. Timotheus wird allerdings später erwähnt werden, niemandem „vorschnell die Hände aufzulegen“ (1 Tim 5,22); gedacht ist wohl


52. So Norbert BROX, Past, p. 142; Jürgen ROLLOFF, I Tim, p. 156. Das wäre dann aber nicht besonders, sondern würde für alle Christen gelten, wenn 1 Kor 7 nicht verlesen werden.

53. So Tertullian, Ad sexorem 7; De monogamia 11s. Das entspricht dem paulinischen Rat in 1 Kor 7,8,39s. und wäre eine Analogie zur Vorschrift für die Witwen in 1 Tim 5.9: Nur wenn eine Frau ein einziges Mal verheiratet war, kann sie, so sie mindestens sechzig Jahre zählt, zu den Witwen gerechnet werden. Allerdings sollen nach 1 Tim 5,38s. und 5,16 jüngere Witwen wieder heiraten. Sie würden dann vom Witwenstand ausgeschlossen. Ein Widerspruch zwischen 1 Tim 5,9 und 5,14 besteht aber nicht. Vielmehr bestätigt sich die restriktive Tendenz des Briefes.

54. So aber Jürgen ROLLOFF, I Tim, p. 163s.


56. Paulus bezieht ihn allerdings in 1Thess 4,11ss. nicht auf die Gemeindeleiter, sondern auf alle Christen.
V. Das Haus Gottes

1 Tim 3,15s. führt über die Hausordnung Gottes zum Wesen der Kirche und zum christologischen „Mysterium des Glaubens“57. Um dieses Geheimnisses willen wird alles gesagt, was über den Episkopos und die Diakone zu sagen ist, über den Apostel und seine Schüler, über das Gesetz und die Gnade, auch über die Kirche. Ekklesia meint in 1 Tim 3,4 und 5,16 die Ortskirche, hier aber die una sancta58. Das ergibt sich aus der Grundsätzlichkeit der Aussage. Dass die eine Kirche sich je vor Ort realisiert, ist paulinisches Erbe, das die Pastoralbriefe nicht verlorengehen.

Die Ekklesia ist „Haus Gottes“; sie ist „Kirche des lebendigen Gottes“ und „Säule und Fundament der Wahrheit“ (1 Tim 3,15). Die Prädikate ergänzen und erhehlen einander. Im Blick steht weniger das antike Haus mit seinen patriarchalischen Strukturen als vielmehr der Tempel59. Vorbild der Formulierung scheint 2 Kor 6,16 zu sein: „Wir sind Tempel des lebendigen Gottes“60. Zwar wird der Episkopos nach Tit 1,7 als Gottes „Ökonomi“ vorgestellt (nicht als Haus herr – das ist Gott allein); aber hier ist auch ein Echo paulinischer Apostolatstheologie zu hören (1 Kor 4,18). Überdies haben Privathäuser in der Anfangszeit oft eine Gottesdienstgemeinde beherbergt61; dass es bereits eigene Kirchengebäude gegeben hätte, ist nicht belegt. Dennoch werden die Privathäuser, in denen das Familienleben sich abspielt (1 Tim 5,13,16; 2 Tim 3,6), vom Haus der Kirche unterschieden, in dem der Episkopos und die Diakone so zu agieren haben, wie Paulus es in der Adresse an Timotheus nahelegt. Es gibt eine Analogie (1 Tim 3,5)62, aber keine Identität. Das Amt

58. So Jiæen ROLOFF, 1 Tim, p. 198 n. 440 vgl. HOLZT, 1 Tim, p. 88.
61. BEETH von LORENZ OBERTLINNER, 1 Tim, p. 123.

1 TIMO THEUS 3: DER EPIS KOPOS UND DIE DIAKONE IN DER KIRCHE

64. Gen 28,17,19,22 bezieht sich auf Biefele, Re 18,31 auf Sido); die Mehrzahl der Stellen auf das Heiligtum, das dann in Jerusalem verortet wird (Ex 23,19; 1 Chron 6,33; 9,11.13.26s; 22,1s; 23,28; 26,7; 28,21; 29,7s; 2 Chron 15,18; 16,2; 35,8; 36,18; Ez 4,24; 5,16; 6,3,7; 16,22; 7,17; 19,4; 8,25; 10,16,9; Neh 8,16; 10,33; 11,12; 11,11,12; 13,4,7,9; 13,11; Tob 14,4s; Ps 41,15; 122,9; 134,1s; Jes 2,2; 38,20; Dan 5,23,20; Joel 1,13,16; NaH 1,14; auch doch Sack; cf. 1Sam 3,15; 1Kön 6,8,20; 1Kön 10,3; 12,9; 12,19; 15,15; 16,8; 21,5; 2Kön 22,3,16,1s; 24,13; 1Chron 23,4,24; 26,20,22; 28,12s,20; 2Chron 4,4,9; 5,1; 25,13,18s; 24,7,12; 24,21; 26,21; 27,3; 28,24; 29,13,16,13; 33,5,15; 35,2; 36,7,10; Ezra 8,29; Ps 116,19; 118,26; Jer 19,4; 20,1; 33,2; 34,16; 35,36; 43,10; Bar 1,8; Ez 8,16; 10,19; 11,1; Joel 19; 4,18; Sach 8,9; „Haus des Herrn“; Jes 63,15); „Haus seiner Dora“; 64,10; „unser heiliges Haus“. Offener ist bar 3,24; Gottes Haus ist die ganze Welt.
65. Mk 2,22 par.; Hebr 10,17 – In Hebr 3 und Pet 1,4 ist allerdings Gottes Haus das Volk Gottes.
66. Ex 26,3,36; Num 3,36; 1Kön 7; 2Kön 11,14; 23,3; 25; 2Chron 3; 23,13; Jer 52; Ez 49; vgl. Offb 3,12.
67. 1 Kön 5,31; 6,37; Ezra 3,10ff.; Sach 8,9; vgl. Jes 28,16; 54,11.
Grundbekenntnis der Christen, gerade auch der ehemaligen Heiden, wiedergibt (1 Thess 1,9s). Das ist der Horizont von 1 Tim 3,14ss. Worin Gottes Leidenschaft besteht, die sein Haus erfüllt, sagt Vers 16 mit einem christologischen Basistext; wozu sie die Kirche macht, zeigt Vers 15 mit dem Bild der Säule und des Fundamentes.

Das Bild der Kirche als Tempel durchzieht das gesamte Corpus Paulinum70. Freilich ändern sich die die Blickpunkte und infolgedessen verschieben sich die Bildmotive. Die revolutionäre Neuerung des christlichen Tempelverständnisses kommt in 1 Kor 3,17 zum Ausdruck: „Gottes Tempel ist heilig, und der seid ihr“. Davon ist die gesamte Tempel-Eklektik des Corpus Paulinum geprägt. 1 Kor 3 leitet die Perspektive der Gründung durch Gott selbst71. Der Epheserbrief verschiebt das Bild (2,20s)72, weil er die geschichtlichen Vermittlungen dieser Gründung durch die „Apostel und Propheten“73 einbezieht74. Die Pastoralbriefe


72. 1 Tim 3,15 ist der Schlüsseltext. Die Kirche ruht nicht auf einem Fundament, sie ist es selbst; sie besteht nicht aus Säulen, sie ragt selbst als Pfeiler empor75. Das Fundament eines antiken Tempels schafft nicht nur eine stabile Baugrundlage, sondern steht für die Gründung des Kosmos und die Absicherung der Welt vor den unterirdischen Chaosmächten76. Das konnte in 1 Kor 3 auf Jesus Christus und Eph 2 auf den Apostolat bezogen werden; der Timotheusbrief sieht die Kirche als ganze in ihrer weltbegründenden, das Böse besiegenden Funktion, die ihr von Gott zukommt. Die Säule eines Tempels hat nicht nur eine tragende Funktion für das Dach, das den Himmel symbolisiert; sie signalisiert weithin die Präsenz des Götlichen in der Welt77, stellt aber selbst das Götliche in seiner weltbegründenden Kraft dar und die Erde als begründet im Götlichen78. Nicht weit entfernt ist das Bild der „lebendigen Steine“, aus denen nach dem Ersten Petrusbrief das Haus der „lebendigen Steine“ gehäuft ist (1 Petr 2,5); nur steht dem Timotheusbrief weniger jeder einzelne Christ als die Kirche insgesamt einschließlich ihrer episkopalen Amtsstruktur vor Augen. Sie ist nicht nur von Gott gegründet; sie ist göttlicher Natur in dieser Welt.


74. Der Rückbezug zum Jerusalemer Tempel könnte durch 1Kron 8,13,18-19 hergestellt worden sein; die Tempeladaption ist allerdings fragil. Ein Seitenblick fällt auf das Parallelen im Prophetenbuch: Das Pathos der Wahrheit, die feste Gründung eines heiligen Tempels haben hier Parallelen.

75. Diese Signalwirkung akzentuiert ROLOPH, 1 Tim, p. 200s.

76. Die Säulen im Jerusalemer Tempel tragen göttliche Namen (1Kron 7,21). Nach Ps 75,4 hat Gott die Säulen der Erde fest gegründet.

VI. Das Geheimnis des Glaubens


- Das Geheimnis des Glaubens ist groß:
  - Er wurde offenbart im Fleisch, gerechtfertigt im Geist,
  - geschaut von den Engeln, verkündet bei den Völkern,
  - geglaubt in der Welt, aufgenommen in Herrlichkeit.

Die Verse sind nicht narrativ strukturiert, sondern perspektivisch. Sie erzählen nicht die Geschichte Jesu Christi nach, obgleich sie bei der Inkarnation des Präexistenten beginnen und bei der Erhöhung des (zum


Der Theozentrik entspricht die implizite Soteriologie. Bereits das erste Gegensatzpaar enthält alles, was über Gott und Jesus zu sagen ist. Der Präexistente erscheint auf Erden als der Inkarnierte98. Joh 1,14 ist eine enge Sachparallele. Während der Philosopherrhymus die „Kenosis“ (Phil 2,7f) und 2Kor 8,9 die „Armuth“ (2Kor 8,9) Jesu betont, unterstrich 1 Tim 3,16 Gottes Entschluss, dass sein Sohn auf Erden als Mensch aus Fleisch und Blut erscheint. Die Pastoralbriefe kennen und betonen die Heilsbedeutung des Todes Jesu, ordnen sie aber in das Heitsgeschehen der Epiphanie ein99. Auf diese Weise wird Jesus von Nazareth als Retter offenbart100. Die Rettung geschieht durch die Offenbarung, weil Gott in seiner „Menschenfreundlichkeit“ (Tit 3) nichts anderes macht, als Jesus unter den Menschen auftreten zu lassen. Dieser menschliche Weg der Rettung ist keine Konzeption, die Gott macht, weil er sich den Menschen sonst nicht mitteilen könnte, sondern Ausdruck seiner Gottheit und deshalb Wesenmoment der Offenbarung. Vom Tode Jesu ist freilich nur


«SOIS UN MODELE POUR LES CROYANTS»
TIMOTHÉE, UN PORTRAIT EXHORTATIF, 1 T M 4

YANN REDALIÉ

1. Destinataires

«Je pense que cette Epistre a été écrite, non point tant pour Timothée, que pour les autres»...et encore, «Ayant donc délibéré d’admonester Timothée de beaucoup de choses, il a voulu aussi par un meneau moyen admonester les autres sous le nom de Timothée». Ainsi Calvin, dans son commentaire de la première à Timothée, introduit l’argument de la lettre. Qui sont les autres? Ceux qui, pour obéir, avaient besoin d’être convaincus par l’autorité de l’apôtre. C’est-à-dire, d’une part ceux qui troublent l’Église d’Éphèse, et de l’autre, l’ensemble de la communauté «car il y avait beaucoup de choses à ordonner». Dans sa dédicace de ce même commentaire au Prince Édouard, tuteur du roi d’Angleterre, après avoir célébré l’effort de Réforme qui anime l’Église d’Angleterre, Calvin propose son volume comme contribution à cette œuvre de renouveau. En effet, selon lui, on trouve dans ces épitres tout ce «qui est nécessaire pour la conduite du bâtiment de l’Église» et le Réformateur souhaite à son illustre dédicataire de trouver de nombreux Timothées prêts à travailler pour «remettre l’Église en bon État».

Ainsi, si la lettre est adressée au jeune délégué de l’apôtre, elle l’est surtout aux chrétiens de l’Église d’Éphèse, y compris à ceux qui créent problème, et au-delà, elle exhorte ces autres Timothées que sont les pasteurs réformés, réformateurs et combattants, invités à suivre le «patron» (le modèle) donné par saint Paul. Et l’interprétation passe de l’un à l’autre de ces trois destinataires avec une grande maîtrise.

2. Trois exhortations à Timothée (1 Tm 1; 4; 6)

En réaction à la prééminence de la question de l’auteur comme préliminaire incontournable de leur interprétation, un certain nombre d’études


2. CALVIN, Commentaires, p. 150.
plus ou moins récentes ont prêté une attention particulière à la structure et à la composition des pastorales comme clés d'interprétation du texte. Le texte n’est plus considéré comme une compilation de matériaux divers sans lien organique, il fournit des indices de structure, et cette structure indique comment le discours entend être compris. C’est dans une perspective analogue que je situerai ma lecture de 1 Tm 4.

Ainsi, en 1 Tm les séquences marquées par la polémique (1,3-20; 4,1-16; 6,3-16) alternent avec d’autres, centrées sur les instructions relatives à l’organisation de la communauté (2,1-3,13; 5,3-6,2). Dans les premières, la dénonciation virulente des faux docteurs (1,3-10; 4,1-5; 6,3-10) précède une exhortation, en contraste, à Timothée qui doit devenir, dans l’exercice de sa responsabilité, par son comportement et son enseignement, la réponse décisive, en qualité de représentant de la communauté, aux menaces de déviation (1,3,18-20; 4,6-16; 6,11-14).

Ces trois exhortations et leur contexte présentent un certain nombre d’analogies et des motifs communs. À chaque fois, la mention de la tâche confiée à Timothée – l’« instruction » 1,18; le « charisme » 4,14; le « commandement » 6,14 et le « dépôt » 6,20 – est accompagnée d’un rappel de l’engagement public pris en son temps: les prophéties prononcées, alors, à son égard 1,18; des prophéties avec imposition des mains des anciens 4,14; sa confession de foi devant de nombreux témoins 6,12.

Dans chacun de ces contextes, à côté de l’accent mis sur l’enseignement correct, le contraste porte sur le comportement (1 Tm 1,3-7,8-10 vs 1,5,14; 4,1-3 vs 6-16; 6,3-10 vs 11-16). Le style de vie du leader fait partie de son mandat, s’il veut devenir le « modèle des croyants » (1 Tm 4,12) et la contre-figure des adversaires (1 Tm 1,18; 4,6; 6,11). Il ne s’agit pourtant pas de morale individuelle en soi, mais d’éthique communicative, représentative, communautaire, combative. On retrouve ainsi la métaphore militaro-sportive du combat ou de la compétition, « batailles d’une belle bataille » 1,18, « c’est pour cela que nous peinons et combattons » 4,10 (l’« exercice de la piété » de 4,8 appartient au même thème), « combats le beau combat » 6,12. En outre, Timothée est mis en garde contre « certains » qui se sont détournés de la foi: « foi et bonne conscience que certains ont rejetées » (1 Tm 1,19); « certains renieront la foi » (1 Tim 1,19); « certains se sont écartés de la foi » (1 Tim 6,21).

Enfin, la perspective des exhortations, la promesse, c’est la « vie éternelle » en 1,16 et 6,12, ou la « vie présente et future » en 4,8, mais aussi la « vie véritable » pour les riches qui savent être généreux (en ce monde-ci) (6,17) et « amassent ainsi un solide trésor pour l’avenir » (6,19). Autant de bienfaits du « Dieu vivant » en 4,10, du « Dieu qui donne vie à toutes choses » 6,13 (cf. le créateur en 4,3-5), « Dieu Sauveur » en 1,1 (cf.1,15) et 4,10.

En outre, les divers motifs présents dans ces exhortations sont, d’un chapitre à l’autre, dans des relations dynamiques. Par exemple, en 1 Tm 1, Paul n’utilise pas l’impératif, il est présent lui-même dans l’énonciation, en 1,3 « comme je t’ai recommandé de rester » (καθὼς προέδρισαν σε προς τ’εγκαθιδρίαν) et en 1,18 « Voilà l’instruction que je te confie » (παρατίθημα σοι). En 1 Tm 1, l’amnésie paulinienne (1,11-17) s’intègre dans la dénonciation des adversaires (1,3-10) et l’instruction à Timothée (1,18-20) dont elle est le fondement. Elle raconte comment l’évangile a été confié à Paul (1,11), dont la conversion est proposée comme modèle originaire (πρότος, v. 15; ὑπότος, v. 16) du devenir croyant et, sans doute aussi, du passage de έκτη χρόνιαι (να 3.10 l’« autre enseignement » des déviants) à πρότος (v. 13 Paul, le pêcheur d’avant), passage de l’altérité négative de la déviation actuelle à un « avant » conversion. À cette condition, même les émules des faux docteurs auront un avenir de futurs croyants.

Ainsi, la relation de modèle (τύπος) indiquée comme tâche à Timothée en 4,12 (« deviens modèle des croyants »), est précédée par celle de Paul – premier pêcheur, premier sauveur – archétype (ὑπότος) de « ceux qui vont croire » (1,15-16), et trouve, en fin de parcours, une

5. Cf. 1 Tm 1,3; 6,3,10 « l’autre enseignement ».
6. On pourrait encore ajouter l’utilité (4,8) ou le gain (6,6) reconnu à la piété (κοπείτηκε).
7. Paul « qualifie son comportement passé de la même manière que celui qu’il dénonce chez les déviants d’aujourd’hui. (...) Si les tenants de l’autre enseignement le considèrent comme passé révolu, il s’identifient aux païens à qui Paul a ouvert la voie. L’altérité négative (πρότος, πρότος) de la déviation actuelle devient alors, comme pour Paul (ou la communauté), cf. Ti 3,3 ‘nous aussi autresfois’, cf. 2 Tm 2,25, un ‘avant’ conversion (το πρότος)», Redalje, Y., Paul après Paul, Genève, Labor et Fides, 1994, pp. 98-99. Dans le même sens, voir aussi, dans ce volume, pp. 30-31. J. T. Johnson sur 1 Tm 1,1-20: « Il est difficile de ne pas prendre l’impression que Paul est délibérément en train de se dégager de son ancien siècle et de ses petits qui, dans leur faiblesse et ignorance, se sont mis à être les maîtres.»
dimension christologique dans l’échange des sujets de la « belle profession de foi » (καλή ὁμολογία 6,12-13). Jésus en a rendu témoignage (μαρτυρήσαντος) devant Pilate, Timothée devant de nombreux témoins (μαρτυρούν).

Enfin, dans une lettre scandée par des prises de congé et des rendez-vous, la relation au temps est également objet d’une dynamique. Présentée comme instruction (1 Tm 1,3,18) pour laquelle Paul a demandé à Timothée de rester à Éphèse, la tâche de Timothée s’inscrit dans le temps qui reste, « jusqu’à (ἐώς ce que je vienne » (4,13; cf 3,14-15 » je viens bientôt », «...si je tarde »), mais, en fin de parcours, c’est « jusqu’à (μέχρι) l’épiphanie de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ, ...aux temps fixés » (6,14) que Timothée doit garder, observer le commandement.

Non seulement la lettre transmet des instructions et des exhortations, elle fonctionne aussi comme lettre d’investiture pour son destinataire et pour ceux qui s’identifieront à lui ou seront sous son autorité. Le rappel d’investiture de Timothée apparaît d’ailleurs déjà en ouverture de lettre, en 1 Tm 1,18, immédiatement après l’anannémis paulinienne, et au centre de la lettre en 1 Tm 3,14-15 et 4,14. Elle a son origine dans celle de Paul. L’ensemble de la construction répond à la préoccupation de garantir la continuité du ministère et sa normativité paulinienne.

3. 1 Tm 4 au centre de la lettre

Dans la dynamique de ces exhortations, 1 Tm 4 occupe une place centrale, et donne une certaine épaisseur à la figure de Timothée, contre-modèle des adversaires et modèle pour la communauté, en lui indiquant ses tâches comme enseignant dans une situation d’hérésie croissante. Le texte s’articule en trois séquences: (a) aux vv. 1-5 Paul dénonce la menace d’apostasie sous l’effet d’enseignements ascétiques mensongers auxquels il oppose l’usage du monde comme création de Dieu. Ensuite, en contraste avec l’adversaire, (b) Timothée s’exercera à la piété qui donne accès à la vie promise par le Dieu vivant et Sauveur de tous les humains (vv. 6-10.11). Ainsi, (c) par son enseignement et son exemple, à travers les tâches publiques et les vertus personnelles, Timothée indiquera le parcours qui mène au salut, le sien et celui de ceux qui l’écoute (vv. 12-16).4

Renforcée par les paradoxes anthropophiques « Ces choses / cela » (τά ἄνθρωπον / τότε v. 6.11.15 [2x].16), la cohésion de l’ensemble s’exprime à travers des motifs récurrents, l’enseignement (διδασκαλία / διδασκαλία v. 1.6.11.13.16), l’universalité4, l’emploi d’un langage éducatif pour inviter à l’exercice en vue de la piété, à devenir un modèle, à rendre visible ses progrès. Le lexique est celui de l’éducation philosophique, déjà en grande partie intégré au langage chrétien, « nourri » (ἐντροφοφόρος) au sens de « être élevé » (θέρετρον v. 6.15), « que tu as suivi » (v. 6), la métaphore de l’effort athlétique, « exerce-toi » (v. 7), « nous peins et luttons » (v. 10). Typique des recommandations à des responsables publics, on remarque encore le langage de l’évaluation, ce qui est « bon » (γάρ, 2x), ce qui est « utile » (v. 8, 2x), et celui de la persévérance, « tenir bon », « attache-toi »


12. "Toute (tout) créature vs. rien (rien) à rejeter" (v. 4); la piété qui est « utile à tout» (πᾶντα v. 8), «le Sauveur de tous les hommes» (πάντων ἅγιόν τοῦ v. 10); «ces progrès» qui doivent devenir «manifestes aux yeux de tous» (πάντων v. 15).


14. Dans la lutte contre les représentations négatives qui assèchent la conscience, Épistèle utilise l’image de l’athlète qui s’entraîne; ainsi dans les *Entretiens* 11,27,28, on trouve une constellation de termes proches de notre passage: « voitil le véritable athlète, celui qui s’exerce lui-même (ὑπερήφανος ὄντως ἐκεῖνος, cf. 1 Tm 4,7) contre de telles représentations. C’est bon (μεγάλος, cf. 1 Tm 4,16), malheureux, ne le laisse pas captiver. Le combat (δραμα, cf. 1 Tm 4,10 ἡμῶν ὑπερήφανος) est grand. Dans *Entretiens* 3,14, le centre des recommandations est présenté comme une méthode d’exercice. Dans quelques lignes d’un chapitre consacré à l’exercice comme forme de résistance à la force de l’habitude, on trouve l’exercice lié à l’application comme dans notre passage: *Entretiens* 13,27-8, il doit être lié à éviter le travail; il entraînerait et j’exercerai (ὑπερήφανος, cf. 1 Tm 4,7) mes représentations à cette fin que l’aversion pour toute chose de ce genre vienne à cesser. Quel est en effet l’homme qui s’exerce? C’est celui qui s’applique (μετέχων, cf. 1 Tm 4,15 μετέχων) à ne rien désirer et à n’avoir d’aversion que pour des choses qui dépendent de nous, et s’il s’applique (μετέχων) principalement dans des matières difficiles à maîtriser” (trad. J. Soulhié, cf. note précédente). Cf. aussi He 5,14, où les adultes sont dits avoir les sens exercés et 12,11, où la pédagogie est présentée comme exercice.
4. Du bon usage du monde, 1 Tm 4,1-5

Nous avons ici le second passage de 1 Tm sur les adversaires et leur enseignement (cf. 1 Tm 1,3-7). Contrairement à l'usage des pastorales, l'argument est combattu sur le plan théologique.

L'énoncé qui introduit la parole prophétique – « dans les derniers temps » (ἐν ὑστέροις χαιροῖς) – est temporel en apparence mais théologique dans sa signification. Il situe d'emblée la menace dans un cadre eschatologique, apocalyptique. L'opposition entre la vérité et la tromperie, menée par des esprits séducteurs et des démons, la menace d'apostasie sont des motifs typiques du conflit final. Mais, comme l'indique la suite de l'argument, ces « derniers temps » menacés d'enseignements démoniaques, c'est maintenant (le verbe est d'ailleurs au présent « L'Esprit dit »), et Timothée doit en défendre la communauté.

Dans ce cadre on s'interroge sur le sens à donner à la « conscience cautionnée » des hérétiques. Plus qu'une allusion symbolique au marquage inflamma du volat déserteur ou de l'esclave fugitif, plusieurs insistent sur l'insensibilité à distinguer le bien du mal.

4.1. Les déviants, une identification difficile

L'identification des adversaires et de l'ascèse proposée est délicate. Les hypothèses s'orientent selon quatre directions principales, la culture du temps, la tradition juive et judéo-chrétienne, la gnosie ou encore diverses formes possibles de radicalisation de traditions paulinienes.

En ce qui concerne le milieu culturel, même si le monde grec n'est pas orienté vers l'ascétisme, les témoignages ne manquent pas qui mentionnent une abstinence alimentaire, le plus souvent temporaire, dont l'origine serait à chercher dans l'orphisme. Les motivations peuvent varier. Idéal de vie conforme à la nature, considérations hygiénistes, émancipation des liens avec la matière. L'abstinence de viande peut être liée à la croyance à la métamorphose. Sénéque traverse les périodes végétariennes (Ép. 108, 17-22). Plutarque est végétarien par respect des animaux mais aussi pour dominer les instincts, les désirs et les passions. La voie néoplatonicienne à la purification de l'âme passe par des interdits alimentaires, la frugalité des cyniques préserve l'autonomie de l'esprit.

Les questions alimentaires renvoient-elles à des pratiques d'origine juive ou judéo-chrétienne, attentives à distinguer le pur de l'impu? En faveur d'une telle hypothèse sont mentionnés les traits judaïques qui, dans certains passages, qualifient les adversaires (1 Tm 1,7ss; 2 T 1,10-14; 3,9). Mais il est impossible de déterminer si les nourritures mystiques à ce stade du développement de l'Église relèveraient de ce judaïsme ou d'autres influences. En tout cas, on ne peut parler d'un judaïsme spécifique qui soit propre à l'Église. L'identité du judaïsme comme source d'inspiration est donc relativement difficile à identifier.

La question nutritionnelle est à priori plus simple. Elle doit être vue en relation avec les enseignements apocalyptiques, et plus particulièrement dans le livre de Dan. 10,14-21, qui parle de l'interdiction de manger de la viande. On peut supposer que cette interdiction est due à une volonté de sanctification et non à un idéal de nourriture. Cependant, il est difficile de dire si cette interdiction est due à un judaïsme ou à un idéalisme. En tout cas, il est certain que l'interdiction de manger de la viande est donnée à Néophyte en Ga 9,1-4 et répétée dans la loi de Moïse en Dt 12,15.
le célibat et s’abstiennent de certaines nourritures
et certains mystiques juifs se préparent à recevoir des visions par une abstinence alimentaire et sexuelle temporaire.

De nombreux commentateurs font référence à un dualisme de matrice gnostique ou protochristien, qui oppose la matière et les réalités terrestres à l’esprit, et propose simultanément une abstinence alimentaire et l’interdit du mariage. Se marier et gérer est satanique. Ou bien encore, le gnostique refuse le mariage qui appartient au monde ancien, parce que la résurrection a déjà eu lieu (2Tim 2,18). La critique adressée à ce type d’hypothèses est la datation relativement récente des sources gnostiques significatives, d’ailleurs ceux qui les défendent considèrent les pastoraux comme des écrits tardifs.

L’enseignement des adversaires pourraient aussi fonder une éthique ascétique considérée comme « spirituelle » à partir d’une relecture de Gn sous l’influence de tendances au vétérinaire et à l’abstinence sexuelle. Un retour à Eden, dans une situation d’avant le péché. L’éthique consiste à éviter tout ce qui, dans le récit de la création, évoque la chute : la conscience sexuelle, le mariage, peut-être aussi le fait de se nourrir de viande.

Plusieurs hypothèses prennent en compte la possibilité que l’enseignement incriminé ait son origine dans une radicalisation de certaines traditions chrétiennes sous l’influence d’une hellénisation du message dans un sens spiritualisant et dualiste. Radicalisation de traditions pauliniennes, Paul ne tend-il pas à préférer le non-mariage (1Co 7,1,7) alors que les pastoraux insistent sur sa nécessité (1Tim 3,4,12; 5,14; Tt 1,6). Il intervenait sur des questions alimentaires avec sympathie lorsque certains se faisaient forts de la faiblesse des faibles (Rm 14,2,21; cf. 1Co 8). La pratique dénoncée pourrait trouver son origine, par exemple, dans un malentendu sur les instructions de Paul en 1Co 8,10,13, «si un aliment doit faire tomber mon frère, je renoncerai à tout jamais à manger de la viande plutôt que de faire tomber mon frère.» La présence de débat de ce type dans la tradition paulinienne est confirmée par la tension relative au lien entre résurrection et ascèse dans les Actes apocryphes de Paul (cf. AP 6, résurrection et abstinence; AP 23, jeûne; AP 25, pain, légumes et eau). Même si l’analogie avec les adversaires de 1Tim ne doit pas être trop poussée, en effet, en AP, il n’y a aucune relation entre ces pratiques et l’observation de la loi.

