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978-0-521-07307-3 - From Hope to Despair in Thessalonica: Situating 1 and 2
Thessalonians

Colin R. Nicholl

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PART ONE

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In this book we shall examine the situations underlying the Thessalonian correspondence with a view to determining points of continuity and discontinuity and whether a plausible course of development between these situations can or cannot be deduced. Our special concern is the eschatological problems assumed by these letters.

The necessity of such an analysis comes into relief when we consider the critical problems relating to 2 Thessalonians that have repeatedly surfaced in the literature of the last two hundred years, and the breakdown of the scholarly consensus regarding the nature of the problems addressed in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. We shall examine each of these in turn.

The need for the study

Four critical problems concerning 2 Thessalonians

There are essentially *four* primary problems concerning 2 Thessalonians which have given rise to hypotheses of pseudonymity (and a plethora of other theories for relating 2 Thessalonians to 1 Thessalonians): (1) the unprecedentedly extensive literary parallels between 2 and 1 Thessalonians;¹ (2) the perceived contradiction between the eschatology of the second letter and the first, specifically between premonitory

¹ See especially W. Wrede, *Die Echtheit des zweiten Thessalonicherbriefs untersucht* (TU; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1903), 3–36; W. Trilling, *Untersuchungen zum zweiten Thessalonicherbrief* (Leipzig: St Benno, 1972), 16–19; F. Laub, *Eschatologische Verkündigung und Lebensgestaltung nach Paulus* (BU; Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1973), 96–110, 152–5; J. A. Bailey, ‘Who Wrote II Thessalonians?’, *NTS* 25 (1978–9): 132–6; R. F. Collins, *Letters that Paul did not Write* (GNS; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988), 218–21; M. J. J. Menken, *2 Thessalonians: Facing the End with Sobriety* (NTR; London: Routledge, 1994), 36–40; E. J. Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians* (SP; Collegeville: Michael Glazier, 1995), 20–2; S. Légasse, *Les Épîtres de Paul aux Thessaloniens* (LD; Paris: Cerf, 1999), 348–9.

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signs in 2 Thessalonians and imminence/suddenness in 1 Thessalonians;² (3) the difficulty of interpreting 2 Thess. 2:2 and 3:17;³ (4) the difference in tone between 2 and 1 Thessalonians, as suggested by the addition of *ὀφείλομεν* to the expressions of thanks in 2 Thess. 1:3 and 2:13, together with 2 Thessalonians' lack of personal remarks like those of 1 Thess. 2:1–3:10, and its perceived greater stress on authority.⁴

An initial examination of each of these problems highlights the significance of this study for their satisfactory resolution.

The problem of the literary affinities

To explain the literary parallels, seven main theories have been propounded: (1) while 1 Thessalonians is authentic,⁵ 2 Thessalonians is pseudonymous;⁶ (2) Paul kept a copy of 1 Thessalonians, which became the basis for 2 Thessalonians;⁷ (3) the period separating the letters was so brief that 1 Thessalonians was still fresh in Paul's mind when he penned 2 Thessalonians;⁸ (4) Paul had formed particular ways of thinking and

² While Wrede, *Echtheit*, 43–6 believed that the eschatology is a hint of (not an independent argument for) inauthenticity, but only after the case for pseudonymity has been established on other grounds (i.e. the literary parallels and 2 Thess. 2:2 and 3:17), most proponents of pseudonymity, including G. Hollmann, 'Die Unechtheit des zweiten Thessalonicherbriefes', *ZNW* 5 (1904): 29–38; C. Masson, *Les Deux Épîtres de Saint Paul aux Thessaloniens* (CNT; Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1957), 10–11; Laub, *Verkündigung*, 96–119, 147–50; G. Krodel, '2 Thessalonians', in *Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, the Pastoral Epistles* (ed. G. Krodel; PC; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), 75–7 and Bailey, 'Who?', 136–7 have insisted that the eschatology constitutes an important independent argument for inauthenticity.

