

BOOKS BY JOHN A. T. ROBINSON

Published by The Westminster Press

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On Being the Church in the World

REDATING THE NEW TESTAMENT

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THE WESTMINSTER PRESS
Philadelphia

the question is, What is the meaning of *διὰ Σιλβανουδ . . . ἔγραψα*? Is Silvanus the carrier or the scribe (and therefore by extension the writer) of the letter? It would be safe to say that he is in any case envisaged as delivering the letter and is commended to the churches for this purpose. But did he also write it at Peter's dictation or behest?

On the analogy of the opening verses of I and II Thessalonians, one might expect Silvanus to have shared in the address if he was part-author, or to have added his own greeting, like Tertius in Rom. 16.22, if he was the amanuensis, though obviously these parallels cannot be pressed. The bearer of Romans is evidently Phoebe, who is similarly commended to the congregation (16.1f.), and it is significant that the subscription added to later manuscripts describes the epistle as *ἐγράφη ἀπὸ Κορίνθου διὰ Φοίβης*. It was her activity, not that of Tertius, that the scribes thought was properly described by the preposition *διὰ*. This is one of a number of parallels given by Chase in a careful note on the subject¹³⁸ which seems to have been conspicuously ignored (or misinterpreted) by those who have not agreed with its conclusion. The only other example in the New Testament (also as it happens associated with Silvanus) is in Acts 15.23 where *γράψαντες διὰ χειρὸς αὐτῶν* must in the context (cf. 15.22, 27) refer to the *sending* of the apostolic letter, *via* Judas Barsabbas and Silas, and mean, as the NEB rightly renders it, 'gave them the letter to deliver'. The same applies to the Epistle of Polycarp 14, 'I write these things to you by (per) Crescens, whom I commended to you recently and now commend to you', and to the only unambiguous instance in the letters of Ignatius: 'I write these things to you from Smyrna by the hand of (*διὰ*) the Ephesians who are worthy of all felicitation' (Rom. 10.1).¹³⁹ On the other side only two parallels, as far as I know, have been cited. One is the letter from Dionysius of Corinth¹⁴⁰ to the Romans, where he describes I Clement as having been written from the Roman church *διὰ Κλέμεντος*. But this means not that Clement was the amanuensis of some other author, but the representative of his church. Similarly in the Martyrdom of Polycarp 20 the church in Smyrna writes to the church in Philomelium and elsewhere 'through our brother Marcianus', and he is distinguished from Euarestus who 'wrote the letter' and, like Tertius in this capacity, sends his own greeting. Marcianus again is evidently the spokesman of the church and thus corresponds to Peter rather than Silvanus: he is no one's secretary. So Kümmel

¹³⁸ HDB III, 790.

¹³⁹ For discussion of this and the other instances (Philad. 11.2; Smyrn. 12.1) see Chase.

¹⁴⁰ Eusebius, HE 4.23.11.

seems to be right in saying that 'no one has yet proved that *γράφω διὰ τῶος* can mean to authorize someone else to compose a piece of writing'.¹⁴¹

Until this can be shown, then to rely upon Silvanus as the real composer of the Greek is extremely hazardous.¹⁴² It could be so. Yet Peter as the author (as the very personal address of 5.1ff. would suggest) must really be prepared to stand on his own feet. The doubts and difficulties will remain, and it seems impossible that they could ever be finally resolved either way. In the last resort I can only say that I find nothing decisive to outweigh the many other considerations to suggest that, whoever actually penned it, the epistle comes from Peter's lifetime and that he is in the fullest sense 'behind' it. I see therefore no reason from the evidence of the authorship to go back on the previous assessment of a date for the dispatch of the letter somewhere around the end of April 65.

II PETER AND JUDE

Turning to II Peter, we move into a much more complex set of problems and an area of the New Testament that from every point of view, including that of chronology, is a good deal murkier. We cannot expect it to shed much light on anything else; it is a question of what light other things can shed on it. II Peter cannot be considered except in conjunction with the epistle of Jude, with which, all would agree, it has a literary connection of some kind. What that is, and what is the relationship between them and I Peter, and whether either Jude or II Peter can sustain the claim to be written by the persons in whose name they stand, raise acutely debated issues which may not be burked. But with dating as our primary concern it may be helpful to come at the matter from a different angle from that which has led to the concentration of the debate on the issue of pseudepigraphy.

Let us begin by leaving on one side for the time being the questions of authorship and literary dependence and look at the documents for the clues they afford which are relevant to placing them in 'period'. I deliberately put it that way, because neither II Peter nor Jude contains any positive indication of absolute dating. It is a question of where they belong in relation to other comparable literature, and more than usually therefore the arguments are in danger of being

¹⁴¹ INT, 424.

¹⁴² Selwyn's attempt, *I Peter*, 369-75, to show Silvanus to be the common literary factor between I Peter, I and II Thessalonians, and the decree of Acts 15.29, cannot be said to have succeeded. Cf. the telling criticisms of the whole 'Silvanus hypothesis' by Beare, *I Peter*, 188-92.

circular. If this other literature itself is dated late, then these epistles will follow; if early, then the same will be true. Yet II Peter has continued to remain an exception to almost every chronological scheme; and exceptions have value in proving a rule. *If* it is an exception, to what is it an exception, and why?

In asking what these two documents may have to tell us about dating, without prejudice to their interrelationship, we must begin with one or the other. Since the majority of scholars give priority to Jude over II Peter, let us start with the epistle of Jude, though keeping an open mind on the question.

