

## Ethics and Pseudepigraphy – Do the Ends Always Justify the Means?<sup>1</sup>

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*Building on the memory approaches of the New Testament, this article analyses the link between pseudepigraphy and ethics. It aims to demonstrate that the period of turmoil of the first communities was a sufficiently destabilising situation that supported and shaped the use of pseudepigraphical literature in the New Testament. The originality of this paper lies in the specific consideration of ethics in pseudepigraphical literature. Focusing on two pseudepigraphical letters of the New Testament – 2 Tim and 2 Pt – this study shows that the loss of the Apostles around 60 CE raises a double challenge for the Christian communities. They had to establish clear indications in a chaotic situation and to translate specific ethical concepts in order to be understood and accepted in a hostile environment. Pseudepigraphy gave them the ability to face this double challenge by calling on authoritative figures of the past so as to call their fellow believers to order. Hence, the specific relevance of this paper is to consider the possibility of a conscious use of pseudepigraphical literature in the post-apostolic period.*

### Introduction

It is not uncommon to find pseudonymous works in ancient literature. Some authors sign their writings by taking on the name of another. This phenomenon is also referred to as pseudepigraphy. The New Testament is no exception in that regard, especially the epistles. For instance, in the thirteen epistles whose authorship is ascribed to the apostle Paul, most commentators distinguish seven authentic epistles (in the canonical order: Rom, 1 and 2 Cor, Gal, Phil, 1 Thess, Phlm) from up to six pseudepigraphical epistles (Col, Eph, 2 Thess and the Pastoral epistles).<sup>2</sup> Although the phenomenon is common in ancient works, it may seem surprising that it is equally found in writings

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1. The subtitle is based on Niccolo Machiavelli's quotation: "although the act condemn the doer, the end may justify him," *cf.*: Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio (Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livy), first book, chapter 9.

2. Janssen and Frey claim that the seven Pauline letters are the only writings on the twenty-seven of the New Testament that are signed by their true author. The others are either anonymous or pseudonymous. [Martina Janssen, and Jörg Frey, Introduction to *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen (Pseudepigraphy and Author Fiction in Early Christian Letters)*, ed. Jörg Frey, Jens Herzer, Martina Janssen, Clare K. Rothschild, with the collaboration of Michaela Engelmann (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 4.]

considered as Holy Scriptures. However, there is a widespread idea in exegesis according to which antiquity was indifferent to pseudepigraphy and the notions of scientific accountability were not the same as today.<sup>3</sup> In spite of the fact that there is a significant temporal gap and that the contemporary situation, especially regarding plagiarism, cannot be compared to that of the antiquity, some documents support the denunciation of some pseudonymous writings as "false writings."<sup>4</sup> Recently, this perspective has been updated and reinforced in Ehrman's well-researched monograph: *Forgery and Counterforgery*.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, Amsler claims that about pseudepigraphy the question is now whether this method is "fraudulent" or not.<sup>6</sup> Considering that this question cannot just be dismissed out of hand, this study presents the different opinions that emerge in the literature. However, as the key question to date tends to focus on the consequences of pseudepigraphy, this paper tries instead to pinpoint the causes. What accounts for the use of pseudepigraphy in the New Testament writings? This is the central question the following shall address.

As the literature on the subject is extensive, we shall begin by presenting an overview of the various hypotheses proposed to explain the use of pseudepigraphy in the history of research. Second, we shall attempt to tackle the question in the light of the historical context of two *pseudepigrapha* of the New Testament - 2 Tim and 2 Pt - to show its implications in the development of such a literature. The choice fell on these two letters as they represent canonical legacies of two major apostolic figures: Peter and Paul.<sup>7</sup> As we shall see, a

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3. Burnet identifies Ferdinand Christian Baur's work on the Pastoral Epistles (1835) as one of the first to have addressed the issue of New Testament pseudepigraphy in detail. According to Burnet, Baur's study expanded the idea that intellectual property was absent in antiquity. [Régis Burnet, *Épîtres et lettres. Ier-IIe siècle. De Paul de Tarse à Polycarpe de Smyrne (Epistles and Letters. I-II Century. From Paul of Tarsus to Polycarp of Smyrna)* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2003), 202.]

4. Wolfgang Speyer, *Die literarische Fälschung im heidnischen und christlichen Altertum: Ein Versuch ihrer Deutung (The Literary Falsification in Pagan and Christian Antiquity: An Attempt at Their Interpretation)* (Munich: Beck, 1971), 68-80.

5. Bart D. Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery. The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

6. Frédéric Amsler, "Pseudépigraphie et littérature apocryphe. Retour sur une pratique ancienne à la lumière de la mémoire culturelle" (Pseudepigraphy and Apocryphal Literature. Comeback on an Old Practice in the Light of Cultural Memory), *Études théologiques et religieuses* 91 (2016): 541.

7. The two letters are often considered as wills and testaments, cf. for example the two following articles: Luc Bulundwe, "2 Timothy 4:6-8 as Paradigm of the Apostle Paul's Legacy," *Athens Journal of Social Sciences* 4, no. 4 (2017): 420, for 2 Tim, and Bulundwe, *Analyse de l'éventuelle responsabilité des disciples de Jésus dans le retard de la parousie (2 Pierre 3,3-13) (Analysis of the Possible Responsibility of Jesus' Disciples in the Delay of the Parousia (2 Peter 3:3-13))*, in *Game Over? Reconsidering Eschatology*, ed. Christophe

relationship could be established between a decisive historical change, its implications on theology and the development of parenetic writings. Finally, it will be determined whether the historical context surrounding the production of *pseudepigrapha* may in itself account for these parenetic writings. This last paragraph may show that the focus on ethics, rooted in apostolic memories in a period of turmoil, could be a plausible hypothesis for the rise of pseudepigraphy. Let us begin with the literature review.