³ *Inter alios* Wrede, *Echtheit*, 54–61; Hollmann, 'Unechtheit', 38; Bailey, 'Who?', 138; Collins, *Letters*, 223–4; Menken, *Thessalonians*, 33–6; Légasse, *Thessaloniens*, 352–3.

⁴ Wrede, *Echtheit*, 74–6; Hollmann, 'Unechtheit', 38; Trilling, *Untersuchungen*, 63–4; Bailey, 'Who?', 137–8; Collins, *Letters*, 222–3; Menken, *Thessalonians*, 30–1; Richard, *Thessalonians*, 23–4; Légasse, *Thessaloniens*, 349.

⁵ That 1 Thessalonians is authentic is accepted by virtually all contemporary scholars.

⁶ So *inter alios* A. Hilgenfeld, 'Die beiden Briefe an die Thessalonicher nach Inhalt und Ursprung', *ZWT* 5 (1862): 249–52; Wrede, *Echtheit*; Hollmann, 'Unechtheit'; Trilling, *Untersuchungen* and *Der zweite Brief an die Thessalonicher* (EKKNT; Zurich: Benzinger; Neukirchen-Vlujn: Neukirchener, 1980); Laub, *Verkündigung*, 149–57; A. Lindemann, 'Zum Abfassungszweck des zweiten Thessalonicherbriefes', *ZNW* 68 (1977): 35–47; Bailey, 'Who?'; Collins, *Letters*; G. S. Holland, *The Tradition that You Received from Us* (HUT; Tübingen: Mohr, 1988); F. W. Hughes, *Early Christian Rhetoric and 2 Thessalonians* (JSNTSup; Sheffield: JSOT, 1989); G. Krodel, '2 Thessalonians', in *The Deutero-Pauline Letters* (ed. G. Krodel; PC; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 56–7; Menken, *Thessalonians*; Richard, *Thessalonians*; G. Lüdemann, *Heretics* (trans. J. Bowden; London: SCM, 1996), 108–19; Légasse, *Thessaloniens*, 347–56.

⁷ T. Zahn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (2nd edn; 3 vols.; Leipzig: Deichert, 1900), I: 161–74.

⁸ J. Graafen, *Die Echtheit des zweiten Thessalonicherbriefes* (NTAbh; Münster: Aschendorff, 1930), 50.

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feeling about his converts, and these paradigms remained frozen from 1 to 2 Thessalonians;⁹ (5) Paul was employing stock words and phrases in both;¹⁰ (6) 1 and 2 Thessalonians were written within a very short period of time, addressed to different sections of the same community, whether 1 Thessalonians to Gentile believers and 2 Thessalonians to Jewish believers,¹¹ or 1 Thessalonians to a 'special circle of the church' and 2 Thessalonians to the entire community;¹² (7) the situations addressed in the letters were similar.¹³

Option (1) is fast becoming the most popular explanation of the literary parallels.¹⁴ However, we should be cautious about uncritically jumping through this particular escape hatch. For, closely scrutinised, the pseudonymous view is seen to be more vulnerable than most of its advocates concede. Two criticisms suffice to make this point: (a) Rigaux summarises succinctly the problem posed by the reference to the temple in 2 Thess. 2:4: 'un faussaire, après la destruction du temple aurait évité tout traite qui aurait pu mettre ses prédictions en contradiction avec la réalité de la destruction du temple' ('A forger, after the temple's destruction, would have avoided every trace which could have put his predictions in contradiction with the reality of the temple's destruction').¹⁵ (b) The

⁹ W. Bornemann, *Die Thessalonicherbriefe* (KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1894), 460–3.

¹⁰ E. J. Bicknell, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (WC; London: Methuen, 1932), xxx.

¹¹ A. von Harnack, 'Das Problem des 2. Thessalonicherbriefes', *SPAW* 31 (1910): 560–78.