Jude follows James, whose brother he claims to be (and there is general agreement that it is of this James that the claim is made), in calling himself simply a 'servant of Jesus Christ' (1.1; cf. James 1.1, 'servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ') and in giving no other details either about himself or of those with him, or of the place of origin or destination of the letter. In fact it is even less informative. While there are clues in James that point, as we saw, to a Palestinian milieu, there is nothing in Jude that affords any hint of where the author is living. And while James at least indicates that the destination of his epistle is *not* a single locality, Jude appears to be addressing a particular group of Christians but gives absolutely no indication of where they might be.

The one thing that is clear is the *occasion* of the epistle, which was of sufficient urgency to make him turn aside from other more leisurely literary activity:

My friends, I was fully engaged in writing to you about our salvation – which is yours no less than ours – when it became urgently necessary to write at once and appeal to you to join the struggle in defence of the faith, the faith which God entrusted to his people once and for all. It is in danger from certain persons who have wormed their way in (3f.).

The whole of the rest of the epistle, up to the notable doxology in 24f., is given over to an attack on these anonymous persons, referred to constantly as 'these men'. Almost all that can be said about them is summarized in the opening description:

They are the enemies of religion (*ἀσεβείς*); they pervert the free favour of our God into licentiousness (*ἀσελγείαν*), disowning (*ἀρνούμενοι*) Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord (4).

Their menace, in other words, is religious, moral and doctrinal. It is also clear from the terms in which they are condemned and the warnings given from the past, that both they and the writer and presumably those to whom he is writing belong to a dominantly, if not exclusively,

Jewish-Christian milieu within the Hellenistic world. Yet we are a long way from the 'primitive' atmosphere of the epistle of James, where no problems of heresy or schism have seriously arisen. Here we are in a silver-age situation, where reversion and perversion are the dangers and where purity of doctrine and discipline are imperilled. It is evident too that the menace arises from a sort of gnosticizing Judaism. Like those in Corinth with whom Paul had to deal, these men 'draw a line between spiritual and unspiritual persons', despising others as *ψυχικοί* (19; cf. I Cor. 2.6–3.4; 8.1–3). Like them too, they take liberty for licence (4; cf. I Cor. 6.12; 10.23) and end up slaves of sensuality (8, 10, 16, 23; cf. I Cor. 6.9–20; II Cor. 12.21). Like them, they 'eat and drink without reverence' at the Christian love-feast (12; cf. I Cor. 11.17–43). Like them again, they flout the authority of those set over them in the Lord (8, 11; cf. I Cor. 4.8–13; 9.1–12) and themselves claim leadership (cf. II Cor. 11.13; 12.11). As 'shepherds who take care only of themselves' (12) they earn the condemnation of Israel's self-styled leaders (cf. Ezek. 34.8).

Yet though there are these reflections of the situation in Corinth in the mid-50s, things are evidently far further gone. In Pauline terms, the parallels are more with the Pastoral Epistles, where we have the same falling back upon the authorized deposit of 'the faith' (3, 20; cf. I Tim. 1.3; 4.6; II Tim. 1.13f.; 2.2; Titus 1.9) – though even this was for Paul by no means a wholly new emphasis (cf. Rom. 6.17; 10.8; 16.17; I Cor. 11.2; Gal. 1.23; 6.10; Eph. 4.5; Phil. 1.27; I Thess. 2.13; II Thess. 2.15; 3.6). The danger from false brethren who insinuate themselves (3), though again not new (cf. Gal. 2.4), is especially characteristic of the later apostolic age (Acts 20.30; Phil. 3.2; II Tim. 3.6; I John 2.18f.; 4.1; II John 7f.; Rev. 2.20f.; cf. Ignatius, Eph. 7.1; 9.1); and they have to be dealt with both firmly and with discrimination (22f.; cf. I Cor. 5; II Thess. 3.14f.; I John 4.1–6; II John 7–11; and Did. 2.7; Ignatius, Smyrn. 4.1).

Yet if we ask what precisely these heretics taught it is impossible to form any clear impression. We read that they 'deny Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord' (4). But whether this was by faithlessness, like those referred to in Heb. 6.6 and 10.29 or II Tim. 2.12f. (cf. Titus 1.16; Rev. 2.13), or by doctrinal error, like those attacked in Col. 2.8 and I John 2.22f. and 5.6–12, or by dishonouring conduct, it is impossible to tell. But there is no reference to theoretical speculation and nothing to suggest any of the gnostic systems of the second century.¹⁴³ To infer from the phrases 'our only Master and Lord' (4) and 'the only God our Saviour' (25) that they believed in other mediators or a

¹⁴³ Kümmel, *LNT*, 426, concurs.

second God or Demiurge is eisegesis rather than exegesis. Their threat seems to have been far more moral and religious than theological. If there is a parallel with other known sectarian groups it is not (as many earlier commentators tended to argue without our present knowledge of the gnostic texts) with the later forms of heresy listed by Irenaeus such as the Carpocratians,¹⁴⁴ but with those gnosticizing libertines attacked in the letters to the seven churches of the Apocalypse who 'hold to the teaching of Balaam' (Rev. 2.14; cf. Jude 11) and 'pollute their clothing' with immorality (Rev. 3.4; cf. Jude 23).