## Overview of the History of Research

### Key Definitions and Benchmarks

In light of recent development about pseudepigraphy, key terms appear of particular concern. In the introduction, a first definition has been established: a writing whose author explicitly signs by the name of another is considered as a pseudepigraph.<sup>8</sup> The concepts of anonymity and pseudonymity are close but express different writing processes. Anonymity is the absence of signature, whereas pseudonymity is the attribution of a name other than that of the author but not necessarily ascribed by the author himself. Therefore, pseudepigraphy may be considered a subset of pseudonymity. Based on this definition, 2 Tim and 2 Pt may be treated as *pseudepigrapha*.<sup>9</sup>

In the literature review, one can distinguish three different points of view about pseudepigraphy:<sup>10</sup> (1) pseudepigraphy as a forgery; (2) pseudepigraphy as

Chalamet, Andreas Dettwiler, Mariel Mazzocco, and Ghislain Waterlot (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 56-59.

8. Burnet, "Pourquoi écrire sous le nom d'un autre? Hypothèses sur le phénomène de la pseudépigraphe néotestamentaire" (Why Write Under the Name of Somebody Else? Hypotheses on the Phenomenon of New Testament Pseudepigraphy), *Études théologiques et religieuses* 88 (2013): 476.

9. According to Burnet, 90% of the scholars consider the Pastoral Epistles (1 et 2 Tim; Titus) as *pseudepigrapha* and 2 Pt can also be considered such. [Burnet, *Épîtres et lettres. Ier-IIe siècle*, 200-201.]

10. Amsler presents an overview of Gamble's study also presented by Aune, in the same collective book. In his paper, Aune seems to use pseudonymity and pseudepigraphy as synonyms. [Amsler, "Pseudépigraphe et littérature apocryphe, 543-544; Harry Y. Gamble, "Pseudonymity and the New Testament Canon," in *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen (Pseudepigraphy and Author Fiction in Early Christian Letters)*, ed. Jörg Frey, Jens Herzer, Martina Janssen, Clare K. Rothschild, with the collaboration of Michaela Engelmann (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 333-362; David E. Aune, "Reconceptualizing the Phenomenon of Ancient Pseudepigraphy. An Epilogue," in *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen (Pseudepigraphy and Author Fiction in Early Christian Letters)*, ed. Jörg Frey, Jens Herzer, Martina Janssen, Clare K.

promoting authority more than authorship; (3) pseudepigraphy as a common practice in antiquity.

Since 2013, the concept of forgery became so widespread with Ehrman's monograph that it appears difficult, if not impossible, to consider another opinion. Ehrman's general conception of forgery is "a writing whose author falsely claims to be a(nother) well-known person."<sup>11</sup> Moreover, updating Speyer's hypothesis, Ehrman claims that already in antiquity "forgery was indeed understood [...] to be a form of lying and deceit."<sup>12</sup> Aune and Burnet share the same opinion that "the notion of deception is intrinsic to pseudepigraphy."<sup>13</sup>

Nonetheless, these exegetes recognise different degrees in pseudepigraphy, from the mistaken attribution of authorship by a third party to the thoroughly intentional fabrication of a new literary world.<sup>14</sup> As a result, Amsler<sup>15</sup> qualifies the statement about forgery and considers that, even if deliberate, pseudepigraphy is not necessarily fraudulent. This paper follows Amsler's precaution and focuses on the hypotheses about the development of *pseudepigrapha* rather than the discussion on whether pseudepigraphy is a deceitful process or not.

To classify the different hypotheses, it may be useful to distinguish between works deliberately written as pseudepigraph and others that became *pseudepigrapha* through the reception and on which the author has no influence.<sup>16</sup> As the latter occurs in the reception, the next steps of the literature review will put emphasis on the first category – works deliberately written as pseudepigraph –, in order to respect the above definition of pseudepigraphy.

Building on Kaestli's study,<sup>17</sup> Burnet<sup>18</sup> and Amsler<sup>19</sup> describe two hypotheses about the rise of pseudepigraphy in antiquity: the ancient school's phenomenon and the inspiration theories.

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Rothschild, with the collaboration of Michaela Engelmann (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 797.]

11. Ehrman, *Forgery and Counterforgery*, 1, note 1.

12. *Ibid.*, 532.

13. Aune, "Reconceptualizing the Phenomenon of Ancient Pseudepigraphy, 792; Burnet, "Pourquoi écrire sous le nom d'un autre?, 477.

14. Burnet, "Pourquoi écrire sous le nom d'un autre?, 479.

15. Amsler, "Pseudépigraphie et littérature apocryphe, 549.

16. Amsler, "Pseudépigraphie et littérature apocryphe, 547.

17. Jean-Daniel Kaestli, "Mémoire et pseudépigraphie dans le christianisme de l'âge post-apostolique" (Memory and Pseudepigraphy in Christianity of the Post-Apostolic Age), *Revue de théologie et de philosophie* 43 (1993): 41-63.

18. Burnet, "Pourquoi écrire sous le nom d'un autre?, 484.

19. Amsler, "Pseudépigraphie et littérature apocryphe, 548.

## From Apostolic Schools to the Source of Pseudepigrapha

First, in the New Testament, most of the debates on pseudepigraphy focus on the Pauline epistles. The most popular theory on the formation of the Pauline canon postulates that the epistles were gathered by a Pauline school. This school was reportedly built around the apostle and was based on the model of ancient philosophical schools.<sup>20</sup>

Conzelmann<sup>21</sup> and Bornkamm<sup>22</sup> appear to be the first having raised the hypothesis of a Pauline School on the model of Hellenistic philosophical schools,<sup>23</sup> especially for the Pastoral Epistles. It could have been the same process for a Petrine School.<sup>24</sup> The aim of this Pauline school would have been to perpetuate, interpret and even prepare Paul's legacy in the light of a specific context and new challenges, especially through the use of pseudepigraphical writings. However, a slight qualifier must be added to the notion of "school." Dettwiler<sup>25</sup> underscores that although it is possible to establish a connection with ancient philosophical schools, not only does the New Testament present no indication relating to the existence of such a school but deutero-pauline literature does not present a homogeneous legacy of the Apostle either. In addition, Burnet<sup>26</sup> claims that there is no clear evidence of these schools before the third century C.E. Nonetheless, this hypothesis stresses the decisive notion of actualisation, to be defined in the following paragraphs.