4.2. Le bon usage du monde, une réponse claire

Même si elle est coupée à l’interdiction du mariage, c’est l’abstinence alimentaire qui fait l’objet de la discussion. Si l’identification de l’ascèse proposée par les déviance et de sa motivation est délicate, la réponse donnée à cet enseignement est assez claire. Elle s’articule en trois vagues qui balaient les fausses interdictions en réaffirmant par trois fois l’initiative créatrice de Dieu, à laquelle correspond, comme le ressacre, un juste accueil reconnaissant des biens créés.

a) v. 3 Les aliments, que Dieu a créés / pour un usage partagé / avec action de grâce.

b) v. 4 Car tout ce que Dieu a créé est bon, / et rien n’est à rejeter / si on le prend avec action de grâce.

c) v. 5 En effet, [tout être créé] est sanctifié par la parole de Dieu // et la prière.

Les termes s’articulent autour de trois motifs, la création, l’accueil au lieu du refus, et la prière, particulièrement l’action de grâce. Si le mariage et les aliments ont été créés par Dieu pour les humains, les considérer comme nuisibles c’est aller contre sa volonté.

L'argument fonctionne tant contre des restrictions judaïstes relatives au pur et à l'impu (Mc 7,15; Rm 14,14; Tt 1,14-15) que contre une pensée qui rejette le monde sur la base d'un dualisme qui situerait le mal dans la pure matérialité.

L'usage réaliste des dons de la création requiert davantage que leur seule libre consommation (vv. 3,4). Sans nier ce qui est dit de la création bonne en soi, l'accent est mis sur la responsabilité humaine qui consiste à reconnaître que Dieu en est le créateur et que l'usage du monde est accueilli partagé et reconnaissant dont rien n'est exclu (πάντα ... οὐδὲν v. 4). En un certain sens, la création est communication. Les aliments ont été créés par Dieu pour être reçus avec gratitude par ceux qui croient dans l'évangile, «qui reconnaissent pleinement la vérité» (ἐγγιγκοστὶ τὴν δόληθσιν v. 3), qui reconnaissent l'économie de Dieu dans la foi (1 Tm 1,4) et qui, par là, sont sauveurs (1 Tm 2,4). Il y a cohérence entre connaissance de la vérité, identité et comportement.

La double mention de l'action de grâce (ἐγγιγκοστὶς vv. 3,4) et l'énoncé du v. 5 concrétisent l'attitude juste en forme de prière35. D'ailleurs, en Rm 14,6 et 1Co 10,30 Paul argumente à partir de l'action de grâce pour rappeler la liberté de manger de tout. En fin de compte (Rm 14,20; 1Co 8,8) il n'indiquera pas de règles mais un critère de discernement dans la relation aux autres, ne pas scandaliser (cf. Rm14,15; 1Co 8,13; 10,23-31).

Cet énoncé, en appeler à une théologie de la création basée sur l'Écriture et à la pratique traditionnelle communaute de la prière au repas c'est s'appuyer sur des fortes autorités pour repousser l'enseignement incriminé.

Trois termes en particulier qualifient la réception de la création. Tout d'abord, le terme qui exprime au v. 3 le but pour lequel les aliments ont été créés par Dieu connote la participation et le partage (μεταλημένος). Cette dimension sociale de l'usage du monde est sans doute à souligner. L'abstinence en est le refus. En ce sens, la critique à ces interdits pourrait s'inscrire dans une critique du sectarisme que l'on retrouve ailleurs dans les pastorales.

34. Pour affirmer que l'on peut consommer tout ce qui est vendu au marché à Corinth, Paul en 1 Co 10,26 reprend le Ps 24,1 «car la terre et tout ce qu'elle contient sont au Seigneur».

35. C'est la pratique juive, celle de Jésus (Mc 8,6; 14,23; Mt 15,36; 26,27; Lc 22,17.19; 1R 6,11.23; 1 Co 11,24; de même Paul en Ac 27,35), voir aussi Didache 10,3.

36. Le verbe (μεταλημένος) indique le partage dans la première communauté chrétienne en Ac 2,46 et après la tempête le partage de la nourriture en Ac 27,33, ou encore que le paysan a droit à sa part (2 Tm 2,6). Chez Justin Apol 67,5, le substantif exprime la participation à l'œcuménisme des absents au culte à qui les diacres l'apportent à domicile. En He 12,10 le croyant participe à la sainteté de Dieu.

Ensuite, si le terme «beau» (καλόν) est présent dans le texte de Gn 1,31 LXX auquel il est fait allusion au v. 4, son usage récurrent dans les pastorales pourrait lui donner ici une nuance particulière, et être l'indice de l'insertion du discours sur la création dans un projet d'ensemble de présence positive dans la société. Le terme καλόν se retrouve vingt-quatre fois dans les pastorales et seulement seize fois dans les autres épîtres du NT. «Beaux» ou «belles» sont les œuvres (1 Tm 5,10.25; 6,18; Tt 2,7.14; 3,8.14), le combat du ministère, le témoignage, la confession de foi, le dépôt de la foi, l'enseignement, etc (1 Tm 1,18; 6,12-13; 3,7; 4,6 2 Tm 1,14; 4,7). Les pastorales introduisaient dans le NT la connotation grecque de «beau» et son application à l'excellence de la vie chrétienne. Appartenir à l'Église, c'est vivre d'une beauté en mesure de conquérir également les païens. La reconnaissance de la beauté-bonté de la création dans son usage partagé pourrait concourir à la réalisation d’un tel programme37.

Enfin, si «santifier» (ἁγιάζεται v. 5), au sens technique, c'est rendre quelque chose adéquat au rituel (LXX Es 29,27; Mt 23,17-19), alors les aliments non seulement sont bons de par leur création, mais ils sont aussi partie prenante de la vie communautaire.

Ces trois termes sont autant d'indices de l'extension à la socialité du jugement positif sur la création. L'évaluation positive de la création s'étend au monde compris comme vie sociale et citoyenne.38 L'attitude requise est un usage «pieux» du monde. Dans un monde où la distinction entre nature et culture n'est pas encore élaborée, il y a continuité entre le monde naturel et la société. L'ordre social est naturel. Or, pour qui reconnaît dans la nature la création bonne de Dieu, cette évaluation positive s'étend à une attitude positive envers le monde et la société.39

La conscience est ouverte à la manière dont Dieu ordonne la réalité et perçoit que les valeurs et les jugements ne sont pas à appliquer aux choses en soi mais à leur usage. Il ne s'agit donc pas d'opérer une séparation dans le monde créé, comme si l'humain avait un discernement supérieur

37. Œuvres (n. 18), pp. 676-684; AMICI, Erotesdaculcatic (n. 21), pp. 131, 134-135.

38. Ainsi pour la vie familiale et la maternité (1 Tm 2,15), la vie familiale des ministres (1 Tm 3,1-5,12-13; Tt 1,6), les veuves et les secondes noces, le souci de la famille (1 Tm 5), l'éducation (Tt 2,1-10).

39. C'est la thèse de l'étude de Roberto AMICI, Erotesdaculcatic (n. 21), p. 11 (88); p. 160: l'évaluation positive de la création et des créatures, exprimée dans le texte de 1 Tm 4,1, s'étend à l'ensemble de la vie sociale et citoyenne contre toute fuite du monde, à commencer par la vie familiale et la maternité (1 Tm 2,15; 1 Tm 3,1-5,12-13; 5; Tt 1,6; 2,1-10, etc.). C'est aussi la raison pour laquelle l'organisation sociale et l'ordre naturel des choses font partie de l'Ecologovit θοῖον, JOHNSON, The First (n. 4), p. 149, «theological perspective».
à celui du créateur, mais de pratiquer une réception ouverte et reconnaissante de tous les biens qui, par la prière, s'insèrent dans une dimension communautaire.

5. Un portrait exhortatif, 1 Tm 4,6-16

De la même manière que l'« enseignement sain » confié à Paul (1 Tm 1,10-11) contrastait avec l'« autre enseignement » (1 Tm 1,3,10), de même ici, en opposition à l'enseignement des déviants (1 Tm 4,1-2), 4,6 introduit au « bel enseignement », à peine rappelé à propos de la création, et aux qualités requises de Timothée. Outre le contraste, le bel enseignement se définit également par sa continuité (« que tu as suivi » παρακολούθησας).

Comme nous l'avons dit, la figure de Timothée se construit entre deux futurs accompagnés de participes qui en expriment les conditions de réalisation. « Exposant tout cela aux frères (τάγα άποστίθεμενος): tu seras (ἔση) ainsi un bon serviteur du Christ Jésus, nourri (ἐντερφόμενος) des paroles de la foi et de la belle doctrine... » (v. 6), et « en agissant ainsi (τούτῳ γὰρ ποιοὶ) tu sauveras (σώσεσαι) et toi-même et ceux qui t'écoute[nt] » (v. 16).

Les pronoms anaphoriques renvoient, d'une part, à l'enseignement sur la création (4,3-5) et à l'enseignement sain en général (« que tu as suivi »), et, d'autre part, aux indications de comportement qui auront été données dans cette exhortation. C'est donc un portrait dynamique, à réaliser dans la perspective du salut, qui met ensemble les questions d'enseignement et de comportement, les tâches ministérielles et la croissance personnelle.

En effet, Timothée est invité à un travail sur soi-même – « Exerce-toi plutôt à la piété » (γίμαζε σεαυτόν ν. 7), « veille sur toi-même » (πυρεχομενος ν. 16), « sauveurs toi-même » (σχεδόν σώσεσαι ν. 16). On peut y ajouter les expressions « deviens modèle » (τύπος γίνοι ν. 12), « le charisme qui est en toi » (ἐν σοί ν. 14), « ton progrès » (σοι ἡ προ- κορή ν. 15). Il y a sans doute aussi une relation dynamique dans le passage de « que personne ne méprise ton jeune âge » (v. 12) à « rendre manifeste à ton progrès » (v. 16).

Ces pronoms réflexifs et cet accent mis sur des qualifications personnelles n'engagent pas à « devenir soi-même » au sens classique de la philosophie, mais, comme l'indique le v. 6, à devenir un « bon serviteur du Christ » et du Dieu vivant (v. 10), devant qui, en définitive, tout se joue, comme le rappellera l'exhortation finale (1 Tm 6,13-14). C'est donc de la fonction et du rôle de Timothée qu'il s'agit, représentant de l'apôtre et modèlev du ministre. Tenir son rôle dans la communauté, s'insérer dans les relations avec les divers interlocuteurs, avec les frères (4,6), qui sont aussi les croyants (vv. 10,12; cf. v. 3), opposés aux « certains » (τινες 4,1; évoqués à nouveau par leurs mythes à éviter en 4,7a), relation avec l'autorité du « collège des anciens » (v. 14), avec « tous » (v. 15), avec « ceux qui t'écoute[nt] » (v. 16) qui, en fin de parcours, font écho à « ceux qui connaissent la vérité » (v. 3).

L'exercice » (vv. 7,8) et le « progrès » (v. 15) s'inscrivent en outre dans une durée. Entre la personne et son rôle il y a du temps pour la formation. D'ailleurs l'évêque ne sera pas un néophyte (1 Tm 3,6), le diacre sera d'abord éprouvé (1 Tm 3,10), personne ne sera consacré en hâte (1 Tm 5,22). Cette inadéquation permet l'actualisation, et aux ministres des générations futures de pouvoir, eux aussi, devenir ces « Timothées » qui, selon Calvin, sont si nécessaires à la « conduite du bastiment de l'Église ».

Quatre tâches sont confiées à Timothée: s'exercer en vue de la piété (v. 7,8), devenir un modèle pour les croyants (v. 12), ne pas négliger le charisme reçu (v. 14), rendre visible à tous son progrès (v. 15).

6. « Exerce-toi plutôt à la piété », 1 Tm 4,7-10

Tant du point de vue de la forme que du contenu, les vv. 7-10 sont au centre de l'argument. À l'enseignement combattu aux vv. 3-5 et disqualifié ici comme mythes (cf. 1 Tm 1,4; Tit 1,14) et fables de vieilles femmes, Paul oppose la pratique de la piété (vv. 7-8), qui ouvre le discours à la vie et au salut (v. 10), motif sur lequel la séquence se conclut au v. 16.

Timothée est exhorté à s'exercer en vue de l'« εὐρύθεια » (piété) qui est supérieure à l'exercice physique. À l'origine de l'image se trouve l'opposition, courante dans la philosophie populaire, entre l'ascèse corporelle de l'athlète et l'effort spirituel de la lutte contre soi-même du philosophe. L'auteur la réinterprète contre des prouesses ascétiques jugées

40. Cf. supra 81.
41. À propos de l'ascèse qui se fonde sur des mythes, voir Schlab, E., Lehre (n. 19), pp. 88-89, 93.
42. Le combat (δύνα) comme image de la lutte de l'homme pour son accomplissement spirituel et moral est un motif répandu dans le monde antique. Épictète met en évidence la différence entre le combat philosophique et les luttes sportives. Celui qui combat contre soi-même mène un combat plus difficile (Épictète, Entretiens III,10,8; le Manuel 51). Entretiens III,22,57: Héraldes, figure de l'effort, de la peine, des « travaux », ne s'est pas jugé malheureux « quand Euryste l'exerçait »; il est le symbole du courage devant le combat et bien
littérature chrétienne à faire un usage courant du terme, l’œsophée est un motif englobant qui inclut l’ensemble du comportement des croyants. Il sert à exprimer un style de vie basé sur la confession de foi en Christ (1 Tm 3,16; cf. 2Tm 3,12; Ti 2,12), une cohérence avec la manifestation de la vérité (1 Tm 6,3; cf. Ti 1,1), avec l’« enseignement sain » (« l’enseignement selon la piété » en 1 Tm 6,3 s’oppose à « l’autre enseignement »). On s’y exerce (1 Tm 4,7-8). Elle se vérifie de manière pratique par le souci des parents (1 Tm 5,4). Bref elle exprime la nouvelle existence en Christ qui articule la foi en Dieu et un mode de vie cohérent. Dans ce sens c’est plus qu’une vertu.

En 1 Tm 4, l’exhortation à s’exercer en vue de l’œsophée (v. 7b) est fortement soulignée. Formellement elle lance l’alternative positive à l’enseignement des déviants (6e adversatif). Reprenant par une maxime (v. 8a) – ce qui présupposerait que le/les destinataires de lettre sache/sachent de quoi il s’agit – elle est mise en évidence par la formule de renforcement du verset 9d. Du point de vue du contenu, l’œsophée est la piétés (dès Auguste) comme garantie de la paix et du bien-être de l’empire. Ce véritable programme impérial, politique, culturel et religieux implique aussi bien les dieux et l’empe reur que tous les citoyens, particulièrement dans une reprise en main des valeurs familiales. Concernant le sens des croyants présupposent que le/les consensus sur ce que signifie « vrai pieux », donc entend leur concept d’œsophée sur le fond d’une conception déjà existante, sans doute reprise du judaïsme hellénistique, lui-même influencé par l’idéologie romaine. Standhartinger (80) formule une hypothèse pour la rédaction tardive des pastorales, sous le règne d’Hadrien ou d’Antonin le pieux, quand l’idéologie de la piétas est à l’apogée de sa diffusion. L’auteur des pastorales donnerait une valeur apologétique au concept, non pas pour défendre le Christianisme comme tel, mais pour distinguer un christianisme vivant d’ancienneté chrétiens qui n’ont que l’apparence de la piété.

46. On trouve l’œsophée dans le cadre de l’œsophée en 1 Tm 2,2; 3,16; 4,7-8; 6,3.5.6.11; 2Tm 3,5; Ti 1,1; œsophée en 1 Tm 5,4; œsophée en 2 Tm 3,12; Ti 2,12. Rares sont les autres emplois ailleurs dans le NT: œsophée Ac 3,12; œsophée Ac 17,23; œsophée Ac 10,2-7; 2P 2,9; cf. également 2P 1,3.6.7; 3,11) n’est pas utilisé dans les prologues bibliques.


48. En effet, seul le v. 8b à la forme d’un « dit », le v. 10 serait un commentaire de cette dit. Pour Rollof, Der Erste Brief (n. 19), pp. 240-245 la formule du v. 9 se réfère au v. 10. Cf. 1 Tm 1,15; 3,1; 2Tm 2,11; Ti 3,8; pour le v. 10 voir Knight, Sayings (n. 47), pp. 30,62-79,143-144; Goodwin, M. J., « The Pauline Background of the Living God as Intercultural Context for Timothy 4: 10 », JSNT 61 (1998), p. 06.
le but de l’effort missionnaire indiqué au v. 10. Elle partage la dimension inclusive et universelle (« utile à tout » πρὸς πάντα ἀπόλειμος) reconnue à l’action divine, qu’elle soit créatrice (toute créature de Dieu, πάν κτισμά) ou salvifique (Sauveur de tous les humains, σοφίτηρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων). Entre création (toute créature) et rédemption (tous les humains), l’événement est la « vertu » universelle, utile à tout. Elle donne accès à la vie présente et future.

La vie éternelle, objet de l’espérance des croyants (1 Tm 1,16; 6,12; cf. 1 T 1,2), n’est pas seulement pour l’autre monde. La vie présente en Christ sous le signe de sa première venue (incarnation, ministère, mort et résurrection) a un avenir qui sera inauguré à la parousie (1 Tm 6,14,19). On retrouve d’ailleurs cette même distinction en 1 Tm 6,17,19 où le mouvement de l’exhortation aux riches souligne, comme ici, davantage la continuité que la discontinuité entre les temps. Les riches de ce monde-ci (ἐν τῷ ζῷῳ ἔλεγεν 1 Tm 6,17) pourront amasser « pour eux-mêmes un bel et solide trésor pour l’avenir, afin d’obtenir la vie véritable » (1 Tm 6,19). Les bénéfices de l’événement dans la vie présente concernent aussi les relations sociales, l’attitude positive envers le monde réel, notamment envers le mariage et la nourriture.

Les énoncés du v. 10 sur les combats de l’apôtre et le « Dieu vivant, ...) Sauveur de tous les hommes », sont le commentaire théologique des vv. 7-8. En effet, au v. 10, les indices ne manquent pas qui se réfèrent à 4,8: « c’est pour cela (εἰς τὸν θρόνον), un effet (γάρ), le verbe « nous luttons » (ἀγωγοὺς ὑμᾶς) qui fait allusion à la métaphore sportive de 4,7-8, et bien sûr le Dieu vivant à la source de la promesse de vie (4,8).

Ainsi, au v. 10, Paul se présente comme luttant, avec Timothée, pour l’accès à l’événement qui est accès à la vie. Outre son contenu théologique, cette coïncidence du destinateur et du destinataire de l’exhortation fait de ce verset 10 le centre et la pivot du chapitre 49.

La connotation des deux premiers verbes (« nous peinons et nous luttons ») est double. Outre le prolongement de la métaphore sportive des vv. 7b-8, ils expriment, dans la tradition paulinienne, l’effort missionnaire 50. L’expression est proche de Col 1,29 dont le contexte est missionnaire, « c’est le but (εἰς τοῦ) de mon labou (κοπῶ), du combat (ἀγωγοῦ) voulu avec sa force qui agit puissamment en moi ».

À ce langage missionnaire explicite s’ajoute la connotation également missionnaire du titre « Sauveur de tous les hommes », qui résume la finalité même de l’annonce de l’évangile, et de l’expression « Dieu vivant ». Ainsi en 1 Th 1,9b, la réussite de la mission de Paul est indiquée par l’expression, sans doute reprise d’une tradition missionnaire judéo-hellénistique, « abandonnant les idoles pour servir le Dieu vivant et véritable » (cf. aussi Ac 14,15). Le Dieu vivant c’est aussi celui qui ressuscite Jésus Christ et les croyants, c’est la source de la vie ressuscitée pour tous ceux qui se sont détournés des idoles et on cru (1 Th 4,14-15). Donc la garantie de la vie future. Et c’est ce pouvoir salvifique que met en évidence le titre de Sauveur 51. Paul peine et lutte avec Timothée pour l’événement qui a la promesse de vie, parce qu’il est apôtre du Dieu vivant, instrument du salut divin.

Enfin, l’universalité du salut — « Sauveur de tous les hommes » — répond à celle de la création, à la bonté de toutes les choses créées par Dieu (4,4), et aussi à l’utilité « pour tout » de la piété (4,8) qui devient, avec sa promesse de vie, une dynamique salvifique à mettre en pratique. Quant à l’expression « surtout des croyants » (μὴ μόνον οἰκείοι), elle est en général interprétée comme un salut offert à tous, et reçu en particulier par les croyants. Il ne s’agit pas d’une préférence particulière pour le peuple de Dieu, mais d’indiquer que la volonté de Dieu de sauver tous les humains est réalisée en particulier parmi les croyants qui ont reconnu la vérité (2,4 et 4,3). À côté de cette spécification, « en particulier », le sens de μὴ μόνον peut être aussi celui d’une précision, « c’est-à-dire », et plus précisément ». Ce qui signifierait ici : « c’est-à-dire les croyants » 52. Il y aurait donc limitation, mais l’universalité demeure. Tous les humains sont potentiellement des croyants. Ce qui d’ailleurs correspondrait aux connotations missionnaires que nous avons relevées dans cet énoncé, et à la théologie paulinienne. L’universalité porte sur la non différenciation selon les déterminations socio-ethnique-religieuses, et tous sont sauvés par la loi en Jésus-Christ (Ga 3,26-28).

51. Sur les traditions pauliniennes missionnaires à l’arrière-plan de 1 Tm 4,10 voir Goodwin, « Pauline Background » (n. 48).
Y. REDALI

7. Deviens modèle, 1 Tm 4.11.12-16

Les vv. 11-16 forment une nouvelle séquence marquée par la concentration de dix impératifs. L’insistance est sur les tâches de Timothée envers la communauté et particulièrement l’exigence d’en être un exemple pour les autres par la qualité de sa vie personnelle. Fidèle à la dialectique entre le comportement et la connaissance, l’exhortation est relayée par deux verbes qui expriment, l’un la prescription (παραγγελλεῖ), l’autre l’enseignement (διδάσκει ; cf. aussi 1 Tm 5.7; 6.17; Ti 2.1,6,15; 3.8).

Devenir modèle est aussi l’antidote face au risque de déconsidération dû au jeune âge de Timothée. En outre, la morale vécue sera une réfutation des leaders hérétiques et une force de conviction pour l’enseignement. Que le maître devienne un modèle des vertus qu’il enseigne est une condition de crédibilité partagée parmi les philosophes hellénistiques.

Dans ce passage, l’autorité fondée sur l’âge, qui reconnaît toute la société antique, est remplacée par une autorité fondée d’abord sur la délégation de l’apôtre, ensuite, fonctionnellement et institutionnellement définie par des tâches et une nomination de l’Église locale (4,13,14), enfin, par les qualités personnelles reconnues.

-On l’a vu, dans la progression de 1 Tm, l’expression «modèle (τύπος) des croyants» renvoie à 1 Tm 1,16, où Paul était présenté comme un prototype (ὑποτύπωσε) de ceux qui allaient croire». Les qualités que l’on va énoncer ne sont dès lors ni des vertus abstraitement universelles, ni l’objet d’un effort intérieur individuel. Il s’agit d’un tissu de relations où se joue la transmission paulinienne. Le système renvoie d’abord à un prototype, à Paul, origine historique unique dont la présence / absence est signalée par un «jusqu’à ce que je vienne» (1 Tm 4,13) qui qualifie Timothée comme son représentant.

53. τύπος, un modèle en mesure de produire une forme, SPIEL, Épîtres (n. 18), p. 513.

SOIS UN MODÈLE POUR LES CROYANTS

Il y a rendez-vous et échéance, comme c’était déjà le cas en 1 Tm 3,14, où Paul espérait revoir Timothée au plus tôt, mais envisageait quand même un retard possible (3,15).

Ensuite, le modèle renvoie à l’Église, à l’institution. La lecture, l’exhortation et l’enseignement (v. 13), à chaque fois précédées d’un article, à pratiquer avec régularité (πρόοδος καὶ cf. 1,4; 3,8; 4,1), sont les tâches spécifiques d’une responsabilité communautaire que pour lesquelles Timothée a été dûment nommé en son temps (v. 14). La lecture en public suit la pratique de la synagogue. Le commentaire de l’Écriture débouche sur l’exhortation peut-être l’exhortation avait-elle plus affaire avec le style de vie, et l’enseignement avec la doctrine.

Enfin, cette perspective est confirmée par le catalogue de vertus qui donne son contenu au modèle (cf. 1 Tm 6,11; 2 Tm 2,22; 3,10). La requête de cohérence entre la parole et le style de vie99 indique, plus que des vertus, des modalités de leur exercice, et rattachent le catalogue au contexte. Dès le v. 6 («nourris des paroles de la foi»), notre passage insiste sur l’articulation de ces deux aspects dans le portrait paternique du leader. Plus le terme qui rattaché le catalogue au comportement (ἐν ἐννοητρόφοις v. 12) fait écho au passage central de 1 Tm 3,4s, qui indiquait la conduite (ἐννοητρόφευσθαι) «dans la maison de Dieu» comme objet des instructions de Paul.

Les trois termes «amour», «foi», «purété» (ἀγαπη) prênnent une connotation plus éthique que théologique à partir du dernier d’entre eux. «Amour et foi» forment le noyau du catalogue. Déjà indiqués comme but de l’injonction en 1 Tm 1,5 et comme dons surabondants de Dieu en 1 Tm 1,14, ils se retrouvent dans les trois autres exhortations à Timothée (1 Tm 6,11; 2 Tm 2,22; 3,10)99. Plus spécifique, la pureté (ἀγαπη, cf. 1 Tm 5,2) est le plus souvent comprise dans la littérature morale comme chasteté, pureté sexuelle. Le terme sera même en 1 Tm 5,2 pour la relation de Timothée avec les femmes jeunes99.

56. Neh 8,1-8; Lc 4,16,20; Ac 13,15; 15,21; 2Co 3,14. C’est aussi le contexte dans lequel les lettres de Paul ont été lues (2 Co 7,8; Col 4,16; 1 Th 5,27; 2 Th 3,14).
57. 1 Tm 1,3; 2,1; 5,1; 6,2. Id en 2 Co 1,3; 7,4. Il s’agit d’une exhortation publique, comme celle que Paul est appelé à adresser à l’auditoire après la lecture en Ac 13,15; cf. aussi Rm 12,8 (2 M 7,24; 15,11; He 13,22; 1 Co 14,3).
58. D’accord avec ROLLO, Der erste Brief (n. 19), p. 253, il ne s’agit pas simplement de ce que dit le leader, mais de sa conformité avec le message évangélique; ἀνοητροφή: la manière dont le contenu de l’évangile prend forme dans la vie (cf. Ga 1,13; Ep 4,22; 4P 3,3,1,3,16; 4,3,11; 1P 2,12; 1,18; 2P 2,7; He 13,7; 1P 1,15; 2P 1,11).
59. Voir aussi 1 Tm 2,15; 2 Tm 1,13; Ti 2,2 et 1 Co 13,13; Ga 5,6,22; 1 Th 3,6; 5,8; 2 Th 1,3; Phil 5; Col 1,4; Ep 6,23.
60. PolPhil 5,3, les jeunes gens doivent «veiller avant tout à la pureté (ἀγαπη)». 
Le rapport «enseigner / suivre ou écouter» qui unissait Timothée à Paul, rappelé au v. 6, doit être reproduit entre «ceux qui l’écouteront» et Timothée (v. 16); c’est en ce sens aussi que Timothée doit devenir «modèle» (v. 12). De même que Paul n’était pas seulement un modèle moral, Timothée représente un modèle de relations.

8. Ne néglige pas le charisme qui est en toi, 1 Tm 4,14

Au-delà de la question de savoir si le charisme dont il s’agit ici est exclusivement celui du ministre64, ce qui me convainc davantage, ou s’il concerne toute la communauté, il me semble important de souligner que, dans le contexte de 1 Tm 4,11-16, l’attention porte sur l’extériorisation, sur le «faire voir» ce qui est en toi. Ainsi «deviens modèle», «que ton progrès soit manifeste pour tous». Ce qui doit aussi contraster le risque d’un manque d’autorité dû à la jeunesse de Timothée (v. 12). Le rappel mettra donc l’accent sur les circonstances extérieures, publiques, devant témoins, de la transmission du «charisme qui est en toi», soit la/les prophétie/s65 et l’imposition des mains66 de la part des anciens64. Cet aspect me semble confirmé par la répétition, déjà signalée, de circonstances du même type dans les deux autres exhortations à Timothée, en ouverture et en conclusion de lettre: «selon les prophéties prononcées jadis sur toi» (1 Tm 1,18) et la «belle profession de foi en présence de nombreux témoins» (1 Tm 6,12).