There are no other distinctive characteristics of second-century Christianity. There is no stress on the authority of the organized ministry, or even reference to it (in marked contrast at this point with the Pastoral Epistles), and the *agape* or love-feast still appears to be one with the eucharistic assembly. There are those¹⁴⁵ who have found in Jude 5 a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem: 'Let me remind you how the Lord, having once delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt, next time destroyed those who were guilty of unbelief.' But the natural interpretation in the context¹⁴⁶ is to refer this to the destruction of faithless Israel in the wilderness, as in the closely parallel warning of I Cor. 10.5-10. Again, to interpret *πάσαι προγεγραμμένοι* in Jude 4 of long past *Christian* writings¹⁴⁷ is wholly arbitrary: it evidently refers to the warnings that follow from 'scripture' (as the NEB rightly translates). The references in v. 9, apparently, to the Assumption of Moses and in v. 14, certainly, to I Enoch carry in themselves no implication for a late date, since both these documents were in existence well before the middle of the first century – though the free use made of them indicates that they had not come under the later suspicion of apocrypha felt by the church.¹⁴⁸

The only passage which suggests a post-apostolic situation is that in 17f.:

But you, my friends, should remember the predictions made by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the warning they gave you: 'In the final age there will be men who pour scorn on religion, and follow their own godless lusts.'

This could indeed imply that the apostolic age was now closed, but it cannot be said that it necessarily does so. From one who makes no claim to be an apostle (or indeed to kinship with Jesus, which later

¹⁴⁴ For the differences here, cf. already Zahn, *INT* II, 292f.

¹⁴⁵ E.g. Zahn, *INT* II, 252-5.

¹⁴⁶ So J. B. Mayor, *The Epistle of St Jude and the Second Epistle of St Peter*, 1907, ad loc.

¹⁴⁷ Again with Zahn, *INT*, 251f.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Jerome, *De vir. ill.* 4.

interest in the person of Jude would surely have exploited),¹⁴⁹ it could refer to the sort of warnings of which the later apostolic age is full (Acts 20.29f.; I Tim. 4.1; II Tim. 3.1-5; 4.3; I John 2.18f. – leaving out of account for the moment II Peter 2.1-3; 3.3). The *ἔλεγον ὑμῖν* would most naturally refer to oral teaching, as in the parallel warning of Phil. 3.18f.:

As I have often told you (*ἔλεγον ὑμῖν*), and now tell you with tears in my eyes, there are many whose way of life makes them enemies of the cross of Christ. They are heading for destruction, appetite is their god, and they glory in their shame (cf. Rom. 16.18).

But even if reference were to written warnings, none of these other documents (leaving aside the Johannine epistles whose date we have yet to consider), excludes a dating in the 60s. Indeed as a provisional conclusion, on the scanty evidence of the epistle itself, I would concur with the estimate of Chase:¹⁵⁰

The general tone of the Epistle harmonizes best with a date somewhat late in the apostolic age. We shall not be far wrong if we suppose that it was written within a year or two of the Pastoral Epistles (assuming their genuineness), the Apocalypse (assuming the earlier date),¹⁵¹ the First Epistle of St Peter, and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Beyond that we cannot go until we have taken into account the link with II Peter, to which we must now turn.

II Peter affords as little direct information about its origin and destination as Jude, and its occasion is less specific. It purports to be 'from Simeon Peter, servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the justice of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ share our faith and enjoy equal privilege with ourselves' (1.1). To the significance of 'Simeon Peter', in contrast with 'Peter' in I Peter 1.1, we must return. But on the face of it the form looks, or is intended to look, both Jewish and primitive. 'Servant and apostle' brings together the 'servant' of James 1.1 and Jude 1 and the 'apostle' of I Peter 1.1, but in itself is a typical apostolic greeting (Rom. 1.1; Titus 1.1) without significance for dating. There are no indications, in contrast with I Peter, of where the epistle was written to or from. The distinction implied in 'those who . . . enjoy equal privilege with ourselves' appears to be between readers and apostle, as in I John 1.3 ('so that you and we together may share in a common life'), rather than

¹⁴⁹ Cf. the story from Hegesippus quoted by Eusebius, *HE* 3.19f., whose point lies in this link.

¹⁵⁰ *HDB* II, 804.

¹⁵¹ I.e., a date from the Neronian rather than the Domitianic persecution. For a discussion of this, cf. ch. VIII below.

between Jews and Gentiles, as in Acts 11.17; Col. 1.25-9; Eph. 2.11-3.6. Indeed it is impossible to be certain whether the recipients are Jewish or Gentile Christians, though (in contrast again with I Peter) the dominant atmosphere (as in Jude) appears to be Jewish-Christian. In 2.20 the words, 'They had once escaped the world's defilements through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ', have been taken to mean that the converts (or is it the heretics?) have come from what the NEB paraphrases in 2.18 as a 'heathen environment'. But the language no more necessarily implies a Gentile origin than when Paul says of his fellow-Jews in Eph. 2.3, 'We too were of their number: we all lived our lives in sensuality, and obeyed the promptings of our own instincts and notions', or when the writer of I John speaks to his predominantly Jewish-Christian readers of the evil world and its blandishments from which they have passed.

