LITERARY FORGERIES AND
CANONICAL PSEUDEPIGRAPHA*

BRUCE M. METZGER

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY 08540

IN 1950 the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* published the Greek text, with an English translation and philological commentary, of what the author, the late Paul R. Coleman–Norton, at that time Associate Professor of Latin at Princeton University, entitled, "An Amusing *Agraphon.*"[1] According to the highly circumstantial account in the opening paragraphs of the article, in 1943 during the Second World War the author was stationed with the U.S. armed forces at Fedhala in French Morocco. Here one day in the town's Mohammedan mosque he was shown an Arabic codex in which was "a single unnumbered page of Greek, sandwiched between two tracts on *materia medica.*" The contents of the page, as was disclosed later when the author studied the transcript which the imam had allowed him to make, turned out to be a fragment of a Greek translation of the Latin *Opus imperfectum in Matthaeum*, which is a collection of homilies on chs. 1-13 and 19-25 of the Gospel according to Matthew. At the conclusion of Matt 24:51, which in the canonical text refers to the judgment when "men will weep and gnash their teeth," the fragment continues with the question, raised by one of the disciples, how these things can be for persons who happen to be toothless. Whereupon Jesus replies, "Teeth will be provided."

However amusing one may regard this account, there is no doubt at all that the *agraphon* is a forgery—whether ancient or modern, opinions may differ. For the present writer, at any rate, it is difficult not to think that it is a modern forgery, for prior to World War II in a class of Latin Patristics Professor Coleman–Norton regaled his students (of whom the present writer was one) with a witticism about dentures being provided in the next world so that all the damned might be able to weep and gnash their teeth.

The story of the "discovery" of the *agraphon* adds one more instance to an

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[1] *CBQ* 12 (1950) 439-49.

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unbelievably long list of ancient and modern forgeries.[2] It also raises questions concerning the nature and variety of literary forgeries and the motives of those who produced them. For example, how far are pseudepigrapha—those inside the canon as well as those outside—to be regarded as literary forgeries? From an ethical point of view, is a pseudepigraphon compatible with honesty and candor, whether by ancient or modern moral standards? From a psychological point of view, how should one estimate an author who impersonates an ancient worthy, such as Orpheus or Enoch? Should we take him seriously, and, if we do, how does this bear on the question of his sanity? From a theological point of view, should a work that involves a fraud, whether pious or not, be regarded as incompatible with the character of a message from God? It is easier to ask such questions than to answer them, and not everyone will be satisfied with the answers.

First of all, it will be good to define terms. A literary forgery is essentially a piece of work created or modified with the intention to deceive. Accordingly, not all pseudepigrapha (that is, works wrongly attributed to authors) are to be regarded as forgeries. In the case of genuine forgery (if this oxymoron may be permitted) the attribution must be made with the calculated attempt to deceive. This consideration excludes from the category of literary forgeries both the copy made in good faith for purposes of study and the large class of writings that, in the course of their descent from antiquity, have become associated with the name of some great classical author or Father of the Church. Thus, if Lobon of Argos in the third century B.C. wrote the *Hymn to Poseidon* attributed to Arion, Lobon is not necessarily responsible for the attribution. A good example of the Church Fathers is the curious confusion by which the Pauline commentaries of the heretic Pelagius have been transmitted to us under the name of Jerome, one of his most bitter opponents. These commentaries are certainly pseudepigraphic, but just as certainly they are not forgeries.

A distinction must also be made between apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works. The term "apocrypha" belongs to the history of the canon and is far from being synonymous with pseudepigrapha. In fact, the question of false attribution played very little part in the identifying of the fourteen or fifteen books or parts of books of the traditional Apocrypha, most of which are regarded by Roman Catholics as deuterocanonical. Instead of the customary division of Jewish post-canonical literature into Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, it is better (as Torrey[3] argued) to make the term "apocrypha" include all extra-canonical writings, and to use "pseudepigraphic" as a literary category, whether the book is regarded as canonical or apocryphal.

In the light of the preceding definitions and distinctions, the following pages

    [2] The bibliography on the subject of literary forgeries and pseudepigrapha is very extensive. Besides the books and articles that are mentioned in subsequent footnotes, reference may be made to the Bibliographical Addendum at the conclusion of the article.

    [3] C. C. Torrey, *The Apocrypha Literature: a Brief Introduction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945) 10-11.

will give consideration, first, to some of the chief motives that prompted the production of literary forgeries and other pseudepigrapha in antiquity. Secondly, attention will be given to ancient and modern evaluations of such literature and to a variety of attempts to solve the ethical, psychological, and theological problems connected with the existence of canonical pseudepigrapha.

I. Motives of Ancient Pseudepigraphers

What motives have led writers to issue works under assumed names? One of the rewards for the labor expended in writing books is the author's enjoyment of personal recognition through the circulation of his works. Why any writer should choose to conceal his identity by assuming a false name is a question which has aroused no little curiosity. Diffidence has often been suggested as a prime motive.[4] Long before the women's lib movement Mary Ann (or, Marian) Evans used the pseudonym George Eliot, by which she is better known today. In presenting their work under the title, "Poems by Currier, Ellis, and Acton Bell," the Brontë sisters, Charlotte, Emily, and Anne, said, "We had a vague impression that authoresses were liable to be looked on with prejudice."

Satirists, iconoclasts, and writers of editorial columns have found pseudonymity a convenient method of launching vitriolic attacks or attempting to mold public opinion. Dean Swift's pseudonym "Lemuel Gulliver" may be mentioned as representative of this category. Humorists and story-tellers have resorted to this practice largely for the purpose of attracting attention to their production. Such names as Sherlock Holmes and Mark Twain are more familiar than their counterparts, Arthur Conan Doyle and Samuel L. Clemens. In times when freedom of speech stood at a premium, many an author escaped censure and even martyrdom by concealing his identity behind a pen name.

Instead of speculating, however, how many of these and other motives may have prompted the production of pseudepigrapha and/or literary forgeries in antiquity, one will do better by collecting specific statements of those who produced and read such literature.

(1) Over the centuries one of the most common motives in the production of forgeries has been the desire for financial gain. The formation of the two great public libraries of antiquity, that in the Museum of Alexandria, founded by Ptolemy Philadelphus (283-246 B.C.), and that of Pergamum, founded by Eumenes II (197-159 B.C.), created a great demand for copies of the works of famous authors. According to Galen, the learned physician of the second century A.D., literary forgeries were first multiplied in numbers when the kings of Egypt and of Pergamum sought to outdo each other in their efforts to increase the holdings in their respective libraries. Monetary rewards were offered to those

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[4] Samuel Halkett and John Laing mention diffidence, fear of consequence, and shame as three common motives in choosing to publish under a pseudonym (*Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous English Literature* [new ed. by James Kennedy et al.; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1926] xi).

who would provide a copy of some ancient author, and, in consequence, many imitations of ancient works were composed and palmed off as genuine.[5]

More than once Galen describes with indignation how the medical works by both Hippocrates and himself had been corrupted by the interpolations of unscrupulous and uncritical editors.[6] Because of the production and sale of forgeries of works under his name, Galen drew up a little tract entitled *On His Own Books*.[7] The immediate reason for writing it was the following incident. One day, in Shoemakers' Street in Rome, where most of the book–shops were located, Galen witnessed a scene that must have delighted his author's heart. A book was displayed bearing the name Doctor Galen. A discussion began as to whether it was a genuine work of Galen's. An educated man standing by, attracted by the title, bought it and began to read it at once to find out what it was about. He had not read two lines before he flung it aside exclaiming: "The style isn't Galen's! The title is false!"