Dans tous ces cas, outre l’évocation du caractère public de la cérémonie, je crois que le rapport à un passé ecclésial est important. Comme


62. L’imposition des mains et les prophéties sont constitutives de l’acte d’ordination (Ac 6,6; 13,3; cf. 1 Tm 1,18). Si le terme est au pl. les «prophéties» désignent Timothée, il a été choisi et on lui impose les mains, il reçoit le charisme (proche de Ac 13,2 ou 1 Tm 1,18). S’il s’agit d’un génitif sg, le don de l’Esprit lui est transmis accompagné par une prophétie [discours MARSHALL, The Pastoral (n. 4), p. 566 ROLLOFF, Der Erste Brief (n. 19), p. 257, n. 181. Pour BROX, Pastoralbriefe (n. 47), p. 180, non seulement les prophéties accompagnent, mais elles sont instruments du choix.

63. Geste extrême d’une action intérieure de l’Esprit, l’imposition des mains est plus qu’un geste symbolique, de même que dans le baptême (Ac 8,14-17; 19,6; He 6,2), elle communique que l’esprit (Mc 10,16; 2 Tm 1,6), elle transmet un pouvoir (Es 29,10; Lv 1,4A; 4,15; 16,21 etc, Ac 6,6; 13,3; 1 Tm 5,22 sur Paul et Barnabas pour leur envoi en mission).

64. Par le collège des anciens. La structure de l’église d’Ephèse est analogue à celle de la synagogue «gerousia» [Lc 22,64; Ac 22,5, JOHNSON, The First (n. 4), p. 253].


66. Epiptetie, Entretiens 1,125; 11,129; 11,17; μελέτης désigne l’application requise par l’effort philosophique; Entretiens III,24,113: c’est Dieu qui ne néglige pas; cf. He 2,3; 8,9 (Jr 38,32); 2 P 1,12; PolPhil. 6,1; IgnPro. 1,4; SPIEGEL, Épiphts (n. 18), pp. 67-68; Gs 5,10; 2M 4,14; Josué, Antiquités 4,67; Guerre 4,168.

67. WULTER, Pastoralbriefe (n. 8), pp. 187-188, donne comme références des lettres d’investigations où l’on invite le destinataire à ne pas négliger la tâche à laquelle il vient d’être nommé; ce qui le porte à une interprétation institutionnelle du charisme en 1 Tm 4,14: le ministère avec son mandat, décrit en 4,13 comme lecture, exhortation, enseignement. Il s’agit de la fonction en tant que telle, qui fait de Timothée le représentant de l’apôtre, autorisé à transmettre ses instructions.

68. Ph 1,12,25.


70. Dans le chap. 4 du premier livre des Entretiens, entièrement consacré à la notion de progrès, Episthétique prend soin de préciser que le progrès n’est pas ivrognerie mais qu’il se manifeste dans le travail sur soi-même, sur ses propres propensions et sur ses répulsions, sur ses propres désirs et sur ses aversions: «mais voyons montrer-toi tes progrès», 1,4,13; «montre-le moi [que tu travailles sur toi-même en harmonie avec la nature] et je te dirai que tu progresse», 1,4,15. Pour exprimer l’erreur qui confond la culture ivrognerie avec le vrai progrès, Episthétique utilise encore une fois la métaphore de l’athlète qui, au lieu de montrer les muscles de ses épaules à qui lui demande de voir ses progrès, lui ferait voir ses hâleries! (1,4,13).
d’un comportement appréciables «par tous», indique qu’il n’y a pas d’espaces clos. Ce qui est en accord avec l’exigence, pour le choix de l’évêque, qu’il ait une bonne réputation auprès de ceux du dehors (1 Tm 3,7).

Ces deux éléments renvoient au motif du modèle du v. 12. Nous retrouverons d’ailleurs les trois exhortations à Timothée qui scindent la lettre à propos de la visibilité et de cette manifestation. D’une part, Timothée est l’enseignant gardien du dépôt, responsable de sa transmission (1 Tm 1,11,18; 6,20); d’autre part, il doit le rendre visible dans son comportement. Il doit le rendre visible et manifeste, comme la longanimité du Christ «a été montrée» (ἐνδείκνυται 1 Tm 1,16) dans la transformation de Paul devenu ainsi prototype des futurs croyants. Il doit le rendre visible et manifeste, jusqu’à la visibilité finale de la manifestation (παράδειγμα) de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ que Dieu «montrera» (δείξει 1 Tm 6,14-15) aux temps fixés.

Dans cette dynamique de la visibilité et de la manifestation, entre la conversion de Paul et l’épiphanie finale, le portrait de Timothée en 1 Tm 4, «comme peint en un tableau au vif» (Calvin, Commentaires IV, préface p. 150), marque le moment de la visibilité ecclésiale. En fin de compte, c’est une exhortation à la manifestation. L’éthique est ici communicative avant d’être morale. Et l’ivité est ce qui est donné à voir, si Timothée s’y exerce, s’il en devient un modèle pour les croyants, s’il ne néglige pas son charisme, s’il rend manifeste son progrès à tous. L’ivité qui articule en un comportement et un style de vie, d’une part, l’usage libre et reconnaissant du monde (nature et institutions comprises) comme création bonne de Dieu, et, de l’autre, l’accès à la vraie vie, présente et future, promise par le Dieu vivant et Sauveur de tous les hommes.

Alors, tout à la fois, si tu réponds à cette vocation, si tu corresponds à ce portrait, si c’est cela que tu montres... S’il s’engage totalement, Timothée se sauvera lui-même et ceux qui l’écoutent, sa communauté. Certes, Dieu seul sauvé (v. 10), mais il sauve à travers des témoins. Ainsi, par son ministère, Paul espère en sauver d’autres (Rom 11,14), il se fait tout à tous pour en sauver quelques-uns (1Co 9,22; 10,33; cf 7,16a).71

«Vray est qu’il n’y a que Dieu qui sauve, de la gloire duquel il n’est pas licite d’en rien transporter aux hommes tant peu que ce soit: mais Dieu ne déroge point à sa gloire, quand il use du moyen des hommes pour dispenser ce salut» (Calvin, Commentaires IV, ad loc., p. 193).

71. JOHNSON, The First (n. 4), p. 254 distingue entre un discours théologique qui maintient la différence entre initiative divine et initiative humaine et le discours moral qui voit toujours les deux choses ensemble.

DISCIPLINING PERFORMANCE AND ‘PLACING’ THE CHURCH: WIDOWS, ELDERS AND SLAVES IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD (1 Tim 5,1-6,2)

DAVID G. HORRELL.

After 1 Tim 2,9-15, the most infamous passage about women in the Pastoral, 1 Tim 5,1-6,2 ranks among the more controversial and frequently discussed texts in 1 Timothy, at least in recent scholarship. The author’s treatment of widows, as well as his instruction to slaves, generates contrasting reactions among readers, depending, at least in part, on where their own sympathies and commitments lie. Indeed, one might broadly characterise a good deal of work on this text as exhibiting either sympathy for the author and suspicion for his opponents, or sympathy for the opponents and suspicion for the author.

For some scholars, then, ‘Paul’ — whether seen as an authentic designation of the author or a pseudonym — is clearly right to restrict the activities of younger widows and to protect the church from the heresy they embody and promote. False teaching is a real and present danger, such that appropriate action to guard against it, and to safeguard the church’s respectable reputation, is both warranted and required. Philip Towner, for example, sees emancipatory aspirations deriving from ‘over-realized eschatology’ on the part of women and slaves as underpinning their ‘perverted conduct, which included a tendency to engage in behaviour that challenged the given social structure’. Such behaviour ‘would do nothing but engender criticism and disgust among outsiders’ so the ‘appropriate solution... was to be found in adherence to social structures such as the family’.


3. P. H. TOWNER, The Goal of Our Instruction: The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles (JSNTSup, 34), Sheffield, JSOT Press, 1989, with phrases from pp. 43,
For other scholars, by contrast, the author’s strategy is a regrettable attempt to use a position of power to exclude and stigmatise those who represent a different ‘take’ on the Christian gospel, a different vision of what the church should be like. The widows, on this reading, are not dangerous heretics who threaten the church’s integrity and continuity, but rather representatives of an alternative, even egalitarian, Christianity, marginalised by the machinations of patriarchal power. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza has influenced much subsequent feminist scholarship with her depiction of the Pastors as evidence of ‘patriarchalisation’ in the early church, a transformation away from the early model of ‘the discipleship of equals’ 14. Deborah Krause, for example, takes a critical stance towards the author of 1 Timothy’s use of power to shape the church in a particular way, and shows explicit sympathy for those, notably the widows of 1 Timothy 5, who ‘do not serve his approved social structure and ecclesial purposes’ 15.

To a considerable extent the contrasting reading stances are reflections of different theological stances and views of biblical authority. For evangelicals committed to a particular construal of the authority of scripture, for example, a stance which opposes the author’s teaching as repressive, and finds in the opponents’ position a potentially positive and emancipatory theology is simply incompatible with a Christian reading of the Bible. Those of a more radical persuasion, by contrast, are happy to see the text’s value precisely in its preservation, albeit partially, of voices and perspectives that go against the grain of the author’s convictions. Krause, for example, sees this as ‘one way to hold such texts as sacred

and yet resist their prescriptions and pretensions about God’s intentions for human social relations within the life of the church’ 6.

Yet the readings are also noticeably different in terms of the extent to which they trust the author’s rhetoric. William Mounce, for example, places the Pastors against the background of the threat posed by an Ephesian heresy – a heresy largely constructed, of course, given our lack of other evidence, on the basis of what the author says his opponents are doing. Furthermore, he takes at face value the author’s statements about those whom he opposes in the letter. Mounce is not quite persuaded that the widows are actually engaging in Satan-worship (cf. 5,15), but nonetheless sees this reference as ‘a euhemerism for acceptance of the demonic Ephesian heresy’ 7. These widows, many of whom had ‘been won over to the Ephesian heresy’ are ‘self-indulgent, self-centered, physically alive but spiritually dead’ 8. The result of this reading strategy is clear: if what ‘Paul’ is counterattacking is so dangerous, then he is fully justified in calling for restrictions and limitations on the activity of widows. A comparable strategy is apparent in Bruce Winter’s recent treatment of this text and of the ancient evidence regarding ‘new women’ – that is to say, women who defied traditional restrictions and were regarded as promiscuous and disturbing to the status quo 9. The widows addressed in 1 Timothy, similarly, are engaging in a ‘promiscuous lifestyle’ made possible by the opportunity ‘to be idle at the expense of the Christian community’ 10.

An immediate contrast may be noted with Jouette Bassler’s much earlier treatment of the same text, in which she sees the changes in the position of women at the time as an instance of ‘liberation’ for women, a form of proto-feminism which raised ‘egalitarian hopes’ and widened the opportunities for women’s participation in society 11. At issue here is not only whether one regards the changes positively or negatively but also how one reads the rhetoric with which these women are described 12. Winter takes the hints of sexual promiscuity at face value,

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10. Winter, Roman Women, pp. 133, 139.

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10. Winter, Roman Women, pp. 133, 139.
it seems, as a description of the widows' activities, while Krause sees this as an indication of 'the letter writer's fear of women's sexuality'. Bassler, along with Krause and many others, is more inclined to see the widows as representatives of an ascetic lifestyle, such as is promoted as ideal in the apocryphal Acts (see below n. 66).

There are good reasons, it seems to me, to read the author's rhetoric (and every author's rhetoric!) with a degree of suspicion, and to resist taking (often stereotypical) polemic at face value. It is relevant, for example, to note that various so-called Gnostic sects were accused of sexual promiscuity and licence, while their own writings reveal an ascetic tendency. Furthermore, one text in the Pastoralls should make the need for such a stance abundantly clear: Tit 1,12. Notwithstanding the fact that the author is quoting 'one of their own prophets', the notion that all people native to Crete were actually 'liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons' would hardly count as sober historical assessment. Similarly, the author's depiction of the dangers posed by the widows should be read with a due sensitivity to the particular stance from which the author writes and the strategies of power implied in his polemic.

However, in this paper I want to draw on some theoretical ideas from recent anthropology and geography which may help to take us beyond the options of sympathy and suspicion. The first such idea is that of performance. Recent anthropological studies have found it valuable to approach culture as something that is performed. This is not to say that everything I do, privately or individually, is performance, but that human interactions, including activities in public or community settings, are performances in which culture is 'kept alive'. This approach, then, implies a broad - though not all-inclusive - understanding of 'performance'. The ways in which we do things, from the mundane and trivial to the spectacular and momentous, are shaped by cultural scripts, which we reproduce and sustain in our performance of them. Roles, among other things, are performed in ways shaped by certain rules and expectations, and our text deals with three roles in particular: elders, widows and slaves. Our author, we may suggest, is attempting to shape - or, more specifically, to discipline - the ways in which these roles are performed by members of the church. One advantage of this approach is that it offers an alternative conceptualisation to one which casts the author in the role of either defender of orthodoxy or power-wielding patriarch. The author of 1 Timothy does, it seems, differ from others, including at least some of those whose conduct he discusses here, in terms of how he thinks the roles of elder, widow, or slave, should be performed. But his opponents equally are engaged in shaping or disciplining the performance of such roles, whether that involves the performance of the slave-master relationship in ways shaped by the notion of a sibling-relationship (6,2) or the performance of the role of widow outside the boundaries of marriage and household. Like the author's own stance, asceticism too may be understood as an attempt to discipline performance, in specific ways.

The second theoretical idea is that of space, and specifically the idea that space is not merely a container within which things happen but is rather constructed or produced in particular ways, socially and ideologically - such that power is thus intrinsically bound up in the making of place. Stephen Barton, for example, has insightfully examined 'Paul's sense of place' as expressed in 1 Cor 11,17-34 and 14,33b-36. Barton

18. The issue of how broadly or specifically to define performance is a matter of some discussion; see Palmer and Jankowiak, 'Performance and Imagination', pp. 225-227.
notes the importance of time and space in the production of social worlds and the significance of boundaries – a category of space\textsuperscript{22}. What Paul is doing in these texts, Barton argues, is distinguishing \textit{oikos}-space from \textit{ekklesia}-space, thus ‘restricting the intrusion of household-based power’; while the Corinthians ‘seem intent on collapsing the two spheres altogether’\textsuperscript{23}.

A comparable approach, though pursued in much greater detail and with sophisticated theoretical discussion, is taken by Jorunn Økland, who examines the ways in which Paul structures and genders ‘the Christian gathering [at Corinth] as a particular kind of space constructed through ritual’\textsuperscript{24}. Like Barton, Økland sees Paul drawing a distinction between \textit{oikos} and \textit{ekklesia} space, despite the fact that they occupy the same \textit{material} location, since the assembly meets in a house\textsuperscript{25}. Recalling our earlier mention of the rhetoric used to describe women’s activities, Økland also helpfully shows how ancient descriptions of the appropriate ‘places’ for women’s and men’s activities – with the former classically assigned to the home and the latter to the public sphere (e.g. Philo, \textit{Spec Leg} 3.169ff.; \textit{Quaest in Gen} 1.26) – cannot, despite much scholarship to the contrary, validly be read simply as descriptions of social reality\textsuperscript{26} but are rather reflections of an ideological struggle: ‘gendering cannot be read as descriptive, but as a way of making sense of the spaces and legitimizing their structures’\textsuperscript{27}.

Picking up this focus on ‘making place’, we may ask how the author of 1 Timothy constructs ecclesial space, and how this construction relates to the household space which is also a prominent concern.

5,1-2

Our text begins with instruction to Timothy as to how he ‘should relate to people of different ages and genders in the church’, which thus

\textsuperscript{22.} \textit{Barton, ‘Paul’s Sense of Place’,} pp. 226, 227-229.

\textsuperscript{23.} \textit{Barton, ‘Paul’s Sense of Place’,} pp. 239, 234.


\textsuperscript{25.} \textit{Økland, Women in Their Place,} pp. 141-142, 149, 151, etc.


\textsuperscript{27.} \textit{Økland, Women in Their Place,} pp. 58-62, quotation from p. 61.

\textsuperscript{28.} \textit{Mounce, Pastoral Epistles,} pp. 268-269.

\textsuperscript{29.} So \textit{J. Roloff, Der erste Brief an Timotheus (EKKNT 15), Zürich/Neukirchen-Vluyn, Benziger/Neukirchner, 1988,} p. 249.


\textsuperscript{31.} Some scholars have referred to the ‘double pseudonymity’ of these letters, e.g., \textit{Wagner, Die Ordung des “Haus Gottes”,} p. 9; \textit{Fatum, Christ Domesticated,} pp. 176-177.

of household (3.4.12). Indeed, the clear connections between seniority in the household and in the church already indicate something of the author’s tendency to construct the church as oikos-space.

The modes of appropriate relating set out here indicate further how the church is regarded as a family, a fictive kin-group or extended household. As Mounce notes, these verses continue ‘from 1 Tim 3:15 the imagery of the church as a household’33. Yet it is also to be noted that the community members are not uniformly designated here as δικαιοποιοι, as is frequent in the undisputed Paulines (and see below on 6.2). Those of a similar age to the young man Timothy (4.12) are to be treated like siblings, with a stress on the need to avoid sexual impropriety in the case of his relationship to sisters34, while those who are senior are to be treated like fathers and mothers. Paul does, of course, alongside his frequent adelphos-terminology, also use familial language which expresses relationships of seniority—Paul as father, Timothy as child, etc. (1 Cor 4.15; Phil 2.22; Phlmn 10). But the notable lack of sibling terminology in 1 Timothy (and the Pastors generally)35, together with the greater prominence of household imagery seem to me to reflect something significant in terms of the developing character and conception of the church, which, as ‘place’, is more like a structured οἶκος than an assembly of siblings36.

33. Mounce, Pastoral Epistles, p. 269.
34. This is the force of the phrase ἵνα πάντες ἄγιοις.
35. The most plausible position seems to me the one traditional in critical scholarship: that the three epistles are pseudonymous and have a common author. Some recent scholarship has, however, urged that each of the letters be treated on its own terms, sometimes arguing for the authenticity of all three epistles (Johnson, First and Second Letters to Timothy, pp. 55-99) or of one or other, notably 2 Timothy: M. Prior, Paul the Letter Writer and the Second Letter to Timothy (JSNTSup 23), Sheffield, JSOT Press, 1989; J. Murphy-O’Connor, ‘2 Timothy Contrasted with 1 Timothy and Titus’, Revue Biblique 98 (1991) 403-418; sometimes not, J. Herr, ‘Abschied vom Konsens? Die Pseudographie der Pastorbriefe als Herausforderung an die neustamentliche Wissenschaft’, Theologische Literaturzeitung 129 (2004) 1267-1282. For a strong assertion of the common authorship of the three letters, see Marshall, Pastoral Epistles, pp. 1-2. Nevertheless, a view on common authorship should not prevent each letter being considered fairly on its own terms.

5.3-16

The most substantial section of our text addresses the subject of widows. As is frequently noted, the purpose of the instruction set out here is not to introduce or establish some new notion of the church’s responsibilities in regard to widows. Such responsibility is presumed; the concern is much more to regulate and limit this charitable practice37. The author’s primary aim is to establish who should count as a ‘genuine widow’ (δικαιοποιοι γυναικεῖα), a term repeated three times in this section of text, including, significantly, in its opening and closing phrases (vv. 3.5.16)38. Indeed, his definition is in some respects highly restrictive, indicative of the need to reduce the number of widows under the church’s care and to reintegrate as many as possible into household relationships, whether of care by relatives or marriage.

Penetrating much further into the intentions and details, however, rapidly brings one face to face with a series of difficult questions: What kind of responsibility is the church taking for widows? Are widows being enrolled into an ‘order’ or ‘office’, and, if so, does this constitute a ‘ministry’, with specific ‘duties’? Crucial in the opening verse, a summary headline for the whole passage39, is the translation of οἵτινες. The question, of course, is whether this imperative means simply, ‘honour’, οἵτινες, ‘give material and financial support’. There are good reasons to follow most recent commentators in arguing that financial support is in view here41. Compassion and material care for the needy, of whom

Eerdman, 2004, pp. 151-164 and M. M. Mitchell, ‘Why Family Matters for Early Christian Literature’, in D.L. Balch and C. Oakey (eds.), Early Christian Families in Context, Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 2003, pp. 345-358, here 350 n. 5. I remain convinced, however, that the changing patterns of use of the term δικαιοποιοι (even comparing letters addressed primarily or ostensibly to individuals, such as Philemon and the Pastors) indicate something significant about the changing emphases in constructions of the δικαιοποιοι. Moreover, while a wide range of familial and household terms are used in the Pauline corpus to describe the δικαιοποιοι, their senses and impacts, though often overlapping, should not simply be regarded as unequivocal.

40. Cf. Johnson, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 260. The translation of οἵτινες is critical to the entire discussion of 5.3-16.
41. Johnson, First and Second Letters to Timothy, pp. 261-262; Mounce, Pastoral Epistles, pp. 278-279; Roloff, Timotheus, p. 287; Thurston, Widows, pp. 44-45. Cf. Sir 38.1; BDAG, 1095.
widows are a prominent category, is a Jewish practice evidently followed since its earliest days by the church.42 Jens Uwe-Krause notes that a considerable proportion of the urban poor in the Roman empire ‘wurde von Witwen und Waisen gestellt, die den Familienvorstand verloren hatten’43.

In distinguishing genuine widows from others, then, the first consideration is that those who have children or grandchildren should find their support there, so that only those who are truly alone (and who are models of piety, ‘praying night and day’, as opposed to those who live ‘for pleasure’, ‘self-indulgently’ (παραταλάσσω) rely upon the church (vv. 4-8). This is a question of responsibility placed upon a widow’s family, rather than on a widow herself; it is her family members who must learn (μυριθανείσαντα) to show due piety in this matter44. The exhortation of v. 7, then, as with the warning of v. 8, most likely relates to households/families, and concerns their duty to care for their own members, in this case specifically widows45. This concern is repeated again at the close of the section on widows (v. 16).

The second consideration to determine genuine widows concerns the status and conduct of the widow herself; three criteria are listed (vv. 9-10). The first is one of age: she must be at least sixty (v. 9), that is to say, ‘the age associated with becoming old’46. Given average life expectancy and the tendency of women to marry older men, this criterion must have excluded very large numbers of widows. Winter notes an estimate ‘that forty percent of women between the ages of forty and fifty were widows and that, as a group, they comprised thirty percent of women in the ancient world’47. The second is her former marital status: she must have been ἐνός δύνας γυνή, ‘a one-man woman’48, a phrase which corresponds exactly to the requirement that an έδήσχος be μιάς γυναικῶς δύνα (3,2). It is difficult to decide whether this means that she must have been chaste and faithful in marriage, or that she must only have been married once. The customary honouring of women who had been univir/alóνυνδρος makes the latter a real possibility — note also Livy’s comment that the women who sacrificed at the altar of Pudicitia had to be un vira nupta (10,23,9) — though strong arguments have been made for the former interpretation, which is perhaps on balance to be preferred49. It may even have been the case that the circle of widows had expanded to include virgins who had committed themselves to the unmarried life in a pledge to the church50. If so, it is possible that the author is also taking steps to exclude the unmarried from the circle of genuine widows, though the use of μίας, which seems ‘intended to indicate “one” in distinction from “more than one” rather than “none”’, speaks against this51. The third criterion is that she must have demonstrated her worthy character by good works, specified with a range of examples, which again imply a prescriptive norm in marriage and child-rearing.

The use of the verb καταλέγειν, a NT hapax, indicates that in some sense the widows are being enrolled, or included in a list52. This does

42. Cf., e.g., Exod 2:22; Deut 14:28-29; Mal 3:5; Acts 6:1; Jas 1:27. See K. NICKE, The Collection: A Study in Paul’s Strategy, London, SCM, 1966, pp. 93-95; WINTER, Seek the Welfare of the City, p. 66; WINTER, Roman Wives, pp. 127-128; THURSTON, Widows, pp. 18-35; though Thurston is inclined to maximise the evidence for ‘the possibility that widows served the early church as founders and sustainers of house churches, as deaconesses, and as assistants of Paul’ (p. 35) and thus to argue for the early emergence of an order or ministry of widows (see below).


44. This is open to dispute. It is unclear whether the subject of the verb μυριθανείσαντα is the widow (as is clearly the understanding in the texts which have μυριθανείσαντα rather than μυριθανεισαντος) or her descendants. ROLLOF, Timotheus, pp. 287-288, argues for the opposite interpretation to that given above, suggesting that the passage as a whole is orientated towards the actions of the widows, and that this verse indicates that ‘ihre erste Pflicht ist die Familie, nicht der Dienst in der Gemeinde’. I find this unconvincing, both here and in v. 8, and see the passage as much concerned to identify those widows who genuinely need the church’s support — i.e. those without families to support them — as to specify those actions which constitute piety on the part of a widow.

45. Cf. MOUNCE, Pastoral Epistles, p. 284; JOHNSON, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 263. For the idea that failure to fulfill this responsibility amounts to a denial of the faith cf. Jas 1:27, where true religion is defined in similar terms.

46. MOUNCE, Pastoral Epistles, p. 286. See M. ABOT 5,21; Plato, Laws 759D; Str-B: 3: 653.
not mean, however, that what is envisaged here need involve registration in a church ‘office’ (Amt), such as some scholars see here. But it does indicate that the identification of ‘true’ widows is regarded as part of the process whereby such widows enter a category which involves ‘some type of formal relationship with the church’. Those who see here enrolment to a formal office tend to read the list of requirements as specifying ‘duties’. However, it is hard to see that the text really constitutes anything like a list of formal duties, or even reflects an already established set of duties, since, as Johnson points out, the list here (in other respects comparable with that in 3,1-13) ‘focuses on what the women have done in the past’. As Mounce argues in some detail, the passage is mostly concerned with criteria which indicate whether a widow should or should not be enrolled, and some of these criteria — such as being sixty years of age — can hardly be described as a ‘duty’. The ‘good works’ listed as a criterion for enrollment (v. 10) are not the specific functions of a defined office, but rather the kind of hospitable and charitable deeds that one would expect from Christians, specifically from women functioning in the context of their household. Furthermore, only by a somewhat precarious mirror-reading of the text can some of the activities supposed to be duties be found in the text — such as house-to-house visiting (v. 13).

We need not doubt that ‘real’ widows would serve the church in practical ways, and by being models of prayerful piety (cf. Pol Phil 4,3), but there seems little to indicate a formal office, a Witweinamt, with set duties, despite the attractiveness of this reconstruction to those for whom this then constitutes a women’s ministry in the early church. A helpful distinction, I think, is the one Roloff draws when he distinguishes between Stand and Amt: widows constitute a Stand in that they form an institutionalised group with specific conditions of entry and patterns of life, but not an Amt, or office, for which established functions would be appropriate.

The statements concerning the qualities that must be displayed by a ‘true’ widow in order to qualify for enrolment in the church’s list are followed by a discussion of the other side of the coin: the problematic behaviour of those who are not genuine widows (vv. 11-15). The most obvious issue is that of age: younger widows should not be enrolled (v. 11; cf. v.14). Two reasons are given for this. First (vv. 11-12), they are likely to be expected to provide the kind of desire (καταστημίωσις) that makes them want to marry (γαμεῖν θέλοντες). Winter sees the verb καταστημίωσις as indicative of the widows’ promiscuous lifestyle, but this seems unlikely, given that the depicted outcome is a desire to marry. What is more difficult to determine is precisely why this is depicted as taking them away from Christ (τοῦ Χριστοῦ) and as representing an abandonment of their first πιστεύεις. The author can hardly be objecting to the desire to marry per se, since this is exactly what he urges younger widows to do (v. 14). Most likely is the idea that enrolment as a widow involves a pledge or oath not to remarry (i.e., of celibacy) and instead to be devoted to and dependent on the church, which is also a particular form of dedication to Christ. To want to marry is incompatible with having made this commitment to living as an enrolled widow. Whether this implies some notion of ‘betrothal to Christ’ or spiritual marriage, as

Pastoral Epistles, p. 75; LSJ: BDAG, p. 528, which offers the translation ‘who feel sensuous impulses that alienate them from Christ’. Cf. LSJ: ‘behave wantonly towards’; Louis-Nida: ‘to experience strong physical desires’). The verb τρύπανα (to live wantonly, in luxury, in sensuality) appears in Rev 18,7,9, along with the noun τρύπανος (18,3). The τρύπα plus genitive here indicates that the wantoness is directly opposed to Christ (BDAG 181; MOUNT, Pastoral Epistles, p. 296; ROLLOFF, Timotheus, p. 296 n. 373).

62. WINTER, Roman Wives, pp. 132-133.

63. This hapax is found only here in Greek literature, and once in a dependent use in Ps-Ign, Ad Antioch 11 (BDAG, p. 528, which offers the translation ‘who feel sensuous impulses that alienate them from Christ’. Cf. LSJ: ‘behave wantonly towards’; Louis-Nida: ‘to experience strong physical desires’). The verb τρύπανα (to live wantonly, in luxury, in sensuality) appears in Rev 18,7,9, along with the noun τρύπανος (18,3). The τρύπα plus genitive here indicates that the wantonness is directly opposed to Christ (BDAG 181; MOUNT, Pastoral Epistles, p. 296; ROLLOFF, Timotheus, p. 296 n. 373).

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developed later, is open to question, but one can certainly see the idea in 1 Macc here.

A second problem concerns the way in which young and idle widows fill their time (v. 13). The author is clearly disturbed not only by their going round from house to house (περεριγυμνών τας ούκετας) but more particularly by the things they say when they do so. There is good reason to affirm the widely held view that these widows are not merely gossiping about the weather, but are promoting a version and interpretation of the Christian faith that the author finds objectionable and heretical.