The prevailing atmosphere, as in Jude, is still that of the Pastoral Epistles, reflecting the same usage of *πίστις* and *σωτήρ* and *εὐσέβεια*, with particular stress on true insight and knowledge (*ἐπίγνωσις* and *γνώσις*) (1.2f., 5f., 8; 2.20; 3.18), which characterizes not only the Pastorals (I Tim. 2.4; 6.20; II Tim. 2.25; 3.7; Titus 1.1) but Colossians (1.9f.; 2.2f.; 3.10) and Ephesians (1.17; 3.19; 4.13) and, in verbs rather than nouns, the Johannine epistles (*passim* but especially I John 2.20f.). The epistle's most distinctive phrase in this regard is 'partakers of the divine nature' (*θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως*) in 1.4, but it has been shown that this, like the whole so-called 'Asian' style in which II Peter is written, in no way lies outside the range of first-century Hellenistic Judaism.¹⁵² Indeed, like the language of *τὸ πλῆρωμα* in Col. 1.19 and 2.19 or *σπέρμα θεοῦ* in I John 3.9, it may well be being taken over and given Christian meaning.¹⁵³ In content it is not essentially different from the Christian's *κοινωνία* with the Father and the Son and his transformation into the divine likeness claimed by I John (1.3; 3.2). And this goal is achieved not, as in Platonism and later gnosticism, by escaping from matter as evil, but by moral union, *having* escaped (*ἀποφυγόντες*) from 'the corruption with which lust has infected the world'. The dualism, as in the Johannine writings, is not

¹⁵² Cf. e.g. Philo and Josephus and in particular the Decree of Stratonicea in Caria to the honour of Zeus and Hecate, dated AD 22 (*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecorum* II, 2715). For the references and discussion, cf. A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, ET Edinburgh 1901, 360-8; Mayor, *Jude and II Peter*, cxxvii-cxxx and ad loc; E. M. B. Green, *II Peter Reconsidered*, 1961, 23; *II Peter and Jude*, 1968, 16-19; Reicke, *James, Peter and Jude*, 146f., 184; Kelly, *Peter and Jude*, ad loc.

¹⁵³ Kelly, *Peter and Jude*, 304, quotes C. H. Dodd's comment, *The Johannine Epistles*, 1946, on I John 3.2, that the writer 'is naturalizing within Christian theology a widely diffused mystical tradition'.

material and metaphysical but moral and eschatological.¹⁵⁴ The use of 'the world' is the same as that in John (e.g. I John 2.15-17) and does not imply any depreciation of the flesh *per se*. In fact neither in Jude nor in II Peter is there any sign of the ascetical denial of the flesh as evil (in contrast to its indulgence as indifferent) such as we find in Col. 2.18f. and I Tim. 4.3f.,¹⁵⁵ or of the docetic denial of matter as unreal of the Johannine epistles (I John 4.2; II John 7). In this again the persons attacked in II Peter as in Jude stand nearer to the libertines of Corinth: they promise freedom but the result is sensual slavery (2.19f.). In fact apart from their questioning of the *parousia* (3.4; cf. 1.16), there is nothing that suggests that the heretics in II Peter were any different from those in Jude or more 'advanced' in their teaching. The 'artfully spun tales' (*μύθοι*) abjured in 1.16 recall the 'myths' attacked in I Tim. 1.4; 4.7; II Tim. 4.4; and Titus 1.14, which are linked with an interest in genealogies and angelology, and in the last passage specifically called 'Jewish'. As in Jude, we are in the sphere of a gnosticizing Judaism, countered by warning examples from Israel's history (2.1-16). We are not dealing with the developed systems of second-century Christian heresies. Summing up the teaching common to both epistles, Zahn concluded:¹⁵⁶

While there were numerous parties and sects representing libertinistic theories and practices in the second and third centuries, there is none that so closely resembles the seducers described in II Peter and Jude as the libertinistic movement with which we become acquainted in I Corinthians, and as the Nicolaitans of whom we learn hints in Revelation.¹⁵⁷

So far then there would be nothing to cause us to date II Peter any later than Jude. It is, however, in the distinctive material of the epistle, particularly in three passages, 1.12-18; 3.1-4; and 3.15f., that the doubts arise.

¹⁵⁴ This point is made strongly and correctly by Green, *II Peter Reconsidered*, 14-21, and *II Peter and Jude*, 24f., against Käsemann, 'An Apologia for Primitive Christian Eschatology', *Essays on New Testament Themes*, 169-95, and especially such a remark as: 'It would be hard to find in the whole New Testament a sentence which, in its expression, its individual motifs and its whole trend, more clearly marks the relapse of Christianity into Hellenistic dualism' (179f.).

¹⁵⁵ How near the two apparently opposite extremes are is illustrated by the story Eusebius, *HE* 3.29, quotes from Clement of Alexandria about the founder of the Nicolaitans, who offered his young and lovely wife to others 'to renounce his passion': 'It was self-control . . . that taught him to say "abuse the flesh".'

¹⁵⁶ *INT* II, 283.

¹⁵⁷ Rev. 2.6, 15. They are evidently closely associated with those who hold to the teaching of Balaam (2.14; cf. II Peter 2.15f.; Jude 11) and with others who falsely claim both to be Jews (2.9; 3.9) and to be apostles of the church (2.2; cf. Jude 12).

1. Taken at its face value, the first passage actually contains nothing that would in itself require us to put the writing after the death of Peter. Yet it is the passage which has given greatest ground for suspicion that a forger is at work, inserting biographical detail for the sake of specious verisimilitude. Whether or not he is doing so cannot be decided except in relation to the whole question of authorship and pseudepigraphy from which at the moment we are prescinding. But let us examine the details without prejudice.