This man, Galen comments approvingly, had had a good old-fashioned Greek education at the hands of the grammarians and rhetoricians. But times have changed. Aspirants to medicine and philosophy, without having learned to read properly, attend lectures on those subjects vainly hoping to understand teachings which are the noblest known to men. Accordingly, to avoid false ascriptions to him of inferior writings Galen proposes to list and describe his genuine works— so he wrote the pamphlet entitled *On His Own Books*.

(2) Occasionally a literary fraud was perpetrated from the motive of pure malice. A counterpart in antiquity to the modern fabrication in czarist Russia of the scurrilous "Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion" was the attempt of Anaximenes of Lampsacus to blast the reputation of one of his contemporaries, the historian Theopompus of Chios (4th cent. B.C.). According to the account of Pausanias,[8] Anaximenes, being himself a sophist and skilled in imitating the style of sophists, once played a scurvy trick by composing, under the name of his

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[5] Galen *In Hipp. de nat. hominis* 1.42 (C. G. Kühn, *Medicorum graecorum opera* 15, 105). In addition to what Galen tells us about Ptolemy and Eumenes, we may refer also to a sixth century commentator on Aristotle's categories (formerly thought to be David the Armenian, but now identified as Elias the Neoplatonist; see Kroll in PW 4. 2232) who traces the origin of spurious works to five causes, one of which is the greed for money that leads men to give a false air of antiquity to books, in order to sell them to great kings who pride themselves on their libraries. Such, he says, were Ptolemy, who collected treatises of Aristotle, and Juba the Libyan, who was a follower of Pythagoras. (King Juba, who died A.D. 23, was a man of learning who sought to introduce Greek and Roman culture into his kingdom; for Elias, see Adolf Busse's ed. in *Commentaria in Aristotelem graeca* 18, pt. 1 [Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1900] 128, 5-9.)

[6] Cf. Johannes Ilberg, *Studia pseudippocratea* (Leipzig, 1883), and on Galen's critical method in determining interpolations, see L. O. Bröcker, "Die Methoden Galens in der literarischen Kritik," *Rheinisches Museum* 40 (1885) 415-38.

[7] Cf. Galen, *On His Own Books*, in J. Marquardt, I. Müller, and G. Helmreich, *Galeni scripta minora* 2 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1891) 91-124.

[8] Pausanias, *History of Greece* 6.18,2ff. Josephus also refers to the forgery (*AgAp* 1.24 §221).

rival Theopompus, bitter invectives against the three chief cities of Greece, Athens, Thebes, and Sparta. He then sent a copy of the slanderous work to each of these cities, with the result that the unfortunate historian was henceforth unable to appear in any part of the peninsula.

Another example is reported by Eusebius,[9] who mentions that early in the fourth century A.D. there appeared a document purporting to be the Acts of Pilate, filled with calumnies against the moral and religious character of Jesus.[10] The author, plausibly thought to have been Theotecnus, an apostate from Christianity and a violent persecutor of the church at Antioch, of which city he was *curator*, issued an edict that schoolmasters should assign the document to their pupils for study and memorization.

(3) Much more often than malevolence were love and respect the motives that prompted the production of pseudonymous works. For example, the desire to honor a respected teacher and founder of a philosophical school prompted the Neo–Pythagoreans to attribute their treatises to Pythagoras himself, who had lived many centuries earlier.[11] According to Iamblichus (ca. A.D. 250—ca. 325), it is most honorable and praiseworthy to publish one's philosophical treatises in the name of so venerable a teacher. Very rarely indeed, Iamblichus tell us, have Pythagoreans ascribed to themselves the glory of their inventions, and very few are known as authors of their own works.[12] Thus it was, as Moffatt put it, nothing more than "innocent admiration and naïve sympathy which prompted a disciple to reproduce in his own language the ideas, or what he conceived to be the ideas, of his master, and yet forbade him, out of modesty, to present these under his own name."[13]

(4) The preceding comment leads us to consider next the motive of modesty, which, whether real or alleged, has occasionally been regarded as an incentive in the production of pseudepigraphic works. For example, about A.D. 440 there appeared an encyclical letter from one who identified himself as "Timothy, least of the servants of God," condemning the avarice of the times and appealing to the Church to renounce its wealth and luxury. A copy of this treatise fell into the hands of Bishop Salonius, who apparently surmised who had composed it

[9] *Ecclesiastical History* 9.5,1.

[10] These Acts (ὑπομνήματα), which are no longer extant (the work that is currently known as the *Acta Pilati* is a Christian fabrication), cannot have been a very skillful forgery, for Eusebius (*Eccl. Hist.* 1.9,2-3) points out a palpable chronological blunder which stamped the document as fiction on its very face.

[11] On treatises attributed to Pythogoras, see H. Thesleff, *An Introduction to the Pythagorean Writings of the Hellenistic Period* (= Acta Academiae Aboensis, Humaniora, 24/3; Åbo, 1961).

[12] The passage in Iamblichus's *De vita Pythagorica* runs as follows: καλὸν δὲ καὶ τὸ πάντα Πυθαγόρᾳ ἀνατιθέναι τε καὶ ἀπονέμειν, καὶ μηδεμίαν περιποιεῖσθαι δόξαν ἰδίαν ἀπὸ τῶν εὑρισκομένων, εἰ μή πού τι σπάνιον· πάνυ γὰρ δὴ τινές εἰσιν ὀλίγοι, ὧν ἴδια γνωρίζεται ὑπομνήματα (§ 198; ed. L. Deubner [Leipzig: Teubner, 1937] 108, 4-7).

[13] James Moffatt, *An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (3rd ed.; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1918) 41.

and called upon Salvian, a priest of Marseilles, to explain why he had written a work which might be mistaken for an apocryphal letter of Timothy.

Without acknowledging that he was the author of the treatise in question, Salvian undertook to defend the issuing of such a work under a pseudonym.[14] After a preliminary paragraph in which he urges that "we ought to be more concerned about the intrinsic value of its contents than about the name of the author," Salvian suggests that

> although there is only one main reason [why the author did not use his own name in the title of the book], I think that several reasons could be adduced. The first is this, based upon a divine command, that we are urged to avoid every pretense of earthly vainglory, for fear that while we are covetous of the mere bauble of man's praise we should lose our heavenly reward. It follows that when God bids us pray and give our alms in secret, he wants us also to bestow the fruits of our labors in secret. . . .
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> Nevertheless, it must be confessed that the main reason lies in the fact that the writer, in his own words, is humble in his sight, self–effacing, thinking only of his own insignificance. . . . Therefore, since he thought—and rightly so—that others ought to regard him in the same way that he regarded himself, the author wisely selected a pseudonym for his book for the obvious reason that he did not wish the obscurity of his own person to detract from the influence of his otherwise valuable book. . . . This is the reason—whoever wants to know it—why the pamphlet was published pseudonymously.
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> It remains to explain why, in particular, the name of Timothy was chosen. This takes us back to the author again. The primary reason is this. Just as humility had prompted him to choose a pseudonym in the first place, so it was reverence and discretion that moved him to use the name of Timothy . . . for the name of Timothy means "the honor of God."[15]

Although we may be in doubt how much of Salvian's extended argumentation should be regarded as mere rationalization, at any rate it is clear that he hoped to mollify his bishop by the avowal of self-effacement and modesty as sufficient reason for pseudonymity.