Only this can adequately explain the strong terms in which their activity is censured, as 'going after Satan' (v. 15; cf. 1,20). Glimpses of the kind of Christianity which such women might have professed may well be found in the apocryphal Acts, notably the Acts of Paul and Thecla, a Christianity with tendencies towards asceticism and celibacy (cf. 1 Tim 4,3) and in which women refuse to submit to the (sexual) domination of their husbands, in some cases separating from their spouse and home.

Eph 5,25-32) and Paul regards the unmarried woman as holy and devoted to the Lord in a special way (1 Cor 7,34). The strong language about abandoning the faith, etc., which Marshall and Mounce see as unlikely in connection with breaking a commitment not to remarry and as more appropriate for something so drastic as abandoning the faith altogether, can reasonably be seen as reflecting the author's stern and serious concern about the problems caused by not awayward young widows and his evident sense that enrollment of genuine widows is a matter of very careful consideration; it is not simply a case that someone can join and then leave the list!

65. E. G. Mounce, Pastoral Epistles, p. 295. Harry Maier has recently highlighted the prominence of the topic of right speaking and listening in the Pastors, and has shown how the author's contrast between ordered, regulated speech and incommode, undisciplined speech reflects the broader pro-family ideology of the Roman Empire and the author's sense of the ideal ordering of the household of God (H.O. Maier, 'Family Quarrels: The Politics of Discord and the Representation of Household Division in Greco-Roman Literature and the Pastoral Epistles', paper given at SBL Annual Meeting, San Antonio, November 2004). Winter's suggestion (Winter, Roman Wives, p. 135) that λαοκαθήσαται τοις μη λάκευσε evokes 'the semantic field of sexuality' here and thus confirms the picture of the widows as promiscuous seems to me somewhat tenuous. In any case, even if the author depicts the widows in this way, one needs to ask whether this is ideological polemic rather than trustworthy description (cf. above).

66. See D.R. MacDonald, The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1983; S. L. Davies, The Revolt of the Widows: The Social World of the Apocalyptic Acts, Carbondale and Edwardsville/London and Amsterdam, Southern Illinois University Press/ Fuffer and Simms, 1980. Davies comments that '[t]he Acts do not condemn marriage per se, but they do condemn the sexual intercourse entailed by marriage; and they encourage women to assert themselves to refuse to submit to the desires of their husbands. If their husbands object, and refuse to allow their wives to live continently, then the Right of women from home and spouse is urged' (p. 110). See e.g., Acts of Paul and Thecla 5-25, Acts of Andrew B.4-8, Acts of Peter 33-34, etc.

One question, of course, is whether this view of the young widows as ascetics is incompatible with the author's first reason not to enroll younger widows—a matter that will later want to marry. The author is evidently suspicious and sceptical of these women's (all women's?) activity, and may well regard any asceticism, particularly when it results in separation from household relationships, as a dangerous and short-lived pattern of life. We should not ignore the fact that this is a polemical description of the widows', activities, such that accusations of sexual impropriety and desire cannot simply be read at face value (cf. above). The author essentially has two problems with the younger widows' particular performance of their identity, first, that their commitment to the celibate lifestyle will not last (vv. 11-12), and second, that their activities are in any case dangerous (v. 13).

The author's response is therefore to direct (βοιλομαί is strong here) younger widows to reintegrate themselves into the structure and activities of the (male-dominated) household: to marry, bear children, and οικοδοσπαιται. What exactly this last verb implies is significant though also somewhat open-ended. Can it be seen, for example, as evidence of 'the new and improved position which was secured to women by the Gospel'? Rollof, in my view rightly, dismisses such sentiments as 'modernes Wunschenken'. And if Winter is right, then the author is reacting precisely against the kind of 'new women' who were emerging around this time. Indeed, the author's teaching elsewhere in the letter indicates clearly enough that the injunction to 'manage their households' does not connote some far-reaching or radical empowerment but rather a conservative ethic concerning women's domestic role. Men are
intended to exercise authority over their households – this is a criterion for leadership – an activity for which the author consistently uses προτέταμ (three times in 3,4-5,12), while women, children and slaves are to be quiet and submissive (2,11-15; 3,4; 6,1-2; cf. Tit 2,4-5). Such governance of the household is indeed a criterion for male church leaders. Urging that women manage their households thus indicates, as Howard Marshall rightly comments, that they are ‘to spend their time in family life and domestic pursuits’, an ideological stance similar to that expressed by Philo, who sees a woman’s proper sphere as the home. The purpose of this reintegration into a household is not only to prevent their spreading ‘heretical’ views but also to lessen criticism of the church, by censuring activities that might be deemed to threaten the established order of society (5,14b, cf. 6,1b).

There are therefore two ways in which the role of widow can appropriately be performed, two patterns of sanctioned cultural practice, and the author’s first concern is to distinguish the two categories. ‘Genuine’ widows – those who are old, and also qualified for support on other grounds – may be enrolled in the church’s list, such that the church functions as their supporting household, the place in which they are integrated. The remainder of the widows should be reintegrated into actual households, whether this involves their children or grandchildren showing the appropriate care to a member of their οἴκος (v. 4) or their integration into a new household through marriage (v. 14).

5,17-25

The next section, dealing with the payment, discipline, and installation of elders, has some structural and substantive parallels with the section on widows, including another use of the word τιμή which is again crucial to understanding the sense. Just as most commentators take τιμή in 5,3 to refer to material and financial support, so most also see that


73. MARSHALL, Pastoral Epistles, p. 604.
75. So, e.g., QUINN and WACKER, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 488.

sense here (5,17), however the ‘double’ is precisely to be understood. Two citations, both apparently regarded as ‘scripture’ (ὑποψις), are introduced to legitimate this material support of leaders resident in the communities; moreover, both citations, significantly, have previously undergirded the right of travelling missionaries to hospitality and support. The first is from Deut 25,4, also cited in 1 Cor 9,9; the second is a saying of Jesus from the synoptic mission charge (Luke 10,7; cf. Matt 10,10; 1 Cor 9,14-15), which evidently influenced early Christian convictions about the support of missionaries and leaders from an early time. The same legitimations used by Paul to justify the support of travelling apostles (cf. 1 Cor 9,1-14) are now applied to the payment of the resident elders.

76. e.g., A. T. HANSON, The Pastoral Epistles (NCBC); Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1982, p. 101; CAMPBELL, The Elders, pp. 200-204; MARSHALL, Pastoral Epistles, p. 613 (‘in some tangible form’); ROLLOFF, Timothaea, 308; QUINN and WACKER, First and Second Letters to Timothy, pp. 460. For the range of interpretations and suggestions on the meaning of ‘double’ here, see MARSHALL, Pastoral Epistles, pp. 612-614. Marshall cautiously favours the suggestion of Georg Schöllgen, that a double portion at the community meal is meant, while QUINN and WACKER, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 460, favour ‘double pay’, in the sense of a stipend for full-time ‘presbyter-presidents’. ROLLOFF, Timothaea, p. 308, rejects the idea that this can be merely a vague reference to a ‘higher honorarium’ and also favours ‘double honorarium’, possibly double that paid to widows but more probably double that paid to the other elders: similarly, J. P. MEER, ‘Presbyteros in the Pastoral Epistles’, Catholic Biblical Quarterly 35 (1973) 323-345 (here 327). Also uncertain is the meaning of μικρον, which may mean ‘especially’ here, or, as a number of recent commentators suggest, ‘in other words’, such as that not two distinct groups of elders in view. For a recent discussion, see H.B. KIM, ‘The Interpretation of μικρον in 1 Timothy 5:14’, Novum Testamentum 46 (2004) 360-68.


78. Indeed, it was pointed out in discussion that the citation in Tim 5,18 presumes the interpretation of Deut 25,4 given in 1 Cor 9,9-10, that is, its application to the topic of support for missionaries/leaders. This forms another indication that the author knew 1 Corinthians, and is engaged in some form of ‘aktiv Selbstauslegung’ or ‘correction exegesis’ in recalling and representing the Pauline teaching here, on which see Margaret Mitchell’s essay in this volume.

80. See further HORRELL, ‘Leadership Patterns’. 
no presumption of immunity from criticism on the part of elders! – are
to be publicly reproved. One exegetical issue here concerns the identity
of the ‘all’ (ἐνόβανοι πάντων ἑλέγχει) and ‘the rest’ (οἱ ἀλλοι). Most
likely is that ‘all’ refers to the whole church community, while ‘the rest’
are the other elders, for whom the fear of similar public judgment serves
as a strong motive to avoid misconduct. As occurs frequently in this
letter, the author firmly reiterates the importance of keeping these instruc-
tions, underlining the sense of authority which the letter conveys
(v. 21; cf. 2:8; 3:14-15; 4:6.11; 5:14; 6:2, etc.).

The third issue regarding elders is their appointment, since the ‘laying
on of hands’ (ἐκδιδάσκει... ἐδιδόθη) here most likely relates to the method
of appointing or admitting people to an office or leadership role with
particular responsibilities. The connection with disciplining elders
who sin is not immediately apparent – Johnson comments that this section is
more loosely structured than that concerning widows – but it may be
that the laying on of hands pertains not only to initial appointment but
also to restoration of elders who have been reprimanded (v. 20). This
would explain the connected injunction to avoid sharing others’ sins and
to keep pure.

As many commentators note, the instruction to Timothy to cease
drinking only water (μηχανεῖν ὅποτε, v. 23) fits oddly here, and
seems something of a ‘strange digression’ at the centre of what has been
seen as a chiastic passage. The topical connection is probably the idea
of keeping pure, which for some ascetics, represented here by Timothy,
entailed abstinence from wine. The ἐκδιδάσκει, Marshall notes,
seems to be used always as the opposite to drinking wine, and Johnson
reminds that ‘the drinking of water alone was a sign of asceticism in
antiquity’. This verse is thus significant not only as an indication of
the generally anti-ascetic stance of the letter (4:3-5) but also as early evidence

81. SO MOUNCE, Pastoral Epistles, p. 314; JOHNSON, First and Second Letters to Timothy,
82. Cf. 4:14; Num 27:22-23; Deut 34:9; Acts 6:6; 13:3; JOHNSON, First and Second Letters
to Timothy, p. 281; MOUNCE, Pastoral Epistles, p. 316; for a detailed discussion see
83. JOHNSON, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 285.
84. MOUNCE, Pastoral Epistles, p. 316.
85. MEIER, ‘Presbyteros’, esp. pp. 325-336 (with the phrase quoted above from p. 334; an
overview of the chiastic structure on p. 336).
87. MARSHALL, Pastoral Epistles, p. 624; JOHNSON, First and Second Letters to Timothy,
p. 281, citing Dan 1,12 (LXX); Pirke Aboth 6,4; Epictetus, Dis. 3:13:21.

that there were some who avoided wine at the eucharist, like those later
ascetics who celebrated bread-and-water eucharists, as explored by
Andrew McGowan. McGowan suggests that here Timothy, or (rather)
those like him whom the author has in view, is exhorted to stop being
a ‘water-drinker’, a practice which relates (though not, of course, exclu-
sively) to eucharistic contexts. There is no direct hint here that the
practice of the eucharist is under discussion; but if there were those in
the community committed to being ‘water-drinkers’, one can only con-
clude that their practice also encompassed community meals – though
none of the commentators I have consulted makes any explicit reference to
the connection between this verse and eucharistic practice.

Finally, we return to the theme of others’ sins (cf. vv. 20-22), which
may be more or less evident at first, but cannot remain hidden forever
(vv. 24-25). Again in this section we see a concern with what we have
labelled the disciplining of performance, whether of ‘Timothy’, in some
kind of exemplary role, or – more prominently here – of the role of elder.
Good performance is to be appropriately rewarded, misconduct to be
punished, and appointment to the role cautiously undertaken.

6,1-2

The third and final group addressed in this section of practical instruc-
tion is slaves (δοῦλοι). The connection with the preceding sections is
again a concern with τύμη (6:1; cf. 5:3.17), though here the sense is with
showing honour or respect, not with material or financial support. Slaves
are urged to consider their own masters worthy of all honour

88. A. B. McGOWAN, Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals
which also implies that some among the Roman churches avoided wine; D. G. HOBRELL,
‘Pauline Churches or Early Christian Churches? Unity, Disagreement, and the Eucharist’, in
A. ALEXEYEV et al. (eds), Einheit der Kirche im Neuen Testament (WUNT 218), Tübingen,
Mohr Siebeck, 2008, pp. 185-203.
89. JOHNSON, First and Second Letters to Timothy; MOUNCE, Pastoral Epistles;
MARSHALL, Pastoral Epistles; QUENN and WACKER, First and Second Letters to Timothy;
KNOTT, Pastoral Epistles; ROLLOFF, Timotheus; HANSON, Pastoral Epistles; J. N. D. KELLY,
KRAUSE, I Timothy (who does, however, comment that 5.23 ‘seems to indicate a context in
which the community practised abstinence from drinking anything but water’ [p. 113]).
90. As JOHNSON, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 283, notes, the description of
them as ἀγαθοὶ δοῦλοι ‘may be used here in order to make clear that no metaphorical sense is
intended’.
91. Toίχος ἴσος δοῦλος ἡ βασίλεια. The instruction is thus focused on the relationship between
a slave and their particular master; JOHNSON, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 283,
Therefore suggests that ['if] does not inculcate a class consciousness toward all masters as a group. However, the relationship with their own master is the relevant relationship in this instruction, which implies a duty of respect for whomsoever one might happen to serve; so, as is usual, this inculcates 'class consciousness' not via some abstract or generic means but in the particular relationships where it is pertinent.

92. MARSHALL, Pastoral Epistles, pp. 629-630, notes that 'πᾶς functions as a superlative' here, citing Tit 2.10 as a similar instance.

93. Horstii here, given parallel uses elsewhere in the epistle, should be taken to mean 'believers' not 'faithful' or 'reliable'; so JOHNSON, First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 283, citing 4,3.10.12, 5.16.

94. So, e.g., Moucher, Pastoral Epistles, p. 328.


DISCIPLINING PERFORMANCE AND 'PLACING' THE CHURCH

This then requires us to make some sense of why slaves should be 'despising' their masters, on the grounds that they regard them as διδάκτοι. This is, of course, the author's language and perspective, and we need to be alert to the fact that others, notably the slaves, may have interpreted their performances differently. What seems most plausible is that, on the basis of their common identity as διδάκτοι, slaves were inclined to treat their masters in a way which did not 'respect' their superior social position, but rather reflected their standing as family equals. This kind of 'treating one's master as an equal' is, from the perspective of the established household order, effectively a form of insubordination and as such is firmly rejected by the author. Instead of such disrespect, slaves should serve all the more (μᾶλλον δουλεύοντας) not because masters are διδάκτοι — rather risky identification, with its possibly egaliitarian implications — but because they are πιστοί ἀγαπητοί, loved by God, and thus, by extension, worthy of love by fellow believers.

The use of the term διδάκτος here, and the context in which it is set, calls to mind Paul's letter to Philemon, in which διδάκτος-language is also emphatically used, though in a very different way. There Paul insists that Philemon, whom he addresses as διδάκτος (Phlm 7, 20), receive back his slave Onesimos οὐκέτι ὡς δοῦλον ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ δοῦλον, διδάκτον ἀγαπητόν... Here the term διδάκτος is used with positive force, indicating what should become the character of the relationship between Philemon and Onesimos. That this is intended to be no merely spiritual revaluation of their relationship is stressed in the striking conclusion to the sentence: καὶ ἐν σωματί καὶ ἐν κυρίῳ (v. 16). While it is uncertain exactly what Paul intended Philemon practically to do in this regard — is a request for manumission implied, as some have argued? — the contrast with 1 Tim 6,2 is clear. As I have previously remarked: 'The author of the Pastoral Epistles does not (and could hardly) deny the firmly established belief that fellow Christians are διδάκτοι. But he does warn
slaves not to draw social consequences from this. On the contrary, he adds Christian legitimation to the notion that slaves should serve Christian owners willingly and well (ὅτι πιστοὶ εἰσιν καὶ ἀθανατοί) .

The clear echo of Philemon, and more generally the use of the ἀδελφος-language so prominent in Paul, makes this text a particularly good example of what Annette Merz calls ‘fiktive Selbstauslegung’ – and, indeed, forms one of the key examples in Merz’s book. In direct opposition to those who found in Phlm 16 (and more generally in the baptismal declarations in Gal 3,28; 1 Cor 12,13 and Col 3,11) a basis for challenging and changing the master-slave relationship in a more egalitarian direction, the author, with clear and deliberate intertextual references to Phlm 16, seeks to take away the (Pauline) basis for this interpretation. He introduces an answer to the question not directly addressed in Philemon – ‘die... Frage nach dem angemessenen Verhalten des Sklaven: ‘Dieses wird auf eine Weise definiert (μᾶλλον δουλευτήρας), die die phn Aussage auf den Kopf stellt und das kritische Potenzial von Phlm 16 ein für allemal entschärft. To pick up the terms used by Margaret Mitchell elsewhere in this volume, where she develops Merz’s approach to the Pastoral, the author is engaged here in a form of ‘corrective exegesis’ – by which Mitchell means to communicate that the author, rather like a scribe copying a text, ‘corrects’ a textual tradition, with which he stands in continuity, both by positively reinscribing or emphasising and by altering and reshaping. In her words, one of the key aims of the author of the Pastoral is to have Paul ‘correct his own legacy... against views the pseudographic author deems mistaken. The author engages in self-correction (though he is not that self) which has in mind correction of others (who also make claims on that Pauline self). This is precisely how Merz, persuasively in my view, regards the author’s strategy in 6.1-2.

The final phrase in this section of the text, describing the masters as οἱ τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι, is again somewhat ambiguous, due to the range of possible meanings for ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι. Are the masters the ones who receive εὐεργεσία, or the ones who dispense it?

100. Merz, Selbstauslegung., pp. 245-261, quotations from p. 266.
101. Thus Merz’s approach is explicitly intended to offer a way of integrating two contrasting emphases in scholarship on the Pastoral, one of which stresses discontinuity with Paul, the other continuity (see Merz, Selbstauslegung, pp. 202-222). See Mitchell, p. 44 above.
102. On which see Marshall, Pastoral Epistles, 632. For the active meaning ‘help’, see Acts 20,35.

The alternatives are somewhat finely balanced. If the phrase refers to the kindness displayed by masters towards their slaves, then it indicates a further reason for slaves to respect them. If, as seems perhaps more likely, it refers to the εὐεργεσία rendered by the slaves, then it is striking – though not as radical as some suggest – in depicting this service as a benefit.

These instructions for slaves are reminiscent of other NT household codes (Col 3,18-4,1; Eph 5,21-6,9), though here focused entirely on the behaviour required of slaves (cf. also 1 Pet 2,18-20; Tit 2,9-10). Again Christian discourse is used to discipline role-performance – the performance of the slave’s role in their everyday relationship to their masters – and, without denying that slave and master are ἀδελφοι, to warn against any notion that this ecclesial designation might disrupt the normal performance of their roles. Instead, μᾶλλον δουλευτήρας. And, as we have seen, the author is interpreting, ‘correcting’, the Pauline tradition as he does this, in direct opposition to alternative forms of its performance. Put differently: the author seeks to prescribe, or at least firmly to constrain, a performance of the role of Christian slave informed and shaped by the notion of all believers as ἀδελφοί; and, bringing different terms to the fore, gives an alternative model which emphasises instead the need for full and loyal service of their masters.

103. So, e.g., R. M. Reid, Wealth and Beneficence in the Pastoral Epistles (SB LDS, 122), Atlanta, GA, Scholars Press, 1990, pp. 140-156; Rolf, Timotheus, pp. 324-325; Bodelius and Conzelmann, Pastoral Epistles, p. 82; Merz, Selbstauslegung, pp. 253-254. Rolf concludes his discussion of 6.2a: ‘Welcher christliche Sklave einem Herrn dient, dessen ganzes Handeln auf εὐεργεσία ausgerichtet ist, kann er sein δοῦλον bejahen, denn es ist ja Teilhabe an diesem Handeln und dient dem gleichen Ziel’ (p. 325).

104. Knight, Pastoral Epistles, p. 247, and Marshall, Pastoral Epistles, p. 633, favour this reading, partly because it offers the most clear and logical construal of the thought of this whole phrase, as does Johnson, First and Second Letters to Timothy, pp. 284-285, who sees it as the antithesis and subversive, since slaves are giving a beneficence to their masters, a flow from social inferior to superior. However, Seneca, De Benef. 3.18-21, would suggest that the point is perhaps not so radical. Seneca discusses at some length whether a slave can give a benefit (beneficium) to a master, and argues that he can: ‘All that he does in excess of what is prescribed as the duty of a slave, what he supplies, not from obedience to authority, but from his own will, will be a benefit, provided that its importance, if another person were supplying it, would entitle it to that name’ (3.21.2 [II.C Li]). On this understanding of benefit, the slaves’ 1 Timothy addresses might be being urged to go beyond the call of duty and obedience in rendering good service to their masters, an interpretation which would fit, I think, with the thrust of the author’s instruction here. Moreover, Acts 4,9, the only other NT use of the word, shows that energesia is not to be seen exclusively as the prerogative of the higher social classes.
Disciplining performance and ‘placing’ the church

Our text is thus dominated by practical instruction for various groups within the church, and I think it is helpful to conceive of the author as shaping, or disciplining the performance of these various roles, not least because this enables a comparison with opposing patterns of discipline which challenges any simple and ideologically-loaded contrast between the author being oppressive versus opponents whose approach is emancipatory, or the author using power and the opponents being egalitarian, or even between the author as orthodox, the opponents as heretical. From the angle of performance, and specifically the notion of the disciplining of performance, both author and opponents have conceptions as to how certain roles should be performed, either of which necessarily involves various forms of the disciplining of bodily and social practice, and in both of which – this is partly what the word ‘discipline’ is intended to convey – power is thus intrinsically bound up. We cannot simply label one position, say, as ‘liberating’, the other as ‘oppressive’. This is not to say, of course, that such an approach removes the scope – and, in the end, the need – for theological and ethical judgments to be made about the value and the impact, then and since, of the different patterns of disciplined practice represented by the author and his opponents. But it does see both sides as engaged, at a general level, and, indeed, competitively, in the same kind of activity: shaping and disciplining the performance of roles within the church, and calling on Paul’s teaching so to do.

In terms of understanding what shapes and informs this particular pattern of the disciplining of performance, the author’s ‘placing’ the church – his construction of the church as oikos-type space – is significant. In short, and in contrast to the distinctions between oikos-space and ekklisia-space Paul is seen by Barton and Økland to draw in 1 Corinthians, the author constructs the church as a household, though at the same time distinguishing it from actual households. Certain roles and duties are to be performed within households, yet the church also functions as a household, not least for those widows who cannot be placed within a household of their own relatives or male spouse. Many scholars have indeed seen the household as a central concept in 1 Timothy, and in the Pastoralas generally, with 1 Tim 3,15 the key ecclesiological statement describing the church as the οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ. Moreover, as I have argued elsewhere, this represents something of a shift in focus from an ecclesiologically dominated by the language of siblingship to one in which the household forms a structuring ideal. Jens Herzer has recently challenged this designation of the Pastoral’s ecclesiological focus, partly on the grounds that each of the Pastoral letters should be treated individually, and partly on the grounds that this description of the church appears in 1 Timothy only once, and here ‘primarily evokes the idea of the congregation as God’s temple’.

There is, though, considerable evidence in the letter to support the view that the model of the household profoundly informs the author’s sense of the kind of ‘place’ the church is and should be. The church may only once be explicitly described as the household of God, but there are a good many other indications that the author sees proper ordering of the household as an appropriate model both for ‘real’ households and for the church-as-household. A primary qualification for leadership in God’s household is that leaders manage their own households well, with children, wives and slaves duly respectful and submissive (cf. 3,4.5,12). In our section of the text, too, much of the author’s instruction can be seen to reflect this household-shaped sense of ecclesial space. So far as widows are concerned, their first source of support is their own familial household; only those who lack this social network can be cared for in the household of the church. And the widows who are especially dangerous are those who are sufficiently itinerant to gad from house to house, 106. See esp. D. C. VERGER, The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles (SB 71), 1983; also N. BROX, Die Pastoralbriefe (RTN 7), Regensburg, Pustet, 1969, p. 157 (who describes 1 Tim 3,15 as ‘die zentrale ekklesiologische Stelle der drei Briefe’); H. J. KLAUZ, Hausgemeinde und Hauskirche im frühen Christentum (S 103), Stuttgart, Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1981, pp. 66-68; WAGNER, Die Ordnung des ‘Hans Gottes’, etc.

107. H. Horrell, ‘From adelphiloi to oikos theou’.

108. A concern he shares with Johnson, First and Second Letters to Timothy; cf. above n. 35.

spreading what the author regards as satanic teaching. What the author therefore recommends is reintegration into a household structure, fulfilling the roles of wife and mother (cf. 2,15) under the governance (προστατημα) of a paterfamilias. In this sense, the οἶκος—whether of the church or the human family—is indeed to serve as a protection against the dangers of false teaching, 'the pillar and bulwark of the truth', as 3,15 describes the οἶκος θεοῦ. Elders are, as Campbell has shown, most likely to be the senior heads of households, whose social position and management responsibilities also make them appropriate persons to undertake leadership in the church. Indeed, the focus of leadership and authority is moving away from itinerant apostles and prophets and towards the resident leaders, though the same legitimations used by Paul to justify support for the former are now drawn on in relation to the latter. Finally, slaves are to have their relationship with their masters defined not primarily by their identity as δομέλου but rather by their respective social positions, as within the οἶκος structure.

All this and more shows how deeply the author’s sense of ecclesial space is formed by a household ideology, and how this household model is seen as the appropriate basis for the disciplining of role-performance in the church and the world. ‘Placing’ the church as household shapes the instruction the author gives, and helps to explain its particular character.

THE FINAL ADMONITION TO TIMOTHY
(1 Tim 6,3-21)

VASILE MIHOC

The charge to Timothy, as presented in 1 and 2 Timothy, is to impose discipline in the church, to refute the deviations from the normative teaching of Paul and to promote ‘the sound doctrine’ (1 Tim 1,10; 6,3; cf. 2 Tim 1,13; 4,3; Tit 1,9,13). Precise identification of the heretical group or groups in view is impossible. When speaking of ‘myths and endless genealogies’ (1 Tim 1,4; cf. Tit 1,14) the author is making reference to some Judaizing elements1. In one instance the false teaching described in 2 Timothy is quite specific: Hymenaeus2 and Philetus are teaching that the resurrection is past already (2,17-18).

Timothy has been entrusted with a position of authority in the church. The Greek word rendered as ‘charge’ or ‘instructions’ in 1 Tim 1,18 – παραγγελία – is intended to stress Timothy’s appointment as not arbitrary but in accordance with God’s purposes as made known through the prophetic utterances. Timothy is enjoined to instruct the church as a ‘good minister (διάκονος) of Christ Jesus’ (1 Tim 4,6). He must nourish himself on the words of faith and of the good doctrine (1 Tim 4,6) and reject the ‘godless and silly myths’ (1 Tim 4,7). Even though young he is to be an example for believers in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity. He is to attend to ministry of the church: public reading of Scripture, preaching and teaching (1 Tim 4,12-13). The duty of teaching is repeatedly stressed in the two letters. As shown above, the content of his teaching and care must be in accord with the true and ‘sound’ doctrine, ‘commandment’ (1 Tim 6,14) and ‘deposit’ (1 Tim 6,20; 2 Tim 1,14) that has to be kept ‘unstained’ until the appearing of Christ (1 Tim 6,14).

1. Those who date the Pastorals very late may have in mind the complex system of emanation from the divine realm characteristic of Gnosticism. But in the Pastoralts these myths appear closely related to Jewish Law. Other scholars are of the opinion that the situation here represents a syncretistic movement in which Gnostic and Jewish elements are intermingled.

2. Hymenaeus is also named in 1 Tim 1,20, where Paul delivers him to Satan together with Alexander that they might learn not to blaspheme.
I. 1 Tim 6,3-21

After the instructions given to Timothy concerning his relations with and treatment of different groups of church members including older men, older and younger women, widows, presbyters and slaves (1 Tim 5,1-6,2), a new and final section of the letter follows, which, at the first sight, appears to be a set of miscellaneous instructions and injunctions. It would be more accurate to consider 1 Tim 6,3-21 as the conclusion of the letter. Paul repeats here the two basic themes: a denunciation of the opponents and an encouragement to Timothy³.

In 1 Timothy 1 and 4 there is a pattern of Paul first criticizing his opponents (1,3-7; 4,1-5) and then proceeding to encourage Timothy (1,18-20; 4,6-16) each time with a reference to the prophecies made earlier about him (1,18; 4,14). This same pattern is repeated in the last chapter of the letter. In 6,3-10 there is a new warning against the opponents in very negative terms. In contrast to these proponents of ‘a different (incorrect) doctrine’ who are described as having a morbid interest in controversial questions and arguments (v. 4), and, further, as ‘men of deprived mind and deprived of the truth’ (v. 5a) who exploit people in the name of ‘godliness’ and crave for money (vv. 5b-10), Timothy, contrariwise, is portrayed as a ‘man of God’ (1 Tim 6,11) who is exhorted to pursue the Christian virtues (v. 11), to fight the ‘good fight of the faith’ and in this way to ‘take hold of the eternal life’ (v. 12a).