I will not hesitate to remind you of this again and again, although you know it and are well grounded in the truth that has already reached you. Yet I think it right to keep refreshing your memory so long as I still lodge in this body. I know that very soon I must leave it; indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has told me so. But I will see to it that after I am gone you will have means of remembering these things at all times.

It was not on tales artfully spun that we relied when we told you of the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and his coming; we saw him with our own eyes in majesty, when at the hands of God the Father he was invested with honour and glory, and there came to him from the sublime Presence a voice which said: 'This is my Son, my Beloved, on whom my favour rests'. This voice from heaven we ourselves heard; when it came, we were with him on the sacred mountain (1.12-18).

Peter (it would be otiose to keep putting the name in inverted commas - any more than Jude or John) here uses the metaphor of the body as a tent (already found in Wisd. 9.15 and Philo, and of course widely in pagan literature) which Paul uses in II Cor. 5.1-4, and, like Paul, he combines it with that of taking off clothes. In his case, he knows, this putting off is to be *ταχυή* (swift), which could be interpreted to mean either 'soon' or 'sudden'. Zahn¹⁵⁸ argued strongly that it here refers to a sudden end, and this is supported by the only other occurrence of the word in the epistle (2.1) and indeed in the New Testament. The intimation upon which it is based, 'as our Lord Jesus Christ has shown me', appears (whether factually or fictionally) to be that alluded to in John 21.18f., where Jesus foretells that Peter will die an unchosen death when he has grown old (*ὅταν γηράσῃς*). By the seventh decade of the century this latter condition could already be said to obtain, but the concern to leave a record of his teaching behind him might be prompted by the expectation of an unprepared as much as by that of an imminent death. All we can say is that these are the words of a man for whom death is much in mind, and this would fit the 60s as the period when they were either written or supposed to be written. What he had in mind to leave, so that 'after I am gone you will have means of remembering these things', is equally

¹⁵⁸ INT II, 212-14.

unclear. Some¹⁵⁹ have seen in this a reference to St Mark's gospel (and the origin of the Papias legend). But the gospel of Mark can hardly be described as a reminder of 'these things', that is, the teaching of the present epistle (cf. 1.12). It would appear too to demand a writing by Peter (as the later pseudepigrapha like the Preaching of Peter and the Gospel of Peter supplied). Kelly¹⁶⁰ thinks that 'almost certainly the reference is to the epistle itself', though he admits that the future, *σπουδάσω* (according to the most probable reading), is difficult. It would naturally suggest a further document. For our purposes we may be content to suspend judgment, noting only that if a forger is at work he has laid some very elusive clues.

In the descriptive passage that follows, the transfiguration is regarded as an anticipation and pledge of the *parousia*, in the way that we argued it was, far less explicitly, in I Peter 5.1. It has also been said that the word *ἐπόπται*, eyewitnesses, echoes the *επιπτεύοντες* of I Peter 2.12 and 3.2; but this is very doubtful, since there it simply refers to pagans 'observing' the conduct of Christians. If the word has any overtones, it is more likely to take up the language of the mysteries and the claims of the heretics that in their visions (cf. the dreams or trances of Jude 8) they had direct experience of the deep things of God (cf. Rev. 2.24). But its immediate reference is to apostolic eyewitness, to which I John 1.1-3 also appeals in similar circumstances. It is generally accepted that the wording of the account of the transfiguration is independent of any of our gospel texts. The omission of the injunction 'hear him', common to them all, and of any reference to Moses and Elijah or to the three tents (*σκηναί*), which one would have thought irresistible after the *σκηνώματος* of 1.14, tells heavily against the use of the synoptists by a later hand. The only other touch, 'the holy mountain', which is said to betray veneration of the sacred site (for which there is in fact no evidence till *much* later), is hardly decisive for dating. As regularly with Zion or Sinai in the Old Testament, any mountain with which theophany is associated is for the Jew 'holy'.

The really significant parallel for dating purposes is that with the Apocalypse of Peter.¹⁶¹ This document is usually put in the first half of the second century, perhaps c. 135. It is quite palpably dependent on the synoptic gospels, particularly Matthew.¹⁶² This is true too of its

¹⁵⁹ E.g. Bigg, *Peter and Jude*, ad loc.; Mayor, *Jude and II Peter*, cxlii and ad loc.

¹⁶⁰ *Peter and Jude*, 315.

¹⁶¹ For the full text, see Hennecke, *NT Apoc.* II, 668-83.

¹⁶² Thus the opening verse contains clear echoes of Matt. 24.3: 'And when he was seated on the Mount of Olives, his own came unto him, and we entreated and

section on the transfiguration (15-17), which includes a highly elaborated account of the vision of the appearances of Moses and Elijah and quotes Peter's comment *verbatim* from the version in Matt. 17.4: 'My Lord, wilt thou that I make here three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses and one for Elias?'. By contrast its only verbal contact with the account in II Peter is the reference (and that in the Ethiopic version only) to 'the holy mountain'. If there is dependence either way, it seems quite clear that the Apocalypse is the later document. How Harnack can have thought otherwise¹⁶³ must be counted as one of those aberrations of scholarship which fresh discoveries induce,¹⁶⁴ and it has long since been abandoned even by those who view II Peter as a second-century document.¹⁶⁵ That even conservative scholars like W. Sanday¹⁶⁶ can have thought that the two came from the same pen, or like Chase¹⁶⁷ from the same school at approximately the same date, is incredible. Indeed if this is the sort of thing that was being produced in the first half of the second century it is the strongest possible argument for *not* placing II Peter there. As the writer of the article on the Apocalypse of Peter in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* says,¹⁶⁸ 'one short sample will indicate the nature of the whole', and he quotes:

And some there were there hanging by their tongues: and these were they that blasphemed the way of righteousness, and under them was laid fire flaming and tormenting them. And there was a great lake full of flaming mire, wherein were certain men that turned away from righteousness; and angels, tormentors, were set over them. And there were also others, women, hanged by their hair above that mire which boiled up; and these were they which adorned themselves for adultery.