¹² M. Dibelius, *An die Thessalonicher I, II* (HNT; Tübingen: Mohr, 1937), 57–8. A number of scholars have proposed that 1 and 2 Thessalonians were addressed to different cities. E. Schweizer, 'Der zweite Thessalonicherbrief ein Philipperbrief?', *TZ* 1 (1945): 90–105 suggested that 2 Thessalonians was written to the Philippians, on the basis of Polycarp's attribution of the citation from 2 Thess. 1:4 to a letter to the Philippians (Pol. *Phil.* 11:3). However, the lack of text-critical evidence for such an address remains a serious objection (E. Best, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (2nd edn; BNTC; London: A. & C. Black, 1986), 41). This criticism holds true also for the proposal of M. Goguel, 'L'Enigme de la seconde épître aux Thessaloniciens', *RHR* 71 (1915): 248–72, that 2 Thessalonians was originally sent to Berea.

¹³ A. Jülicher, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (trans. J. P. Ward; London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1904), 62–3.

¹⁴ This is largely due to the important studies of Wrede, *Echtheit* and Trilling, *Untersuchungen*.

¹⁵ B. Rigaux, *Saint Paul: Les Épîtres aux Thessaloniciens* (EBib; Paris: Gabalda, 1956), 145. *Contra* Wrede, *Echtheit*, 112–13, it is implausible that an author writing after 70, drawing on a pre-70 tradition, might have avoided thinking of the serious problem posed by the destruction of the Jerusalem temple. Most proponents of pseudonymity conclude that the 'taking his seat in the temple of God' is a *metaphor* rooted in the OT. See chapter 5 for a consideration of this position. Note that M. Hengel, *Studies in the Gospel of Mark* (London: SCM, 1985), 131 n. 115 opts for a pre-70 date on the grounds that the *ναός* must be the Jerusalem temple.

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lack of consensus regarding a date¹⁶ and destination for the pseudonymous letter reflects a dilemma for this position: on the one hand, the date needs to be early enough for the letter to have been accepted as Pauline and included in the Pauline collection, and moreover to accommodate plausibly the reference to 2 Thess. 1:4 and 3:15 in Pol. *Phil.* 11:3 and 4 respectively (c. 107–17).¹⁷ On the other hand, the date and destination need to be such that the author could be confident that no contemporary of 1 Thessalonians (especially no member of the original Thessalonian community) who might have known that Paul had dispatched only one letter to the Thessalonians could have exposed 2 Thessalonians as a rather deceptive forgery (note especially 2 Thess. 3:17). Whether a date and a destination exist which avoid these pitfalls has yet to be demonstrated. With regard to destination, Asia Minor certainly seems an implausible candidate,¹⁸ since, given the communications between it and Macedonia, a pseudonymous author could hardly have been confident that his work would not have been exposed as inauthentic.

Whether 2 Thessalonians is pseudonymous has not been settled, and so we must give careful attention to the Pauline alternatives. Regarding

¹⁶ Proponents of pseudonymity have suggested various dates for 2 Thessalonians: Wrede, *Echtheit*, 91–5, between 100 and 110; Lindemann, 'Abfassungszweck', 44, the close of the first century; Bailey, 'Who?', 143 and C. H. Giblin, '2 Thessalonians', in *NJBC* (ed. R. E. Brown, J. A. Fitzmyer and R. E. Murphy; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990; henceforth '2 Thessalonians'), 872, the last decade of the first century; W. Trilling, 'Literarische Paulusimitation im 2. Thessalonicherbrief', in *Paulus in den neutestamentlichen Spätschriften* (ed. K. Kertelge; QD; Freiburg: Herder, 1981), 154 (and his *Zweite Brief*, 28) and Menken, *Thessalonians*, 66, between 80 and the early part of the second century; L. Hartman, 'The Eschatology of 2 Thessalonians as Included in a Communication', in *TC* (ed. R. F. Collins; BETL; Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1990), 484, the late 70s, 'during the time, say, between Nero and Domitian'; W. Marxsen, *Introduction to the New Testament* (trans. G. Buswell; Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), 44, shortly after 70; F. H. Kern, 'Über 2 Thess 2, 1–12. Nebst Andeutungen über den Ursprung des 2. Briefs an die Thessalonicher', *TZT* 2 (1839): 200, between 68 and 70; and Hengel, *Mark.*, 131 n. 115, between 62 and 70.

