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INTRODUCTION

The problem

The Pastorals claim to be personal letters from the apostle Paul to his two co-workers, Timothy and Titus, but the problem of the Pastorals, in a sentence, is that they do not seem to be what they claim to be.

They claim to be written by Paul, but in their diction, writing style, and theological emphases, they are hardly Pauline. Significant differences are acknowledged even by those who defend the Pauline authorship of these letters; C. F. D. Moule, for example, commenting on 1 Tim. 1:8, remarks:

it is astonishing that anyone could seriously attribute to Paul at any stage of his life the definition there offered of where the goodness of the law lies.¹

The Pastorals appear to be letters, but they only loosely follow the conventional epistolary format of the day;² I Timothy, for instance, omits the customary final greetings.³ And the opening

¹ C. F. D. Moule, "The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: A Reappraisal," *BJRL* 3 (1965), 431f. J. Jeremias (*Die Briefe an Timotheus und Titus* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953], p. 1) also concedes the peculiarity of the Pastorals: "The three Pastoral letters form materially and linguistically a special group within Paul's Letters."

² See the general discussion of first-century epistolary customs in G. J. Bahr, "Paul and Letter Writing in the First Century," *CBQ* 28 (1966), 465–477; W. G. Doty, "The Classification of Epistolary Literature," *CBQ* 31 (1969), 183–199; and R. W. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutics, and Word of God* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 250–274.

³ The lack of personal greetings is unusual in a personal letter and deserves close attention; J. L. White ("The New Testament Epistolary Literature in the Framework of Ancient Epistolography," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms in Spiegel der neueren Forschung*, ed. H. Temporini and W. Hasse [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984], II. 25.2: 1753) observes

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thanksgiving, which normally follows directly upon the salutation, does not appear at all in I Timothy or Titus.⁴

The letters claim to be written to two of Paul's closest co-workers, but the language is formal and distant, lacking the intimacy that one would expect among friends of long standing.⁵ The admonitions directed to Timothy and Titus do not seem to accord with the status of these two men as veterans within the Pauline circle. After years of faithful service under Paul's supervision, it is strange that Timothy would need to be cautioned to "flee the evil desires of youth" (II 2:22). And it is equally odd that at this stage in his ministry Timothy would require a letter giving basic instructions on how one ought to behave in the household of God (I 3:15).⁶ The general treatment of these two men is problematic throughout the Pastorals, given the special relationship that they had obviously enjoyed with Paul.⁷

The Pastorals purport to be occasional letters, but what actually occasioned them is not easily determined. I Timothy appears to be written in response to a threat from false teachers (1:3), but this concern soon gives way to matters that appear far less urgent and mundane by comparison (cf. 2:1ff., the exhortation to make prayers for all men, kings, etc.). The remarks at 3:15 suggest an altogether different motive behind the letter: to set right the conduct of the worshiping community. But the instructions given

that "the closing greetings are one of the marks of a real letter." Compare the final greetings in the letters of Philemon and III John.

- ⁴ I 1:12–17 differs considerably from the typical Pauline thanksgiving; it does not immediately follow the salutation, makes no reference to the addressee, and focuses upon Paul's own conversion. See the discussion in ch. 3 below. See also M. Wolter, *Die Pastoralbriefe als Paulustradition* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), pp. 27ff.
- ⁵ Compare, for example, the formality of the salutation to Titus with that of Paul's letter to Philemon. J. Jeremias's suggestion (*Die Briefe*, pp. 3–4) that I Timothy and Titus are "official letters" does not adequately explain this oddity; Paul's letter to Philemon also has "official" character (the letter is addressed both to Philemon and to his "house-church"), but the language is far less formal than that of the Pastorals.
- ⁶ The elementary nature of the "church-order" instructions is surprising even if they are regarded as intended for "church leaders" in general; see, for example, the instructions on how to relate to various age groups within the congregation, I 5:1f.
- ⁷ The treatment of Timothy and Titus in the Pastorals caused A. Jülicher (*An Introduction to the New Testament*, ET by J. Ward [London: Smith, Elder, 1904], p. 186) to conclude that the Pauline authorship of these letters is "psychologically inconceivable." C. F. D. Moule ("The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles," p. 440) regards the treatment of Timothy in the Pastorals to be the greatest single difficulty facing those who seek to maintain the authenticity of these letters.

are hardly sufficient for such a task, and once again the letter trails off into other unrelated matters (cf. 4:1ff., concerns about the last days). The almost miscellaneous nature of the letter makes it difficult to determine what specific occasion (if any) gave rise to it. The epistolary motives behind II Timothy and Titus are equally difficult to specify.