He comments:

That this writing, in all likelihood in no small part suggested by the canonical Revelation, and the product of perfervid imagination, aided by Orphic and

implored him severally and besought him, saying unto him, "Make known unto us what are the signs of thy Parousia and of the end of the world." ' The contrast with II Peter is at once evident.

¹⁶³ *Chron.*, 470-2. He dated the Apocalypse c. 120-40 (or 110-60) and II Peter c. 160 (or 150-175).

¹⁶⁴ At the time he only had the Akhmim fragment in Greek to go on, discovered in 1886, though this includes most of the relevant parallels. The complete text, in Ethiopic translation, was found in 1910. For a modern assessment, cf. C. Maurer in Hennecke, *NT Apoc.* II, 663-8.

¹⁶⁵ Moffatt, *ILNT*, 367, was a strange exception.

¹⁶⁶ W. Sanday, *Inspiration*, Oxford 1893, 347.

¹⁶⁷ *HDB* III, 815f. He is followed by McNeile-Williams, *INT*, 247.

¹⁶⁸ M. S. Enslin, *IDB* III, 758.

Pythagorean accounts of the future, is not later than the middle of the second century is universally admitted.

He agrees in fact that it is probably earlier than the Gospel of Peter — but interestingly *never even mentions* II Peter. Yet the same Dictionary's article on II Peter¹⁶⁹ continues to date this epistle c. 150 AD.! On the basis of this passage of II Peter alone some rethinking of critical pre-suppositions appears to be called for.

2. The second passage, II Peter 3.1-4, raises more difficulties. The writer starts with a reference, apparently, to I Peter:

This is now my second letter to you, my friends. In both of them I have been recalling to you what you already know, to rouse you to honest thought. Remember the predictions made by God's own prophets, and the commands given by the Lord and Saviour through your apostles (3.1f.).

The relation to I Peter must engage us later. At this stage one need only say that if the writer is a Christian from a subsequent age then the reference *must* be to I Peter, since this is the only other Petrine letter of which there is any record in the tradition. Yet it is very far from obvious that the content of the two epistles *is* the same, and, if the allusion here is to I Peter 1.10-12 (the only likely passage), then the content of the prophecies there is the sufferings of Christ, not, as in the verses that follow in II Peter, the state of affairs at the end of the world. Again the pseudepigrapher does not lay his trail at all obviously.

The phrase in v. 2, 'your apostles', certainly reads oddly (quite apart from the tortuous grammar of the Greek) from one claiming himself to be an apostle, and it has seemed to most commentators to reflect the post-apostolic age. Yet we may say this with certainty only if it is agreed that Eph. 2.20 and 3.5 (where the apostles are also described as 'holy') *could* not have come from Paul, writing as an 'apostle of Christ Jesus' (Eph. 1.1). But, as we have seen, it is impossible to be so dogmatic. Moreover 'your apostles' need not, though it probably does, mean more than 'your missionaries' (cf. I Peter 1.12), and Paul (Rom. 16.7; II Cor. 8.23; Phil. 2.25), like Acts (14.14) and the Didache (11.3), continues to use the word in a wider sense. But assuming that it means those of the apostles particularly associated with you, this need not imply the end of the apostolic age, any more than when Paul says to the Corinthians, 'If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you' (I Cor. 9.2). In I Clem. 44.1 we have a similar usage of 'our apostles' (i.e., in Rome, Peter and Paul; cf. 5.3). All one can say is that the phrase itself is compatible with an apostolic or with a post-apostolic date. What is significant is that the apostles are

¹⁶⁹ J. C. Beker, *IDB* III, 769.

not contrasted in any way with a subsequent ordering of Christian ministry, as in I Clem. 44 (which speaks of their successors) or in the epistles of Ignatius (especially Rom. 4.3: 'I do not enjoin you as Peter and Paul did. They were apostles'). There is no more concern than in Jude with ministerial authority or its perpetuation.

But more serious as an objection to apostolic dating is the state of affairs reflected in the words of the scoffers that follow:

In the last day there will come men who scoff at religion and live self-indulgent lives, and they will say: 'Where is now the promise of his coming? Our fathers (οἱ πατέρες) have been laid to their rest, but still everything continues exactly as it always has been since the world began.'

I cannot believe that it will do to say with Bigg¹⁷⁰ and Green¹⁷¹ that 'the fathers' here means the ancestors of Israel. The context demands the sense¹⁷² that ever since the first generation of *Christians* died things have continued as they always have been, whereas the specific promise had been given: 'This generation shall not pass away until all these things happen' (Mark 13.30 and pars.). It is true that elsewhere in the New Testament 'the fathers' refers to the Israelites. But in I John 2.13f. we have the usage of 'fathers' in contrast with the second and third generation of Christians, which stresses their special relationship as the founder-generation to the ἀρχή, in the way that in Acts 21.16 Mnason as one of the 'originals' is called an ἀρχαῖος μαθητής. The death of Christians had always been a problem, as we know from Thessalonians and Corinthians, but the real crisis for the church must have come as that first promised generation was dying out and still nothing had happened. By the 60s a whole generation *had* elapsed. Naturally the difficulty did not then disappear.¹⁷³ But this is when the question must have been at its most acute, and there is no necessary reason to look to a later age. The theme of the master's delay, reflected in the church's adaptation of the parables, is already to be found in the 'Q' material of Matt. 24.28 = Luke 12.45, and also in Matt. 25.5, whose final editing we have seen no reason to place much after 60.