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20. Gamble, "The New Testament Canon: recent research and the status quaestionis," in *The Canon Debate*, ed. Lee Martin McDonald, James A. Sanders (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers: 2002), 286 quoting Schenke 1975.

21. Hans Conzelmann, "Paulus und die Weisheit" (Paul and the Wisdom), *New Testament Studies* 12 (1966): 231-244.

22. Günther Bornkamm, *Paul. Apôtre de Jésus-Christ (Paul, Apostle of Jesus-Christ)*, trans. Lore Jeanneret (Genève-Paris: Labor et Fides-Librairie protestante, 1971).

23. Amsler, "Pseudépigraphie et littérature apocryphe, 550.

24. Karl Matthias Schmidt, Die Stimme des Apostels erheben. Pragmatische Leistungen der Autorenfiktion in den Petrusbriefen (The Voices of the Apostle Raised. Pragmatic Achievements of Author Fiction in the Epistles of Peter), in *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen (Pseudepigraphy and Author Fiction in Early Christian Letters)*, ed. Jörg Frey, Jens Herzer, Martina Janssen, Clare K. Rothschild, with the collaboration of Michaela Engelmänn (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 625-644.

25. Andreas Dettwiler, L'école paulinienne: évaluation d'une hypothèse (The Pauline School: Evaluation of a Hypothesis), in *Paul, une théologie en construction (Paul: A Theology Under Construction)*, ed. Andreas Dettwiler, Jean-Daniel Kaestli, and Daniel Marguerat (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2004), 421.

26. Burnet, "Pourquoi écrire sous le nom d'un autre?, 488.

### Truly Inspired Literary Works

Second, interpretation attempts focused on the notion of inspiration. This led to the creation of a category of truly inspired literary works which contained works considered to have resulted from an authentic inspiration experience.<sup>27</sup> The interpreters of such works classified them in the category of myths and considered them as rational literary works deliberately written under the name of another person so that they are not qualified as deliberate false attribution.<sup>28</sup> The aim is to shift the debate to the content of a text and not only the historical circumstances surrounding its writing. Speyer has identified these writings in pagan traditions as well as those derived from Judaism but far from Christianity. This disqualified Christian pseudepigraphs thereby considering them as fraud. They were allegedly written for an apologetic purpose in a context of controversy. However, this verdict is biased. In the first place, such an analysis does not take into account the author's intention, which is nearly impossible to reconstruct. Moreover, it is based on a unilateral line of argument. The arguments put forward by any opponent could only have been indirectly constructed. In other words, the criteria to distinguish a sincere pseudepigraphy from a fraudulent one seem to be insufficient and reflect subjective viewpoints, if not a value judgement.<sup>29</sup>

### A Pseudepigraphical Literature Specific to the New Testament

In addition, still in the inspiration theories, exegetes such as Aland<sup>30</sup> defended a "pseudepigraphical literature which is specific to the New Testament" driven by the conviction of the Christian authors to be regarded as key figures in a larger history.<sup>31</sup> Buttressed by this belief, these authors, in some cases, may not have signed some of their works and in other cases, signed on behalf of the apostle to which they referred. This specificity of the New Testament *pseudepigrapha* would make them inapplicable to the category used by

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27. Speyer, "Fälschung, pseudepigraphische freie Erfindung und 'echte religiöse Pseudepigraphie'," (Falsification, Pseudepigraphical Free Invention and 'Real Religious Pseudepigraphy'), in *Pseudepigrapha I. Pseudopythagorica – Lettres de Platon – Littérature pseudépigraohique juive (Pseudepigraphical Jewish Literature - Letters from Plato)*, ed. Kurt von Fritz (Vandoeuvres-Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1972), 331-335.

28. *Ibid.*, 340-345.

29. Ruben Zimmermann, "Unecht – und doch wahr? Pseudepigraphie im Neuen Testament als theologisches Problem" (False – and Yet True? Pseudepigraphy in the New Testament as Theological Problem), *Zeitschrift für Neues Testament* 12, no. 2 (2003): 28.

30. Kurt Aland, "The Problem of Anonymity and Pseudonymity in Christian Literature of the First Two Centuries," *Journal of Theological Studies* 12 (1961): 39-49.

31. Kaestli, "Mémoire et pseudépigraohie, 48.

Speyer or any other comparison out of the New Testament canon given their specific character as Christian writings. Also, it would not be appropriate to qualify them as false.<sup>32</sup> Aland's argument attempts to respond to exegetes who rely on the historical context surrounding the production of New Testament *pseudepigrapha* and especially to synchronic approaches, which compare them to other *pseudepigrapha* of the same era and derived from Jewish and pagan literature. This point of view also favours the value judgements and seems to be driven by a strong theological belief rather than well-founded exegetical arguments.

### Pseudepigraphy as a Way to Actualise the Apostolic Tradition

This overview shall end with a presentation of Meade's work: *Pseudonymity and the Canon*<sup>33</sup> which have received significant attention. The author postulates that pseudepigraphy is a form of actualisation of tradition.<sup>34</sup> According to him, the pseudepigraphy of the New Testament, like wisdom, prophetic and apocalyptic traditions of the Hebrew Bible, acknowledges a revealed authoritative tradition which is remembered and actualised after the death of the apostles. Therefore, the New Testament pseudepigraphy should essentially be post-apostolic. This actualisation of an authoritative model of the past grants a certain specificity to the biblical pseudepigraphy. The key issue of this hypothesis lies in the interpretation of the New Testament pseudepigraphical writings as an actualisation of first and normative tradition.