¹⁷ Laub, *Verkündigung*, 157 and H. Braun, 'Zur nachpaulinischen Herkunft des zweiten Thessalonicherbriefes', *ZNW* 44 (1952–3): 156 acknowledged that Polycarp's *Phil.* 11:3 almost certainly alludes to 2 Thess. 1:4. However, J. Gnilka, *Der Philipperbrief* (HTKNT; Freiburg: Herder, 1968), 5–11; Trilling, *Untersuchungen*, 33 n. 69 and Holland, *Tradition*, 130 do not defer to the weight of the evidence, and consequently are forced to conclude that Polycarp is referring to a second Pauline letter to the Philippians. The extensive parallelism in such a confined space and the uncommon nature of the wording, combined with the abundance of references to the Pauline corpus in Polycarp, strongly suggest that he is here echoing 2 Thess. 1:4 and 3:15. The dating of Polycarp's letter is evident from 1:1 and 13:2: it must be very soon after Ignatius' death. The evidence from the Muratorian canon, Marcion's collection and the early versions also suggests that 2 Thessalonians was known and accepted as Pauline in the second century.

¹⁸ *Pace inter alios* Trilling, *Zweite Brief*, 28; Giblin, '2 Thessalonians', 872; M. J. J. Menken, 'Paradise Regained or Still Lost? Eschatology and Disorderly Behaviour in 2 Thessalonians', *NTS* 38 (1992): 288 and *Thessalonians*, 65.

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(2), while it cannot be outrightly dismissed that the apostle kept copies of his correspondence, several factors cast doubt on the plausibility of this suggestion: (a) It presupposes that Paul himself ‘attached a greater importance to his own writings than their strictly occasional character warrants’,¹⁹ and (b) There is some doubt concerning whether the missionaries could have afforded to use papyrus so liberally as to keep copies of letters.²⁰ With respect to (3), although most would agree that the problem of the literary parallels is significantly eased if the two letters were written within a short time frame,²¹ this hypothesis is independently insufficient to explain the full extent of similar material; moreover, without evidence that 2 Thessalonians did follow soon after 1 Thessalonians, it must remain no more than a hypothetical possibility. Concerning (4), while the psychological explanation does account for some of the literary affinities between the two letters, such as the two thanksgivings in each and the emphatic ἡμεῖς at the head of those in 2 Thess. 2:13/1 Thess. 2:13, it cannot explain the majority of the parallels, or why so much of the personal material in 1 Thessalonians (especially 2:17–3:10) is missing from 2 Thessalonians. With regard to (5), although the use of stock words and phrases may shed light on particular parallels (such as 2 Thess. 3:8/1 Thess. 2:9 and perhaps 2 Thess. 1:1–2/1 Thess. 1:1, the use of ‘Lord/God of peace’ in the benedictory prayers in 2 Thess. 3:16/1 Thess. 5:23 and the occurrence of αὐτός with ‘God’ or ‘Lord’ in prayers in each letter), it too is restricted in the help it offers. Suggestion (6) is unconvincing, for 1 Thess. 5:27 plainly indicates that 1 Thessalonians was addressed directly and primarily to the whole community, and, moreover, the pre-scripts of both letters, which are uncontested text-critically, suggest that the addressees cannot be restricted to groups within the community. Furthermore, 2 Thess. 2:15 most naturally implies that 2 Thessalonians was a *second* letter written to the same addressees, the Thessalonians.

All this highlights the importance of option (7). Can a significant number of the literary affinities be explained with reference to similarities in the situations? Much depends on our answer to this question. If it is affirmative, a crucial argument for pseudonymity is critically undermined. If

¹⁹ G. Milligan, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians* (MC; London: Macmillan, 1908), lxxxv.

²⁰ Laurent as cited by Wrede, *Echtheit*, 33 n. 2; Bailey, ‘Who?’, 135–6.