The details that follow in 3.5-13 of the *parousia* teaching do not in themselves require a late date. The notion of the destruction of the

¹⁷⁰ *Peter and Jude*, ad loc.

¹⁷¹ *II Peter Reconsidered*, 29f.; *II Peter and Jude*, ad loc.

¹⁷² So Mayor, *Jude and II Peter*, ad loc., strongly.

¹⁷³ Cf. I Clem. 23.3, quoting what it calls 'scripture': 'These things we did hear in the days of our fathers also, and behold we have grown old, and none of these things hath befallen us' (cf. II Clem. 11.2). But for the date of I Clement, cf. pp. 327-34 below.

world by fire, going back a long way in pagan literature, is now paralleled graphically in the Qumran Psalms (1QH 3.29-35).¹⁷⁴ Moreover Green is justified in pointing out¹⁷⁵ that the reference to Ps. 90.4 is not given a chiliast interpretation (that the world would last for as many thousand years as there were days in creation) such as it regularly receives in later literature (e.g. Ep. Barn. 15.4, Justin, *Dial.* 81.3f., and Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 5.23.2; 28.3). As he says:

If this Epistle had been written in the second century, when this doctrine was so widespread that it almost became a touchstone of Christian orthodoxy, is it likely that the author could have refrained from making any allusion to it whatever when quoting the very verse which gave it birth?

With the rest of II Peter's eschatology, including the coming of the day of the Lord as a thief (3.10; cf. Rev. 3.3; 16.15), the laying bare of the earth and all that is in it (3.10; cf. Rev. 6.12-17; 16.20; etc.), and the creation of new heavens and a new earth (3.13; cf. Rev. 21.1-4), this theme finds its nearest parallel in the book of Revelation (20.1-6), rather than in the extravagances of subsequent apocalypses, whether Jewish or Christian (including the Apocalypse of Peter).

3. It is the third passage (3.15f.), however, that presents the greatest difficulties of all:

Bear in mind that our Lord's patience with us is our salvation, as Paul, our friend and brother, said when he wrote to you with his inspired wisdom. And so he does in all his other letters, wherever he speaks of this subject, though they contain some obscure passages, which the ignorant and unstable misinterpret to their own ruin, as they do the other scriptures.

We need not spend time at this hour refuting the Tübingen thesis that the genuine Peter could never have spoken of Paul in terms other than of hostility.¹⁷⁶ It is however relevant to ask whether a second-century writer would not have adopted an attitude either of attack or adulation (rather than bewildered affection). Typical of later descriptions are 'the blessed Paul' (I Clem. 47.1; Ep. Polyc. 11.3) or 'the blessed and glorious Paul' (Ep. Polyc. 3.2). 'Dear brother' and similar expressions are confined elsewhere in the New Testament to living fellow-workers (e.g. Eph. 6.21; Col. 4.7, 9; Philem. 16) and Paul himself is so addressed by James in Acts 21.20. The expression therefore *sounds* as if it comes from a contemporary, whether it does or not. Indeed Mayor, who himself argues for pseudepigraphy, says:¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ The passage is quoted in full by Reicke, *James, Peter and Jude*, 176.

¹⁷⁵ *II Peter and Jude*, ad loc. He is here, as often, following Bigg (*Peter and Jude*, 214).

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, ch. 3.

¹⁷⁷ *Jude and II Peter*, ad loc.

There are many difficulties in the way of accepting the genuineness of this epistle; but the manner in which St Paul is spoken of seems to me just what we should have expected from his brother Apostle.

Again, the reference to the wisdom given to him implies not more than what Paul claimed for himself (e.g. I Cor. 2.6f.; 3.10; Gal. 2.9; Eph. 3.1-10). The contrast is striking with the self-depreciatory tone of the second century: 'Neither am I, nor is any other like unto me, able to follow the wisdom of the blessed and glorious Paul' (Ep. Polyc. 3.2). Moreover, whereas there can be no doubt that when Polycarp refers in the same passage to 'the letter he wrote to you' he means the epistle to the Philippians, the expression in II Peter 3.15 has baffled all the commentators. There is no obvious identification, unless indeed the reference to the Lord's patience with us being our salvation is meant to recall Rom. 2.4: 'Or do you think lightly of his wealth of kindness, of tolerance, and of patience, without recognizing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to a change of heart?'¹⁷⁸ In fact on this narrow basis alone Mayor argues for a Roman destination.¹⁷⁹ Yet there is no other hint that the epistle was written to Rome or from it. Either a genuine letter of Paul's has been lost or the imitator again is laying baffling or careless clues.