Meade builds on the work of Zmijewski<sup>35</sup> and, according to Burnet,<sup>36</sup> more globally on the hermeneutic of Gadamer. Meade's book has influenced numerous *pseudepigrapha* specialists. To begin with, Kaestli<sup>37</sup> considers pseudepigraphy as a legitimate form of memories of Christian origins. Norelli<sup>38</sup> continued the research hypotheses of Meade and Kaestli by building on the

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32. Aland, "The Problem of Anonymity and Pseudonymity."

33. David G. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon: An Investigation into the Relationship of Authorship and Authority in Jewish and Earliest Christian Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986).

34. Ibid. 216-218.

35. Josef Zmijewski, *Die Pastoralbriefe als pseudepigraphische Schriften – Beschreibung, Erklärung, Bewertung* (*The Pastoral Letters as Pseudepigraphic Writings – Description, Explanation, Evaluation*) (Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt, 1979), 97-118.

36. Burnet, "Pourquoi écrire sous le nom d'un autre?", 489.

37. Kaestli, "Mémoire et pseudégraphie."

38. Enrico Norelli, "La notion de 'mémoire' nous aide-t-elle à mieux comprendre la formation du canon du Nouveau Testament? (Does the Notion of 'Memory' Help Us to Better Understand the Formation of the New Testament Canon?)," in *Le canon des Écritures dans les traditions juive et chrétienne* (*The Canon of Scripture in Jewish and Christian Tradition*), ed. Philip S. Alexander, Jean-Daniel Kaestli (Prahins: Zèbre: 2007), 169-206.

works of Maurice Halbwachs<sup>39</sup> about collective memory (first edition in 1950). As such, he interprets the connections between pseudepigraphy, memory and canon. As regards the notions of memory and pseudepigraphy out of the canon, the recent contribution of Amsler<sup>40</sup> is particularly valuable for the step from actualisation to memory approaches. Concerning the construction of an apostolic memory in pseudepigraphical writings, the recent articles of Buttica<sup>41</sup> are also rich, especially for the analysis of 2 Pt and 2 Tim.

To summarise, the research shows that memory approaches could strengthen Meade's study and lead to a solid hypothesis about the reasons for the use of pseudepigraphy in antiquity. This now has to be experienced in the two texts – 2 Tim and 2 Pt. Before, a brief overview of memory approaches appears useful.

### The Memory Approaches: Overview

In 2015, Keith published two articles that offer a detailed state of research about memory approaches in the field of the New Testament gospels.<sup>42</sup> He presents not only their origin but the reason why it took so long for them to penetrate the field of biblical studies. For the use of these approaches in the New Testament epistolography and the early Christianity literature, two other monographs, published after 2015, are also essential: the one edited by Tucker and Baker<sup>43</sup> and the other edited by Buttica and Norelli.<sup>44</sup> Memory approaches have entered many fields of studies and this overview could not be exhaustive. Nonetheless, in biblical studies two features can be noted.

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39. Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective (The Collective Memory)* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997).

40. Amsler, "Pseudépigraphie et littérature apocryphe.

41. Simon Buttica, "The Construction of Apostolic Memories in the Light of Two New Testament Pseudepigrapha (2 Tm and 2 Pt)," *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 33, no. 2 (2016): 341-363; Buttica, "Mémoire, fiction auctoriale et construction de l'autorité: l'exemple de la Deuxième lettre de Pierre" (Memory, Auctorial Fiction and Authority Construction: The Example of the Second Letter from Peter), *Études théologiques et religieuses* 91 (2016): 685-701.

42. Chris Keith, "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part One)," *Early Christianity* 6, no. 3 (2015): 354-376 and Keith, "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part Two)," *Early Christianity* 6, no. 4 (2015): 517-542.

43. J. Brian Tucker, and Coleman A. Baker (ed.), *T&T Clark Handbook to Social Identity in the New Testament* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).

44. Simon Buttica, and Enrico Norelli (ed.), *Memory and Memories in Early Christianity. Proceedings of the International Conference Held at the Universities of Geneva and Lausanne (June 2-3, 2016)* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018).

Firstly, thoughts about collective or social memory come from sociology and cultural anthropology. Keith<sup>45</sup> identified the first allusions about memory in the field of biblical studies around 1971. Secondly, three important scholars are Halbwachs, Assmann and Schwartz. In short, Halbwachs brought the concept of collective memory, Assmann the difference between the communicative and cultural memory and Schwartz the embodiment of memory in authoritative figures. The collective memory looks for the external levers of memory in the society, specifically among the living members of a group. The communicative memory is Assmann's way to express the collective memory. Conversely, the cultural memory goes beyond death and is close to the concept of tradition. The impact of Schwartz's studies is obvious as memory approaches in the New Testament studies are focused on the figures of Jesus and the apostles. In the biblical sciences, cultural memory is the most fruitful as the others describe a living process in a sociological perspective. Hence, the notion of cultural memory is interesting to understand the construction of the group identity. One will see in 2 Tim and 2 Pt that the identity of the group seems to spring from the memory of its founders at a time when the said memory was starting to fade.<sup>46</sup> It will be particularly interesting to note the emphasis on the parenetic dimension of the authoritative figures of the past.

### **The Need for an Apostolic *Ethos* after a "Break from Tradition"**

Taking up Keith's study,<sup>47</sup> who applied Assmann's work<sup>48</sup> to the origins of Christianity, Butticaz shows that the primitive Church experienced a "significant crisis in its collective memory" during the first century of our era. This crisis was mainly caused by the death of the first Christian generation in the early 60s.<sup>49</sup> In the words of Assmann, this loss caused a "break from tradition" (*Traditionsbruch*).<sup>50</sup> Against this backdrop, the successors of the Apostles implemented what Butticaz refers to as "A Twofold Safety Mechanism"<sup>51</sup>. The transition from oral to

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45. Keith, "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research (Part One), 355.