Scholarship's response

The apparent discrepancies within the Pastorals are not easily explained on the assumption that these letters are authentic. Almost two centuries ago, F. D. E. Schleiermacher noted the literary oddities within I Timothy and concluded that the letter was nothing more than the patchwork of an imitator (a *zusammentragenden Nachahmer*).⁸ Schleiermacher's assessment was soon followed by J. G. Eichhorn's rejection in 1812 of all three Pastorals.⁹ Detailed studies by F. C. Baur (1835), H. J. Holtzmann (1880), M. Dibelius (1913), and P. N. Harrison (1921)¹⁰ succeeded in convincing most scholars that the Pastorals are not authentic.¹¹

Defenders of Pauline authorship¹² have consistently maintained that the literary peculiarities of these letters can be adequately accounted for by the special circumstances that surrounded their origin, among the most important of which are: (a) Paul's advancing age (which influenced his thinking), (b) Paul's long stay in the

⁸ F. D. E. Schleiermacher, "Ueber den sogenannten ersten Brief des Paulus an den Timotheos [*sic*]," reprinted in *Sämmtliche Werke* (32 vols., Berlin: G. Reimer, 1836), Vol. I, part 2, p. 317.

⁹ J. G. Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Leipzig: Weidmannischen Buchhandlung, 1812), Vol. I, part 3, pp. 315–410.

¹⁰ F. C. Baur, *Die sogenannten Pastoralbriefe* (Tübingen: J. G. Gotta'schen, 1835); H. J. Holtzmann, *Die Pastoralbriefe kritisch und exegetisch behandelt* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann, 1880); M. Dibelius, *Die Briefe der Apostels Paulus an Timotheus I, II und Titus* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1913); P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921).

¹¹ For a detailed review of critical studies on the Pastorals, see P. Trummer, *Die Paulustradition der Pastoralbriefe* (Frankfurt: P. Lang, 1978), pp. 19–56.

¹² Among the most noted of these are: J. B. Lightfoot, "The Date of the Pastoral Epistles," in *Biblical Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1893), pp. 397–418; T. Zahn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (Leipzig: A. Deichert [G. Böhme], 1897), Vol. I, pp. 398–389; A. Schlatter, *Die Kirche der Griechen im Urteil des Paulus* (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1936); Jeremias, *Die Briefe*; C. Spicq, *St. Paul: Les Épîtres Pastorales*, Etudes Bibliques (Paris: Gabalda, 1969); other advocates include: F. J. A. Hort, B. Weiss, E. K. Simpson, R. Parry, O. Roller, H. Schlier, M. Meinertz, W. Michaelis, B. Reicke, G. Holtz, J. N. D. Kelly, D. Guthrie, G. Fee.

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West (which affected his use of language), (c) the new concerns addressed in the Pastorals (which required a different vocabulary), and (d) the employment of a new amanuensis (which altered the writing style).¹³

But such arguments have failed to convince most NT critics, who believe the discrepancies within the Pastorals to be much more serious and pervasive than the traditional approach allows.¹⁴ The language, writing style, theology, literary character, and ecclesiastical concerns of these letters are all regarded as cumulative witnesses to the fact that the Pastorals are not Pauline, but stem from the hand of a pseudonymous author, who may (or may not) have had in his possession some genuine Pauline fragments.¹⁵

This position (in its various forms) has become so well entrenched that contemporary scholarship often takes the pseudonymous authorship of these documents for granted. J. T. Sanders, for example, in his work *Ethics in the New Testament*, reflects much current practice in his approach to these letters:

That Colossians, Ephesians, II Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus and I Peter are pseudonymous and imitate Paul's style and thought is not to be debated here but rather accepted as an assured result of critical historical scholarship.¹⁶

A similar starting point is taken by most contemporary students of

¹³ On the function and literary influence of an amanuensis, see especially O. Roller, *Das Formular der Paulinischen Briefe*, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament 4.6 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933), pp. 20ff.; Roller argues that Paul did not dictate the Pastorals but gave notes to an amanuensis who was responsible for the actual writing of these letters. W. G. Kümmel (*Introduction to the New Testament*, ET by H. C. Keel, revised ed. [London: SCM, 1975], pp. 251, 373–374) rejects this view, noting that the frequent breaks in the language of the Pauline letter suggest the practice of dictation.