The apostle solemnly urges him to make the ‘good confession’ (v. 12b), following the example of Jesus himself, who witnessed the ‘good confession’ before Pontius Pilate (v. 13), and to keep faithfully ‘the commandment’ until the second coming of the Lord (v. 14). A short but majestic doxology extolling the power and the transcendence of God (vv. 15b-16) is followed by an instruction on teaching the rich to overcome the temptations of wealth and to ‘take hold of that which is truly life’ by being rich in good works and in sharing (vv. 17-19). Paul draws his letter to a close with a last charge to Timothy to ‘guard the deposit’ that has been entrusted to him – and he does this in the context of a new warning against false teaching (vv. 20-21a). It is interesting to note that the final, brief blessing (v. 21b) uses the plural ūči, thus indicating that Paul expected this letter to be read to the whole community in Ephesus.


II. Parallels and Similarities with 1 Tim 6,3-21

There are some parallels and similarities between 1 Tim 6,3-21 and other passages in the Pastoral epistles:

A. First, there appears to be some form of parallelism between the first and the last chapter of 1 Timothy but such presumed parallelism is treated differently by different authors. For Blight, a broad correspondence can be seen mainly between 1,3-7 and 6,20-21c, giving a sandwich structure to the letter⁴. Roloff emphasizes the importance of the letter form and the relationship between the writer, the recipient and the congregation. From this perspective, 1,1-20 is concerned with the commission of the writer to the recipient and similarly the concluding section (6,21-24) is concerned with the same relationship (with the exception of 6,17-19) and is in effect a peroration with a concluding recapitulation⁵. Roloff separates 1,3-20 and 6,3-21 from the rest of the letter as personal instructions to Timothy⁶. For Bush, there is parallelism between 1,12-20 and 6,11-16,20,21, suggesting that these sections form an inclusio; in the former Paul mediates the gospel to Timothy whereas in the latter God himself is the one to whom Timothy is responsible⁷.

B. We also see an antithetic parallelism between 1 Tim 6,3-10, where the opponents are presented as quarrelsome, slanderers, and greedy for money, vices that make them unworthy for leadership positions in the church, and 1 Tim 3,1-13, where precisely the opposite qualities are required for candidates who desire to become bishops and deacons.

C. Important to note is the similarity between the doxologies in 1,17 and 6,15-16, both of which occur in the midst of a discussion and not at the end of a major section⁸.

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5. J. ROLOFF, Der Erste Brief an Timotheus (EKKNT), Zurich/Neukirchen-Vluyn, Benzing/Neukirchen, 1988, pp. 48-50.


7. P. G. BUSH, A Note on the Structure of 1 Timothy, NTS 36 (1990) 152-156. Bush thinks that 6,17-19 is misplaced as a result of scribal error.

actually represents the conclusion of the letter and reiterates some of its main themes.

The following observations may be useful for understanding the structure of this final part of the letter:

- the opponents who spread the false teaching are described in vv. 3-5 as ignorant and craving to make godliness a source of material profit;
- building on the mention of the opponents’ greed for material gain in vv. 6-10, Paul urges that there is actually great profit coming from godliness with contentment (v. 6), and then shares a general reflection on wealth, its dangers and temptations;
- a clear break at v. 11 signals the beginning of a section addressed to Timothy personally that concerns his own conduct. Four imperatives, all ‘linear in aspect, emphasizing the necessity of continual action,’ are directed to Timothy: ‘flee’, ‘pursue’, ‘fight’, and ‘take hold of’ (vv. 11-12). Moving from eschatological reference in v. 15a, Paul now breaks into a doxology (vv. 15b-16) that indicates the closing of this section;
- following this doxology, there is a fresh start in v. 17, with vv. 17-19 serving as instruction to the faithful teacher on how wealthy believers should be approached;
- by addressing Timothy by name in v. 20, the author introduces his final injunction in the letter (vv. 20-21a).

As we will see, there is a clear progression and a natural flow of thought in this final section of the epistle. The content of 6,3-21 can be structured in an alternating A B A’ B’ pattern:

- false teaching, especially on riches 6,3-10; 6,17-19;
- Timothy’s own attitude and behavior 6,11-16; 6,20-21a


III. The Structure of 6,3-21

Following the transitional admonition in v. 2b, 1 Tim 6,3-21 falls into definite parts. 1 Tim 6,3 represents the beginning of a section that

11. The transitional sentence in 6,2b refers to what precedes (most probably to the whole of what precedes, and not just to the directions to slaves). It is also linked to 6,3 by providing a contrast between the teaching of Paul’s opponents and that of Timothy.

A. The teachers of a false doctrine and their bad motivation (1 Tim 6, 3-10)

This is now the third time that Paul speaks about false teachers, having made reference to them in 1,3-11 and 4,1-5. Here the reference is to specific false teachers and as a result the conditional clause εἰ τις should be translated ‘since someone’\(^{15}\).

The closest equivalent to ἑτεροδόξασκολον (which is used in the New Testament only in 1 Tim 1,3 and 6,3) is in Paul’s description of the ‘gospel’ of the Galatian Judaizers as ἑτερον εὐαγγέλιον, διὸ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο in Gal 1,6-9. The term εὐαγγέλιον cannot be applied to false teaching because there is only one εὐαγγέλιον and this is proclaimed by Paul; beyond that there is no gospel. The verb ἑτεροδόξασκολον carries with it the proclamation of an ἑτέρα διάδοσις that is a perversion of the gospel and must, therefore, be rejected. In 1 Timothy 6 ἑτεροδόξασκολον is used with reference to persons who disseminate a teaching different from that of Paul and his disciples and who confuse peripheral matters for the main issue (1,4f). Since they are also called νομοδόξασκολοι in 1,7, a Judaizing stress on the νόμος is what brings their doctrine under the sentence of ἑτεροδόξασκολον and distinguishes it from ὑγιαίνοντες λόγοι (1 Tim 6,3; 2 Tim 1,13), ὑγιαίνουσα διάδοσις (1 Tim 1,10; 2 Tim 4,3; Tit 1,9; 2,1), or λόγος ὑγιής (Tit 2,8). Sound doctrine is true and correct teaching in contrast to perverted doctrine (μῦθοι καὶ γενεαλογίαι ἀπέραντοι, 1 Tim 1,4); it is the traditional teaching that is established and validated by the apostles and preserved by the office to which Timothy and Titus are called. But in the description of proclamation and teaching as ὑγιαίνουσα διάδοσις there is a material definition that is important for understanding the Pastoral. The concern of this teaching is not with a speculative theology, but with the content of the true and proper Christian life in the world\(^{16}\).

For this reason the admonition to ὑγιαίνειν τῇ πίστει is connected with the summons to a correct and orderly walk (Tit 1,13; 2,2).

The ὑγιαίνουσα λόγος are described in 1 Tim 6,3 as being of ‘our Lord Jesus Christ’ (τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). If this genitive refers to actual sayings of Jesus\(^{17}\), important attribution would be provided for the use of Jesus sayings, faithfully transmitted by the church, as the controlling authority for both the appropriate proclamation of the Gospel as well as ethical teaching at the time the Pastoral was written. But this genitive can also describe more broadly the teaching coming from Christ, behind which would surely also stand Christ’s authority, or, in an even more expansive sense, the teaching about Christ, which surely could include sayings of Jesus. I think that this last meaning must be included, which means that in Paul’s perception the false teaching of the opponents is primarily a wrong Christology\(^{18}\). This would mean that the false teachers referred to in the Pastoralss anticipate the ‘antichrists’ of the Johnanine writings\(^{19}\). The solemn designation of ‘our Lord Jesus Christ’ in 6,3 and repeated in 6,14 strongly supports this interpretation.

Verse 3 presents a threefold test for orthodoxy. The first is whether the teaching agrees with that of Paul (the opponents teach a doctrine which is ‘different’ from that of Paul and ‘Timothy’). The second is conformity to ‘the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ’, i.e. with the teaching of and about Christ. And the third is that all practical results of this teaching must be in accordance with ἐσθένεια: orthodox teaching is κατ’ ἐσθένειαν, like the ‘truth’ in Tit 1,1 (ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας τῆς κατ’ ἐσθένειαν). Both ἐσθένουσιν, ‘sound, healthy’, and ἐσθένεια, ‘godliness’, have a decidedly practical aspect to them.

This last word, ἐσθένεια, is a key term in the Pastoral (1 Tim 2,2; 3,16; 4,7-8; 6,3.5.6.11; 2 Tim 3,5; Tit 1,1; elsewhere in the New Testament only in Acts 3,12; 2 Pet 1,3.6.7; 3,11; the verb ἐσθένεια, 1 Tim 5,4; the adjective ἐσθενικός, Acts 10,2.7; 2 Pet 2,9; and the adverb ἐσθενοῦσα, 2 Tim 3,12; Tit 2,12). Its currency in pagan ethical thought suggested to many the adoption in these epistles of a secular morality indicating a compromise with the world, the so-called ‘bourgeois’ ethic\(^{20}\). Surely, the use of ἐσθένεια in the Pastoralss can, on the one hand, reflect

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17. See Romans, Der Erste Brief an Timothy, p. 331, who notes that where λόγος is used in the broader sense of ‘teaching’ in the Pastoralss it is always in the singular form, and that the teaching of Jesus has already been cited at 1 Tim 5,18. But the plural is also found in

18. The false ‘gospel’ in Galatians is also not simply a wrong soteriology; any falsification of soteriology implies a false understanding of Christ and his work of salvation, and is, therefore, a heretical Christology (cf. Gal 5,4: ‘You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.’).


the attempt of Roman Christians to identify themselves in terms of the society in which they lived. Yet in the Pastoral, on the other hand, the term is clearly filled with new, Christian meaning despite its common usage in the Roman world. 1 Tim 3,16 magnificently expresses this new meaning, making evident that ‘godliness’ is theologically anchored in the Christ-event itself (cf. 2 Tim 3,12). The practice of εὐδείβεια presupposes a theological dimension. And indeed, as used in the Pastoral, the term εὐδείβεια as well as the word-group in general is closely related to the knowledge of God and such related concepts including gospel and truth (1 Tim 6,3,5,6,11; Tit 1,1). Contrary to the superficial ‘form’ of godliness of the false teachers (2 Tim 3,5) ‘genuine godliness proceeds out of commitment to God and the orthodox teaching of faith. Both true faith and true ethics are included in the meaning of εὐδείβεια.

St John Chrysostom wonderfully summarizes this understanding when, interpreting 1 Tim 4,7, he says: Γέμνησε σεβασμόν πρὸς εὐδείβειαν, τούτεστι πρὸς πίστιν καθαρόν καὶ βίον δρόν: τούτο γάρ ἀτιν εὐδείβεια. ‘Pure faith’ or ‘doctrine’ expressed in ‘righteous life’ – this is indeed the meaning of εὐδείβεια as used in the Pastoral.

Following this brief description of false teaching in 1 Tim 6,3, Paul moves to the opponents themselves, describing first their character and attitude (vv. 4-5), and then identifying their true motivation (vv. 6-10).

The primary characterization of the false teacher is given by the main verb in the apodosis of the conditional sentence, τετουργεῖται (v. 4a): ‘conceited’, ‘puffed up’. This verb is qualified by two participles, ἐπιστασμένος and νοσόν, with the second contrasting the first. There are three basic (negative) qualities that characterize the false teacher: arrogant, ignorant and disputatious. The proponent of false doctrine teaches not from knowledge, but from ‘knowing nothing’. He speaks what he does not know only because he has a ‘sick’ or ‘unhealthy’

23. On 1 Tim, Hom. 12, PG 62, c. 560.
24. This sense is contextually indicated in 3,6. Other possible meanings include ‘blinded’ or ‘foolish’.
25. Already in 1,7 this theme of the opponents’ ignorance is introduced: they wish ‘to be teachers of law; but they understand neither the words they use nor the matters about which they make such strong assertions’ (cf. Tit 1,16). St John Chrysostom comments: ‘Presumption therefore arises not from knowledge, but from “knowing nothing”. For he that knows the doctrines of godliness is also the most disposed to moderation’ (On 1 Tim, Hom. 17; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers [NPNF] 13, p. 467).
26. The figurative use of this medical term continues the medical imagery of healthy words in the previous verse: ‘whereas Paul and Timothy’s proclamation comprises healthy words about Jesus and accords with godliness, the message of the opponents is sick’ (Mounce, Pastoral Epistles, p. 338).
27. στηρίζει, ‘speculations’, is a common designation of the heresy (cf. 1 Tim 1,4; 2 Tim 2,23-25; Tit 3,9).
28. But the verb is found in 2 Tim 2,14.
29. There is a Filiationssiehe (RODD, Der Erste Brief an Timothen, p. 329), the vices here listed being related to their origin.
30. φλογός, ‘envy, jealousy’, and ἐρήμ, ‘strife, quarrel, contention’ go hand in hand (cf. Rom 1,29; Phil 1,15).
31. βλαψὴν, which is used also in vice lists in Eph 4,31 and Col 3,8, refers to abusive speech, meaning ‘defamation’, ‘slander’; with reference to God it means ‘blasphemy’.
32. διασειρήσθη, ‘mutual, constant friction or irritation’, the intensive form of παρησαρασθῆ, ‘irritation’, occurs only here, in the New Testament.
33. Other references to loss of the truth in 2 Tim 2,18; 3,7,8; 4,6; Tit 1,14.
34. In the New Testament παρησάθη occurs only here and in the verse that follows.
35. From 1 Tim 5,17 we know that church leaders and teachers were also remunerated in some way for their work. It seems that the opponents were aiming to gain support for their false doctrine among the church members and in this way to substitute themselves for the appointed teachers. Paul gives clear instructions that the candidates to leadership in the church, the bishop (1 Tim 3,3; Tit 1,7) and the deacon (1 Tim 3,8), must not be greedy for gain.
36. αὐταρκεία, ‘a central concept in ethical discussion from the time of Socrates and yet also a well-worn term in ordinary usage’ (G. Kittel, in TDNT 1, p. 466). In philosophy,
Some exeges see in vv. 6-10 simply a collection of comments and maxims taken from Stoic or Cynic teaching. However, the passage reveals an intentional structure, with vv. 9-10 carefully balancing vv. 6-8. In vv. 6-8 Paul teaches that (1) godliness is actually 'great gain'; (2) material wealth is of temporary use, 'for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world' (v. 7); (3) we (Christians) should be content with a minimum of things necessary for life, 'if we have food and clothing', with these we will be content (v. 8). By contrast, in vv. 9-10 there is a warning that the desire to be rich in this world leads to temptation (πετρασμός) and finally to ruin and destruction. Verse 10 reinforces v. 9, first by a proverbial statement that 'the love of money is root of all kinds of evils' (v. 10a), and then by appealing to what has actually been happening in the church as a result of straining after wealth. Paul says that 'some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs' (v. 10b), having in mind especially the false teachers. 'Faith' is here the Christian faith in an objective sense; the 'many pangs' can be 'the severe piercing... self-accusations and pangs of conscience which will smite those who have defected out of love for money'.

The final admonition to Timothy contains a variety of themes. The first two verses contain four imperatives: (1) Timothy is to flee the way of thinking and of acting as the false teachers as they have been portrayed; (2) he is to pursue such Christian virtues as 'righteousness', godliness, faith, love, steadfastness (endurance), gentleness; (3) he is to 'fight the good fight of faith'; (4) and, as a result of such behavior, 'to take hold of the eternal life' to which he has been called and for which he has 'confessed' the good confession in the presence of many witnesses, either at his baptism, or at his ordination, or in a special occasion of persecution.

45. θυρισμός, an imperative which also appears in 2 Tim 2:22, where St Paul tells to Timothy 'to flee youthful passions' (cf. 1 Cor 6:18; 10:14).
46. ισχυος, here means 'pursue, strive' (cf. 2 Tim 2:22; Rom 9:30; 12:13; 14:19). St Paul mentions six qualities that Timothy is to pursue. The verb θυρισμός can also mean 'to persecute', as it does in 2 Tim 3:12.
47. ονοματολογία is used here 'in its ethical sense of the demands laid on a person who has been justified' (Mounce, Pastoral Epistles, p. 354).
48. The trilogy of faith, love and steadfastness (endurance, ἀγάπη, often present within the context of suffering) occurs in a similar injunction, but directed to old men, in Tit 2:2.
49. The metaphor here employed can refer to athletics or to warfare (the same problem arises in 2 Tim 4, in relation to the 'good fight' that Paul himself has fought through his apostolic activity), but considering the Allison to the prize in v. 12b, it seems clearly enough that the author has in mind the athletic contest (cf. 2 Tim 2; 1 Cor 9:24-27; Phil 3:12-14; Heb 12:1; 1 Clement 7:1).
50. The call to eternal life was received by Timothy at his conversion. It is God’s invitation to salvation, to which all are called in Christ.
51. If confession must be for the Christian a continuing activity, the aorist here ‘suggests a reference to a specific occasion’ (Marshall, The Pastoral Epistles, p. 661). Given the link with God’s calling, one can think of the baptismal confession of faith made by Timothy when becoming a Christian. But other possibilities cannot be excluded, especially, the parallel with the ‘good confession’ made by Jesus before Pontius Pilate (v. 13) that suggests a context of persecution for Timothy as well.
There is a break between vv. 12 and 13 and a further charge is given to Timothy in vv. 13-16; the theme of 'good confession' links this new material to what precedes. By making reference to Timothy's 'good confession' on one of the occasions referenced above, Paul thinks back to the foundational example of Christ who gave testimony (μαρτυρίζοντος) to the original 'good confession.' Timothy is now 'charged' in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus who made the 'good confession' before, or during the time of Pontius Pilate (v. 13) to keep the commandment (τον εντολην) unstained and free from reproach until the manifestation of Christ (v. 14). It is a call to Timothy to faithfully 'keep' or preserve the commandment from being corrupted or misunderstood. The precise meaning of εντολη presents a major challenge. Does the term refer to the entire Christian faith, the baptismal charge, the commission received at Timothy's ordination, the charge to fight the good fight of faith? All these and still other interpretations have been proposed. St Cyril of Jerusalem (Catechetical Lectures 5,13) quotes 1 Tim 6,13-14 with την παραθεδεμενην πιστην in place of εντολην, which means that he interprets the word as the totality of the ethical demands of the gospel.

The doxology in vv. 15-16 refers to God who will show (δειξεται), or will display, the parousia at the proper time (v. 15a). The reference to God's sovereignty with regard to the timing of the parousia introduces a remarkable description of God expressed with seven phrases:

- ὁ μακάριος καὶ μόνος δυνάμεως (the adjectival forms have already been used for God, 1,11 and 17);
- ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων (cf. 1,17, and also, in the Old Testament, Deut 10,17; Ps 135[LXX],2);
- καὶ κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων, the only use of κύριος for God in 1 Timothy; the βασιλεύας and κύριος phrases are joined in describing Jesus Christ in Rev 17,14 and 19,16 (cf. 1 Enoch 9,4);
- ὁ μόνος ἐξον ἀθανασίαν (immortality), which means not being submitted to death, ἀθανασίας in 1,17);
- φῶς οἰκών ἀπρόσιτον (who dwells in unapproachable light), a phrase that emphasizes God's transcendence, cf. Exod 33,17-23; Ps 103[LXX],2; 1 John 1,7; Rev 22,5 and an important text for the Orthodox theology of the divine uncreated light;
- ὁ τιμή καὶ κράτος αἰωνίων, αἰμή, concluding doxology introduced as usual in the New Testament by ὁ.

There is nothing in this doxological text that could not be the result of Paul's own creative writing and the synagogue may well be the source of much of the terminology employed. As many exegetes rightly note, this description of God seems to be directed against emperor worship.

C. Instructions for the rich (6,17-19)

Some argued that these instructions to the rich fit more properly after 6,2a as a fifth group following the advice to those of different ages (5,1-2), widows (5,3-16), presbyters (5,17-25), and slaves (6,1-2a). But there are solid reasons for seeing them as having their proper place here, following v. 16. Since the false teachers place the desire to be rich above anything else, this attitude deserves condemnation (vv. 2b-10). After calling Timothy to persevere in his work with these people (vv. 11-16), Paul balances his previous comments by saying that the mere possession of wealth is not wrong (as opposed to the love of wealth, which is...
wrong). 63 Most of all, the imagery in v. 19 links vv. 17-19 with vv. 11-16: the ‘good foundation’ (cf. v. 12) and the dangers of wealth; the eschatological expectation (v. 14); and, the admonition to ‘take hold of that which is truly life’ (v. 19), which is identical to ‘eternal life’ (v. 12). While it is true that the preceding doxology with its concluding ‘amen’ gives the appearance of closure, it must be remembered that doxologies do not necessarily mark the end of letters (cf. 1:17; Rom 1:25; 11:36).

If earlier (6:4-10) Paul was condemning those who would become rich by their false piety, this text in 1 Tim 6:17-19 contains guidance to those in the church who are rich, 64 aiming to help them not to fall into the spiritual dangers related to wealth. It actually explains to the rich what εὐθέλεια μετὰ αὐθαραξίας (6:6) means in their case. 65 There is no idea here of complete renunciation of riches. Is this perhaps intended ‘to guard against an ascetic interpretation of the earlier criticism of seeking after wealth in vv. 6-10’? 66 It is difficult to say. What is sure is that this moderate attitude to wealth is consistent with the preceding texts in which Paul shows himself not to be agreement with ascetical excesses with which the opponents were praising themselves (4:3-8; cf. 5:23).

The πλουσίοι to be instructed are the rich ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, ‘in this present age’ (v. 17; cf. 2 Tim 4:10; Tit 2:12); the low assessment of material wealth is clearly stated from the very beginning as well as its ‘uncertainty’. Paul will oppose the riches εἰς τὸ μέλλον (v. 19) to the wealth in this world. The ‘advice’ 67 Timothy is to give the rich is first expressed in v. 17 by the use of two negative infinitival clauses:

- ‘not to be haughty’ (or ‘proud’), 68 which is often the sin to which the rich succumb; and
- not ‘to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches’ (πλουσίου ἀδηλότητι), 69 but rather on the certainty of placing one’s hope ‘on

63. Mounce, Pastoral Epistles, p. 365.
64. O. Knoch, 1. and 2. Timothybrief. Tiunbrief (NEchB), Würzburg, Echter Verlag, p. 47, finds in 1 Timothy also other signs of the presence of the rich people in the church.
67. παραγγέλλω is found in the Pastors ‘to urge’ rather than ‘to command’ (cf. 1 Tim 1.3).
68. οὐκ ἐπιθυμησάσθαι, in common in the Bible (Ps 2,27: 62,10; Prov 24,4,5; Eccles 5,8,20; Jer 9,23; Mk 10,17,27; Lk 12,13-21).
69. This word is used only here in the New Testament (cognates in 1 Cor 9,26; 14,8). The fertility of setting one’s hope on riches is a common theme in the Bible (Ps 52,7: 62,10; Prov 24,4,5; Eccles 5,8,20; Jer 9,23; Mk 10,17,27; Lk 12,13-21).
70. ‘With this word Paul begins an instructive play on words and concepts going back to the previous πλουσίοις and continuing with πλουσίον (Knight, The Pastoral Epistles, p. 275). This is similar to the play on the word ‘faith’ in 1,12-17.
71. ἀπόλλυμι, employed elsewhere of the temporary enjoyment of sin (Heb 11,25), denotes almost sensual enjoyment. Its use here is a new affirmation of the goodness of God’s creation and, implicitly, a new negation of extreme asceticism.
72. Contrast the use of πλουσίως in 6,9, where it means ‘to become rich’ rather than ‘abound in’.
73. The last two words, ἀπαραξίας and κοινωνίας, with similar meaning, are Hellenistic (cf. Roloff, Der Erste Brief an Timotheus, p. 369 n. 194 and n. 196).
D. Final warning to Timothy and closing greeting (6,20-21)

The letter’s short conclusion is formulated as a final warning to Timothy with a new direct address to Timothy (with ὑμῖν) providing the transition, much like 1 Tim 6,11. All Paul’s deep concern is poured forth in this ‘O Timothy’. The use of the personal name echoes 1,18, where the same urgent theme was first developed. Here in 1 Tim 6,20-21 one has a final call for Timothy to persevere as well as a new attack on the false teachers. Positively, Timothy must ‘guard the deposit entrusted to him’ (v. 20a), and negatively he must turn away from ‘profane’ or ‘godless empty talk’ of the opponents and the ‘contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge”’ (v. 20b). The final verse also reveals the result of this falsely called ‘knowledge’: ‘by professing it some have departed from the faith’ (or ‘gone astray with regard to the faith’, v. 21a).

παραθηκή, which also occurs in 2 Tim 1,12,14, is used as a technical legal term meaning ‘deposit, property entrusted to another’, that must be kept safely and returned when required. To entrust such a deposit to someone presupposes the trustworthiness and the faithfulness of the recipient. The word is used here metaphorically, being a reference to the entire apostolic teaching. The ‘deposit’ is therefore synonymous with other terms employed in the Pastorals, such as πίστις, ‘the faith’ (3,9,13; 4,6; 6,12,21), or αὐλήθεια, ‘the truth’ (1 Tim 2,4,7; 3,15; 4,3; 6,5).

76. John Chrysostom says on the duty of Timothy to ‘guard the deposit’ entrusted to him: ‘It is not thine: it is another’s property with which thou hast been entrusted: Diminish it not at all! (St John Chrysostom, On 1 Tim., Hom. 18, NPNF, 13, p. 472). And it is also worth recalling what Vincent of Lerins (d. 434) says on this: ‘That which was entrusted to thee, not found by thee: which thou hast received, not invented: a matter not of genius, but of teaching; not of private usurpation, but of public tradition; a matter brought to thee, not put forth by thee, in which thou oughtest to be not an enlarger, but a guardian; not an originator, but a disciple; not leading, but following. “Keep”, saith he, “the deposit”; preserve intact and inviolate the talent of the catholic faith. What has been entrusted to thee, let that same remain with thee; let that same be handed down by thee. Gold thou hast received, gold return. I should be sorry thou shouldsh substitute ought else. I should be sorry that for gold thou shouldst substitute lead impudently, or brass fraudulently. I do not want the mere appearance of gold, but its actual reality. Not that there is to be no progress in religion in Christ’s Church. Let there be so by all means, and the greatest progress; but then let it be real progress, not a change of the faith. Let the intelligence of the whole Church and its individual members increase exceedingly, provided it be only in its own kind, the doctrine being still the same. Let the religion of the soul resemble the growth of the body, which, though it develops its several parts in the progress of years, yet remains the same as it was essentially’ (Vincent of Lerins, A Commonitory, 22-23, NPNF second series, 13, ed. by Ph. Schaff and H. Wace, second printing, Peabody, MA, Hendrickson, 1995, pp. 147-48.

2 Tim 2,15,18,25; 3,7,8; 4,4; Tit 1,11,14), and somewhat analogous to ἀνθρώπων, ‘the commandment’ (6,14).

The final blessing has, as usual in Paul’s epistles, the word χάρις, ‘grace’. This brief formula (‘grace be with you’) is also used in 2 Tim 4,22 (with variants) and Col 4,18. The use of the plural ζημίων in this final blessing 1 in Timothy suggests that Paul expected this letter to be read in the church to all the believers, and that throughout this writing he had them all, not simply Timothy, in view.

In this final admonition to Timothy in 1 Tim 6,3-21, Paul returns to his concern about false teachers (1,3ff) and enhances the well-structured form of the letter. Not only are the doctrines of the false teachers’ erroneous (vv. 3-5a), but they also suppose that ‘godliness is a means of (financial) gain’ (v. 5b). Over against this, the apostle asserts the benefit of true godliness accompanied by contentment (v. 6). The true believer should be satisfied with the essentials of food and clothing (v. 8), especially when viewed from the perspective of the beginning and of the end of our human existence (v. 7). This gives Paul the opportunity to warn against the insatiable desire for wealth (v. 9), a desire that is the source of all sorts of evil and cause of wandering from the faith (v. 10).

To Timothy, Paul addresses a series of demands in form of imperatives (vv. 11-14a) to flee from these dangers and to ‘fight the good fight of faith’. These demands are to be kept until the coming of Christ.

77. Other interpretations suggest the task which was entrusted to Timothy (Gordon Fee, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus (NIBCNT) Peabody, MA, Hendrickson, 1995, p. 161), or the epistle itself.
78. The use of ἀνθρώπων (which occurs only here in the New Testament) together with γνῶσις determined some commentators (most of all those who date the Pastoral very late) to see here an allusion to the Antitheses of Marcion and to identify the heresy opposed to in the Pastoral as second-century gnosticism. This interpretation cannot be sustained. In fact, Marcion was not a gnostic, and did not claim to gnosco in the sense that he did not pretend to belong to this movement.
(v. 14b). The Apostle’s affirmation that God will bring about Christ’s *epiphaneia* leads to the doxological statement about God (vv. 15-16).

To those who possess wealth the apostle provides specific instruction and warning about the danger of arrogance by setting their hope on riches (v. 17a); rather they are urged to place their hope in God alone, who has given all things for their enjoyment (v. 17b). Instructions then follow about using their wealth in ways that lead to the reception of eternal life (vv. 18-19).

1 Timothy is brought to its conclusion with a final exhortation to Timothy that calls on him to ‘guard the deposit’ and warns him once again about the severe dangers of false teaching (vv. 20-21a). Thus Paul returns to the concerns with which he opened the letter (1.3ff), concerns that are sustained throughout (1.18-20; 4.1ff; 6.3ff) and which unambiguously demonstrate the unity of 1 Timothy.