46. Amsler, "Pseudépigraphie et littérature apocryphe, 541.

47. Keith, "Prolegomena on the Textualization of Mark's Gospel: Manuscript Culture, the Extended Situation, and the Emergence of the Written Gospel," in *Memory and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: A Conversation with Barry Schwartz*, ed. Tom Thatcher (Atlanta: SBL Press), 2014.

48. Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen (Cultural Memory and Early Civilisation: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination)* (Munich: Beck, 1992).

49. Butticaz, "Mémoire, fiction auctoriale et construction, 692.

50. Butticaz, "The Construction of Apostolic Memories, 342.

51. *Ibid.*, 342-344.

written traditions about the life of Jesus and the development of pseudepigraphical literature, which made it possible to actualise, stabilise and perpetuate the memory of the apostles.

The need for stability is a result of the shock wave which ensued after the death of the apostles. This agitation gave rise to power struggles which influenced the governance, theology and ethics of Christian communities. This is seen in pseudepigraphical literature, which appears controversial at times and fights against the infiltration of some doctrines later considered as heretical as illustrated by 2 Pt and 2 Tim.

In addition, the demise of this generation may have made the authors put the apostolic tradition into question. Consequently, the mobilisation of apostles *a posteriori* aimed at reactualising, if not reconstructing, an apostolic *ethos*.<sup>52</sup> The focus on the *ethos* corresponds to the chaotic situation. The author of pseudepigraphical writings seem to use the apostles' figures to call to order their communities. This process becomes clear through the lens of memory approaches. The development of *pseudepigrapha* does not only take place after the death of the apostles historically, it relies on their memories. 2 Tim and 2 Pt are two good examples to illustrate this process as each of these letters contains traits which are specific to Peter and Paul, two key figures of early Christianity. Special attention was given to the two epistles in the study of New Testament *pseudepigrapha*. Indeed, as literary legacies they symbolically represent the end of the Pauline and Petrine traditions, at least in a canonical perspective. For each epistle, the analysis shall comprise a brief account of the issues pertaining to pseudepigraphy and a presentation of parenetic notices.

## Ethical Solutions to the Post-Apostolic Crisis

### 2 Peter - Canonical Testament of Apostle Peter

After an introductory section (1:1–11), the second epistle of Peter mainly focuses, in the body of the letter (1:12–3:16) on the delay of the Parousia (3:3–13) before a brief doxology. It should be noted that there are no greetings contrary to the Pauline epistles or the first letter of Peter (1 Pet) as well as a proximity to the epistle of Jude.

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52. Dettwiler's preferred scope of study is that of Pauline receptions. In his article, he demonstrates that this *ethos* is highlighted in the "auto-recommendation" or "epistolary auto-presentation" (cf. Col 1:24–25; Ep 3:1–13; 2 Tim 1:6–18). [Dettwiler, *Auctoritas Pauli selon la littérature deutéro-paulinienne et l'œuvre lucanienne* (*Auctoritas Pauli according to the Deutero-Pauline Literatur and the Acts of the Apostles*), in *Reception of Paulinism in Acts*, ed. Daniel Marguerat (Leuven-Paris-Walpole: Peeters, 2009), 306–307.]

As concerns the content, the epistle falls in line with the apostolic tradition not only of Petrine (1:12-15) but Pauline literature as well (3:15-16). Emphasis is put on the importance of prophetic writings of the Hebrew Bible as well as the Christ who is referred to as Lord. Peter is presented at the "threshold" of his death (2 Pet 1:14). This is typical of the testamentary literary genre,<sup>53</sup> as well as the controversy against false teachers (2:1 and 3:3). One can equally notice an eschatological dimension<sup>54</sup> but they particularly mark "an urgent appeal to remain faithful to the teachings received."<sup>55</sup>

This call illustrates the author's use of an authoritative figure to present a "way forward" to his contemporaries after the Apostle's death (1:15). In order to do that, the author mobilises the addressees' remembrance of Peter the apostle.<sup>56</sup> There are other elements in favour of pseudepigraphy, such as the emphatic auto-recommendation on the figure of Peter (1:12-18), his status as an eye and ear witness of Christ (1:16-18). These remarks about the eye and ear witness are here to give the epistle Peter's authority, to inscribe it in the apostolic doctrine and to confirm its continuity.<sup>57</sup>

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53. Dettwiler, *Die Gegenwart des Erhöhten: Eine exegetische Studie zu den johanneischen Abschiedsreden (Joh 13,31-16,33) unter besonderer Berücksichtigung ihres Relecture-Charakters (The Presence of the Most High: An Exegetical Study on the Johannine Farewell Discourses (John 13:31-16:33), with Special Reference to their Relecture Character)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 17-18. Dettwiler presents in the farewell speeches of St. John (John 13-17) general characteristics of farewell speeches in the antiquity. He builds on Winter's (1994) model. [Martin Winter, *Das Vermächtnis Jesu und die Abschiedsworte der Väter. gattungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der Vermächtnisrede im Blick auf Joh. 13-17 (Jesus' Legacy and the Farewell Words of the Fathers. Genealogical Investigation of the Farewell Speeches in View of John 13-17)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994).] For 2 Pt cf. also Fuchs and Reymond and for the characteristics of farewell speeches based on 2 Tim, cf. Weiser; Wolter. [Éric Fuchs, and Pierre Reymond, *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre. L'épître de saint Jude (The Second Letter of St Peter. The Letter of St Jude)* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1980), 25-26; Alfons Weiser, *Der zweite Brief an Timotheus (The Second Letter to Timothy)* (Düsseldorf-Zürich: Benziger Verlag-Neukirchener Verlag, 2003), 30-44; Michael Wolter, *Die Pastoralbriefe als Paulustradition (The Pastoral Epistles as Pauline Tradition)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 222-241.

