

concept of literary or theological world is problematic. It is correct to observe that theological patterns are part of a larger whole, a theological world. In comparing various theological patterns, dissimilarities play a disproportionately large role. This leads Aageson to statements about divergent worlds, apparently taking a small visible pattern for the whole of a theological world, which is clearly incorrect. The patterns might also represent partially overlapping sections of one larger theological world. It would take further historical and social analysis to draw legitimate conclusions about this, but Aageson denies himself this option with his focus on theological analysis. He is left with only chronological development or authorship as mechanisms to explain his observations.

Second, it is questionable whether Aageson's method, moving directly from theological patterns to historical reconstruction, is legitimate. Even though earlier studies by Beker, Richards, or Merz approach the matter similarly, the methodology is essentially faulty, identified as the "idealistic fallacy." Patterns of theology tell very little about possible lines of historical development, unless they are anchored by external evidence. Without such an anchor, proposals for historical development are likely determined by unexamined presuppositions about religious development of early Christian communities, as appears to be the case in Aageson's conclusion.

Aageson's overview is an interesting case study in its methodology rather than a stand-alone textbook on the Pastorals or the Pauline tradition. The question of authorship will remain prominent in this discussion. If the Pastorals were written towards the end of the first century as Aageson proposes, then it took one or two generations beyond Paul (and most other apostles) to arrive at a settled package of 'true doctrine' that most likely had competitors. However, if Paul wrote the Pastorals in the early 60's, this implies a very early awareness of a settled state of doctrinal content. Add to this the observation that even Paul's letters, our earliest NT documents, appear to contain doctrinal summaries of preformed traditions, and we have here evidence of doctrinal formation that is traceable to the 40's, undercutting any argument for early and widespread variation of doctrinal content. Authorship of the Pastorals thus deserves careful attention, and Aageson's contribution sharpens our focus on some of the issues involved, although perhaps leading in another direction than he himself envisioned.

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Discerning the Spirits: Theological and Ethical Hermeneutics in Paul. By André Munzinger. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 140. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, xv+239 pp., \$101.00, hardcover.

Discerning the Spirits is a revision of André Munzinger's 2004 doctoral thesis presented to Brunel University and the London School of Theology under the supervision of Max Turner, which argues that for Paul "spiritual discernment . . . was dependent on a liberated perception of reality and mature self-understanding" (p. xiii). Munzinger teaches at the Institute of Protestant Theology at the University of Köln and argues further that "discernment" is "the nerve centre of Pauline thinking" and functions as a "translation of the Christ-event into the particulars of everyday life" (p. 18). To substantiate his claim, his work is divided into four parts. Part 1 (chap. 1) presents a study of discernment that is rightly expanded beyond a mere

lexical analysis of *diakr-inō* and *dokimazō* to include other words related to cognition. Part 2 (chaps. 2-4) establishes that which is to be assessed; this includes an analysis of the "renewed mind" (Rom 12:1), the "mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16), and Paul's general epistemic framework, which Munzinger describes as "existential/theologising" (p. 98, emphasis original). Part 3 (chaps. 5-6) contextualizes the concept of discernment in Jewish and Greco-Roman literary sources, and then argues that the agency of the Spirit results in transformed cognitive processes, "leading to a more authentic perception of both the self and others" (p. 160). Part 4 (chap. 7) summarizes Munzinger's findings related to the role of the "mind of Christ" and its "constitutive role in constructing and verifying meaning" (p. 191), and delineates contemporary theological and ethical implications of his study on transformed cognitive processes (pp. 194-96).

Munzinger has provided a helpful study on the interaction of the agency of the Spirit with existing cognitive processes. The interaction results in "transformed" decision-making (p. 188). The integrative concept of the "renewed mind," which is equated with the "mind of Christ" or "the mindset of the Spirit," however, appears to function in an overly-individualistic manner, and Munzinger's construct may be critiqued for overlooking the communal aspects of the agency of the Spirit with regard to decision-making (p. 35). In the context of 1 Cor 2:9-3:4, corporate epistemic issues are Paul's concern, and Munzinger's one paragraph defense of his individualistic approach fails to convince (pp. 185-86). Besides, by enfolding the communal orientation of Paul into an anachronistic individualistic orientation, Munzinger does not fully address the difference between the "renewed mind" in Rom 12:2 and the "mind of Christ" in 1 Cor 2:16. Specifically, the agency of the Spirit is not evident in Rom 12:2, and Munzinger's allusion to Romans 8 (p. 147, n. 32) to support his contention for the presence of the Spirit is not argued but simply asserted. Thus, this reviewer is not convinced that the "renewed mind" of Rom 12:2 and the "mind of Christ" in 1 Cor 2:16 are addressing the same cognitive processes.

Munzinger follows a universalistic approach to social identity and understands an "egalitarian" impulse in Paul's identity-forming agenda (p. 176). It is difficult to understand, however, how Paul could be arguing for "love" as that which "can level the differences of race, status, and gender," when in 1 Cor 7:20 he actually argues that each person is to remain in the state in which he was called. Further, the transformed cognitive processes that Munzinger envisions actually may be employed for the construction of communal identity in the context of difference. William S. Campbell in *Paul and the Creation of Christian Identity* (T & T Clark, 2006) argues that unity does not relegate difference (1 Cor 7:20; 12:12-13), but embraces "diversity not as a remaining vestige of human sinfulness, but as something perfectly in accord with the mind of Christ" (p. 94).

These two minor issues aside, Munzinger's volume provides useful information for those interested in Paul's conception of discernment, pneumatology, or his approach to identity formation within the early Christ-movement. It is an excellent example of cross-disciplinary research providing both theological and ethical insights into the thinking of the apostle Paul on this important ecclesiological and anthropological topic.

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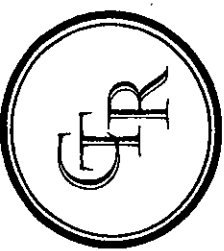
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