(5) There is another class of undoubtedly spurious writings whose existence can neither be accounted for on the assumption of literary forgery, nor justly attributed to any of the motives thus far mentioned. These are the large number of pseudepigrapha in the collections of speeches attributed to the great Attic orators. Although a certain number of speeches were designedly forged, most of them probably owe their existence to what may be called the interests of dramatic composition.

The post-Aristotelian epoch witnessed the development all over the Greek-speaking world of schools of rhetoric the purpose of which was to give to students an oratorical education. Part of the curriculum were assignments to compose fictitious speeches based on models left by the great Attic orators.[16] The

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[14] *Epistola* ix (ed. F. Pauly, CSEL 8 [1883] 217-23).

[15] Tr. Alfred E. Haefner, "A Unique Source for the Study of Ancient Pseudonymity," *ATR* 16 (1934) 8-15.

[16] Cf. Edwin Hatch, *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian*

subjects would be propounded in some such form as the following: "Given a certain case, how would Antiphon, or Lysias, or Isocrates have treated it? Given such and such circumstances, how would Hyperides, or Æschines, or Demosthenes have spoken?" As a result, an immense number of such exercises were produced, which in many instances, if skillfully composed, might easily have passed as genuine compositions of the authors upon whom they were confessedly modelled.

Related somewhat to such supposititious productions were the speeches which ancient historians, Greek as well as Roman, were accustomed to put into the mouths of their *dramatis personae*. These are either wholly fictitious or at best but a reflex of what was, in the writer's knowledge or belief, actually said upon certain occasions.

The historians, moreover, as a rule do not conceal the fictitious nature of these speeches, although it must be said that Roman writers, such as Caesar, Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus, do not deal as frankly with their readers as does Thucydides,[17] doubtless because the origin of such rhetorically finished orations was in their day an open secret, and hence not calculated to deceive anyone. It is significant that Josephus, who has occasion in his parallel works to deal twice with the same situation, puts two totally different speeches into the mouth of Herod.[18] What goes under the name of *Historia Augusta* consists of a mass of speeches, letters, and documents that contain references to more than two hundred characters not elsewhere attested, most of them highly suspect. Among them are no fewer than thirty-five historians or biographers, cited as "authorities," most of whom scholars today (since Dessau's incisive analysis[19]) regard as bogus.

(6) Among the several kinds of literary forgeries in antiquity, arising from diverse motives, that of producing spurious epistles seems to have been most

Church (3rd ed.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1891) 86-115; H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956); Donald L. Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (New York: Columbia University, 1957); and George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1963).

[17] Near the beginning of his history (1. 22) Thucydides states: "As to the speeches that were made by different men, either when they were about to begin the war or when they were already engaged therein, it has been difficult to recall with strict accuracy the words actually spoken, both for me as regards that which I myself heard, and for those who from various other sources have brought to me reports. Therefore the speeches are given in the language in which, as it seemed to me, the several speakers would express, on the subjects under consideration, the sentiments most befitting to the occasion, though at the same time I have adhered as closely as possible to the general sense of what was actually said" (tr. C. F. Smith; LCL).

[18] Josephus *JW* 1.19,4 § 373-74; *Ant.* 15.5,3 § 127-28. See also H. St. John Thackeray, *Josephus: The Man and the Historian* (New York: Jewish Institute of Religion, 1929) 41-45.

[19] Hermann Dessau ("Über Zeit und Persönlichkeit der Scriptores historiae Augustae," *Hermes* 24 [1889] 337-92) gives compelling reasons for dating the composition of *Historia Augusta* under Theodosius I (A.D. 379-95), a date accepted most recently by Sir Ronald Syme (see the chapter entitled, "The Bogus Names," in his *Emperors and Biography: Studies in the Historia Augusta* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1971]).

assiduously practiced. There is scarcely an illustrious personality in Greek litera-
ture or history from Themistocles down to Alexander, who was not credited with
a more or less extensive correspondence. Probably the most famous are the 148
Greek epistles supposedly written by Phalaris, tyrant of Acragas (Agrigentum)
in the sixth century B.C., in which he appears as a gentle ruler and a patron of art
and poetry. As is well-known, these were brilliantly and vigorously exposed in
1697-99 by Bentley as a worthless forgery,[20] composed probably by a sophist of
the second century A.D.

Besides letters which were falsely attributed to classical authors, other note-
worthy forgeries include the Letter of Aristeas, the correspondence between King
Abgar and Jesus, Paul's third letter to the Corinthians, his brief letter to the Lao-
diceans, and the Epistle of the Apostles. The fourteen spurious letters of the cor-
respondence between the Apostle Paul and Seneca were forged at a comparatively
early period, for they are quoted by Jerome[21] and Augustine.[22] The idea of a
friendly intercourse between the illustrious Apostle to the Gentiles and the pagan
philosopher, whose Stoic teachings seemed to present so many points of contact
with Christian doctrine, appealed strongly to the early Church Fathers. It was this
that originally called forth the forgery and at the same time caused it to be
handed down.

(7) Various fortuitous and mechanical accidents of copying account for the
origin of several pseudepigrapha. For example, it happened more than once that
an erroneous attribution of authorship occurred in connection with treatises
written by different authors who had identical names, or closely similar names.
It was, in fact, to avoid such confusion that Diogenes Laertius drew up a list of
ancient philosophers with the same names (homonyms).

Likewise when scribes copied a manuscript that contained a miscellaneous
assortment of writings by several authors, there was the ever-present chance of
attributing some or all of them to the chief author in the collection, or to the one
who happened to be named at the beginning of the manuscript.

(8) Still other literary forgeries and/or pseudepigrapha were produced
when, for diverse reasons, various compositions were attributed to important
figures of antiquity. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between deliberate
forgery and convenient assignment of anonymous works to authors under whose
influence they were written. The prestige of such diverse figures as Lucian of
Samosata and John Chrysostom occasioned the false attribution of many stray
treatises to each. We have 132 pieces bearing the name of Lucian, besides some
epigrams; in the opinion of most classicists, many are either certainly or prob-
ably not his. According to one reckoning of Chrysostom's works, about 900 ser-
mons (300 printed, the rest in manuscript) have been falsely attributed to that

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[20] Richard Bentley, *Dissertations upon the Epistles of Phalaris* . . . (edited, with an
Introduction and Notes, by Wilhelm Wagner; Berlin: S. Calvary, 1874).
[21] *De viris ill.* 12.
[22] *Epist.* 153.

Father.[23] Similarly, the computistic writings of the Venerable Bede, which were required textbooks everywhere in the Carolingian system of schools, soon attracted other similar treatises assembled by librarians from a variety of sources.[24] Among Latin poets, Vergil attracted a good many imitators, some of whose feeble attempts are included among the short poems that are customarily identified under the rubric *Appendix Vergiliana*.[25]

Besides such assignments for the sake of convenience, very frequently literary frauds were perpetrated in the interest of securing greater credence for certain doctrines and claims. Two of the earliest such forgeries in Greek history date from the sixth century B.C. According to the geographer Strabo,[26] in order to provide support for the Athenians' claim to the island of Salamis, a verse was interpolated in the *Iliad*[27] by either Pisistratus or Solon. Again, according to Herodotus,[28] Onomacritus, the friend and counselor of Pisistratus, was banished from Athens when it was proved that he had interpolated in the Oracles of Musaeus, which he had edited, a passage showing that the islands off Lemnos would disappear in the sea.