²¹ Von Harnack, ‘Problem’, 574–5; Marxsen, *Introduction*, 40–1; Trilling, *Untersuchungen*, 43–4 and G. Friedrich, ‘Der zweite Brief an die Thessalonicher’, in *Die Briefe an die Galater, Epheser, Philipper, Kolosser, Thessalonicher und Philemon* (ed. J. Becker, H. Conzelmann and G. Friedrich; NTD; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 257 maintained that the literary parallels could only be explained with reference to pseudonymity or Paul’s having written 1 and 2 Thessalonians within a very short time span.

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it is negative, the pseudonymous explanation becomes more compelling. Hence the importance of this investigation.

The problem of the apparently incompatible eschatologies

To overcome the problem of genuinely or apparently contradictory eschatologies centred on signs *versus* suddenness/imminence, defenders of the Pauline authorship of 2 Thessalonians have typically pointed to the fact that contemporary Judaism and indeed Jesus' eschatological teaching as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels (e.g. Mark 13:14–37) held signs and suddenness/imminence together.²² Some have objected to this line of defence on the grounds that the coincidence in the eschatological discourses attributed to Jesus in the Synoptics may simply reflect use of two independent traditions²³ and that Paul and Jesus stand apart from the apocalypticists in rejecting signs.²⁴ However, the former objection merely pushes the coincidence to the time of the Gospels' redaction and composition. And the latter objection not only overlooks the fact that our access to Pauline thought is restricted to a number of occasional letters, which hardly constitute reliable grounds for such sweeping judgments concerning Paul's thought, but also the likelihood that Rom. 11:11–12, 23–4, 25–6 seem to anticipate that certain events will necessarily precede the eschaton (namely the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of 'all Israel'). Whether signs and suddenness/imminence are genuinely contradictory or not, it is surely significant that they could be held together by Jewish and Christian contemporaries of Paul. Moreover, it is remarkable that the majority of proponents of pseudonymity adopt the complementary hypothesis, which contends that 2 Thessalonians was intended to *complement* 1 Thessalonians, correcting the enthusiasts' false eschatological notion (2 Thess. 2:2c), which was rooted in a *misunderstanding* of 1 Thessalonians' eschatological instruction, perhaps 1 Thess. 5:1–11.²⁵ That would mean that the author of 2 Thessalonians

²² So *inter alios* J. E. Frame, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Paul's Letters to the Thessalonians* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912), 43–4; Rigaux, *Thessaloniens*, 140–1; W. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (rev. edn; trans. H. C. Kee; NTL; London: SCM, 1975), 266; I. H. Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (NCBC; London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1983), 37; Best, *Thessalonians*, 55.

²³ Krodel, *Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians*, 76–7; cf. Hollmann, 'Unechtheit', 31.

²⁴ Hollmann, 'Unechtheit', 31–2.

²⁵ So, for example, Wrede, *Echtheit*; Hollmann, 'Unechtheit'; Trilling, *Untersuchungen und Zweite Brief*; Bailey, 'Who?'; Collins, *Letters*; Holland, *Tradition*, 152; Hughes, *2 Thessalonians*; C. H. Giblin, '2 Thessalonians 2 Reread as Pseudepigraphal: A Revised

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himself did not perceive the eschatology of the second letter to be irreconcilable with that of 1 Thessalonians. If the two concepts of signs and suddenness/imminence could indeed have been viewed as compatible by the author of 2 Thessalonians, the only plausible version of the argument for pseudonymity based on eschatological contradiction is that which contends that 1 and 2 Thessalonians could not have been addressed to the same community within a short period of time.²⁶ Hence the value of this argument from signs *versus* suddenness/imminence is also ultimately dependent on the analysis of the situations underlying 1 and 2 Thessalonians, which is the task of this book.