¹⁴ E. F. Scott (*The Pastoral Epistles*, The Moffatt New Testament Commentary Series [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1936], p. xxi), for example, thinks that “at almost every point [the pseudonymous author] has misunderstood Paul ... We cannot but feel that the mind at work in these Epistles is different, in its whole bent and outlook, from that of Paul.”

¹⁵ The “fragments hypothesis” advocated as early as 1836 by K. A. Credner, and with great effect by P. N. Harrison (*The Problem*), is not really a mediating position in this debate since it also assumes that a pseudonymous author created a fictional letter (in which he placed genuine Pauline fragments). Cf. M. Dibelius and H. Conzelmann (*The Pastoral Epistles* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972], p. 5): “The secretary hypothesis and the fragment hypothesis are nothing but modifications of the declaration of inauthenticity.”

¹⁶ J. T. Sanders, *Ethics in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. 67n.

the Pastorals.¹⁷ The acceptance of these letters as the product of a skilled pseudonymous author is increasingly being regarded as the *sine qua non* of Pastoral studies.

Continuing difficulties

But such a starting point is not easily defended. For although these letters contain anomalies that make it difficult to ascribe them to Paul, they present equally serious difficulties to the interpreter who presumes their pseudepigraphical character. Donelson surely overstates his case and undervalues the problems inherent in it when, in a chapter on the pseudepigraphical letter, he concludes that

the Pastorals conform beautifully to the pseudepigraphical letter genre. They hold no surprises in either form or function.¹⁸

This sort of blanket endorsement of the Pastorals as pseudepigraphical suggests that the task of ascribing these letters to a pseudonymous author is virtually trouble-free. But that is not the case.

Considerable evidence suggests that early Christian circles did not knowingly endorse pseudepigraphical writings as authoritative.¹⁹ Basic literary and historical questions were addressed by the

¹⁷ So M. Wolter (*Die Pastoralbriefe*, p. 11), for example, begins his study by stating: "The wording of the title reveals that the following investigation flows out of the presumption that the Pastoral letters were not written by Paul, but stem from a later time in which the 'Apostolic' was only present as tradition." L. Donelson (*Pseudepigraphy and Ethical Argument in the Pastoral Epistles* [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1986], pp. 1–2) refers with approval to the "waning pressure to re-argue the question of authorship" and "the growing confidence that the author was not Paul."

¹⁸ Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy*, p. 54.

¹⁹ The view that the early church regarded pseudepigraphy as an innocent literary device (so F. C. Baur, *Paulus der Apostel Jesu Christi* (2 vols., Stuttgart: Becher & Müller, 1845), Vol. II, pp. 110–111) has been increasingly challenged. See, for example, J. S. Candlish, "On the Moral Character of Pseudonymous Books," *The Expositor*, 4.4 (1891), 91–107, 272–279; F. Torm, "Die Psychologie der Pseudonymität im Hinblick auf die Literatur des Urchristentums," in *Pseudepigraphie in der heidnischen und jüdisch-christlichen Antike*, Studien der Luther-Akademie 2 (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1932); more recently: M. Rist, "Pseudepigraphy and the Early Christians," in *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature: Essays in Honor of Allen P. Wikren*, ed. D. E. Aune (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), pp. 75–91. Rist calls pseudepigraphy "an ancient, though not honorable, literary device" (p. 75); likewise, D. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 39 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1986), p. 198. On the history of the debate, see D. Guthrie, "The Development of the Idea of Canonical Pseudepigraphy in New Testament