The rise of oracles as a literary type in Greek literature and the manufacture of elliptical verses to decorate narratives make it difficult to know when we have a genuine oracle and when a fictitious one. According to Parke and Wormell,

> "There was every inducement and abundant occasion in antiquity for tampering with the text of existing oracles. . . . There have come down to us large numbers of responses which are clearly fabricated, some of uncertain provenance intended to point a moral or adorn a tale, but most emanating, in all probability, from Delphi itself and designed to illustrate the oracle's infallibility. . . . Few forgers can have worked under such propitious circumstances as the Delphic Priesthood, responsible as they were for the formulation of authentic oracles also. Indeed the conditions of consultation, and the circumstances in which oracles were delivered, were such that it is not possible for us, and may never have been possible, to distinguish sharply between what was an authentic utterance of the Pythia and what was not."[29]

Finally, attention should be drawn to several heterogeneous bodies of religio-philosophical treatises which gravitated around three mythical or semi-mythical figures: Orpheus, the Sibyl, and Hermes Trismegistus.[30] Many poems

[23] Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, 3 (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1960) 470.

[24] Charles W. Jones, *Bedae pseudepigrapha: Scientific Writings Falsely Attributed to Bede* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1939). See also Paul Lehmann, *Pseudo-Antike Literatur des Mittelalters* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1927), who discusses a mass of spurious literature liberally attributed to Aristotle, Augustine, Bonaventura, or Cicero (to mention only a few).

[25] For a convenient list of the several items in the collection, see F. R. D. Goodyear in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1970) s. v.

[26] *Geography* 9.1,10.

[27] It is line 258 of book B.

[28] *History* 7.6.

[29] H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle*, 2 (2d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1956) xxi.

[30] For a competent discussion of the literature that was attributed to these three figures,

were in circulation at an early date under the name of Orpheus (a list of these poems, drawn up by an Alexandrian scholar, Epigenes, is preserved by Clement of Alexandria).[31] The first who had any misgivings concerning these pseudepigrapha was Aristole, who speaks of the "so-called Orphic treatises,"[32] while in his lost dialogue *On Philosophy*, as his commentator Joannes Philoponus informs us, he actually went so far as to question the historical existence of Orpheus himself.

The corpus known as the Sibylline oracles is another outstanding instance of pseudepigraphic attribution. This collection is an extraordinary conglomerate of elements drawn from ancient pagan oracles on various countries and cities, Jewish compositions of widely different dates, and Christian interpolations of didactic and moralizing content. All through this farrago of verses the profession is kept up that they are the utterances of an ancient prophetess, who is sometimes introduced as speaking of herself as a daughter-in-law of Noah—a representation that was purposely adopted to gain credit for the oracles as real predictions.

Later than the two corpora just mentioned is the collection of Greek and Latin religious and philosophical writings ascribed to Hermes "the Thrice-Greatest," a later designation of the Egyptian God, Thoth, regarded as the father and protector of all knowledge (*gnosis*). The contents of several of the treatises are ascribed to the prophet Tat, the son of Hermes, and to Apuleius.

By way of summary of the preceding section, it has become apparent that in antiquity a very large number of literary forgeries and other pseudepigrapha were in circulation. Although the reasons for their production are not always apparent today, in many instances we can ascertain with tolerable certainty which one of a wide range of motives was responsible for their origin.

II. Problems Concerning Canonical Pseudepigrapha

In the preceding section we have surveyed a variety of motives that prompted ancient writers to produce forgeries and other pseudepigrapha of all kinds. It will be necessary now to examine some of the representative reactions to and evaluations of such productions in both (*a*) ancient and (*b*) modern times.

(*a*) That persons in antiquity were aware of the concepts of forgery and plagiarism[33] is plain from the existence of a wide range of words used to describe

see Joseph A. Sint, *Pseudonymität im Altertum, ihre Formen und ihre Gründe* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag, 1960) 25-67.

[31] *Stromata* 1.21.

[32] *De anima* 1.5.

[33] There was a great amount of μίμησις in antiquity, but it was condemned only if it was practiced with the intent to deceive for personal gain; in such a case, however, the verdict was swift and severe. For example, Vitruvius (*De archit.* 7.4-7) tells of an instance when one of the Ptolemies instituted at Alexandria some literary contests in honor of Apollo and the Muses. Aristophanes, the grammarian, who on a certain day acted as judge, gave his decision, to the surprise of the audience, in favor of a contestant whose composi-

and condemn such practices, e.g., κιβδηλεύειν, νοθεύειν, παραχαράττειν, πλάττειν, ῥᾳδιουργεῖν, *adulterare, confingere, falsare, supponere*, etc.[34] That scholars in antiquity were able to detect forgeries, using in general the same kinds of tests as are employed by modern critics, is also well attested. Thus, in his *Vita Horati* Suetonius mentions, "There have come into my possession some elegies attributed to his [Horace's] pen and a letter in prose, supposed to be a recommendation of himself to Maecenas, but I think that both are spurious; for the elegies are commonplace (*vulgares*), and the letter in addition is obscure—which was by no means one of his faults."

During the third century Dionysius, the scholarly bishop of Alexandria, made a most sophisticated and extensive criticism of the style, vocabulary, and content of the book of Revelation, in which he proved that it was not written by the fourth evangelist but by a different John.[35]

Jerome recognized two kinds of pseudepigrapha: forgeries and false attributions. A study of Jerome's critical procedures reveals that he knew several definite criteria for distinguishing between spurious and genuine writings and that he used them with intelligence and discretion. For example, he takes into consideration such points as the following when reviewing a possibly false ascription: (1) Could homonyms be the cause of a false inscription? (2) Is the book in question inferior in subject–matter or treatment to other works by the same author? (3) When was the book written, and how does this probable date agree with other historical evidence? (4) Do statements in the book or the point of view contradict or conflict with undeniably authentic writings of the alleged author? (Jerome regarded this evidence as of little value.) (5) Is the style of the work appropriate to its language, time of composition, and author? (Jerome

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tion had certainly not been the most able. When asked to defend his decision, he showed that the competing productions were literal copies from the works of well known writers. Thereupon the unsuccessful competitors were promptly sentenced before the tribunal as veritable robbers and were ignominiously thrust out of the city. For other instances of plagiarism in antiquity see the following studies: Hermann Peter, *Wahrheit und Kunst, Geschichtsschreibung und Plagiat im klassischen Altertum* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1911); Eduard Stemplinger, *Das Plagiat in der griechischen Literatur* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1912); Carl Hosius "Plagiatoren und Plagiatbegriff in Altertum," *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum* 31 (1913) 176-93; and Konrat Ziegler, "Plagiat," PW 20/2 (1950) 1956-57.

Copyright did not exist until relatively modern times. As G. H. Putnam points out, "No such thing as literary property [defined as ownership in a specific literary form given to certain ideas, the right to control such particular form of expression of those ideas, and the right to multiply and dispose of copies of such form of expression] can be said to have come into existence in ancient times, or in fact until some considerable period had elapsed after the invention of printing" (*Authors and their Public in Ancient Times* (2d ed.; [New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894] iv).