54. Dettwiler, *Die Gegenwart des Erhöhten*, 18.

55. Fuchs and Reymond, *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre*, 25.

56. With regard to memory, 2 Pt 3:1-2 is particularly interesting. To open the debate about "the delay of the Parousia," heart of the problematic, the author calls his addressees to "remembrance" (ὑπόμνησις). Moreover, the following arguments are placed in the memory (μνησθῆναι) of the prophets and, above all, the teaching of the apostles.

57. Ernst Käsemann, *Eine Apologie der urchristlichen Eschatologie (An Apology of Early Christianity)*, in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen (Exegetical Experiments and Reflections)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 141-142.

## An Ethical Answer to the "Delay of the Parousia"

2 Pt is considered as one of the oldest documents that use pseudepigraphy and illustrate a dispute between orthodoxy and heterodoxy within the canon of the New Testament.<sup>58</sup> Ethical exhortations mainly surfaced in this controversial context. The testamentary tone therefore confers a strong symbolic authority to the arguments. In 2 Pt, these arguments are centred on the "delay of the Parousia." It is interpreted by opponents not only as a denial of Christ's promises (cf. Mk 13:30; Mat 10:23 and 24:34; Lk 21:32) but also as the denial of a creative God given the cosmic immutability.<sup>59</sup> By supporting such assertions, opponents start to consider that which was the foundation of an ethical behaviour as a relative concept. However, the author rhetorically points out the need for a negative answer.<sup>60</sup> Is the Lord late? No, according to 2 Pt. However, patience must be exercised (μακροθυμία) for all mankind to seek repentance (μετάνοια) (3:9). The concept of God's patience gives value to the present time. At the same time, the Petrine author takes the risk to introduce the question of man's role in the delay of the Parousia.<sup>61</sup> Several authors (cf. Frey<sup>62</sup> and Ngayihembako<sup>63</sup> have discussed this issue by highlighting the link between 2 Pt (3:9.11-12) and a rabbinic tradition. According to this tradition, it is humanly possible to "hasten God's coming." The theocentric lexical field of 2 Pt, as well as the use of Jewish sources (Isa 60:22b; Sir 36:10; 2 Apoc Bar 20:1-2; 54:1; 2 Chron 7:14) may support the interpretation of σπεύδειν (to hasten). Bauckham<sup>64</sup> describes a controversy in rabbinic Judaism mentioning this possibility. Would it be Israel's repentance? Israel's repentance would urge God to hasten his coming. The eschatological discourse would then culminate in the parenthesis.<sup>65</sup>

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58. Ibid., 137.

59. Fuchs and Reymond, *La deuxième épître de saint Pierre*, 111.

60. Jörg Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus (The Letter from Jude and the Second Letter from Peter)* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlanganstalt, 2015), 318.

61. For a detailed discussion about this topic, cf. Bulundwe, *Analyse de l'éventuelle responsabilité*.

62. Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, 351.

63. On the non-canonical Jewish sources, cf. also Daniel von Allmen, "L'apocalyptique juive et le retard de la parousie en II Pierre 3,1-13" (*The Jewish Apocalyptic and the Delay of the Parousia in 2 Peter 3:1-13*), *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie* 16 (1966): 263; Käsemann, *Eine Apologie der urchristlichen Eschatologie*, 145; Samuel Ngayihembako, *Les temps de la fin. Approche exégétique de l'eschatologie du Nouveau Testament (The Times of the End. Exegetical Approach to New Testament Eschatology)* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1994), 362.

64. Richard Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (Waco Texas: Word Books, 1983), 325.

65. Frey, *Der Brief des Judas und der zweite Brief des Petrus*, 350.

In 3, 12, the author asserts (own translation): "waiting (προσδοκῶντας) and hastening (σπεύδοντας)<sup>66</sup> the Parousia (coming) of God."<sup>67</sup> This active waiting can be interpreted as encouragement to maintain an ethical conduct beyond reproach. Through Peter memory (2 Pt 1,12-15), the author plays on his addressees' willingness. Placed in Peter legacy, this ethical urging becomes an order. In 11b, addressees are encouraged to live holy (ἀγία ἀναστροφή) and godly (εὐσέβεια) lives. Verse 13 discusses justice in the moral sense (δικαιοσύνη) and in verse 14 the parenetic line of argument reaches a climax as the addressees are explicitly encouraged to make every effort (σπουδάζειν) to be found spotless and blameless (ἄσπιλοι καὶ ἀμώμητοι), contrary to the opponents described in 2:13 with their blots and blemishes (σπίλοι καὶ μῶμοι).

In a nutshell, the post-apostolic author of 2 Pt is concerned about encouraging his addressees to have an ethical behaviour which is without reproach (cf. 1:5-7; 3:12-14). The possibility of a "delay of the Parousia" would be caused by an ethical laxity resulting from a questioning of repentance (μετάνοια).<sup>68</sup> God, in his patience, gives time for repentance. This interpretation of the verb σπεύδειν is based on Jewish apocalyptic thought.<sup>69</sup> It underpins the will to restore a discipline which during the apostles' lifetime was based on a potentially imminent Parousia (1 Thess 4:12). The mention of Paul (3:15-16) at the end of the epistle gives a quasi-ecumenical dimension to 2 Pt<sup>70</sup> and undoubtedly spreads its authority. It also shows that after his death, the apostle of nations joined Peter among the "pillars" of an emerging Christianity (cf. Ga 2:9).

## 2 Timothy - Apostle Paul's Canonical Testament

2 Tim as well as 1 Tim and Titus constitute the corpus known as the Pastoral Epistles. The epistle is classically structured. It comprises an introduction in which the apostle's auto-recommendation (1:6-18) follows the address, greetings and thanksgiving (1:1-5). In the corpus of the letter (2:1-4,8), there are two warnings against heresy. These warnings introduce the necessity to adopt a certain ethical conduct in an eschatological dimension (2:14-26 et 3:1-17). After the greetings, a blessing closes the epistles (4:22). 2 Tim is considered as a letter of friendship written in the form of a testament (cf.: Wolter; Weiser; Redalié).<sup>71</sup> The

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66. The omitted 1611 syh manuscripts add φεύγοντας (run, flee) but we prefer the *lectio brevior*.