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early church; Tertullian informs us, for example, that the authenticity of the book of Enoch was disputed by some who found it difficult to believe that the book (if written by Enoch) could have survived the great flood.²⁰ Origen had doubts about the authenticity of Hebrews on the grounds of its peculiar literary style:

the verbal style of the epistle “to the Hebrews” is not rude, like the language of the apostle [Paul] . . . The thoughts are those of the apostle, but the diction and phraseology are those of some one who remembered the apostolic teachings, and wrote down at his leisure what had been said by this teacher.²¹

The Petrine authorship of II Peter was disputed, according to Jerome, by some who took account of the differences in style between this letter and I Peter.²²

That pseudepigraphical writings were not knowingly accepted by the early church is also indicated by Tertullian’s report of the censure and removal of the presbyter in Asia who was convicted of composing the Acts of Paul.²³ Tertullian plainly rejects this document on theological grounds,²⁴ but his report also indicates a certain disdain for documents that “falsely bear the name of Paul.” The number of pseudepigrapha that failed to achieve recognition because of their dubious literary or theological character underscores the church’s sensitivity on this point.²⁵

There is no convincing evidence to prove that pseudonymous authors aimed at versimilitude; but we do know, as J. S. Candlish

Criticism,” in *Vox Evangelica*, ed. R. Martin (London: Epworth Press, 1962). Reprinted in *SPCK Theological Collections 4: Some Recent Studies by Kurt Aland, Donald Guthrie* [et al.] (London: SPCK, 1965).

²⁰ Tertullian responds to this early form of historical criticism by suggesting that Noah probably heard the teaching of Enoch from Methuselah and passed it on to posterity. See Tertullian, *De cultu fem.* 1.3, as cited by B.M. Metzger, “Literary Forgeries and Canonical Pseudepigrapha,” *JBL* 91 (1972), 15.

²¹ Cited by Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.25.11–14 (Loeb edition).

²² Jerome, *Lives of Illustrious Men* 1, as cited by Rist, “Pseudepigraphy,” p. 87.

²³ The account appears in Tertullian’s *De baptismo* 17. See the introductory article by W. Schneemelcher, “Acts of Paul,” in *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, ET by R. Mcl. Wilson (London: Lutterworth Press, 1965), Vol. II, p. 232.

²⁴ Tertullian opposed those who, pointing to Thecla as an example, maintained the right of women to teach and to baptize (*De baptismo* 17).

²⁵ The Muratori Canon refers to the rejection of the epistles to the Laodiceans and the Alexandrians, “forged in Paul’s name for the sect of Marcion, and several others, which cannot be received in the catholic Church; for it will not do to mix gall with honey” (lines 63–67).

has noted, that no known pseudepigraphical writing was ever accepted as authoritative by the early church.²⁶ And if (as seems likely) pseudepigraphy was regarded as a “dishonorable device”²⁷ within the early Christian community, it is reasonable to suppose that an author writing pseudapostolic letters would employ every device to ensure that his composition appeared authentic. He would naturally be concerned to provide a convincing *Sitz im Leben* for the letters, and would be cautious about deviating too widely from the epistolary style of the one in whose name he wrote.

Judged by such criteria, however, the Pastorals do not read easily as pseudonymous documents. They pose serious difficulties, in fact, to the interpreter who decides to treat them as pseudepigraphical writings.²⁸

To promote the appearance of genuineness, a pseudonymous author might be expected to build upon well-known traditions.²⁹ To a certain extent the Pastorals do reflect earlier Pauline traditions; for example, Paul’s persecutions in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra are described in II Tim. 3:11, and specific reference to a number of his known companions is made (see II Tim. 4:11ff.). But it is nonetheless remarkable that the Pastorals consistently refer to persons and events otherwise unknown within the NT; the names of sixteen persons appear in these letters who are mentioned nowhere else in the NT.³⁰ Nor is there any hint within early Christian literature that Timothy ever served as the leader of the community in Ephesus, or that Titus ever worked in Crete. As a fictional sphere of ministry, Spain would seem the more sensible

²⁶ Candlish, “On the Moral Character of Pseudonymous Books,” p. 103.

²⁷ So Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy*, p. 16: “We are forced to admit that in Christian circles pseudonymity was considered a dishonorable device and, if discovered, the document was rejected and the author, if known, was excoriated.”