[34] Many of the same expressions of reproach were used by orthodox ecclesiastical writers in charging heretics with having corrupted the text of copies of the Scriptures in order to support their doctrines; see August Bludau, *Die Schriftfälschungen der Häretiker: Ein Beitrag zur Textkritik der Bibel* (NTAbh 11/5; Münster i. W.: Aschendorff, 1925).

[35] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 7.25,6-27.

was particularly sensitive to stylistic tests but realized that they must be used with caution and restraint).[36]

It is instructive to examine some of the specific reasons adduced by patristic writers for or against the genuineness of certain disputed books. With regard to the *Book of Enoch*, for example, apparently some persons in the early Church were inclined to doubt that the antediluvian could have written the book since it would have perished in the flood. Tertullian, however, suggests that they should take into account the circumstance that Noah, the survivor of the flood, would have heard from Methuselah the preachings of Enoch, "since Enoch had given no other charge to Methuselah than that he should hand on the knowledge of them to his posterity."[37] On the other hand, Tertullian is severe in his judgment against the Asiatic presbyter who acknowledged that he had written the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. The author defended himself at his trial by pleading that it was because of his love for the great Apostle that he had composed the account. His plea, however, was unavailing, and he was deposed from the ministry—and rightly so, Tertullian implies, because in the book the author made Paul guilty of allowing a woman to preach and to baptize![38] In other cases, however, when a given author was held to have been in personal contact with an apostle, Tertullian apparently saw no difficulty in regarding the work as essentially that of the latter, for he says, "[The Gospel] which was published by Mark may be maintained to be Peter's, whose interpreter Mark was; for even the narrative (*digestum*) of Luke is generally ascribed to Paul—since it is allowable (*capat videri*) that that which disciples publish should be regarded as their masters' work."[39]

About the year 200 Bishop Serapion of Antioch prohibited the reading of the *Gospel of Peter* in the parish of Rhossus, a city of Syria lying northwest of Antioch. On a former visit to that place he had indeed permitted the church to read the book (a work till then unknown to him) in its services. Soon afterward heresy broke out in Rhossus, and some appealed to the *Gospel of Peter* in support of Docetism. Thereupon Serapion examined the book and, finding some parts of it to be unorthodox, he rejected it peremptorily as a forgery (ψευδεπίγραφον).[40]

In like manner the vehement warnings in the *Apostolic Constitutions* (6. 16) against "the poisonous books which Simon and Cleobius, and their followers, have compiled under the name of Christ and his disciples" are motivated far more on the ground of what was taken to be their heretical teaching than because of their pseudonymous character. Similarly Cyril of Jerusalem, when giving a list of the canonical books, says: "The four gospels alone, but the rest are falsely inscribed and hurtful (ψευδεπίγραφα καὶ βλαβερά). The Manicheans also wrote a

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[36] For examples illustrating each of these categories, see Karl K. Hulley, "Principles of Textual Criticism Known to St. Jerome," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 55 (1944) 104-9.

[37] *De cultu fem.* 1.3.

[38] *De baptismo* 17.

[39] *Adv. Marcionem* 6.5.

[40] Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.12,3-6.

Gospel according to Thomas, which, tinged with the fragrance of the evangelical title, corrupts the souls of the more simple."[41]

From the preceding examples it appears that patristic writers condemned pseudonymous works not merely on literary grounds but also, and sometimes primarily, on doctrinal grounds.[42] After the limits of the canon became more widely recognized, pseudepigrapha that were also apocryphal were put on the forbidden list of works. But there were many exceptions—probably because there were many different motives that led to the production of pseudepigrapha—and no strictly consistent policy or pattern can be discerned either in the selection of the OT or the NT books or in the rejection of other books.

(b) In modern times scholars have expressed a wide variety of opinions concerning canonical pseudepigrapha. At one extreme is the rather widespread assumption that the early Church regarded pseudepigraphy as a wholly legitimate device, which carried no moral stigma. For example, according to P. N. Harrison, the author of the Pastoral Epistles "was not conscious of misrepresenting the Apostle [Paul] in any way; he was not consciously deceiving anybody; it is not, indeed, necessary to suppose that he did deceive anybody. It seems far more probable that . . . [the Pastorals] went out for what they really were, and the warm appreciation with which the best minds in the Church received them, would not be tinged with any misunderstanding as to the way in which they had been written."[43]

In a similar vein is the statement of Samuel Holmes concerning references in the Wisdom of Solomon where the author "plainly speaks in the name of Solomon, though the name itself is not mentioned." Holmes continues, "This is, of course, a literary device and would deceive no one."[44]

Such assessments are open to challenge. Who in fact were "the best minds

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[41] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* 4. 36. Already at the beginning of this century R. Liechtenhan could list twenty-five pseudepigraphic works written by Gnostics in the early Christian centuries ("Die pseudepigraphische Literatur der Gnostiker," *ZNW* 3 [1902] 222-37, 286-99). This number has, of course, been greatly increased with the more recent discovery at Nag Hammadi. Still other titles of apocryphal works have now come to light in a list of thirty-five gospel-books preserved in the Hebrew text of the Samaritan Chronicle no. II (see John Macdonald and A. J. B. Higgins, "The Beginnings of Christianity According to the Samaritans," *NTS* 18 [1971-72] 54-80).

[42] In this connection perhaps reference should also be made to 2 Thes 2:2, μήτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ὡς δι' ἡμῶν, though the sense of the whole passage is far from certain (does it refer to (a) a misconstruction of some passage in the first letter; (b) a lost letter from Paul; or (c) a forged letter purporting to be from Paul?).

[43] P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Oxford, 1921) 12. For other such opinions, see the survey made by Donald Guthrie, "The Development of the Idea of Canonical Pseudepigrapha in New Testament Criticism," *Vox Evangelica* [1] (1962) 43-59; cf. also Guthrie, "Epistolary Pseudepigraphy," *New Testament Introduction* (3rd ed.; London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1970) 671-84; and "Acts and Epistles in Apocryphal Writings," *Apostolic History and the Gospel: Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F. F. Bruce* (eds. W. Ward Gasque and Ralph P. Martin; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1970) 328-45.

[44] S. Holmes, *APOT* 1. 525.

in the church" that, so it is asserted, "would not be tinged with any misunderstanding" concerning the production of pseudepigrapha? Still more to the point, how can it be so confidently known that such productions "would deceive no one"? Indeed, if nobody was taken in by the device of pseudepigraphy, it is difficult to see why it was adopted at all.

A much needed corrective to such loose and unsupported statements was provided by Friedrich Torm in his monograph on the psychological problems that are involved in the production of ancient pseudepigrapha, particularly those of a religious cast.[45] After considering a wide range of pseudepigraphic literature, including Orphic, Hermetic, Sibylline, and a few Jewish writings, he concludes that, so far as the evidence is concerned, we must say that "a pseudonymous writing was either believed and therefore highly esteemed, or its inauthenticity was perceived and therefore the document was regarded as somewhat disreputable."[46] In fact the notion of dramatic personation as a legitimate literary device is never mentioned, and seems never to have been thought of as a defense of such compositions. If any author wrote a pseudonymous book in such a way, he must have been very unsuccessful in his purpose; for it was generally taken as a genuine work, or else rejected as feigned and worthless.