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**RETHINKING SCHOLARLY APPROACHES TO 1 TIMOTHY**

**KARL PAUL DONFRIED**

**Introduction**

At the outset please allow me to express my deep gratitude not only to our seven presenters but also to each and every member of our *Colloquium Paulinum* for their extraordinary contributions during each of our main sessions as well as for the fruitful dialogues that have taken place in the discussion groups. I have learned enormously and I stand in debt to each of you. The modest intention of this concluding presidential presentation is to share several reflections prompted by these excellent papers and to ask to what degree the insights presented by our colleagues are able to be coordinated with each other and to what extent they prompt viable solutions toward more adequate interpretations of 1 Timothy.

**A. THE SETTING OF 1 TIMOTHY**

1. **THE RELATIONSHIP OF 1 TIMOTHY TO PAUL AND THE "PASTORALS"**

It is unmistakable from every one of our superb papers that the question of the authorship of 1 Timothy as well as its integrity as an individual letter continues to be a contentious and unresolved issue in contemporary scholarship and, indeed, this diversity of approach with regard to these very matters is alive and present among the members of our colloquium. Some regard not only the written document but also the person of Timothy as a “device of pseudonymity,”1 with some drawing the consequence that the letter known as 1 Timothy is, therefore, “corrective” of Paul himself. Others argue that this letter was written “under Paul’s authorization during his ministry”2 and still others argue for a

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a canonical approach that links 1 Timothy closely with the authentic Pauline letters while recognizing the tension between them.

As one surveys the overall discussion concerning these three letters – 1, 2 Timothy and Titus – particularly over the last several decades, one observes that the different analytical decisions and “contrasting reading stances” are often reflections of prior theological or ideological presuppositions and this has enormously complicated the possibility of any reasonable exegetical consensus. A serious pastoral problem that only emerged at the end of the last century is that the radically corrective approach has effectively led to the disenfranchisement of these letters in much of mainline Protestantism since they have, for all intents and purposes, been moved to the edge or out of the canon, a process facilitated by much feminist biblical scholarship. David Horrell illustrates how Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, for example, “has influenced much subsequent feminist scholarship with her depiction of the Pastors as evidence of ‘patriarchalisation’ in the early church, a transformation away from the early model of ‘the discipleship of equals.’”9 Referring to this overall situation of hermeneutical confusion and conflict, Margaret Mitchell concedes, “I am not sure there is any way beyond that methodological impasse.”10

Most Pauline scholars acknowledge this current dilemma as well as the fact that there are no easy or simplistic solutions to this complex and thorny situation. What follows is an attempt to isolate selected components of the current crisis and to suggest possible avenues in which dialogue might be broadened and deepened. To begin this process I would underscore some of the assertions made by the author of our first paper, Luke Timothy Johnson, who insists that the existing criteria for priority are both “formally problematic and materially insufficient.”11 Johnson’s pointed challenge of the current status quo concerning these three writings – 1, 2 Timothy and Titus – parallels in many ways Brevard Childs’ analysis of the situation.

“First of all, among those scholars who have recently attempted to interpret the Pastors as an example of pseudepigraphical literature the model of strictly historical referentiality of meaning continues to remain dominant. The literary genre is continually interpreted in reference to its allegedly ‘real’ historical situation, namely, one some fifty years after the death of Paul. The effect of this move is that the literary genre is actually viewed as something ‘pseudo,’ whose true meaning only emerges when the genuine historical setting is reconstructed. A concomitant effect of this hermeneutical model is that the description of the Pastoral as pseudoeipigraphical usually functions to establish from the outset the referentiality of the letters to be derived from the creative imagination of the author. As a result, a rich variety of possible relationships, both simple and complex, between the literature and its referent is lost because the genre description simply decides the issue as if by reflex. The kerygmatic witness of the text is, thereby, rendered mute, and its interpretation is made dependent on other external forces which are set in a causal relationship.”12

Especially germane for our consideration is Childs’ assertion that a “concomitant effect of this hermeneutical model is that the description of the Pastors as pseudepigraphical usually functions to establish from the outset the referentiality of the letters to be derived from the creative imagination of the author” for this brings us to the heart of the current dilemma. While I do not necessarily affirm Johnson’s ultimate conclusions concerning 1 Timothy, he does offer a number of guidelines that are worthy of our serious attention. To begin with he rejects the homogenization of 1, 2 Timothy and Titus under the term “Pastors” since their collective character is no “more distinct than that exhibited by any of the other obvious clusters within the Pauline corpus.”14 Indeed only when these letters are each examined individually can responsible analyses and comparisons be made. In order to proceed effectively in such a manner, Johnson urges that four specific factors must be given attention: “the shape of Paul’s ministry, the character of Paul’s correspondence, the role of Paul’s delegates, and the literary form of the respective letters.”15 Further, Johnson suggests three additional principles in his commentary that should be observed as starting points so that these letters can be interpreted in terms of their self-presentation:

4. See further Johnson, “First Timothy 1.1-20,” in this volume, p. 27.
1. “They are real rather than fictional letters. They were written by Paul to his delegate Timothy and are to be understood within the framework of Paul’s ministry, the relationship between Paul and his delegate, and the socio-historical realities of the first century.” One should note here that in the provocative paper presented earlier this week, Johnson uses the phrase “produced in the apostle’s lifetime under his authorization,” a formulation that is more flexible and thereby a more effective category for analysis of a complex situation.

2. “Each letter addresses a particular situation, has its own literary form, and uses its own mode of argumentation. Each letter must therefore be considered individually and in particular rather than in general and as part of a larger group.”

3. “The Pauline corpus is assumed to be the appropriate comparative context for each letter. When this premise seems weak, as it does in some cases, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the alternative approach will also be considered.”

These suggested premises have value because it is they that have guided scholarly approaches to these letters well into the nineteenth century and contemporary scholarship needs to critically present the evidence for or against their validity and not simply transmit to the next generation what may be currently popular but not necessarily argued convincingly.

2. THE VEXING QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP

2.1. Joint Authorship, Co-Workers and Pauline Missionary Centers

In agreement with Johnson that a “more complex model for the composition of Paul’s letters” is required, it is important to review the structure and nature of Paul’s missionary team both during and after his lifetime. I want to raise the question whether there were Pauline missionary centers and, if so, how they might have functioned and, especially, whether there was a relationship between such centers and letter writing activities associated with Paul. In considering the differences that can be detected between all of the letters of the Corpus Paulinum broadly understood, one needs to ascertain, if possible, whether the team approach of Paul’s ministry also affected the writing, the collection, and the dissemination of these letters. It is necessary to both recognize and evaluate the fact that Paul does not write all of his letters alone; others are involved. The earliest letter attributed to Paul is 1 Thessalonians and it claims to have been written by Paul, Silvanus and Timothy to the church at Thessalonica. Paul obviously takes this joint authorship seriously; the dominant references throughout the letter are to the “we” of the first person plural. On at least three occasions he will move to the first person singular in order to emphasize his unique role or perspective as in 1 Thess 2,18; 3,5 and 5,27. 1 Thessalonians also testifies to both the close and strategic role that Timothy exercised in the Thessalonian ministry as is evident in 1 Thess 3,2-6. In striking contrast to this phenomenon stands Galatians, claiming to have been dictated by Paul alone and referring to the author only in the first person singular.

Worthy of note is that 2 Thessalonians begins exactly as does 1 Thessalonians – Paul, Silvanus and Timothy and – and, as I have suggested elsewhere, may contribute to our understanding of the authorship issue of that letter. 1 Corinthians refers both to Paul and Sosthenes as the authors and 2 Corinthians to Paul and Timothy, with a further reference to the joint work of Silvanus, Timothy and Paul in 1,19: “For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not ‘Yes and No’; but in him it is always ‘Yes.’” That at least some of the Apostle’s letters were dictated is evident from direct testimony to this effect as in Rom 16,21 (“I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord”) or Paul’s indication that he was setting his stamp of approval on a given letter by adding words in his own hand (1 Cor 16,21, “I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand” ; Gal 6,11, “See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand!”). It is not unimportant that at the conclusion of Romans there is a specific reference to Timothy’s greetings as well (Rom 16,21: “Timothy, my co-worker, greets you”), one of ten references to him in those letters of Paul recognized by virtually all as authentic, with another six references in Acts. In terms of our further discussion it should be noted that there are ten references to Titus in the authentic Paulines but none in Acts, although Acts contains fourteen references to Silvanus/Silas.

Even though it is often overlooked or denied, Luke was not only a companion of Paul but according to Phlm 24 he is explicitly referred to as a συνεργός, a co-worker during Paul’s imprisonment. This identical term used to identify Luke is also used for others who were co-workers within the Pauline team including Timothy (1 Thess 3:2; Rom 16,21), Titus (2 Cor 8,23), Epaphroditus (Phil 2,25), Philemon (Phlm 1), Prisca and Aquila (Rom 16,3). Further, at the conclusion of Colossians one reads “Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you” (4,14) and in 2 Tim 4,11 one finds the intriguing reference that “Only Luke is with me.” When these references are augmented by the “we” sections of Acts (16,10-17; 20,5-15; 21,1-18; 27,1-28,16), one has several indications of Luke’s significant involvement in Pauline missionary activity, especially if one is willing to understand these citations as stemming from a diary. Although understanding the “we” sections is not accepted by all, as early as Irenaeus (Adv. Haer. 3,14,1) these passages in Acts have been appealed to in establishing the fact that Luke was Paul’s “inseparable” companion. Should this be the case, how then can one explain a variety of inconsistencies in Luke’s understanding of Paul’s theology as presented in Acts? One possible approach to this question would be to realize that Luke did not accompany Paul during major parts of his missionary activity that included, for example, the Judaizing issues, and this not unimportant detail might explain the variances between the Lucan and Pauline interpretations with regard to these questions. This would make sense especially if Luke remained in Philippi while Paul and the remainder of his missionary team traveled to Achaia; he would then have rejoined them some years later when they once again came to Philippi (Acts 20,5-6) on a journey that eventually led to Rome.

My use of the phrase “Pauline Missionary Centers” was in a more restrictive way anticipated by Hans Conzelmann who in his discussion of Luke, Paul and the Corpus Paulinum argued that the differences between these writings “must be understood historically. Therefore, it is necessary to include also the theology of Paul’s disciples in the comparison. This, in turn presupposes a tradition-critical analysis of the Corpus Paulinum in two respects: (1) the appropriation of Paul’s theology by a ‘school,’ (2) the function of the formulas of confessions of faith as criteria for theology, for distinguishing between orthodoxy and heresy. Concerning (1) we can understand the existence of deuterono-Pauline

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missionary center. In this way my suggestion concerning the existence of Pauline missionary centers would transcend Conzelmann’s more limited reference to the ancient school. Without something like these broader missionary centered schools in Ephesus, Corinthish and elsewhere, it is difficult to visualize both the activities of Paul’s delegates and the missionary zeal of area churches beyond their actual location. By some means the traffic between the churches had to be organized and communications coordinated. Surely when Paul writes a letter to the church in Corinthish, “including all the saints throughout Achaia” (2 Cor 1,1), there had to be procedures and structures in place for such transmission and communication.

2.2. The Missionary Centers and Letter Writing

Once again it is important to emphasize that the Pastoral letters were, wherever they were known in the early church, accepted as authentic[21] and this occurred in an environment in which they were alert to falsified letters as is evident from 2 Thess 2,2: “not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as though from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here.”[22] Summarizing the work of Brox and Speyer on pseudepigraphical literature, Freischikowski comes to this conclusion: “Es bleibt dabei, daß Pseudographie eine bewußte und planmäßig durchgeführte Täuschung ist, welche — wenn sie erkannt worden wäre — damalige Leser im allgemeinen ebenso vor den Kopf gestoßen hätte wie heutige.”[23] Given the extraordinarily close relationship between Paul and his co-workers, Freischikowski proceeds to raise a question of considerable importance: “Aber wie mogen die in den Präkripten erwähnten Mitarbeiter selbst diese Sache aufgefaßt haben, vor allem nach dem Tod des Paulus? Was besagt die explizite Mitverantwortung dieser Männer für das Werk des Paulus für ihr menschliches, theologisches und — schriftstellerisches Selbstbewußtsein?”[24]

22. Italics mine.

What this question suggests is the need to revise what we mean by “Pauline” authorship and to rethink this matter in the broadest possible terms as does Johnson in his opening paper when he speaks of Pauline authorization as one dimension of Pauline authorship. Given our previous discussion I would urge that the teams that worked with Paul at the various mission centers actively participated in his letter writing activities in a number of ways and Richards makes a correct observation when he writes that Paul, as leader of the team, “accepted full responsibility for the content of his letters” and that he checked them carefully because they “had his authorization”[25]. If these Centers included “ein inhaltlich profifizierbarer Traditionszusammengang”[26] in which the theological perspectives of the founder are transmitted, especially during that person’s absence (i.e., missionary travels, prison) or after that persons death, then we observe here a critical element that allows for the continuation and further articulation of the Apostle’s theology when his presence was temporarily or permanently interrupted. In such a manner it becomes possible to understand how Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians and 1, 2 Timothy and Titus continue and apply a Pauline train of thought to changed circumstances.

In this connection it is important to emphasize that modern scholarship needs to be careful not to retroject current understandings of letter writing into that of the ancient world. The work of Richards has made a major contribution in alerting us to the very different mode of letter writing employed in the Pauline context of the first century. In addition to what has already been discussed in terms of Pauline co-writers in the framework of a team approach and the use of secretaries, Richards has expanded these phenomena in significant ways. He concludes that Paul’s letters “likely went through multiple drafts involving editing material and even inserting preformed material,” that “Paul and his team were constantly preparing and polishing material,” that without “external evidence (manuscript attestation), material injected by a co-author into a letter would be indistinguishable from a post-Pauline interpolation,” and that Paul “likely retained copies of his letters”[27].

26. Freischikowski, “Pseudographie und Pauluschule,” p. 260. For a further definition of the school in antiquity, see R. Alan Culpepper, The Johannine School: An Evaluation of the Johannine-School Hypothesis Based on an Investigation of the Nature of Ancient Schools (SBLDS 26) Missoula, Scholars Press, 1975, pp. 258-260. Also important for this entire discussion is the transmission of pre-Pauline material within the Pauline school.
With regard to this last point made by Richards, it is not unrelated to the request made by Paul to his co-worker in 2 Tim 4,13: "When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books (τὰ βιβλία) and above all the parchments (τὰς μεμβρανας)." At several points in his letters Paul cites traditional formulations, sometimes even using the Jewish formula "I delivered to you... what I also received..." Such is the case in 1 Cor 11,23 where he cites the earliest extant words of Jesus concerning the institution of the Lord's Supper, or in 1 Cor 15,3 when he cites a confession of faith. These kinds of pre-Pauline traditions, together with other pre- and extra-Pauline hymns and confessions (for example, Phil 2,5-11) might well have been recorded in his membranae. Paul, his co-workers and his secretary/ies, would have found these parchment notebooks useful for the first-draft writing of his letters, since parchment could be easily erased and revised. Many scholars have noted that the chapter on love in 1 Corinthians 13, to cite another example, was very carefully prepared in advance and then inserted in the structure of the letter. Paul, or a member of his missionary team, would have prepared this in his notebook and then at a later point made use of it in his letter to the Corinthians. Richards correctly observes that material from a co-author or, I would add, members of his team, were "non-Pauline but not un-Pauline".

In addition, as I have suggested in Paul, Thessalonica and Early Christianity, Paul used the (proto)-codex as a vehicle for his own correspondence. In the first place, it was convenient for a traveling missionary. Further, rolls at this time were used for literature and it is highly unlikely that Paul thought that his ad hoc letters were literature; rather, they were practical letters dealing with pressing problems. Paul's use of the codex for his correspondence would also explain the ease by which his co-workers and members of his missionary team could take several smaller letters and portions thereof and rearrange them into a single, larger one as is the case with what is referred to as 2 Corinthians. Many scholars hold that this letter, as it now stands in the canon, was composed from several Pauline letters. Further, when the Pauline letters were collected by the end of the first century they circulated as one handy codex volume rather than as two cumbersome and inconvenient rolls.

This Pauline model, which, on the one hand, meets the needs of the church by easy access to the apostle's writings, and, on the other hand, provides an alternative option to the dominant Jewish roll, a factor hardly to be underestimated in the tension between church and synagogue at the turn of the century, influences and shapes the development of Christian literature in the succeeding centuries, and world literature by the fourth century. It is, incidentally, quite appropriate to speak of the apostle Paul as the most instrumental factor in the shaping of the book as we know it today, that is, in the form of a codex rather than a roll.

But before moving on to the complex authorship issues related to 1, 2 Timothy and Titus, the lively and dialogical nature of the Pauline letter writing process with reference to Paul himself has been splendidly demonstrated by Margaret Mitchell in her article, "The Birth of Pauline Hermeneutics". Relying predominantly on the Corinthian correspondence, Mitchell explains that in his continuing dialogue with his readers Paul is able to cite an earlier text in order to clarify it (1 Cor 5,9-10) or to juxtapose a new interpretative statement (1 Cor 6,12 and 20,23), write a new text that augments an earlier one (see 1 Cor 5,9 and 11) as well as to make a direct appeal either to the exact wording of a text in question (2 Cor 2,4-9) or to his intention at the time of composition (2 Cor 4,9). This same enhanced articulation of intention may also be found in 2 Thessalonians where one or more of the authors (Paul, Silvanus or Timothy) employs precisely such hermeneutical strategies to clarify what was intended by 1 Thessalonians with regard to certain issues that had been misunderstood and misinterpreted.

2.3. The Authorship of 1, 2 Timothy and Titus

Both the continuation of the rich and complex Pauline writing strategies as well as the activities of missionary centers take place during the

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35. See note 17 above.
Apostle’s lifetime, including his imprisonments, as well as following his death through his closest authorized associates. This confidence and conveyed authority to members of his missionary team can be observed when Paul, for example, refers to Timothy as “doing the work of the Lord just as I am” (1 Cor 16,10) and as “my beloved and faithful child in the Lord” who is sent to the Corinthians as a reminder “of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church” (1 Cor 4,17). Paul’s authorization of his co-workers as substitutes for his absence are part of his missionary and ecclesial strategy and to overlook this key ingredient will lead to a constricted view of the wide-ranging and multifaceted nature of Paul’s activity both while present as well as during his absence.

It is not the task of this concluding presidential presentation to rehearse the many reasons that have been given to suggest Paul himself did not directly write 1, 2 Timothy or Titus; they have been thoroughly presented elsewhere with varying degrees of persuasiveness. What bedevils the conversation is both the proximity to and the distance of these three letters from some of Paul’s theology as expressed in one or more of his other letters. If one is not persuaded that pseudonymity is the immediate answer to our dilemma, a more comprehensive view of the whole of Pauline activity and strategy needs to be analyzed and appraised.

Such a broader discussion will want to ask, for example, whether one or more of Paul’s missionary team members might have written any or all of the letters referred to by many as the “Pastorals” as a result of the explicit direction and authorization by Paul himself. Freunschkowski moves in precisely such a direction and given the importance of Timothy as a Pauline ally comes to the conclusion that Timothy, following Paul’s death, is the author of 1, 2 Timothy and Titus. But why, one must ask, only after the Apostle’s death? Should it not first be ascertained whether a Pauline παρευρείας might not have written one or more of these letters during Paul’s lifetime? Also the unnatural assumption that Timothy is writing two pseudopigraphical letters to himself is not persuasive.

Frenschkowski has clearly enunciated his reservations with the thesis of Pauline authorship, either directly or through a secretary, and appropriately moves to a logical first step, viz., to consider whether a Pauline co-worker might, at Paul’s behest, have written 1, 2 Timothy or Titus. However, if such a possible proposal is to be entertained and explored one will need to ask more broadly than does Freunschkowski which of Paul’s co-workers might be logical candidates for authorship given the overall setting of these documents. Further, one must inquire whether that potential candidate reveals literary and theological characteristics that might lead to giving that παρευρείας initial preference. Several prominent scholars have urged that Paul authorized Luke to write these three letters on his behalf. In recent years this interpretation has been argued by Moule, Strobel and Wilson. Even though it has not received the attention it deserves, largely no doubt because it conflicts with other speculative hypotheses related to 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus, it is, nevertheless, a thesis worthy of examination for a variety of reasons not least because it focuses on the final chapter in Paul’s life as well as drawing attention to the question of how Paul’s letters were collected and became part of the Christian canon of Scripture. These broader concerns rather than the narrower argument for Lucan authorship per se are what motivate the observations that follow.

Moule argues that Luke wrote 1, 2 Timothy and Titus “during Paul’s lifetime, at Paul’s behest, and, in part (but only in part), at Paul’s dictation.” Some explanation of the fact that 1, 2 Timothy and Titus have about eighty phrases in common with Acts and of these thirty-four are only found in these writings of the New Testament is required. One possibility that Moule explores is that Luke, the author of Luke-Acts, wrote 1, 2 Timothy and Titus at the explicit request of Paul. In reviewing the “we” sections in Acts, one finds Paul’s address to the Ephesian elders between the second (20,5-15) and the third (21,1-18). Steve Walton’s monograph attempted to show a connection between the four major themes found in this Mileus address – leadership, suffering, wealth and work – and 1 Thessalonians. While I have not found this thesis likely, I do find some quite compelling links between this address in Acts and 1, 2 Timothy and Titus. Evaluating this matter C. K. Barrett concludes that the “parallels are real and substantial, and there can be

40. Acts 16,10-17, 20,5-15, 21,1-18; 27,1-28,16
42. See my review of this volume in JTS 54 (2003) 252-256.
little doubt that Acts and the Pastoral letters were produced in similar circumstances and at times not very remote from one another.\(^{43}\) These connections between the Miletus speech and 1, 2 Timothy and Titus have been concisely summarized by S. G. Wilson in his *Luke and the Pastoral Epistles*, preceded by the observation that almost "every detail of Acts 20,17-33 can be found in the Pastoral letters."

1. Paul looks back on his past career with some confidence, believing that he has fulfilled the tasks designated for him (Acts 20,18-21, 25-6; 2 Tim. 4,6). Moreover, the striking metaphor of an athlete finishing his race is used in both Acts 20,24 (hos teleiso ton dromon mon) and 2 Tim. 4,7 (ion dromon teteleka). At the same time he is deeply concerned with the fate of the Church in his absence. This is indicated by the whole of Acts 20,17-35 and each of the Pastoral letters.

2. The problem Paul foresees and warns of is heresy, which will assault the Church from within and without (Acts 20,29-30; 1 Tim. 1,3 f; 3,1 f; 6,20 f; 2 Tim 2,14 f; 3,1 f). The heresy appears to be an early form of Gnosticism and its center is in Ephesus (Acts 20,17 f; 1 Tim 1,3). Paul urges constant alertness (Acts 20,31; 2 Tim 4,2).

3. The responsibility for resisting the false teaching is placed on the church leaders or on Paul’s assistants. The church leaders are, in both cases, elder-bishops (Acts 20,17-28; 1 Tim. 5,17; 2 Tim. 2,1; Tit. 1,5), and it is Paul’s example and instruction which will be their chief weapon (Acts 20,27, 30-5; 1 Tim. 3,14; 4,1 f; 6,20; 2 Tim. 1,8 f; 13,14; 3,10 f; Tit. 1,5).

4. Paul speaks of his own suffering for the sake of the gospel (Acts 20,19-24; 2 Tim. 1,11-12; 2,3; 3,11) and indicates that for him a martyr’s death lies ahead (Acts 20,25, 37; 2 Tim. 4,6 f).

5. The ministers whom Paul appoints and exorts are warned of the dangers of the love of money (Acts 20,33-5; 1 Tim. 6,9-10; Tit. 1,11).

6. Paul commits his successors to the Lord and his grace (Acts 20,32; 2 Tim. 4,22).\(^{44}\)

Approaching Acts 20,17-38 as well as all the speeches in Acts from the perspective of Greek rhetoric, the influential classicist G. A. Kennedy evaluates Acts 20,17-38 in the following way: "Speeches attributed to Paul in Acts through chapter 19 do not appear to be based on a firsthand knowledge of what he actually said and have the characteristics of


construction that Luke seems to have used in speeches attributed to Peter and others. The speech to the elders of Ephesus (20:18-35) is the first in Acts that seems based on direct knowledge by the narrator, and the only speech evocative of Paul’s personal style\(^{46}\), though simplified for use in an historiographic work. Subsequent speeches are not markedly Pauline in style, except perhaps the exchange with Agrippa. They seem to have been written with some knowledge of Paul’s arguments, but probably not of his actual words.... Of the rhetorical features of Acts the most important historically is the way the apostles utilize occasions to preach the gospel\(^{46}\). Since the itineraries described in the second and third "we" sections takes place in Miletus at the time of Paul’s address it is not an unlikely assumption that Luke was actually present, thus explaining the particular proximity to Pauline thought at his particular juncture.

Returning now to the broader relationships between Luke and the Pastoral, Moule suggests three categories of overlap:

1. Significant words or uses of words, from which we select only one example, the word group εὐσεβεία. Moule points out that "εὐσεβεία, outside Acts iii. 12 and the Pastoral, only occurs in 2 Peter (thrice); εὐσεβεία occurs only in Acts and 1 Timothy (once each); εὐσεβεία occurs twice in Acts (x. 2, 7) and once in 2 Peter (ii. 9); εὐσεβος occurs only at 2 Timothy iii. 12 and Titus ii. 12."\(^{47}\)

2. Significant phases or association of words, from which we once again select only one example, the collocation of φιλαγγυστα and ὑψηλομορφείνει. Moule observes that the moralizing against the wealth in 1 Tim 6,10 "is called φιλαγγυστα, ‘love of money’; in verse 17, when the theme is taken up again, Timothy is told to charge his flock μη ὑψηλομορφείνει – ‘not to be haughty’. Now, in Luke xvi. 14, the Pharisees... are described as φιλάγγυστοι, ‘lovers of money’; and in the next verse, ὑψηλομορφος, among men is abominated by God."\(^{47}\) Moule rightly asks whether this association is purely fortuitous.

3. Significant ideas as, for example, the use of the "angelic trinity", i.e. God or the Father, Christ or the Son of Man, and the angels, at both

45. Italic mine.
47. MOULE, "The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles." p. 442.
Luke 9:26 ("Those who are ashamed of me and of my words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels") and 1 Tim 5:21 ("In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels, I warn you")

That 1, 2 Timothy and Titus were written during the interim between a first and second Pauline captivity in Rome, as Moule maintains, is certainly possible, as is Paul's request that Luke write up and send to Timothy and Titus concerns that need to be urgently communicated. Some fourteen years later Stephen Wilson developed further in his very useful volume, *Luke and the Pastoral Epistles*50, Moule's very preliminary and relatively brief argumentation with far more comprehensive analysis and documentation. An essential difference between the two is that Wilson sees Luke writing the Pastoral Epistles on his own and not at Paul's behest as maintained by Moule, a position not unrelated to Jerome Quinn's thesis that 1, 2 Timothy and Titus comprise Luke's third volume following the first two, the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles51.

Wilson's monograph is filled with analytical detail and many provocative suggestions that cannot, of course, be reviewed in this context. Nevertheless his perspective that Luke traveled to various Pauline communities to gather information for the narrative accounts presented in Acts indirectly supports an intriguing suggestion made by Moule that Luke was the facilitator for the Pauline letter collection52, a suggestion with which Wilson is sympathetic53. Again the intention of this very brief suggestion is not to defend the correctness of Moule or Wilson's perspective but rather to indicate that 1 Timothy needs to be interpreted against a far more complex and tightly woven map of early Christian interconnections and interrelated developments than the thesis of a pseudopigraphical writing permits.

50. See note 57 above.

3. TOWARD A MORE COMPREHENSIVE DISCERNMENT OF A PAULINE TRAJECTORY

In *Peter in the New Testament* we sought to trace a trajectory of the images of Peter54. One of the reasons I have discussed in some detail the relationship of Paul and his co-workers, the structures of the Pauline missionary centers and the possible role of Luke in the transmission of 1 Timothy is to suggest that this may be a good moment for New Testament scholarship to give greater attention to the reconstruction of a Pauline trajectory that ranges from Paul's earliest days as a persecutor of the Judean believing communities through the finalization of Pauline letter collection, a period involving at least some seven decades.

New Testament scholarship over the last fifty years has advanced our knowledge considerably, yet the focus has often been restricted to limited parts of the Pauline trajectory rather than to its comprehensive fullness. Selected themes and limited issues are often given such prominence that the many trees endanger the broader vision of the entire forest. Whether the emphasis is on themes such as justification, law, ethics, the "new perspective," anti-imperialism, apocalyptic or on the interpretation of selected Pauline texts or letters, the range of interest, whether exegetical or chronological, is often more partial than inclusive. Even when the points argued are correct, their limitation of scope, have the potential to lead toward a skewed understanding of Pauline theology as a coherent whole. Given this situation one stands on dubious ground when arguing that 1 Timothy, for example, is non-Pauline since what is meant by "Pauline" in contemporary scholarship is frequently built on a very tenuous foundation. Since a more detailed discussion of the current state of Pauline studies may be found in my public lecture given earlier at the Biblicum here in Rome, I will not pursue the shifting paradigms for the interpretation of Paul at this moment55.