67. Quite a few manuscripts have κύριου for θεοῦ. The latter however seems *difficilior* and may represent a theocentric context.

68. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 313.

69. Käsemann, *Eine Apologie der urchristlichen Eschatologie*, 145.

70. Buttica, "The Construction of Apostolic Memories", 358.

71. Wolter, *Die Pastoralbriefe als Paulustradition*; Weiser, *Der zweite Brief an Timotheus*; Yann Redalié, *Les épîtres pastorales (The Pastoral Epistles)*, in *Introduction au Nouveau*

exchange is more personal. Paul is presented at the threshold of death (4,6-8) as the only apostle after Jesus (1:9-10; 2:11-13). His succession falls on Timothy in the form of a deposit (παράθηκη) (1:12-14). According to Wall and Steele,<sup>72</sup> this framework reveals "the occasion of these letters." The two letters would better be "understood as a response to the crisis of Paul's departure (cf. 1 Tim 1:3; Tit 1:5) and the effect his absence may have on his unproven associates." The remembrance appears to be as much important as in 2 Pt. The aim of the author is to address the issues on the basis of Paul's teaching remembered. As for 2 Pt, this is in the semantic field since the beginning of the epistle.<sup>73</sup>

To consider 2 Tim as pseudonymous is the majority but not unanimous position.<sup>74</sup> In this perspective, the fact that this writing was connected to Paul seems to have aimed at placing Christianity in the prevailing culture<sup>75</sup> and creating a Pauline legacy which relies on proto-pauline literature and reinterprets it in a post-apostolic context. Parenthesis therefore falls in line with the figure of Paul. Like in 2 Pt, it takes on a strong and nearly solemn symbolic dimension. The literary genre – a letter of friendship written in the form of a testament –

*Testament: Son histoire, son écriture, sa théologie (Introduction to the New Testament. Its History, its Writing, its Theology)*, ed. Daniel Marguerat (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2008), 329-348. For a detailed presentation of the literary genre of 2 Tim cf. Bulundwe, "2 Timothy 4:6-8, 416-417.

72. Robert W. Wall, and Richard B. Steele, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 7.

73. See the different verbs that introduce the first exhortation in 1:3-6: I have in remembrance (ἔχω μνήαν), Remembering (μνηστικός), To call to remembrance (ὑπόμνησιν λαβών), I remind you (ἀναμνήσκω σε).

74. The consensus around the Pastoral letters has been questioned for close to twenty years especially by Johnson in the American exegesis and Herzer in the German exegesis who supported Johnson's view point in a bid to open the debate in an article significantly and programmatically titled: *Abschied vom Konsens*. [Luke T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2001); Jens Herzer, "Abschied vom Konsens? Die Pseudepigraphie der Pastoralbriefe als Herausforderung an die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft" (Farewell to the Consensus? The Pastoral Epistles Pseudepigraphy as Challenge to New Testament Studies), *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 129 (2004): 1267-1282.] Towner cannot be left out [Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006)]. Those who support the authenticity of part of the Pastoral letters argue that research on these letters conflates the debate on the unity of the corpus and the pseudonymity of the letters since the 19th century and the works of Friedrich Schleiermacher on 1 Tim. As such, Herzer believes that only 1 Tim would have been written later and pseudonymously. For Johnson, whose commentary mainly builds on the patristic tradition, the three epistles are authentic. [Michel Gourgues, *Les deux lettres à Timothée: La lettre à Tite (The Two Letters to Timothy: The Letter to Titus)* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2009), 43-46.]

75. Raymond F. Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. A Commentary* (Louisville, Westminster: John Knox Press, 2002), 200.

aims for a lively memory of Paul's willingness. This stresses the significance of the ethical exhortation.

### A Parenesis Made of Contrast

In the body of the letter, there are no less than eighteen singular imperatives which underscore not only the personal but the exhortative dimension of the epistle as well. The exhortations unfold in a contradictory argumentation between the advocates of the "to be continued" tradition. It comes from God through Christ, Paul, Timothy but equally Onesiphorus (1:15-18) and Luke (4:11) and oppose the "not to be continued" tradition, that is, those who deserted Paul: those of Asia including Phygelus and Hermogenes (1:15) or Demas (4:10). These two directions prepare parenetic instructions which are also made of contrast. In addition, following the auto-recommendation of 1,6-18, in which the figure of Paul is ideally described, the parenesis becomes one of the "exit points" of the figure of Paul.<sup>76</sup>

The two main pericopes concerning the parenesis are 2:22-26 and 3:10-17. The preceding excerpts (2:14-18 et 3:1-9) could also be incorporated<sup>77</sup> but the exhortation to adopt an ethical conduct beyond reproach abounds in these verses. The previous sections are used to create a contrast. They present a list of vices that are opposed by the highlighted pericopes which contrast them with the following virtues; 2:22: "pursue righteousness (δικαιοσύνην), faith (πίστιν), love (ἀγάπην), peace (εἰρήνην)..." and 3:10-11a: You, however, know all about my teaching (τῆ διδασκαλία), my way of life (τῆ ἀγωγῆ), my purpose (τῆ προθέσει), faith (τῆ πίστει), patience (τῆ μακροθυμία), love (τῆ ἀγάπῃ), endurance (τῆ ὑπομονῆ), persecutions (τοῖς διωγμοῖς), sufferings (τοῖς παθήμασιν). Furthermore, this list of virtues worth emulating is preceded by two verbs highlighting some prescriptions: v. 22, φεῦγε (flee); v. 24a, οὐ δεῖ μάχεσθαι (must not be quarrelsome). This contrast underscores the author's desire to present alternatives to forms of conduct which he must certainly have identified and abhorred.<sup>78</sup>

As 2:22-26, 3:10-17 is built in contrast with the description of opponents whose *ethos* is presented antithetically in a list of vices (cf. 3:1-9) which stands as an ideal-typical counter-example of the parenesis of 3:10-17. However, there is a change in tone from verse 3:1. It focuses on the "last days" (ἔσχάται ἡμέραι), and

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76. Redalié, *Paul après Paul: Le temps, le salut, la morale selon les épîtres à Timothée et à Tite (Paul after Paul: Time, Salvation, Morality according to the Epistles to Timothy and Titus)* (Geneva: Labor and Fides, 1994), 45.