From a somewhat different orientation Arnold Meyer made a brief but comprehensive survey of religious pseudepigraphic literature, giving more attention to Jewish examples than Torm had done.[47] He argues as follows:

> "If a writer in the Old Testament introduces God as speaking, and thus man is confident that he can speak as God, so also the [early] Christians are able to use transmitted sayings of Jesus and compose speeches such as the Sermon on the Mount or, in a freer manner, to produce discourses of Christ, as the Fourth Evangelist is generally acknowledged to have done. If one thus is able to speak freely as God and Christ concerning any historical tradition, then it is no great step beyond if one should believe himself warranted to write in the name of a Patriarch or of an Apostle."[48]

It should, therefore, not be regarded as unusual that several pseudepigrapha are included in the canon, for "acceptance or rejection was on the basis of ecclesiastical truth, not that of literary genuineness."[49]

Another point of view has been proposed by Kurt Aland, who insists that the question of canonical pseudepigrapha has nothing to do with either ethical or psychological considerations.[50] Restricting his investigation to Christian literature of the first two centuries, and differentiating between genuine letters

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[45] *Die Psychologie der Pseudonymität im Hinblick auf die Literatur des Urchristentums* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1932).

[46] Ibid. 19.

[47] "Religiöse Pseudepigraphie als ethisch-psychologisches Problem," *ZNW* 35 (1936) 262-79.

[48] Ibid. 277. *Per contra*, for a reasoned argument against the opinion that many charismatic utterances by early Christian prophets found their way into the canonical gospels, see Fritz Neugebauer, "Geistsprüche und Jesuslogien," *ZNW* 53 (1962) 218-28.

[49] Ibid. 279.

[50] "The Problem of Anonymity and Pseudonymity in Christian Literature of the First

(those of Paul, Ignatius, and Polycarp) and pseudonymous epistles (the Deu-teropaulines, Catholic epistles, and the Epistle of Barnabas), Aland argues that anonymity and pseudonymity of NT books are closely connected and that one should not consider the latter apart from the former. He thinks that the earliest period in the production of Christian writings was dominated by anonymity. For example, all the Gospels were originally published anonymously, and the Book of Acts (despite the "we-sections") and such treatises in the corpus of Apostolic Fathers as I Clement and the Epistle of Barnabas lack any explicit mention of the name of the author. It was only at a later date that titles and names of authors were supplied.

Among pseudonymous Christian writings Aland finds that the Didache, or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, provides the key to understanding the transition from anonymity to pseudonymity. How, asks Aland, could this docu-ment, whose author must have been known to those to whom he first communi-cated it, have been accepted as the work of the twelve apostles? Aland answers by suggesting that the author "knew himself to be a charismatic, and was ac-knowledged [by others] as such, because the content of the message confirmed the claim." Accordingly, "the written version of what hitherto had been delivered at any congregational meeting" as the teaching of the twelve apostles "received the same credence as the charismatically spoken word, and thus the Didache achieved recognition in the Church of those days."[51] In other words,

> "what happened in pseudonymous literature of the early period was nothing but the shift of the message from the spoken to the written word. In this change not only was the tool by which the message was given irrelevant, but according to the view of that time it would have amounted to falsification even to name this tool, because, according to this conception, it was not the author of the writing who really spoke, but only the authentic witness, the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the apostles. When the pseudonymous writings of the New Testament claimed the authorship of the most prominent apostles . . . , this was not a skillful trick of the so-called fakers, in order to guarantee the highest possible reputation and the widest possible circulation for their work, but the logical conclusion of the presupposition that the Spirit himself was the real author."[52]

Although at first sight Aland seems to have made an advance in solving some of the perplexing problems of early Christian pseudonymity, after more mature reflection one is troubled by several disturbing questions. For example, is it legitimate to make such a hard-and-fast distinction between the mentality of those who composed letters and those who composed epistles? Is not such a distinction arbitrary in the extreme?[53] Secondly, one has an uneasy feeling that a survey of data limited to Christian literature produced within a span of two

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Two Centuries," *JTS* n.s. 12 (1961) 39-49; German text in Aland's *Studien zur Über-lieferung des Neuen Testaments und seines Textes* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967) 24-34.

  [51] Ibid. 44 (German text, 29).

  [52] Ibid. 44-45 (German text, 29-30).

  [53] Guthrie also makes this point in his "Idea of Canonical Pseudepigrapha," 56; see also his *New Testament Introduction*, 683-84.

centuries is unduly restricted. Thirdly, does not Aland's argument lead to the fatal consequence that the writers of Christian pseudepigrapha during the second, third, and fourth generations were more strongly under the influence of the Spirit than was the Apostle Paul?[54]

The most recent extensive contributions to the discussion of religious pseudepigrapha and literary forgeries in antiquity are those of Joseph A. Sint[55] and Wolfgang Speyer,[56] both of whom make a sharp distinction between secular and religious documents. Sint classifies ancient pseudonymous writings in two main categories, those arising from mythical and religious motivating forces, and those arising from literary creative forces, though he admits that these categories are not mutually exclusive. Speyer's classification is more detailed. After differentiating between secular and religious documents, he classifies the latter in three categories: (a) Genuine religious pseudepigrapha, widespread in the Near East and also known in Greece and Rome, emerged from mythological origins and represented a deity or a mythological personage as the author. (b) There were also forged religious pseudepigrapha which imitated the genuine religious pseudepigrapha, and (c) fictional religious pseudepigrapha, which were artistic compositions that belong to the realm of poetic art.

It was the heretics, Speyer thinks, who began the production of "pious" forgeries in the early church. In the ensuing struggle with gnosticizing and libertine communities, orthodox writers (such as, for example, the author of the Epistle of Jude) adopted pseudepigraphy, which had proved to be an effective literary contrivance.[57] In the ensuing years, when there was so much talk about forgeries which were also regarded as heretical, the composition of pseudonymous writings in a good sense was rather unlikely. In fact, according to Speyer, only a few authors, particularly those in remote regions, employed the pseudepigraphic format (Einkleidung) in a good sense.[58]

Apart from questions that might be raised concerning the validity of Speyer's attributing the origin of "pious" pseudepigrapha to heretics,[59] it is problematic

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[54] So also Horst R. Balz, "Anonymität und Pseudepigraphie im Urchristentum," ZTK 66 (1969) 403-36, esp. 419.

[55] For the title, see note 30 above.

[56] "Religiöse Pseudepigraphie und literarische Fälschung im Altertum," Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, 8/9 (1965-66) 88-125; cf. "Fälschung, literarische," RAC 7 (1969) 236-77. For a brief summary of Speyer's work on the subject of literary forgeries in antiquity, see Das Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum und das F. J. Dölger-Institut in Bonn, Berichte, Erwägungen, Richtlinien vorgelegt von Theodor Klauser (2. Aufl.; Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1970) 99-100. Speyer has just published a monograph entitled Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum (Handbücher der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft; Munich: C. H. Beck, 1971 [not in the series Theophaneia, as previously announced]).

[57] Speyer, "Religiöse Pseudepigraphie," 120.

[58] Ibid. 123.