The problem of 2 Thess. 2:2 and 3:17

In their attempts to determine what 2 Thess. 2:2 and 3:17 (to which we might add 2:15) reveal about the relationship between 1 and 2 Thessalonians, scholars have come up with the following hypotheses: (1) the authentic 2 Thessalonians actually preceded 1 Thessalonians;²⁷ (2) the problem underlying the authentic 2 Thessalonians may have been caused by a misunderstanding or misrepresentation of 1 Thessalonians;²⁸ (3) the pseudonymous 2 Thessalonians was intended to complement 1 Thessalonians, a misunderstanding or misrepresentation of which had led to the problem giving rise to 2 Thessalonians;²⁹ (4) the pseudonymous 2 Thessalonians was designed to discredit 1 Thessalonians as a forgery and to undermine what the author of 2 Thessalonians regarded as the heretical over-imminentist eschatological expectation of 1 Thessalonians, which

Reaffirmation of *The Threat to Faith*, in *TC* (henceforth 'Reread') and '2 Thessalonians'; Menken, *Thessalonians*, 34; Richard, *Thessalonians*.

²⁶ See Marxsen, *Introduction*, 40–2; Bailey, 'Who?', 137; Menken, *Thessalonians*, 29–30.

²⁷ So, for example, T. W. Manson, 'St. Paul in Greece: The Letters to the Thessalonians', *BJRL* 35 (1952–3): 437–47; R. W. Thurston, 'The Relationship between the Thessalonian Epistles', *ExpTim* 85 (1973–4): 52–6; C. A. Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 37–45; P. Trudinger, 'The Priority of 2 Thessalonians Revisited: Some Fresh Evidence', *DRev* 113 (1995): 31–5.

²⁸ For example, Marshall, *Thessalonians*, 187; R. Jewett, *The Thessalonian Correspondence* (FF; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 181–91; F. Bassin, *Les Épîtres de Paul aux Thessaloniens* (CEB; Vaux-Sur-Seine: Edifac, 1991), 185; Fee, 'Pneuma and Eschatology in 2 Thessalonians 2.1–2: A Proposal about "Testing the Prophets" and the Purpose of 2 Thessalonians', in *To Tell the Mystery* (ed. T. E. Schmidt and M. Silva; JSNTSup; Sheffield: JSOT, 1994), 200 and *God's Empowering Presence* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), 72–4; A. J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 355–6.

²⁹ So, for example, Wrede, *Echtheit*, 60–3; Bailey, 'Who?', 142–3; Trilling, *Zweite Brief*, 77; Menken, *Thessalonians*, 34.

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was being employed by his opponents;³⁰ (5) Paul feared that a forgery in his name might have given rise to the community's new eschatological problem.³¹

Hypothesis (1) can probably be discounted since 2 Thess. 2:15's aorist ἐδιδάχθητε most naturally belongs with δι' ἐπιστολῆς ἡμῶν, indicating that the specified letter is almost certainly past rather than present,³² and hence is probably 1 Thessalonians. That the 'letter' is indeed past seems to be confirmed by the observation that δι' ἐπιστολῆς ἡμῶν is paired with διὰ λόγου (note εἶτε . . . εἶτε), which can only refer to the missionaries' oral instruction passed on during the mission.³³ Concerning (2) and (3), 2 Thess. 2:2's μήτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ὡς δι' ἡμῶν more naturally refers to a forged letter than a misunderstanding or misrepresentation of an authentic one, suggesting that 3:17 is intended to empower the readers to distinguish a possible forgery from Paul's authentic letters.³⁴ Proponents of option (4) have persistently failed to take seriously enough the problem that a pseudonymous author is almost certainly not going to base his composition of a Pauline epistle on a letter which he regards as a forgery. Moreover, not only have advocates of this view not given a satisfactory explanation of the Christian author's flagrant deception and hypocrisy as entailed in such a scenario, but they also have failed to respond adequately to the objection that 2 Thess. 2:15 most naturally refers to 1 Thessalonians as a part of the tradition which 2 Thessalonians is calling its readers to embrace. Furthermore, *contra* those who adhere to this view, it cannot be assumed that the mark of authenticity of 3:17, the handwritten greeting of Paul, is in fact absent from 1 Thessalonians,³⁵ nor can it be presumed that the three possible sources of the false claim in 2 Thess. 2:2 are more than *possible* sources. In the light of these critiques