The reasons for this lack of breadth and consensus in Pauline studies is not due to a lack of technical competence – on the whole, quite the contrary – but rather to what has become emblematic of the current model, viz., enslavement to a virtual limitless explosion of literature.

coupled with an intensely individualistic style of scholarship. Until a more collaborative model of cooperative research and publication can be inaugurated and instituted—a discussion to which I will return at the end of this presentation—a more comprehensive examination of the entire chronological span and full theological complexity of the Pauline trajectory cannot be undertaken. Using all the available scholarly and exegetical tools including textual, literary, archeological, sociological and anthropological analysis, such an approach will include and analyze, for example, the Jewish and Graeco-Roman backgrounds not only of the Pauline communities but of Paul himself, the theology and chronology of each letter in their contingent situation but also as part of a more coherent whole, the missionary strategy of Paul and his team in an alien cultural and political world, the phenomenon of imprisonment, the persecution and death of Paul in Rome as well as the continuation of the Pauline mission following his death all the way through the collection of the Pauline letter corpus. Although these selected items are not intended as a complete project description, the objective for our present discussion is, I hope, obvious: a letter like 1 Timothy can only be approached and interpreted effectively as part of such a larger Pauline trajectory. The current fragmentation present in Pauline scholarship can only lead to tentative, tenuous and fragile conclusions with regard to those letters commonly, but not accurately, referred to as the “Pastoral Epistles.”

B. REASSESSING THEOLOGICAL ISSUES

1. GRACE, HETERO/NOMOS NORMS AND ASCETICISM

1.1 In his exegesis of 1 Tim.1.1-20, Johnson interprets this text as dominated by two interrelated contrasts “between God’s dispensation and human ambition, and that between internal disposition and external norm.” The goal here and elsewhere in 1 Timothy is “the cultivation of moral dispositions internal to humans” exactly as expressed in 1.5 (“love from a pure heart and a good conscience, and sincere faith”); also reiterated in 1.19) and not the imposition of heteronomous norms (eg., “law”) that are articulated in a variety of extraneous realities (“myths and genealogies”). The οἰκονομία of the letter is mapped in 1 Tim.1.4, which Johnson translates as “God’s way of ordering [or, disposing] things.” stands in contrast to such speculations. Johnson suggests that these contrasts, already found in the opening chapter, announce themes that will be articulated throughout the letter. In his exposition of the 1 Timothy 6, he refers back to the beginning of the letter and writes that “Paul concludes the letter with a final appeal to Timothy to ‘keep’ the parathēkē... Paul understands this ‘tradition’ not as a set of prescriptions concerning the ordering of the community or as a body of beliefs, but as a certain way of life that is based in the oikonomia theou, the way that God has created and saved the world through gift, a way of life that is perceived and practiced not by rancorous debates or so-called knowledge, but by that response to God’s gift that is faith. This was the goal of the commandment from the beginning (1:5). It is the point of the letter.” God’s grace alone, not heteronomous norms, can enact moral transformation, a theme of exceptional importance in several letters found within the Pauline corpus.

1.2 Several members of the colloquium have drawn our attention to how the heteronomous norm of asceticism is being enacted within the congregation addressed while at the same time being rejected by the writer of 1 Timothy. Thus, for example, through “the hypocrisy of liars” marriage is forbidden and “abstinence from foods” is demanded (4,2-3). Yann Redalliœ makes clear that this distorted teaching concerning abstinence is unambiguously countered: “For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by God’s word and by prayer” (4,4-5). Horrell sees a possible ascetical tendency toward celibacy among the younger widows as part of the multifaceted discussion in 1 Timothy 5. His concern is as follows: “One question, of course, is whether this view of the young widows as ascetics is incompatible with the author’s first reason not to enroll younger widows— that they will later want to marry. The author is evidently suspicious and skeptical of these women (all women’s?) activity, and may well regard any asceticism, particularly when it results in separation from household relationships, as a dangerous and

62. Yann Redalliœ, «Sois un modèle pour les croyants» Timothée, un portrait exhortatif, 1Tim 4, in this volume, pp. 87-108.
short-lived pattern of life. We should not ignore the fact that this is a polemical description of the widows’ activities, such that accusations of sexual impropriety and desire cannot simply be read at face value (cf. above). The author essentially has two problems with the younger widows’ particular performance of their identity, first, that their commitment to the celibate lifestyle will not last (vv. 11-12), and second, that their activities are in any case dangerous (v. 13). Thus the author’s response is: “to marry, bear children, and ὁμοίωσιστήσει.” Finally, Horrell also proposes that the advice that Timothy no longer drink only water (μηκέτι δόρσοντει, v. 23), is probably a sign of asceticism that the author wishes to refuse and appears to be part of a larger anti-ascetic concern of this letter.

2. Heteronomous Norms, Asceticism and 1 Tim 2,15.

2.1 1 Tim 2,9-15 involves a notoriously controversial set of verses dealing with women. Are these categorical condemnations of women intended for universal application or are these contingent warnings that are applied to a very specific set of circumstances? For Deborah Krause 1 Timothy “reveals the objectification of women’s bodies and their vocational purposes into the direct service of the patriarchal household” and, further, that this writer “constructs for women a social reality in the church that is in direct contradiction to the teachings of Paul found in Paul’s uncontested letters.” One could come to a diametrically opposed interpretation if one understood the author of 1 Timothy as reacting against a heteronomous asceticism which claimed that holy women should not be involved in marriage and its consequence, childbirth. More comprehensive analyses will need to probe whether our author is primarily intending to correct what Paul has to say about women in his letters or whether a very local and specific distortion of sexuality in Ephesus is being referenced. The avoidance of ἡμετούσια (pregnancy) may either be due to an ascetic trend exercised, for example, by groups

analogous to the Therapeuta, the Corinthian ἱερουστηκοί (1 Cor 7,1-5), those related to the mother goddess cult of Artemis in Ephesus, or, with Winter, it could be the result of rich and progressive women, along the lines of what he refers to as the “new woman.” It has also been documented that the use of contraceptives and abortion at this time could be fatal and Künzlenberger has argued that the phrase in 1 Timothy that women “will be saved through childbirth (διὰ τῆς τεκνοφυλακίας)" suggests a way of escape or preservation from precisely such dangers.

My point is straightforward: before one labels a text such as 1 Tim 2,9-15 as “a text of terror,” “corrective” or wishes to censor it from the canon, one must, as a critical historian, first examine whether the text is addressing a likely threat to the community addressed emanating from the first century Graeco-Roman world. Research in the area of the contextual setting of 1 Timothy requires considerable enhancement as well as more precise focus.

3. Εὐσεβεία AND Bourgeois Christianity.

The term “bourgeois Christianity” was coined by Martin Dibelius (bürgerliche Christentum) and has generally come to indicate that the ethics of the “Pastorals” are accommodationist and, as a result, represent compromise and a merger of values with the non-Christian world. The practical result is an adoption by these letters of values represented by urban Graeco-Roman society, manifested primarily by their acceptance of patriarchal structures linked to the dominant household economy with its typical subjection of women and legitimization of hierarchical structure.


65. This is a widely held position among commentators; see further, Raymond F. Coulthard, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus: A Commentary (NTL), Louisville, Westminster John Knox, 2002, p. 150; Philip H. Towner, The Letters to Timothy and Titus (NIBCANT), Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2006, p. 376.


73. See further Mark Harding, What Are They Saying About the Pastoral Epistles? New York, Paulist Press, 2001, p. 54.
Two of our presenters have challenged this interpretation of ἐνσεβεία as a compromise with the broader Graeco-Roman culture. Redalić translates the term as piétē and has urged that it points to a way of life firmly based on a confession of faith in Christ (1 Tim 3,16) that presupposes a knowledge of the truth which is the sound and healthy teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Tim 6,3). Moving in a quite similar direction and being able to probe the meaning of ἐνσεβεία in greater detail due to the multiple references to the term in 1 Timothy 6 (3,5,6,11), Mihoc also suggests that 1 Tim 3,16 “magnificently expresses this new meaning, making evident that ‘godliness’ is theologically anchored in the Christ-event itself,”74 and, further, that in 1 Timothy and Titus ἐνσεβεία belongs to a word-group related “to the knowledge of God and such related concepts including gospel and truth (1 Tim 6,3,5,6,11; Tit 1,1)”75. ἐνσεβεία understood in this way stands against the distorted form of ἐνσεβεία characterized by the arrogance, ignorance and disputatiousness of the false teachers. These instruct not from knowledge but from “knowing nothing.”76 Mihoc declares that for 1 Timothy “‘Pure faith’ or ‘doctrine’ expressed in ‘righteous life’ – this is indeed the meaning of ἐνσεβεία...”77. Since the righteous life is of such importance to the author of 1 Timothy he must not only expose the false teachers’ erroneous claim that godliness is a means of financial gain but he must, in the complement to this section (6,17-19), provide instruction for the rich about using wealth in such a manner that it will lead to the reception of eternal life.

4. Household Ideology as a Misrepresentation of Paul’s Understanding of the Church?

Among the many sociologically influenced analyses of the New Testament stand the work of David Balch and Carolyn Osiek, Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches,78 and Mary D’Angelo79 both of which give emphasis to the perceived patriarchal structure of the ideal household and the implied inferiority of women, children, and slaves within this household economy. As we have already noted, Bruce Winter comes to very different conclusions with regard to the social and cultural influences that shaped 1 Timothy.80 Commenting on 1 Tim 2,9-15, Winter writes that the opponents of the believers in Christ “could have concluded that they belonged to a promiscuous cult that endorsed avant-garde behaviour. Because in Roman law you were what you wore, the concerns in this new community of Christians were that the values of the ‘new woman’ could intrude into the gatherings in Christian homes, and hence the concern for preventative measures in 1 Timothy 2:9-15.”81 These sharply divergent analyses suggest that many methodological issues concerning the relations between domestic space and social groups remain unresolved as well as the fact that much of the internal life of the household remains obscure.

David Horrell concludes his essay with these words: all “this and more shows how deeply the author’s sense of ecclesial space is formed by a household ideology, and how this household model is seen as the appropriate basis for the disciplining of role-performance in the church and the world. ‘Placing’ the church as household shapes the instruction the author gives, and helps to explain its particular character.”82 This might well be a correct observation but before it can be applied in a persuasive way there needs to be a critical methodological analysis of how the contents of “household ideology” are determined, how the term is to be defined with some precision and how one is to understand the tension between such categories and the Christological emphases as well as the transformation of common language and concepts used in 1 Timothy. I am bold enough to suggest that this definitive task still lies before us as part of the overall scholarly rethinking that needs to take place with regard to the letters addressed to Timothy and Titus.

Thomas Süding also comments on the phrase “house of God” in 1 Tim 3,15. Whereas the term ἔκκλησια in 1 Tim 3,5 and 5,16 denotes the local church, in 3,15 it signifies the “una sancta.” The phrase “house of God,” further described as the “church of the living God” and as the “mystery of faith” (3,16), has less to do with the patriarchal structures of a household than with the Temple imagery. Such imagery, dominant throughout the Pauline letters and central to his understanding of ἔκκλησια, as well as related terms like truth and glory, mystery and confession, proclamation and faith, revelation and glory clearly move in

74. Vasile Mihoc, “The Final Admonition to Timothy (1 Tim 6,3-21),” in this volume, pp. 135-152, here p. 142.
78. Louisville, John Knox, 1997
80. See n. 67 above.
81. WINTER, Roman Wives, Roman Widows, p. 122.
the direction not of the profane but of the sacred. The ἐκκλησία of 1 Timothy 3 “is not only von Gott gegründet; sie ist göttlicher Natur in dieser Welt” 83; much like the Temple, the ἐκκλησία participates both in earthly and heavenly realms. And it is precisely this ecclesial double participation that drives the Pauline “Missionssynagoge” to proclaim the Gospel to the entire Gentile world. “Die Verbindung Jesu Christi geschieht grundlegend durch den Apostel; der Glaube soll jetzt durch die Ordnung der Kirche und eine ihr gemäße Lehre auf Dauer gesichert werden.” 84 Building on a canonical exegesis here and elsewhere, Söding has attempted to bring to the forefront the apostolic continuity between the Pauline letters and 1, 2 Timothy and Titus in contrast to those who would argue for their discontinuity and inconsistency.

To talk about “household ideology” seems to miss the major emphasis in 1 Tim 1:3-5 with regard to ὁλοκομοίνθι τοῦ τῆς ἐν πίστει, “God’s way of ordering things.” 85 Since the church is a divine ὀλοκλομοινθι that is actualized through sound teaching and a new social reality, it is surely appropriate to refer to her as a “house of God” (οἶκος θεοῦ) who is further defined as “the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth” (ἡ εἰς ἑκκλησία τοῦ ζῶντος, στῦλος καὶ ἔδρασιμα τῆς ἀληθείας). “Given this particular context,” writes Jens Herzer, “the lexeme οἶκος θεοῦ is not related to a certain structure but to a certain behaviour (πῶς δὲ ἐν οἰκῷ θεοῦ ἀναπτυσσόμεθα), which is identified by reference of ταύτα in v. 14 with all the instructions for life of the community (2:8-3:13). From this perspective I doubt that the lexeme οἶκος θεοῦ in this particular context functions as a metaphor of the community structured according to ancient household codes and that in this semantic framework the common translation of οἶκος as ‘household’ is appropriate at all.” 86 1 Tim 3:15 clearly identifies οἶκος θεοῦ as the “house of God,” not as a “household” determined by Graeco-Roman values, and this house of God serves as the pillar and bulwark (στῦλος καὶ ἔδρασιμο) of the truth. 87

Söding has correctly linked the “house of God” language in 1 Timothy with that of the Temple, and in the Dead Sea Scrolls one observes that

83. SÖDING, “1 Timotheus 3,” in this volume, p. 83.
84. SÖDING, “1 Timotheus 3,” in this volume, p. 86.
85. JOHNSON, “First Timothy I.1-20,” in this volume, p. 28.

both “house” and “temple” serve as a metaphor for God’s community. The concern with behavior in the house of God (3:15) is also unmistakably linked to temple language in Paul’s Corinthian correspondence (1 Cor 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6,16 and this is the emphasis in 1 Timothy as well. There is sufficient linguistic evidence in the Pauline letters to suggest that Paul viewed his communities as being replacements for the Temple, a phenomenon also unmistakably evident in the Qumran literature. A few examples must suffice. Most striking is the reference that “we are the temple of the living God” in the broader context of 2 Cor 6,14-7,1:

“Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God (ἡμένεις γὰρ νοῦς θεοῦ ἐστενζοντος); as God said,

“I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord,

and touch nothing unclean (ἀκαθάρσεις μὴ ἀποκαθιστᾷ); then I will welcome you,

and I will be your father, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God [καθαρισθομεν ἐστώμεν ἀκόαν παντὸς μισθοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος; ἐπετελοῦτες ἐν πάθος ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ].”

Almost identical is the use of “temple” language in 1 Cor 3,16 and 6,19, particularly with the “you” references in the plural. The former is especially instructive: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.” The application of this way of thinking can also be found in 1 Cor 5,1-13. This replacement temple community cannot tolerate immorality since the impurity of one will defile the entire church. Since “our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed, “the festival,” presumably the sacred meal of the community, must be celebrated not with the old yeast
of malice and evil but "with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." So that this can happen Deut 17,7 is invoked: "Drive out the wicked person from among you." The presence of God in this sacred community demands purity. Paul’s “rule” in 1 Thess 4,1-9, as we have observed, contains similar themes, including an equivalent pattern of uncleaness/impurity being opposed by the concepts of sanctification/holiness88. With regard to 1 Timothy Herzer states the matter well when he writes that “the congregation represents the house of God – a new kind of spiritual temple, which should be solid and strong, a fortification to preserve and keep the truth of the faith, that is, the mystery of godliness exposed as a confession in the last verse of the chapter (3:16)"89.

5. CORRECTIVE MODIFICATIONS AND THEIR FUTURE SIGNIFICANCE

Among the significant contributions of the 19th Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum will be its reassessment of certain essential theological dimensions of 1 Timothy and by so doing will undoubtedly influence the re-examination of this letter so necessary for the twenty-first century. Johnson’s distinction between grace and heteronomous norms provides an exegetical insight not only for the first chapter but for the entire letter. Asceticism in its various manifestations is an articulation of a heteronomous norm that is creating confusion and turmoil in the congregation that the author of 1 Timothy has in mind as he writes this letter. It has also been urged that there needs to be a sharper and clearer distinction made between the theological perspective of this document and its cultural context. What provokes our author to so categorically make the requisite corrections of an aberrant Graeco-Roman milieu influencing some of the believers in Christ? In what ways does he intentionally transform εὐδοκέω and ὁλοκόος language in light of his Christological reflections? In short, provocative questions and fascinating proposals are apparent throughout each of these presentations, questions and proposals that will fuel not only a rethinking of 1 Timothy but that will also lead to a more profound comprehension of the Pauline trajectory in and beyond the New Testament.


C. REFLECTIONS ON THE PRACTICE OF BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP

1. THE UNIQUE CONTEXT AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE COLLOQUIUM OECUMENICUM PAULINUM

As I reflect on the events of this week I not only marvel both at the privilege that is ours but also ask myself whether our work here might not also lead to new directions in the exercise and practice of biblical scholarship on a broader scale. What is unique to the work of this colloquium, meeting here in Rome since 1968, is that approximately thirty highly gifted international and ecumenical Pauline scholars, spend an entire week collaboratively working through Pauline texts in a spirit of friendship and collegiality, in an ecclesial context marked by regular worship and the sharing of bread with this marvelous monastic community.

Our time together is marked by a careful listening to and discussion of the relevant texts, often approached in very different ways as a result of the rich diversity of scholarship gathered around this table. Our papers and discussions this year, representing the proceedings of our deliberations focused on 1 Timothy, indicate not only a deep wrestling with the texts but also, at times, how we understand them very differently. Our essays represent points of convergence as well as divergence. I, for one, have learned enormously from the wide variety of excellent and competent insights especially when they are in tension with my own pre-understanding. Yet at this point we have not reached a consensus regarding the complex issues that confront us in the analysis and interpretation of 1 Timothy. Having deepened our learning by means of so many perceptive and discerning papers and insights, we would now be ready to spend a second fruitful week in trying to sort through and review the various options in terms of possibility and probability and I am convinced that such additional collaborative work would move us toward greater exegetical exactitude and theological accord.

Allow me to build on these brief reflections as well as my previous remarks concerning the need for a more comprehensive discernment of a Pauline trajectory. As one today looks at the literature dealing with the so-called “pastoral epistles” one finds a state of utter disarray. The extensive deviations in contemporary biblical scholarship on the major issues presented by these writings has effectively led to their disenfranchisement in many churches today; their alleged ideological bias has for
many undermined their credibility and their canonical function has virtually ceased. Surely critical scholars need to have the room to differ, even to differ sharply, with one another. There is, however, a deeper and broader problem: too much biblical scholarship is performed in an individualistic and non-collaborative manner, thus leading to a situation where many theses emerge that have not been properly tested, sifted and critically discussed with a wider group of diversely competent scholars. This leads to publications with perspectives that not only sharply contradict each other, often in the name of a historiography that masks tendentious superficiality, and that are published with such rapidity that scholars and students are often more busy keeping up with the “latest” in biblical scholarship than in wrestling with the texts and their respective contexts. In this sense our week of collaborative and critical sharing, where the text itself is given precedence in a concentrated manner, is relatively unique. Does the approach represented in this colloquium hold promise on a broader scale? I would suggest that it does; allow me to elaborate.

As I attempt to make some very modest recommendations for our consideration as to how biblical scholarship might achieve greater consensus and thus provide greater service and instruction to the churches they serve, let me use the genre of the biblical commentary as a convenient example. My personal library alone contains forty-five different commentaries on Romans with the newest over 1140 pages in length. Several questions come to mind: is all of this necessary? Has not redundancy rather than measured insight and critical balance become the order of the day? Is there not the danger that this enormous secondary literature disables the text itself from speaking? Who will read and benefit from these oversized volumes? Who is able to gain a coherent understanding of Romans from these many divergent and contradictory readings?

The burden created by these almost limitless publications in our generation no doubt has several causes; surely primary among them is the pressure placed on faculty to “publish or perish” as well as the desire for most major publishers to have a commentary series. Although scholars may consult with other commentaries and be in dialogue through articles and academic conferences, the fundamental approach to writing the commentary is not collaborative and therein lays a major flaw and defect, one that leads to the array of cacophonous voices in contemporary scholarship. As a result, one major publisher has found it necessary to publish a series with the heading “What Are They Saying About...” as a way to help students and scholars canvass the myriad of vastly different approaches to many biblical documents90. While this series provides a valuable service, it is symptomatic of a distressing predicament.

Is there an alternative to this current confusion of tongues? The collaborative work that has marked our days together may well serve as a model for an approach that affirms and continues the manner and shared style of the current week-long colloquium but that additionally develops a second, different ecclesiastically oriented scholarly approach that would concentrate, to cite merely one example, on the collaborative publication of commentaries on the Pauline writings. To accomplish this goal the Abbey might consider bringing together periodically, as part of a long-range project, a group of approximately twelve international and ecumenical Pauline scholars who represent different competencies and approaches to a given Pauline letter. The goal of their research and dialogue with one another would be the eventual publication of a collaborative and jointly written commentary. This would allow not only for a richness and diversity in research method and approach, but it would present a commentary in which the reader would be able to clearly determine where there is consensus and where there is not. When agreement is lacking the commentary would then list what the different interpretive options are and what effect their acceptance would have in understanding not only the given text at hand but the letter as a whole. This is exactly the approach that we employed in publishing the highly influential volumes produced for the USA national Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue, Peter in the New Testament91 and Mary in the New Testament92. Thus, for example, in discussing the post-resurrectional message to Peter (Mark 16,7) the collaborative team, after having reviewed a questionable alternative interpretation, writes that they “have presented this second interpretation of the scene, not because the task force has judged it highly persuasive, but as an example, lastly, of how much the assessment of Peter’s role in the Marcan Gospel is influenced by one’s overall view of Mark’s theology. The fact that at the moment a great deal of scholarly attention is being focused on Marcan theology, resulting in some very different interpretations, has complicated our task93. Such candor recognizes

90. Published by the Paulist Press.
91. See n. 54 above.
93. BROWN, Peter in the New Testament, p. 73.
divergent understandings while simultaneously recognizing that speculative or ideological readings of the text are not equivalent to reasoned, critical analytical evaluation by a team of scholars.

A collaborative approach involving international scholars representing different faith traditions and different areas of expertise would result in a commentary comprehensive both in terms of content as well as providing an intelligent overview of differing perspectives that would provide, where possible, an evaluation of these differences in both the micro and macro contexts of the document being interpreted. Such a commentary would be far more reader friendly and would provide a great assistance for those who regularly consult commentaries for exegetical insights for teaching and sermon preparation.

One final word about utilization. Given today’s non-collaborative style of commentary writing one is forced to consult many commentaries that are both expensive and have limited shelf-life when one takes into consideration subsequent criticism and correction as well as newly discovered texts, as the finds at Nag Hamadi and the Dead Sea so dramatically reveal. Would it not be possible and far more practical for a collaborative team of Pauline scholars as here envisioned to publish their results in a format that could be periodically updated, whether as a loosely bound hard copy format or one that is computer generated in an ebook format? The advantages of a collaborative commentary published in such a practical and functional format would indeed be a dramatic step forward in terms of the accessibility of competent scholarship and ecclesial usefulness, as well as a positive concern for the environmental.

Perhaps the moment has arrived for this marvelous Abbey of Saint Paul to consider the establishment of an international and ecumenical center for Pauline studies that would foster and guide such collaborative publications related to the Apostle Paul. The process of collaboratively and jointly written commentaries might well be a first step that would enable other groups of scholars to begin work toward a much larger and urgently needed project: the various building blocks requisite for a comprehensive presentation of a Pauline trajectory. I can think of no environment better suited for this task than the Abbey of Saint Paul, a pioneering community living constantly in the remembered presence of the Apostle Paul himself.

CRESCERE NELLA «BELLA PROFESSIONE DI FEDE».
La responsabilità per il vangelo secondo la Prima lettera a Timoteo

LÁSZLÓ T. SIMON

I. Introduzione

«Esporrò la mia lettura in tre tappe, che nel contempo intendono rispondere alle tre seguenti domande: che cosa vediamo, che cosa ne sappiamo, che cosa sospettiamo». È Jan Bialostocki (1921-1988), storico dell’arte di fama internazionale, a promettere questo percorso nella prefazione al suo saggio dedicato ad uno dei dipinti tardivi di Pieter Bruegel il Vecchio (ca. 1525-1569), «La predicazione di Giovanni Battista» (1566, olio su legno, Budapest, Szépművészeti Múzeum [Museo delle Belle Arti]). «In altre parole» — prosegue Bialostocki — «l’analisi tratterà prima il dipinto stesso, poi si parlerà del contesto storico della sua nascita, e infine si presenteranno le varie opinioni concernenti la tavola e i suoi particolari». Tuttavia Bialostocki non tarda ad aggiungere che strada facendo la divisione tripartita dell’analisi si è rivelata insufficiente, poiché prima che la pittura potesse venire adeguatamente letta, era necessario parlare delle fonti scritte della raffigurazione visiva, nonché della tradizione iconografica precedente ad essa; e dall’altro canto, afferma lo storico dell’arte, l’opera in questione doveva inserirsi nell’oeuvre intera di Bruegel il Vecchio.

Pur tenendo quindi conto dell’artificialità della divisione tripartita, mi sono lasciato ispirare al modello proposto da Bialostocki, ed esporrò la mia lettura di 1 Tim in tre tappe, che volendo rispondere alle domande appena menzionate — che cosa vediamo, che cosa ne sappiamo, che cosa sospettiamo — prendono in esame la 1 Tm come strumento, come testimone e come invito. In altre parole, vogliamo scandagliare questo documento del NT quale strumento di crescita e di responsabilità, ovverosia cercheremo di enucleare come lo scritto indirizzato a Timoteo dia forma al desiderio del mittente nel suo volere far crescere il destinatario della lettera. Questo primo approccio osserverà, quindi, il funzionamento del testo; in altri termini, si colloca ad un livello sincronico.

A partire dall’inizio dell’Ottocento la paternità letteraria di Paolo, quale autore delle Lettere Pastorali (d’ora in poi LP), è stata messa in dubbio. Col passare del tempo questa opinione andò rafforzandosi, e cosi oggi circa il novanta per cento degli specialisti le considera come lettere pseudepigraffe, vale a dire ritengono che siano opere del cui autore reale si distingue dall’autore firmatario, nonostante che l’insieme del documento voglia rendere verosimile questa stessa paternità. Diversi fattori hanno contribuito a portare la maggioranza degli esegesi a giungere a questa conclusione: la lingua e lo stile di questi documenti si distaccano dalle altre epistle paoline, i dati biografici di Paolo che emergono da questi tre brevi scritti si rivelano ostici quando si vuole farli quadare con i dettagli biografici del Papa Apostolico ricavabili dai suoi scritti comunemente ritenuti autentici. Inoltre, il profilo degli avversari rimane sfocato, poiché – a differenza di quanto succede negli altri scritti di Paolo – le LP non entrano in discussione sul contenuto del loro insegnamento. Come se non bastasse, anche il linguaggio teologico e l’immagine della Chiesa che si riscontrano in esse si distanziano sia dalle proto-, sia dalle lettere deutero-paoline. Ciononostante le LP si trovano annoverate tra i documenti del Corpus Paulinum. Questa apparente anomala però non può far sparire l’irriducibile discontinuità. Tuttavia, è altrettanto vero che le divergenze continuano ad offrire spunti di continuità con il gruppo delle lettere ritenute autenticamente paoline. La tensione che emerge, potremmo riformularla così: le divergenze rendono testimonianza ad una cresciuta, mentre costituiscono la prova di una responsabilità sia il fatto che anche nella 1 Tm la storia di Paolo si fa memoria presentando l’ammonimento rivolto a Timoteo con l’autorità, sotto l’egida di Paolo, sia il fatto che la lettera è stata inserita nel corpus dei suoi scritti. Con l’indagine affrontata sotto quest’ottica, lo sguardo si volge verso il retroterra del testo volendo delucidarne la genesi.

La terza angolatura, ovvero considerare la 1 Tm come un invito alla crescita e simultaneamente alla responsabilità per il vangelo, comporta che noi stessi – a onta della distanza temporale – ci sentiamo destinatari. Questa lettera, facendo parte del canone neotestamentario è intrisa di una sacralità che la investe con un’autorità, conferendole un potere istituzionalizzato che in seno alla comunità dei credenti viene riconosciuto come legittimo. In altre parole, leggendo la non stiamo sbirciando nella corrispondenza altrui, bensì la interpretiamo come un testo che ci sta coinvolgendo. Questo coinvolgimento però rende necessario un distanziamento, affinché la nostra lettura possa considerarsi un’interpretazione e non meramente uso del testo. Il coinvolgimento e la presa di distanza fanno sì che il valore universale delle affermazioni bibliche rinascia dalla loro contestualizzazione. Riconoscendo il contingente nell’andamento del pensiero della 1 Tm possiamo trovare un approdo per comprendere il metodo dell’autore apostolico. Non è forse una vera e propria inculturazione che viene richiesta a ciascuna generazione che deve forgiare la propria identità? Le tre metafore del nostro percorso – strumento, testimone, invito – corrispondono quindi a tre posizioni in funzione del testo. Guardandolo come strumento ci moviamo nel mondo creato dal testo; considerandolo come testimone, l’attenzione si volge verso quel mondo al quale il testo si riferisce, dal quale si è prodotto; mentre leggendolo come un invito, vogliamo comprendere davanti al testo (P. Ricoeur). Potremmo forse dire che queste tre angolature creano così uno spazio apostolico ampio ed invito. Prima di entrarci, tuttavia, dobbiamo aggiungere un chiarimento. Nella presentazione che segue ci limitiamo a parlare della 1 Tm, mentre di solito si parla dell’LP come se costituisse un’entità ben distinta e nettamente definibile, un corpus che comprende tre documenti del NT: 1-2 Tm e Tit. Potremmo pure eludere il problema nascondendoci dietro un dito e dichiarare che il Colloquium aveva in programma la 1 Tm, quindi anche nella conferenza conclusiva si dovrebbe parlare esclusivamente di questo documento. Questa soluzione però mi risulterebbe una facilitazione fin troppo sbrigativa, tanto inutile quanto ingannevole. Inoltre, soffermarci brevemente sulla questione dell’adeguatezza del consueto raggruppamento potrebbe aprire nuove porte verso la comprensione della 1 Tm.