[59] Reference is sometimes made to 2 Thes. 2:2 as evidence for the circulation of a letter forged in the name of Paul. The meaning of the verse, however, is uncertain; see footnote 42 above.

how far such schematically ordered classifications are really helpful in the evalua-
tion of pseudepigrapha. At most they draw attention to the variety of motives
that led to the production of forgeries and pseudepigrapha, and the consequent
difficulty of applying any one criterion in judging them. Speyer's tendency,
however, toward setting up strict categories occasionally makes for artificial
distinctions.

One must conclude from the preceding survey that literary forgeries were of
many kinds, from the amusing hoax to the most barefaced and impudent impos-
ture, and that the moral judgment to be passed on each must vary accordingly.
Indeed, in many cases such a judgment can be only tentative, not only from sheer
inability to discover the motive which prompted the author, but also because the
Platonic doctrine of the "noble falsehood"[60] pervaded Greek speculation and
passed by inheritance to hellenistic culture in general. Thus it is not surprising
that the assumption underlying the attitude of many was that the mere formal
accuracy of a statement was of infinitely less importance than the religious or
moral value of its content.

Conclusion

From the preceding discussion it will be obvious that a consideration of
ancient literary forgeries and canonical pseudepigrapha involves a complex set of
problems to which there are no pat answers. The fact that a wide variety of
motives prompted the production of falsely ascribed treatises, and the prevalence
of differing degrees of sensitivity to the morality of such productions, should
warn us against attempting to find a single fomula that will solve all questions,
whether literary, psychological, ethical, or theological. The following comments
have the modest aim of suggesting several considerations, some more tentative
than others, that bear upon general issues rather than upon the credentials of in-
dividual books of the Bible—for whether a given book is or is not a pseudepi-
graphon can be determined only after undertaking a careful and detailed literary
and historical analysis.[61]

It is necessary first to set to one side those books and parts of books which
themselves make no claim to specific authorship, but to which, in the course of
time, others have supplied the name of an author. Thus, for example, no stigma
can be leveled against the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews because the title
given to it in the later manuscripts declares it to be by the Apostle Paul. In a
similar manner more than once elaborations, expansions, and new sections of
material have found their way into collections of legal and sapiential literature

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[60] Plato, *Republic* 382C, 414B, 459D.

[61] In considering questions concerning individual pseudepigrapha within the NT, e.g.,
the Pastoral Epistles or 2 Peter, one must beware against relying upon proofs based upon
statistical analysis of vocabulary, inasmuch as the brevity of the documents limits the sig-
nificance of such data in determining authorship; see the writer's article, "A Reconsidera-
tion of Certain Arguments against the Pauline Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles," *ExpT*
70 (1958-59) 91-94.

which had been associated with Moses and Solomon. In the former case Moses was regarded as the fountainhead of all legal stipulations. We can in fact see within the OT how this process operated. When David was making a raid against the Amalekites (1 Sam 30:7-25), a third of the men were left behind, and after the raid a dispute arose as to whether they were entitled to a share of the booty. But David said, "As his share is who goes down to the battle, so shall his share be who stays by the baggage; they shall share alike"—to which the editor adds the comment, "and from that day forward he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day." Yet in Num 31:27-28 this "law" is assigned to Moses as part of the original revelation.

The same process of accretion is even more obvious with regard to Solomon. In the course of the development of tradition, Solomon became the outstanding example of a ruler endowed with divine wisdom and capable of transmitting that wisdom. The collection of proverbs originally attributed to Solomon attracted to itself many other similar aphorisms, so that eventually the contents of the entire book of Proverbs (with the exception of chs. 30 and 31) came to be ascribed to him. Two other sapiential books, Ecclesiastes and Wisdom, are also pseudonymous—for, despite the absence of the name of Solomon within the body of either book, the total representation of authorship in both is intended to convey to the reader the assurance of Solomonic authorship.

Whereas the choice of Moses and Solomon as pseudonyms for legal and sapiential material can be regarded as altogether natural, what can be said of the pseudonymity of apocalyptic? Here there is no single figure to whom apocalyptic writers could make their appeal by the use of his name. As a result we find that a great variety of names were called upon as authors of apocalyptic literature. In addition to each of the twelve patriarchs (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph, Benjamin), apocalypses were ascribed to a dozen other Old Testament worthies, namely Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Baruch, Zechariah, Daniel, Zephaniah, and Ezra.

In this connection we must extend our consideration beyond the limits of purely literary convention and raise a question about the psychology of a writer who attributed his literary production to an ancient and honored figure. What ought we say concerning the sanity of an author who, for example, calmly identifies himself with Enoch, the seventh from Adam? Is he deluded—in plain English, crazy—or is there some other explanation that accounts for the predominance of pseudonymity among apocalyptic writers?

The Hebrews, as is well known, had what is to us a peculiar consciousness of time, so that centuries could be telescoped and generations spanned. For example, more than once long after the Exodus a prophet addressed his contemporaries as those whom God had delivered out of Egyptian bondage (e.g., Judg 6:8; Amos 2:10; Mic 6:4; Hag 2:5). This idea of corporate personality may account for the peculiar impression given by apocalyptic writers, namely the conviction, apparently shared by author and ancient readers alike, that the apocalypse is a *bona*

fide disclosure of ancient lore. How this conviction was generated is problematical, but at least the possibility should be left open that it arose from a vivid sense of kinship which the apocalyptist shared with the one in whose name he wrote. Such a kinship would have been felt still more intensely if, as may well have occurred more than once, the account reflects actual visionary experiences which the author believed he had received through divine inspiration. Enoch, for example, is described by Mowinckel as "patron saint" of subsequent sages and apocalyptic preachers, so that "just as Noah once visited him 'at the end of the earth' and received mysteries revealed by him, so also the sages of the present age [that of the apocalyptists] through prayer and fasting and study of the old books, and perhaps also by means of ecstatic exercises, are able to get revelations from him to complete and give authentic interpretations of the ancient traditions."[62] Thus, as a contemporary scholar concludes, "pseudonymity is to be explained in terms both of tradition and of inspiration which in turn are to be understood in terms of that peculiar Hebrew psychology to which the apocalyptists had fallen heir."[63]

When we turn from psychological problems to ethical and theological problems we must especially be on guard against making off-hand or summary judgments. The question whether the pseudonymity of certain books in the canon is consistent with their being divinely inspired, or whether we should exclude from the Bible any book that professes to be the work of someone other than its real author, cannot be answered in a simplistic manner, either in the affirmative or the negative.

From the standpoint of ethics, it is clear that the Scriptures contain the most emphatic precepts and warnings against all lying and deceit. At the same time more than one biblical personage—including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Elisha, David, Jehu[64]—are represented as having used deceit for accomplishing what were reckoned as good or holy purposes. Part of the difficulty in the present consideration arises from a lack of agreement on what differentiates literary frauds from innocent pseudonymous impersonations. On the one hand, J. I. Packer roundly declares, "Frauds are still fraudulent, even when perpetrated from noble motives."[65] On the other hand, J. C. Fenton defines a forger as "one who writes in the name of another for his own profit: they [pseudonymous authors in the Bible] did not do so. Forgery involves deceit for gain; pseudonymity did not."[66]

Instead of beginning with declarations of what is licit and what is illicit, one is likely to make more progress by considering the theological problem from a historical and literary point of view. It must be acknowledged that the inspira-

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[62] "Henokskikkelsen i senjødish apokalyptikk," *Norsk teologisk tidsskrift* 41 (1940) 212, quoted by D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964) 134.