²⁸ See, especially, the objections made by F. Torm in “Die Psychologie der Pseudonymität.” Torm finds the theory of pseudonymity psychologically inconceivable: “It seems to me, that this interpretation of the letters which presents them as having an ethical purpose and as a cleverly devised account of an imagined drama in three acts, introduces us to an author whose personality is psychologically inconceivable. Such a peculiar person never lived” (p. 52). Torm’s objections have weight and have not received adequate attention.

²⁹ The pseudepigraphical epistle to the Laodiceans, for example, builds upon the reference in Col. 4:16 to a letter from Laodicea.

³⁰ They are: Hymenaeus (I 1:20; II 2:17); Alexander (I 1:20; II 4:14); Lois and Eunice (II 1:5); Phygelus and Hermogenes (II 1:15); Onesiphorus (II 1:16; 4:19); Philetus (II 2:17); Crescens, Carpus, Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia (II 4:10, 13, 21); Artemus and Zenas (Titus 3:12ff.).

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and compelling choice of a pseudonymous author, especially since Paul mentions it as his intended field of work (Rom. 15:24).³¹

And Demas, a man acknowledged and praised elsewhere in the Pauline corpus (Philemon 24; cf. Col. 4:14), is portrayed by the author of the Pastorals as “a forsaker who has abandoned the apostle and the Christian ministry for the love of this present age” (II 4:10).³² Such disparaging remarks about a known disciple could raise questions that would not be in the interests of a pseudonymous author. The unfavorable picture of Timothy as young and inexperienced, needing to learn the basic principles of Christian service, seems equally difficult to ascribe to a pseudonymous author.³³

The problem becomes even more pronounced if, as most commentators believe, the author of the Pastorals possessed an in-depth knowledge of Paul’s other letters³⁴ (and the book of Acts?).³⁵ With the models of ten Pauline letters before him, and the concern to make his pseudepigraphic writings appear authentic, it is hard to understand why a pseudonymous author would not take more care in conforming the epistolary format of the Pastorals to that of the other Paulines. Why not include a conventional “thanksgiving” in I Timothy and Titus? Why omit the customary greetings at the end of I Timothy? Why deviate from the customary Pauline letter form by addressing the letters to individuals rather than to commu-

³¹ It is possible, of course, that a pseudonymous author could have been relying upon traditions in which it was known that Paul did not visit Spain.

³² It is not impossible that the Demas referred to here is a different one from that of Philemon 24 and Col. 4:14, but later tradition (see Epiphanius, *Haer.* 51) regards him both as Paul’s colleague and an apostate from the Christian faith.

³³ See, for example, II 2:3, 7, 14, 22. T. Zahn (*Introduction to the New Testament*, ET by J. Trout et al. [3 vols., Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909], Vol. II, pp. 88f.) thinks it “inconceivable” that a pseudonymous author would paint such a portrait of Timothy.

³⁴ P. N. Harrison (*The Problem*, p. 8), for example, argues that “the real author of the Pastorals was a devout, sincere, and earnest Paulinist . . . He knew and had studied deeply every one of our ten Paulines.” Roland Schwarz (*Bürgerliches Christentum im Neuen Testament?*, Österreichische Biblische Studien 4 [Klosterneuburg: Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1983], p. 26) builds his study on this assumption: “The author of this writing [the Pastorals] is more than likely a direct disciple of Paul.” See also the extensive tabulations of Pauline-like phrases in the Pastorals: Harrison, *The Problem*, pp. 167–175; A. E. Barnett, *Paul Becomes a Literary Influence* (Chicago: University Press, 1941), pp. 251–277; Schlatter, *Die Kirche der Griechen*, p. 15.

³⁵ So A. T. Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 13. Likewise, C. K. Barrett, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 18. Barrett thinks it probable that II 3:11 shows a knowledge of Acts.

nities?³⁶ Conforming the Pastorals to the style of the other Paulines would contribute, one would think, to the verisimilitude needed in a pseudonymous undertaking of this kind.