Anche in commentari recenti si può incontrare una premessa metodologica, secondo la quale le LP possono essere studiate insieme con frutto, poiché condividono la stessa premura pastorale, e sono contrassegnate da una comune prospettiva teologica, cristologica ed etica, la quale si esprime in uno stile caratteristico e con un vocabolario particolare. A questo punto però si solleva la domanda: a chi verrebbe in mente l’idea di interpretare insieme le cosiddette «lettere della prigione», oppure trattare le cosiddette «lettere cattoliche» come un corpus dai confini netti e chiari, in cui le singole lettere si chiarifcono a vicenda?

Mi pare istruttivo accennare brevemente alla storia della stessa designazione «lettere pastorali». Sebbene L. T. Johnson3 faccia risalire questo

3. 1 Tm 4,1-5 sembra piuttosto un’eccezione che conferma la regola. D’ora in avanti quando si tratta di un riferimento alla 1 Tm, si daranno soltanto il numero del capitolo e quello del versetto.
nome fino a San Tommaso d’Aquino, il quale a proposito di 1 Tm afferma che fu scritta come quasi pastoralis regula, e la 2 Tm invece per curam pastoralem ac pastorale officium, in realtà egli predica di circa cinquecento anni il nome che normalmente veniva rintracciato solo all’inizio del Settecento. Nell’esegesi moderna questa designazione sembra essere collegata non soltanto con il loro trattamento quale gruppo compiuto, bensì con la messa in questione della loro autenticità. È stato Schleiermacher nel 1807 a mettere in dubbio la paternità letteraria di Paolo nei confronti di 1 Tm, e poi a partire dallo studio di Eichhorn le «pastorali» sono state trattate da un sempre maggior numero di esegeti come se fossero un gruppo. Un metodo quest’ultimo che con Johnson possiamo considerare infelice e fuorviante, che ha avuto delle conseguenze deleterie per l’interpretazione di questi scritti. Secondo questa impostazione infatti l’unità designata come «lettere pastorali», da un lato viene caratterizzata con i tratti ricavati dalle tre lettere considerandole nel loro insieme, e poi, in un secondo momento applicati alle singole lettere, nonostante che la lettera in questione manchi del tutto di questo tratto. Per esempio, 2 Tm non dice nulla sull’ordine della chiesa e Ti vi dedica appena alcune righe, neppure completamente chiare. L’altro errore metodologico — afferma Johnson — si riscontra quando le caratteristiche del corpus «lettere pastorali» vengono messe a confronto con il concetto altrettanto astratto del «Paolo autentico». Questo procedimento misconosce la varietà irriducibile di quelle lettere la cui autenticità non si mette assolutamente in dubbio. Queste osservazioni di Johnson hanno il loro valore indipendentemente dal fatto che consideriamo questi scritti come autenticamente paolini, oppure come esempi di pseudopigraphia.

II. La 1 Tm come strumento di crescita e di responsabilità

Nella 1 Tm, "Paolo" si rivolge tre volte al destinatario chiamandolo per nome. In 1,2 lo chiamà «Timoteo, legittimo»[6] figlio nella fede».

(Γιωσέφ γνασιος τέκνον ἐν πίστει), in 1,18 di nuovo troviamo «o figlio Timoteo» (τέκνον Τιμόθεου), mentre al momento del congedo si da soltanto il vocativo del nome del destinatario «o Timoteo» (6,20). Non possiamo forse dire che ci troviamo di fronte ad una traiettoria, i cui poli estremi vengono accennati da questi riferimenti al destinatario? Non possiamo forse affermare che siamo davanti a un sottile segnale, il quale può venir percepito come se la lettera prospettasse la possibilità che il destinatario, proprio tramite l’appropriazione capillare dell’esorta- zione apostolica, possa crescere? Così la lettera stessa si presenta come monumento di questa esortazione apostolica: un monumento aere perennius. Timoteo però non viene raffigurato nella relazione padre-figlio in rapporto con “Paolo” — malgrado che in molte traduzioni vediamo intrufolarsi il pronom possessivo ‘mio’ nel saluto iniziale della lettera — e nemmeno viene presentato come discepolo di “Paolo”, bensì piuttosto come depositario della sua esortazione. «Come ti esortai quando andai in Macedonia, rimani in Efeso per ordinare ad alcuni di non insegnare dottrine diverse» (1,3). Paolo non aveva discepoli, ma collaboratori[13]. Dalla lettera veniamo a sapere che Timoteo quale rappresentante e depositario dell’esortazione apostolica è ancora giovane; deve ancora forgiarsi la propria autorevolezza: «Nessuno disprezza la tua giovinezza» (4,12). Timoteo quindi deve trovare il suo posto di autorità tra le varie generazioni presenti nella comunità ecclesiale di Efeso. Anzi, deve diventare modello, come prosegue il medesimo versetto: «Divinci esempio ai fedeli nella parola, nella condotta, nell’amore, nello Spirito, nella fede e nella castità». L’insenamento di “Paolo”, sia quello di una volta sia quello impartito nella lettera, hanno di mira questa crescita. Timoteo quale rappresentante di una nuova generazione cristiana diventa depositario della tradizione apostolica: dunque è figlio anche se “Paolo” non si erge come «padre» nei suoi confronti, lasciando il posto a Dio (cf. 1,2).


8. JOHNSON, The First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 15.
9. JOHNSON, The First and Second Letters to Timothy, pp. 635ss.
10. JOHNSON, The First and Second Letters to Timothy, p. 64.
11. D’ora in avanti “Paolo” si riferisce al personaggio pseudopigraphico quale mittente delle LP.
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Timoteo non deve tuttavia incorrinciare dal nulla: «Esponendo queste cose ai fratelli, tu sarai un buon servitore di Cristo Gesù, nutrito con le parole della fede e della buona dottrina che hai imparato» (4,6). In altre parole, si profila un passato condiviso da “Paolo” e dal destinatario: la formazione di Timoteo da parte dell’Apostolo. L’esortazione abbraccia quindi il passato e il presente, e si rivela così che il metodo fondamentale di Paolo dovrebbe essere riconoscibile nel desiderio di Timoteo.

L’autorità legittima di Timoteo si trova corroborata non soltanto in virtù del suo legame con “Paolo”, bensì anche a forza di due altri fattori: il carisma a lui conferito e la bella professione di fede fatta da lui stesso. Il termine καλός, che si presenta nelle LP con una frequenza notevolmente maggiore che in qualsiasi altro documento del NT, mantiene il significato consono che ha nel Nuovo Testamento. Esprime la qualità di una cosa o di una persona che risponde pienamente alla sua funzione. Abbiamo così «una buona terra» (Mt 13,8); un «buon albero» che porta «buoni frutti» (Mt 7,17,5; il «vino buono» (Gv 2,10); le «opere buone» (Gv 10,32); un «buon amministratore» (1Pt 4,10), “Paolo” esortando Timoteo sottolinea due aspetti decisivi della vita che scaturisce dalla fede: ne segnala l’inizio solenne (χαϊ καλή ὀμολογία, la bella confessione) e l’articolarsi costante, scegliendo un’immagine cara alla letteratura ellenistica, il combattimento (ὑπόν). In altri termini, Timoteo deve far florire tutte le sue qualità. Queste qualità hanno la loro base nel cammino di fede del destinatario delle parole apostoliche. Per il mittemente i momenti salienti di questo cammino possono essere colti e caratterizzati con l’aggettivo καλός.

A differenza delle sue epistle comunemente ritenute autentiche, nella 1 Tm “Paolo” non interviene direttamente per risolvere i nodi destabilizzanti della chiesa di Efeso. Sarà Timoteo ad adempiere questo compito. Dovrà farlo quale rappresentante legittimo dell’insegnamento paulino. Il compito del destinatario dunque non è quello dell’episcopos,

15 1,3: «Come ti esortai quando andai in Macedonia, rimani in Efeso per ordinare ad alcuni di non insegnare dottrine diverse»; 2,1: «Ti esorto dunque prima d’ogni cosa, che si facciano suppellettili, preghe, intercessioni e ringraziamenti per tutti gli uomini».

16 5,1: «Non riprendere aspramente un anziano, ma esso, come un padre e i più giovani come fratelli»; 6,2: «Insegnare queste cose ed esorta a praticare»; 4,13: «Applicati alla lettura, all’esortazione e all’insegnamento, finsché io venga».

17 4,14: «Non trascurare il dono (χαϊρετικος) che in te ti è stato dato per profezia, con l'imposizione delle mani da parte del collegio degli anziani».

16 18: 6,12: «Combatti il bel (καλόν) battutamento della fede, afferma la vita eterna, alla quale sei stato chiamato e per cui hai fatto la bella (καλή) confessione di fede davanti a molti testimoni». al quale, del resto, la lettera dedica un celebre paragrafo, bensì quello dell’δύναμις ὀλοκληρωτικής (2 Tm 4,5). Proprio per questo Timoteo deve «rimanere fermamente» (1,3). L’assenza di “Paolo” in questo caso sembra procrastinarsi (3,14s). A causa di quest’assenza “Paolo” lascia per iscritto come Timoteo deve comportarsi nella casa di Dio, «la quale è chiesa del Dio vivente, colonna e sostegno della verità». L’ordine dunque è la parola d’ordine per colui che scrive. Nella chiesa di Efeso sono presenti e vengono presentati con insolita accuratezza varie generazioni e diversi strati della società, nonché componenti specifici di una comunità ecclesiale ben strutturata, organizzata con rimarchevole chiarezza e notevole trasparenza. In questa fitta rete di legami e di relazioni ciascuno deve trovare un posto, ciascuno deve trovare il proprio posto. L’organizzazione ecclesiastica, il comportamento adeguato dei ministri e dei diversi gruppi della comunità, nonché il mantenimento del solo insegnamento articolano la risposta alla minaccia dei devianti.

Il perseverare di Timoteo ad Efeso deve prendere corpo in una «decisa posizione nei confronti di certuni perché non propinino insegnamenti diversi» (1,3).

Rimane difficile identificare il contenuto di questa contesta. Si cristallizzano due atteggiamenti, potremmo forse chiamarli modi che condizionano il comportamento delle parti in causa. Gli atteggiamenti opposti si caratterizzano in una maniera molto sommaria: da un lato come «favole e genealogie interminabili», e dall’altro come il «progetto del Dio». Entrambe le parti vogliono quindi rintracciare la possibilità di raggiungere Dio, raggiungere l’Assoluto. Nonostante i numerosi riferimenti agli avversari, il loro volto rimane sfocato. Come dicevamo, il mittemente non entra in discussione con le argomentazioni degli avversari. Può farne a meno, perché rivolgendosi a Timoteo può presupporre la conoscenza degli oppositori da parte di quest’ultimo. Questa situazione delle enunciazioni, inoltre, fa sì che l’autore possa servirsi di un linguaggio già codificato, in cui il conflitto si esprime in formule come «dottrina diversa» (1,3), «dottrina sana» (1,10; 6,3), «favole o chiacchiere profane» (4,7), «discorsi senza senso» (1,6). Il riferimento a questi falsi dottori della Legge (cf. 1,7) lascia intravedere che verosimilmente si trattasse di un gruppo di cristiani di stampa giudaizzante, con un marcato aspetto ascetico: «proibisco di sposare, esigono che si ci astenga da cibi che Dio ha creato» (4,3). Poi l’autore soggiunge: «Ogni cosa infatti che è stata creata da Dio è buona e nulla va scartato qualora venga preso con animo grato» (4,4). Ciò che colpisce nell’argomentazione in questo contesto è che tutta la questione dell’aspetto delia definita
venga esplicitamente collegata con il tema della creazione.19. Respinto
gendo «le favole e le genealogie interminabili» (1,4), l’autore mette in
rilievo che il «progetto di Dio nella fede» (1,4) non richiede un risalire
– tramite genealogie – fino alla sorgente dell’esistenza, perché il progetto
di Dio raggiunge ogni individuo nell’esperienza della propria creata-
bilità. Questa è la ragione per la quale l’autore respinge l’ascetismo degli
avversari, e a partire da questa convinzione si spiega anche perché Timo-
teo deve insistere affinché le vedove giovani si risposino (5,11ss), come
pure partendo da qui possiamo comprendere perché Timoteo deve abban-
donare la pratica ascetica di bere solo acqua (5,23).

Tuttavia il corpo quale luogo dell’esperienza di creaturalità s’insinua
sullo sfondo di un altro orizzonte: la manifestazione del mistero della
religione nella carne. Secondo la visione dell’autore, la vita della chiesa
deve svolgersi e svilupparsi tra le due manifestazioni di Gesù: quella
nella carne (3,16; 6,13) e quella alla fine dei tempi (6,14). Il compito di
Timoteo, quale depositario dell’autorità di “Paolo”, è sorvegliare affin-
ché la comunità dei credenti ad Efeso sia il luogo dove si possa fare
esperienza di questa manifestazione. Siccome si tratta di un’esperienza,
la fine dei tempi – alla stregua dell’inizio (la creazione) – deve toccare
e coinvolgere Timoteo: «Ma tu, o uomo di Dio, fuggi queste cose [si
tratta innanzitutto della bramosia del denaro che viene bollata come “la
radice di tutti i mali”, v. 10] e procaccia la giustizia, la pietà, la fede,
l’amore, la pazienza e la mansuetudine. Combatti il buon combattimento
della fede, afferra la vita eterna» (6,11s). “Paolo” non sta profilando una
seguenza su cosa debba fare il destinatario del suo scritto: fuggire prima,
cercare dopo, quindi combattere ed infine afferrare la vita eterna. Al
contrario, l’afferrare la vita eterna presuppone e comporta piuttosto la
fuga, la ricerca e il combattimento.

III. La 1 Tm come testimone di crescita e di responsabilità

Le LP non sono l’unica fonte per conoscere Timoteo. Mentre sulla
figura di Tito cala un totale silenzio negli At, il secondo tomo dell’opus

19. Secondo B. DEHANSSCHUTTER (The history-of-religions background of 1 Timothy
4:4: “Everything that God has created is good”, in G. H. VAN Kooten, ed., The creation of
heaven and earth. Re-interpretations of Genesis 1 in the context of Judaism, ancient philo-
sophy, Christianity, and modern physics [Themes in biblical narrative. Jewish and Christian
traditions 8], Leiden, Brill, 2005, 211-221, p. 216) si tratta di un tipo di protostigmatico
(early gnosticism).

pp. 167-170.
L'intenzione dell'autore. La proposta di K. Aland appare assomigliare a quella di Speyer. Aland, da parte sua, tratta insieme le opere anonime e gli scritti pseudonimi del NT, e vede in essi lo sviluppo necessario quando la trasmissione orale ha ceduto il posto allo scritto. Gli autori non avendo pubblicato le loro opere con i loro propri nomi volevano rendere evidente che tutto ciò che avevano scritto era frutto dello Spirito, del quale si consideravano i portavoce. Secondo Aland, non sono la pseudonimia o l'anonimia che dovrebbero destare stupore, bensì il contrario, ossia quando le opere portano il nome del loro vero autore. D. G. Meade in un certo senso si muove sulla scia dell'ipotesi di una scuola paolina, ed è del parere che la pseudopigrafia sia una forma di attualizzazione della tradizione. Vista in questa ottica la pseudopigrafia neotestamentaria si inserisce nelle grandi tradizioni profetiche, sapientiali e apocalittiche dell'AT. Murphy-O'Connor nella sua magistrale biografia di Paolo afferma che trattando le LP dobbiamo distinguere tra 1 Tm e Ti da un lato e 2 Tm dall'altro. Egli considera 2 Tm come autentico scritto di Paolo affermando che: «Realistamente, l'unico quadro in grado di spiegare l'accoglienza delle pastorali è l'autenticità di una delle tre lettere. Se una fosse stata da tempo conosciuta e accolta, allora la “scoperta” ritardata delle altre due, con lo stesso schema generale, poteva essere spiegata in vari contesti. La domanda che secondo questi orientamenti non è stata mai sollevata con la soluzione che la LP è di Timoteo, infatti era presente in Timoteo anche in Timoteo. Negli anni 80 e 90 si sarebbe un Timoteo avanti nell'età che, prima di morire, vuole salvare dall'oblio i ricordi dei circa 20 anni trascorsi alla scuola dell'Apostolo».  

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Questa ipotesi, pur essendo accattivante, non si sottraggono alle critiche e alle difficoltà sollevate prima, risultato dell’esegesi avviata a partire dai primi anni dell’Ottocento. In tutte le spiegazioni finora menzionate troviamo un denominatore comune. Nessuna di esse tratta la pseudopigrafia come procedimento letterario (procédé littéraire). Questo invece è lo scopo di Burnet32. Questi prendendo lo spunto dall’affermazione di Murphy-O’Connor, secondo cui «sembra impossibile che 2 Tm possa essere un testo dello stesso autore di 1 Tm e Tt», dichiara che si può andare ancora più lontano e dimostrare che gli autori di questi due gruppi non soltanto rappresentano una teologia diversa, bensì adoperano diverse strategie enunciatve (stratégies énonciatives)33, ovvero sia 2 Tm utilizzando la Vergegenwärtigung vuole attualizzare per la seconda generazione cristiana il processo totale della comunicazione: l’autorità non viene tanto dalla figura che pronuncia le parole, bensì dalla parousia apostolica che avviene tramite la comunicazione stessa. In questo caso solo “Paolo” viene presentato come un modello da seguire, Timoteo no. Nei soteri una diversa invece il procedimento letterario è improntato dal l’anacronismo; enunciazioni attuali vengono attribuite a personaggi del passato, affinché possano prestare loro autorità. Qui entrambi i destinatari devono agire in modo che possano essere modelli 34. (cf. 1 Tm 4,12-15; Ti 2,7) verosimilmente per la terza o quarta generazione cristiana. Questi due processi di pseudopigrafia presuppongono la coscienza del tempo che passa: l’epoca della questione del trasferimento dell’autorità ha lasciato il posto alla questione della legittimità dei successori, i quali si presentano come modelli da seguire.

L’autore pseudopigrafico servendosi della lettera come mezzo di comunicazione e prendendo Timoteo (e Tito), eminenti delegati e collaboratori di Paolo, dà forma concreta alla responsabilità con cui ci si deve misurare di fronte alla cresciuta delle chiese locali, in cui la figura dei fondatori ormai diviene storia, e le generazioni dell’indomani ne devono fare memoria e trarne autorità e legitimazione. L’autore – per quanto riguarda la scelta di Timoteo quale destinatario e depositario dell’autorità apostolica – poteva trovare un punto d’appiglio per questo nella 1Cor 4,16-17: «Vi esorto dunque a divenire miei imitatori. Per questa ragione vi ho mandato Timoteo, che è mio figlio diletto e fedele nel Signore, che vi ricorderà quali sono le mie vie in Cristo e come insegnò dappertutto in ogni chiesa». Timoteo da delegato e collaboratore fidato dell’Apostolo

32. BURNET, La pseudépigraphie, Io, Épître.
33. BURNET, Épître, p. 238.
34. F. VOGUA, Uma teologia do Nuevo Testamento (Coleção Ágora 12), Estella, Verbo Divino, 2002, pp. 185ss.

conto che il cristianesimo deve misurarsi con la storia, col passare del tempo. In altri termini, il cristianesimo che vediamo emerge qui è una realtà che prende coscienza della propria temporalità. Per questo motivo diventa importante lo strumento istituzionale (la figura dell’episcopos, i presbiteri, i diaconi, le vedove – 3,1-13; 5,3-25). Il ripetuto riferimento alla pratica della religione (εὐσκῆφεται) sembra avere la stessa funzione. Inoltre, la 1 Tm vuole presentare il cristianesimo come una condotta rispettabile per quelli di fuori, per gli outsider. Il contenuto della fede deve sboccare in un addestramento della pietà (εὐσκῆφεται/πιέτας)\(^{35}\): buona condotta di fede, di amore, di purezza (cf. 4,12). Questo atteggiamento da un lato vuole aprire uno sbocco applicativo della missione della chiesa in una società non cristiana, e dall’altro intende aiutarla a forgiare la propria identità.

Come nel caso della fede, dove il suo contenuto chiaramente circoscivibile e la trasmissione fedele di un tale contenuto diventano importanti, anche per quanto concerne la verità si intravede qualcosa di simile. Nelle LP possiamo, infatti, costatare uno sottileamento verso l’oggettività del contenuto del vangelo e della verità. Quest’ultimo s’identifica con la formulazione della tradizione apostolica, mediata, anzi esclusivamente rappresentata da “Paolo”. Anche l’immagine della chiesa è caratterizzata da questa oggettività: la chiesa si da, secondo 3,15 come «colonna e fondamento della verità». Mentre nella prima generazione il meccanismosmo era del tutto normale nei confronti dei ministri, per 1 Tm diventa un’eccezione (cf. 5,17-18). I ministri tra di loro stratificati sono rimuovi rati. È istruttivo notare che questo cambiamento non sfocia in un irrebutismo clericale, bensì favorisce la democratizzazione dei ruoli\(^{36}\). Mentre nella Lettera ai Filippi così gli eserpici figurano come un gruppo (cf. Fil 1,1), nelle LP l’episcopos è sempre al singolare. Timoteo stesso però sta al di sopra di questa struttura ben stratificata: egli è εὐσκῆφεται (2 Tm 4,5), ovverossia colui che continua l’opera dell’apostolo Paolo, lavorando insieme con l’episcopo (cf. 3,1-7), con i diaconi (cf. 3,8-13), con le vedove (cf. 3,5-16) e con i presbiteri (cf. 5,17-21). La distinzione tra ministi e credenti in generale, che si intravede già nella Lettera agli Efesini, per le LP sembra essere ormai un dato di fatto. Si delinea tuttavia un altro contrasto con i credenti da un lato, i quali «approfondiscono la conoscenza della verità» (4,3) e quelli che hanno «un insegnamento diverso» (6,3), «lontano dalla verità» (6,5), i quali aderiscono a «spiriti ingannatori e a insegnamenti demoniaci» (4,1-9). La verità dunque si da in quanto «sana dottrina» (1,10), circoscivibile come «buon deposito» (6,20) che Timoteo deve abilmente gestire e trasmettere con una fedeltà creativa.

IV. La 1 Tm come invito alla crescita e alla responsabilità

«La voce è la voce di Giacobbe, ma le braccia sono le braccia di Esau» (Gen 27,22). Le parole di Isacco riassumono bene i mixed feelings che le LP hanno destato e continuano a destare negli interpreti corredati con l’arsenale del metodo storico-critico. Tuttavia, indipendentemente dal fatto se siano opere autentiche di Paolo o scritti pseudopepigrapi, la ricerca sulle LP palesa che la conoscenza storica deve rimanere necessariamente ipotetica. La spiccata sensibilità per il falso letterario presente nell’antichità rende più che verosimile che doveva esserci un qualche legame che poteva legittimare il forte richiamo all’eredità paolina che troviamo in questi scritti. Come nel caso dei vangeli la cornice narrativa sembra esser stato uno di fattori decisivi per il riconoscimento di uno scritto come normativo per la presentazione di Gesù di Nazaret, così per le LP la conservazione della forma di comunicazione – la lettera – pare aver assicurato, insieme con la figura dei destinatari, la permanenza di Paolo. Inoltre, già nella flessibilità di cui Paolo diede un’ampia testimonianza negli scritti autentici, risultava essere stato non di rado sconcentrante per i suoi contemporanei, e proprio a causa di questa sua flessibilità poteva facilmente essere bollato come un incostante (cf. 1 Cor 9, 19-23; Gal 1,10).

Dobbiamo quindi interpretare la pseudepigrafia innanzitutto come una reazione alla morte dei personaggi fondatori. Questa reazione anelava per una risposta sul come poteva, e doveva rimanere viva la voce di quei fondatori. Questo anelito si vede presto costretto a rendersi conto della realtà socio-politica dell’ambiente. La 1 Tm rende chiaro questa presa di coscienza. L’autore della 1 Tm è ben consapevole che la società in cui il destinatario deve orientarsi e orientare la comunità ecclesiale non è una società cristiana. Riconoscendone però i valori, quali ad esempio la εὐσκῆφεται, vuole far conoscere il vangelo. Questa presa di coscienza di una società non cristiana forse può essere utile nel confrontarci con una società che non di rado viene etichettata come post-cristiana. Assorbendo

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36. VOOGA, Una teologia, p. 192.
38. F. VOOGA, Una teologia, p. 396.
alcuni valori della società non vuole significare lasciarsi assorbire da essa. Per cui 1 Tm mette in rilievo l’importanza sia della compattezza della fede, sia la compattezza della comunità ecclesiale. Il suo contatto con la società però non si esaurisce in un modello bipolare insider – outsider. Tutto deve articolarsi in una relazione triangolare: noi – Dio – gli altri, lo stesso modello che contrassegna, diremmo deve contrassegnare, qualsiasi rapporto intraccenclesiale, come palese già il saluto delle lettere paoline, dove l’Apostolo trasforma il rapporto bipolare tra mittente e destinatario in una benedizione. Gli ammonimenti di 1 Tm talvolta possono destare l’impressione di essere troppo terra terra. Non dobbiamo però dimenticare che il comportamento viene sempre ricondotto al mistero, e il vangelo non viene presentato mai come una raccolta di norme beni come il «vangelo della gloria».

Possiamo dunque riepilogare così: la 1 Tm vuol creare uno spazio dove il credente deve esercitare la propria responsabilità in un’esistenza radicata nella fede. Per creare questo spazio, affinché lo spazio rimanga vivibile, deve creare dei limiti. Proprio tramite questi limiti che talvolta risultano inquietanti – ad esempio il trattamento delle donne nella struttura ecclesiastica – la lettera rimane un testimone fedele del suo contesto vitale. Dobbiamo però essere consapevoli che i suoi limiti non sono i nostri, poiché la 1 Tm ci raggiruglie tramite un altro spazio, quello del canone del NT. Un ulteriore testimone di crescita e di responsabilità: «Negare il tempo e considerarlo come un luogo di degenerazione o di attentato alla verità significa negare colui che conduce alla pienezza della verità, lo Spirito, e togliere legittimità a colei che riceve, dice e garantisce questa verità, vale a dire la chiesa» (P. Gibert80). Che la 1 Tm costituisca uno stimolante e affascinante invito alla crescita e alla responsabilità, questo Colloquio ne è stato una prova. Altrettanto stimolante e affascinante.

39. 1,11 cf. 2 Tm 1,8; 10; 2,8.

Abstract

Inspired by an acute and didactically pertinent observation provided by an art historian in his interpretation of a famous painting of Bruegel, the present paper, which is a slightly modified version of the public lecture given at the end of the 19th Colloquium Oecumenicum Paulinum, aims at answering the three following questions applied to 1 Timothy: what can we see, what do we know, and what do we guess? Along the interpretative lines indicated by these questions three metaphors are proposed as heuristic keys for the reading of this late document of the New Testament. First, 1 Timothy is considered as an instrument of growth and of responsibility; second, it is read as a witness to growth and to responsibility; and, third, it is viewed as an invitation to growth and to responsibility. So, a first synchronic reading is given in order to see how 1 Timothy articulates the sender’s desire to help the addressee to grow and to face all the challenges that his office must deal with. The canonical place of 1 Timothy, on the one hand, and the massive bulk of erudition concerning its historical relation to the authentic Pauline letters, on the other, set the reader in a peculiar situation, namely, between signals of continuity with the Corpus Paulinum and an irreducible discontinuity with the authentic Pauline heritage. The differences, however, can also be regarded as a witness to an organic development. Whereas the fact that it is Paul’s story which is being elaborated into an authoritative admonition to Timothy, and the fact that the letter was inserted in the Pauline corpus can be viewed as proofs of a responsibility for a new generation which is fully aware of the chronological distance that separates it from the founders. So, this second reading intends to shed light on the formation of 1 Timothy. Last but not least, one can read 1 Timothy as an invitation to growth and responsibility; to do so will highlight its pragmatic dimension, and will allow it to be viewed as a text directly addressed to the present day reader. At this point, however, one has to discover that in order to grow in responsibility toward the Gospel, which is one of the most important concerns of this letter, and in order to come to terms with the ambivalent feelings some passages in 1 Timothy may trigger, one has to realize that the space in which 1 Timothy wanted to make the addressee grow is not the limited space in which we are meant to grow. Our responsibility for the Gospel has to articulate itself within the broader space provided by the New Testament canon and the living community of the Church.