[63] D. S. Russell, ibid. Cf. also L. H. Brockington, "The Problem of Pseudonymity," *JTS* n.s. 4 (1953) 20-22.

[64] See Gen 12:13; 20:2; 26:7; 27:19; 1 Sam 21:2; 2 Kgs 6:19; 10:18-19.

[65] *'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God* (London: Inter-Varsity, 1958) 184.

[66] "Pseudonymity in the New Testament," *Theology* 58 (1955) 55.

tion of the Scriptures is consistent with any kind of form of literary composition that was in keeping with the character and habits of the speaker or writer. Whatever idiom or mode of expression he would use in ordinary speech must surely be allowed him when moved by the Holy Spirit. Rhetoric, poetry, drama, allegory, saga, legend, or any other form of serious discourse that would be rightly understood in a merely human production, cannot be excluded on *a priori* grounds from one divinely inspired. Even the most rigorously formulated doctrine of inspiration would admit that the dramatic composition of the Book of Job and the Song of Songs ascribes to historical personages discourses not literally uttered by them.[67]

The recognized custom of antiquity allowed historians great freedom in representing the sentiments of those about whom they wrote by means of imaginary speeches, founded more or less on what was actually said. If, indeed, an entire book should appear to have been composed in order to present vividly the thoughts and feelings of an important person, there would not seem to be in this circumstance any reason to say that it could not be divinely inspired. Why, then, should inspiration be denied if, as in the case of 2 Peter (which most scholars believe was written about A.D. 125-140), the author appears to have drawn up the treatise in the name of Simon Peter (1:1) and with details lending a high degree of verisimilitude (e.g., the reference to having been present at the Transfiguration, 1:17-18) in order to recall second and third generation Christians back to the orthodox teaching and practice held to have been inculcated by Peter himself? In short, since the use of the literary form of pseudepigraphy need not be regarded as necessarily involving fraudulent intent, it cannot be argued that the character of inspiration excludes the possibility of pseudepigraphy among the canonical writings.

[67] The point made in this paragraph is condensed from the discussion of James S. Candlish, "On the Moral Character of Pseudonymous Books," *Expositor*, Fourth Series, 4 (1891) 273; the entire article (pp. 91-107 and 262-79) is both thoughtful and thought-provoking. Cf. also the following comment of Wilfred Harrington:

"It is clear that the sacred writers may have employed any of the literary forms in use among their contemporaries 'so long as they are in no way inconsistent with God's sanctity and truth' (*Enchir. Bibl.* 559). . . . Only very few literary forms, past and present, could in fact be excluded on this score, and even then it would perhaps be because of the content rather than of the form. It has been said that whereas we could very well imagine God inspiring a novelist like Dostoyevsky we could never dream that he would inspire a pornographic novel. That is so, but the observation is not altogether relevant since in either case, the form might be the same. We can hardly ever, in fact, decide *a priori* what is becoming or unbecoming to God, for divine condescension goes deeper than we know. When we study the written word of God it is well to have in mind the stark reality of the Incarnation and the scandal of the cross" (*Irish Theological Quarterly* 29 [1962] 23-24). The reference which Harrington makes to *Enchiridion biblicum* (3rd ed.) involves a quotation from the Encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* (1943), "ea conditione, ut adhibitum dicendi genus Dei sanctitati et veritati haud quaquam repugnat" (§ 37).

For other, somewhat similar views, see Karl Hermann Schelkle, "Biblische Pseudepigraphie," *Die Petrusbriefe. Der Judasbrief* (HTKNT 13/2; Herder: Freiburg, 1961) 245-48, and Raymond E. Brown, "Enduring Problems in Canonicity," *JBC* §67:87-89.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ADDENDUM

The bibliography on the subject of literary forgeries and pseudepigrapha is very extensive. In addition to the books and articles that are mentioned in the footnotes of the article, the following selected titles are significant for one or another aspect of ancient, medieval, and modern forgeries.

ANCIENT FORGERIES

Gustav Bardy, "Faux et fraudes littéraires dans l'antiquité chrétienne," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 32 (1936) 5-23, 275-302.

Theodor Birt, *Kritik und Hermeneutik* (Munich: Oskar Beck, 1913) 222-42.

Edmund K. Chambers, *The History and Motives of Literary Forgeries*, being the Chancellor's English Essay for 1891 (London, 1891; reprinted, New York: Burt Franklin, 1970). [A brief survey of ancient, medieval, and modern forgeries.]

Evelyn H. Clift, *Latin Pseudepigrapha, a Study in Literary Attributions* (Baltimore, 1945). [Deals chiefly with Plautine pseudepigrapha, Republican prose, and Augustan pseudepigrapha.]

Alfred Gudeman, "Literary Frauds among the Greeks," *Classical Studies in Honour of Henry Drisler* (New York: Macmillan, 1894) 52-74; "Literary Frauds among the Romans," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 25 (1894) 140-64.

Denys L. Page, *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934). [With special reference to Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Aulis*.]

Alessandro Ronconi, "Introduzione alla letteratura pseudoepigrafa," *Studi classici e orientali* 5 (1955 [1956]) 15-37.

Wolfgang Speyer, *Bücherfunde in der Glaubenswerbung der Antike* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970). [Deals with writings thought to have descended from heaven, writings from tombs and from the earth, and writings from temples, libraries, and archives.]

Archer Taylor and Fredrick J. Mosher, *The Bibliographical History of Anonyma and Pseudonyma* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1951). [Admirable in every respect.]

Hugo Willrich, *Urkundenfälschungen in der hellenistisch-jüdischen Literatur* (FRLANT n.s. 21; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1924).

MEDIEVAL FORGERIES

L. C. Hector, *Palaeography and Forgery* (London and New York: St. Anthony's Press, 1959). [Deals with the pre-Mabillon period of palaeographical criticism.]

T. F. Tout, "Mediaeval Forgers and Forgeries," *BJRL* 5 (1918-20) 208-34. ["To mediaeval eyes forgery in itself was hardly regarded as a crime" (p. 209).]

MODERN FORGERIES

F. F. Abbott, "Some Spurious Inscriptions and their Authors," *Classical Philology* 3 (1908) 22-30. [Of a total of 144,044 Latin inscriptions in vols. II through XIV of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 10,576 are spurious; that is, one to thirteen. Perhaps the most prolific forger was Pirro Ligorio (the successor to Michaelangelo in supervising

the work at St. Peter's in Rome), who was responsible for 2995 of the 3645 spurious inscriptions in *CIL* VI, 5.]

James A. Farrer, *Literary Forgeries* (London: Longmans, Green, 1907; reprinted, Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1969), German translation by Fr. J. Kleemeier, *Literarische Fälschungen* (Leipzig: Th. Thomas, 1907). [A wide-ranging account of frauds perpetrated by English, German, Greek (Constantine Simonides), Irish, Italian, and Scottish forgers.]

Edgar J. Goodspeed, *Strange New Gospels* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1931); reissued with significant additions under the title, *Modern Apocrypha* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1956); reprinted under the title *Famous Biblical Hoaxes* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968).

Wilfred Partington, *Thomas J. Wise in the Original Cloth* (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1946). [Faked first editions of nineteenth-century British belles lettres, produced by an honorary fellow of Worcester College, Oxford.]