But the peculiarity of the Pastorals extends beyond their external forms. The internal organization of the letters has no parallel within the Pauline corpus;³⁷ community rules, domestic codes, and non-parenetic materials appear in odd juxtaposition.³⁸ Unlike most other Pauline letters, the Pastorals have no specific parenetic section; instead, blocks of parenetic materials are scattered throughout the letters.³⁹ Such differences, as W. Stenger has observed, “lead to a highly significant difference between the Pastoral Epistles, the genuine letters of Paul and the Deuteropaulines.”⁴⁰ The Pastorals do not read like other pseudepigraphic letters; A. T. Hanson finds their lack of any central or developing theme a distinctive feature that has no parallel within pseudepigraphic circles; he regards them as *sui generis*.⁴¹

On the assumption that the Pastorals are the product of a pseudonymous author, it is also difficult to explain their stark variations of pseudepigraphic “dress.” II Timothy is full of personalia and information specific to Paul, but I Timothy and Titus contain relatively little that serves to set the occasions of the letter or to add a personal touch. Consequently, II Timothy seems far more convincing as a personal letter. But if the Pastorals are all written by the same pseudonymous author, why the striking differences in pseudepigraphic style? Why do I Timothy and Titus

³⁶ The personal nature of the Pastorals seems to have made their acceptance as authoritative community documents more difficult. The Muratori Canon hints at this when it describes the Pastorals as “[written] out of goodwill and love, and yet held sacred to the glory of the catholic Church for the ordering of ecclesiastical discipline” (lines 60–63, my italic).

³⁷ See the analysis of the Pauline letter form by W. Doty, *Contemporary New Testament Interpretation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 144. By comparing the internal organization of Paul’s letters (“sequence analysis”) Doty thinks a “more or less standard pattern” of a Pauline letter can be observed. Even if the specifics of Doty’s “sequence analysis” are not accepted, it is hard to deny that the internal organization of the Pastorals is quite different from that of the other Paulines.

³⁸ H. von Campenhausen (“Polykarp von Smyrna und die Pastoralbriefe,” in *Aus der Frühzeit des Christentums* [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1963], pp. 229–231) notes the unusual ordering of these materials in the Pastorals.

³⁹ R. Karris (“The Function and *Sitz im Leben* of the Paraenetic Elements in the Pastoral Letters,” Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard, 1971, p. x) estimates that up to 75 percent of the Pastorals can be classified as parenesis.

⁴⁰ W. Stenger, “Timotheus und Titus als literarische Gestalten,” *Kairos* 16 (1974), 262–263.

⁴¹ Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 27.

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lack the pseudepigraphic features that make II Timothy so compelling? Attempts to explain these differences in “dress” have been less than satisfactory; B. S. Easton argues that the success of II Timothy and Titus (which, in his opinion, were published first) lessened the need for a convincing display of pseudepigraphic personalia in I Timothy.⁴² But Easton can produce no evidence to support such a view. Equally unconvincing is A. T. Hanson’s suggestion that “by the time the author came to write Titus he was beginning to run out of material.”⁴³

Summary

From these preliminary observations, it is clear that in their present form the Pastorals are not easily attributed to the hand of any single author, be it Paul or a pseudo-Paul.

The arguments against the Pauline authorship of these letters do not need to be rehearsed here; they are well known and will be discussed at various points within this study. Suffice it to say that on literary, stylistic, historical, and linguistic grounds, the acceptance of the Pauline authorship of the Pastorals seems most untenable. This position gains support, I think, from the primary role that advocates of authenticity make the amanuensis play in the writing of these letters.⁴⁴ Although the use of another secretary could account for some differences in the Pastorals’ literary style *vis-à-vis* the other Pauline letters, it cannot adequately explain the basic changes in the thought and outlook that characterize so much of the material within these letters. To attribute such differences to an amanuensis is to make him for all practical purposes the author of the documents.

But if the Pastorals are not easily ascribed to Paul, neither do they lend themselves readily to the view that they are pseudepigraphic writings, composed by a sophisticated and skilled pseudonymous author. This is an aspect of the problem that has been too frequently overlooked by NT critics. It has been largely assumed

⁴² B. S. Easton, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: SCM, 1948), p. 19. “Finally in I Timothy the method was so well known that the pseudonymity is a bare convention; it is only in 1.3 (copied from Titus 1.5) that any attempt is made to put the situation back into the past.”

⁴³ Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 47.

⁴⁴ See Jeremias, *Die Briefe*, p. 8; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1963), pp. 25–26; Spicq, *Les Épîtres Pastorales*, p. 199; J. H. Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980 [1899]), pp. XII, XXIV.