³⁰ Hilgenfeld, 'Thessalonicher', 249–52, 262; H. J. Holtzmann, 'Zum zweiten Thessalonicherbrief', *ZNW* 2 (1901): 105–6; M. Rist, 'Pseudepigraphy and the Early Christians', in *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (ed. David Aune; NovTSup; Leiden: Brill, 1972), 82–3; Lindemann, 'Abfassungszweck', 35–47, esp. 39–42, 47; W. Marxsen, *Der zweite Thessalonicherbrief* (ZBK; Zurich: Theologischer, 1982), 107–17; Krodel, *Deutero-Pauline Letters*, 56–7 and Lüdemann, *Heretics*, 108–19.

³¹ So, for example, G. G. Findlay, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians* (CBSC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1894), 141.

³² Wanamaker, *Thessalonians*, 40–1 suggests that the verb is either an 'epistolary aorist' or a 'perfective passive', but his proposal smacks of special pleading.

³³ Against the reversal-of-canonical-order view, see the case of Jewett, *Correspondence*, 26–30, which Wanamaker, *Thessalonians*, 39–45 fails to undermine.

³⁴ We shall substantiate this claim in some detail in chapters 5 and 8 below.

³⁵ See E. R. Richards, *The Secretary in the Letters of Paul* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr, 1991), 76–80 and 172–5. The change to the first-person singular in 5:27 would appear to endorse the claim of 2 Thess. 3:17.

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and the lack of problems with hypothesis (5), it would seem that it is the most plausible explanation of these controversial verses. If so, the fact that the author of 2 Thess. 2:2 does not even consider the possibility that a misunderstanding of 1 Thessalonians could have been responsible for the problem, but only a forged letter (μήτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ὡς δι' ἡμῶν), may mean that the false claim of verse 2c was made (and the community exposed to the possible forged letter) prior to reception of 1 Thessalonians.

Nevertheless, any hypothesis designed to elucidate the relationship of 1 Thessalonians to 2 Thessalonians must be rooted in an analysis of the situations underlying each letter. In this book we shall attempt to develop a fresh hypothesis which will better integrate 2 Thess. 2:2, 15 and 3:17 (Part 4) and be rooted in a rigorous analysis of the situations underlying 1 and 2 Thessalonians (Parts 2 and 3).

The problem of the perceived difference in tone

In response to the claim that the perceived difference in tone is a proof of pseudonymity, many proponents of authenticity have argued that any difference in tone is due primarily to the different situation being addressed in the second letter.³⁶ For example, Stepien attributes the differences between 1 and 2 Thessalonians to the change in circumstances of the Thessalonian community in the three months after 1 Thessalonians was written, especially the new idea reflected in 2 Thess. 2:2c and the worsening of the idleness problem.³⁷ He claims that this explains why Paul could not simply give thanks, as he did in 1 Thessalonians. Certainly Paul is perfectly capable of writing letters as different in tone as Philippians on the one hand and Galatians on the other. In the ensuing chapters we shall analyse both Thessalonian letters to determine whether the epistolary tones are as contrasting as is usually claimed and whether whatever difference in tone there is can or cannot be justified with reference to Paul's addressing different situations.

In conclusion, it can be seen that a study of the situations underlying 1 and 2 Thessalonians such as we shall attempt in this monograph is essential to a consideration of how the two letters are related and whether 2 Thessalonians is pseudonymous or authentic.

³⁶ For example, Milligan, *Thessalonians*, lxxxiii–lxxxiv; W. Neil, *The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians* (MNTC; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1950), xxii–xxiii; Rigaux, *Thessaloniens*, 150; J. Stepien, 'Autentyczność listów do Tessaloniczan', *ColT* 34 (1963): 171–4; Jewett, *Correspondence*, 12, 17; Malherbe, *Thessalonians*, 351, 367.

³⁷ Stepien, 'Tessaloniczan', 171–4.