77. Gourgues, *Les deux lettres à Timothée*, 286; Helmut Merkel, *Die Pastoralbriefe (The Pastoral Epistles)* (Göttingen, Germany, and Zürich: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 65; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 514.

78. Weiser, *Der zweite Brief an Timotheus*, 226.

presents a context described as "terrible times"<sup>79</sup> (cf. 3:1). This eschatological motive opens the final exhortations of the epistle. As 3:1-9 shifts from the historical background toward an eschatological dimension, it gives a peremptory nature to the instructions given in 3:10-17, which goes beyond any historical contingency.

The reference to the Holy Scriptures (ἱερὰ γράμματα) strengthens the apocalyptic dimension<sup>80</sup> of the pericope. It may even be connected to Paul whose letters were known, in a post-apostolic perspective. The reference to the Scripture also reveals the will to disseminate some *topoi* already discussed in veterotestamentary literature undoubtedly by Paul.<sup>81</sup> The Scripture becomes a way to disseminate the parenesis which is no longer addressed to Timothy alone but any servant of God (ἄνθρωπος τοῦ θεοῦ) for good works (πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν). In 2 Tim 3:14-17, it is presented as a means to lead to salvation in Christ Jesus.

The parenesis is built on the memory of the two central figures of Timothy and Paul. The master-disciple couple becomes an ethical example worth emulating. This may show a *Sitz im Leben* breaking from the Greco-Roman culture and philosophy which revolved around charismatic figures (Plato, Aristotle, et al.). Faced with the Greco-Roman culture and in a context likely characterised by persecution (cf. 3:12), the *auctor ad Timotheum*, would therefore aim at explaining its faith in terms accepted by the political, religious and intellectual authorities of the prevailing culture. In the remaining section of the epistle, other terms like ἐπιφάνεια and σωτήρ, which qualify Jesus, reinforce this view. Two terms that recall the worship of the emperor in Rome.<sup>82</sup> Consequently, the "youthful passions" which must be fled in 2:22 are seemingly not exclusively related to sexual impurity but may holistically refer to a form of immaturity that is contrary to the cardinal virtues of Aristotle and Plato (courage (ἀνδρεία), justice (δικαιοσύνη), moderation (σωφροσύνη), wisdom (φρόνησις or σοφία) often associated in the culture of the time, with experience and maturity, specific to πρεσβύτεροι (1 Tim 5:1.2.17.19; Tt 1:5). This contrast to strong urges

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79. The symbolic dimension of this marker is highlighted by the use, in verse 3:1 of the time καιρός (καιροὶ χαλεποί). It is not a historical time (χρόνος) but a spiritual season in the symbolic sense.

80. Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. A commentary*, 254.

81. This desire of the author of the Pastoral letters to disseminate some Pauline motives has been presented by Trummer, Wolter, and Merz as the creation of a tradition. [Peter Trummer, *Die Paulustradition der Pastoralbriefe (The Pauline Tradition of the Pastoral Epistles)* (Frankfurt, Bern, Las Vegas: Peter Lang, 1978); Wolter, *Die Pastoralbriefe als Paulustradition*; Annette Merz, *Die fiktive Selbstausslegung des Paulus. Intertextuelle Studien zur Intention und Rezeption der Pastoralbriefe (The Fictitious Self-Interpretation of Paul: Intertextual Studies on the Intention and Reception of the Pastoral Letters)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004).]

82. Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus. A commentary*, 203.

(ἐπιθυμίας), related to natural passions, is typical of stoic circles especially.<sup>83</sup> However, the Christian characteristic of this ethic is highlighted in the theological convocation in 2:25-26.

## Conclusion

This paper attempted to answer the following question: how can one account for the use of pseudepigraphy in the New Testament writings? To answer this question, the first section of the work presented an overview of the main hypotheses formulated in the history of research. Among several hypotheses, Meade's hypothesis<sup>84</sup> on the reactualisation of the past clearly held a place of prominence. His model, which is followed by several contemporary exegetes, was extended to show how a memory of origins was stabilised and preserved in a post-apostolic period. Building on his works, through the lens of Assmann's concept of cultural memory, we showed that this memory reactualisation also reached the construction of an apostolic *ethos* in a period when, as Donelson<sup>85</sup> states "the diversity of opinions about the character of the Christian life was, to some minds at least, out of control."

The study of 2 Pt and 2 Tim revealed that this reactualisation, or reconstruction, through the apostolic memory served a twofold purpose. On the one hand, it aimed at re-emphasising the importance of the present time in an eschatological perspective, which was the challenge of the author of 2 Pt. The goal was to give clear parenetic instructions to the addressees based on the concept of repentance (μετάνοια). On the other hand, to preserve this legacy, there was the need to explain in terms authorised in the culture that prevailed in the new persecuted communities, what the author of 2 Tim was striving to implement. In other words, one can conclude that this double challenge posed by the historical context of the New Testament *pseudepigrapha* authors required extraordinary means. If it is absolutely true that apart from this specific context pseudonymity may be inconceivable, in such periods considered as the end times, it may seem to be a brilliant idea. Or, to put it another way, answering to the subtitle question, contrary to widespread perceptions about pseudepigraphy, it seems that the end may sometimes justify the means.<sup>86</sup>

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83. Ibid., 239.

84. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon*.

85. Lewis R. Donelson, *Pseudepigraphy and ethical argument in the Pastoral Epistles* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986), 201.

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