But the real problems start with the following phrase, *ὡς καὶ ἐν πάσαις ἐπιστολαῖς*. It is legitimate, with Zahn,¹⁸⁰ to point out that it is not (on the most likely reading) *ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς*. This would imply 'in every letter he wrote', whereas without the article the phrase could mean little more than *et passim* - though how much reliance should be placed on the presence or absence of the article in this writer is very doubtful.¹⁸¹ It is not in any case implied that the readers knew all Paul's epistles, nor that these already formed a collection, let alone a canon. Talk here of 'the Pauline corpus' is premature. The present tense, 'whenever he speaks', is not of itself decisive, since Ignatius uses closely parallel language in Eph. 12.2, 'who in every letter makes mention of you in Christ Jesus', though Ignatius combines this with phrases that make it clear that Paul is long since dead: 'who was sanctified, who obtained a good report, who is worthy of all felicitation'. II Peter, in contrast, whether genuinely or fictionally, clearly

¹⁷⁸ But this is, of course, a Jewish commonplace; cf. e.g. Wisd. 11.23.

¹⁷⁹ *Jude and II Peter*, cxxxvii and ad loc.

¹⁸⁰ *INT* II, 290.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Mayor, *Jude and II Peter*, xxx: 'I think we must recognize a failure to appreciate the refinements of the Greek article on the part of those whose mother tongue was not Greek and who may have also been influenced by the fact that Latin had no article.' Interestingly he does not even discuss this passage, following the longer reading (with the article) without demur.

implies that Paul is still alive. The misinterpretation of Paul's position, of which he speaks, in a gnosticizing, antinomian direction is of course plentifully attested in his lifetime (I Cor. 10.23; Rom. 3.8; 6.1; etc.), and, despite Paul's disclaimer, we may surmise between the lines of II Cor. 1.13f. that his readers *did* find parts of his epistles hard to understand. So far therefore there is nothing that *demands* a later date.

The crucial difficulty is the interpretation of the following phrase, *καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς*, which certainly suggests that the Pauline epistles were already being viewed as 'scripture'. In view of the parallels for *γραφὴ* and *γραφαί* in the New Testament,¹⁸² it is impossible, I believe, to argue¹⁸³ that the books of the Old Testament are *not* here being bracketed with the letters of Paul. The sole issue is whether the words imply that 'the writings' in question are seen as part of a canon, whether Jewish or Christian. This appears to be much more doubtful, and I would concur with the judgment of Mayor (who nevertheless thinks II Peter very late) when he says:¹⁸⁴

I incline to think that *γραφαί* is here used to denote any book read in the synagogue or congregation, including the letters of the Apostles (Col. 4.16; I Thess. 5.27) as well as the lessons from the Old Testament.

Certainly this would include the kind of apocryphal writings alluded to by Jude, one of which is described as a work of 'prophecy' (14). The work already referred to which is cited in I Clem. 23.3 ('these things did we hear in the days of our fathers also . . . and none of these things have befallen us') and which Lightfoot tentatively identified with *Eldad and Modad*,¹⁸⁵ is introduced with the words *ἡ γραφὴ λέγει*, and the same passage is designated in II Clem. 11.2 *ὁ προφητικὸς λόγος*. Certainly too if the quotations in James 4.5 ('the spirit which God implanted in man turns towards envious desires') and John 7.38 ('streams of living water shall flow out from within him'), each described as *ἡ γραφὴ*, are literal quotations, they do not come from the canonical Old Testament. Moreover texts from what appear to be the Old and New Testaments are already combined as citations of 'scripture' in I Tim. 5.18;¹⁸⁶ Ep. Barn. 13.7; I Clem. 36; Ep. Polyc. 12.1; etc. This does not by any means dispose of the

¹⁸² They are fully set out by Mayor, ad loc.

¹⁸³ With Zahn, *INT* II, 277f., 290f. His arguments are countered by Chase, *HDB* III, 810.

¹⁸⁴ *Jude and II Peter*, 168.

¹⁸⁵ *AF* I.2, 80f.; cf. Hermas, Vis. 2.3.4.

¹⁸⁶ 'The labourer is worthy of his hire' could well however be a proverbial saying, not a quotation from Jesus.

difficulty. Yet Green at least puts up a good case when he argues:¹⁸⁷

For the writer of II Peter, the term *ἡ γραφή* denotes writings of men in touch with God, *ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι* (1.21). He constantly correlates apostles and prophets – both are led by the Holy Spirit. In chapter 1 the apostolic testimony to the divine voice, and the divine voice through the Old Testament scriptures, are regarded in the same light. In chapter 2.iff. the false teachers are accused of wresting the Old Testament; in chapter 3 of wresting Paul.

Most will probably not feel that this is a complete answer. But I am not at this stage attempting to come to a decision one way or the other. Having, however, started with the conviction that the so-called anachronisms in the epistle were almost certainly insuperable, I have been impressed, working through them, how open the verdict has constantly to remain. These passages certainly do not prove a first-century date: but they do not prove a second-century date either. Moreover they leave unresolved the question of authorship – for the absence of demonstrable anachronisms could merely indicate the skill of the imitator. Nor of themselves do they determine the epistle's relationship to I Peter or to Jude. To these wider issues we must now turn. For only then shall we be in a position to resolve more closely the question of dating.

The one thing on which virtually everyone is agreed is that I and II Peter cannot be written by the same hand. Even those who accept the apostolic authorship of both concede, with Jerome, that the difference of style demands an amanuensis with great liberty of expression for the composition of one if not of each – though a difficulty of this theory is that the greatest evidence for Petrine colouring in theology and expression comes in the epistle that might refer to an amanuensis (Silvanus), whereas the other mentions none.

Attempts have been made to minimize the differences between the two. Thus Green¹⁸⁸ quotes, *via* Mayor, B. Weiss' judgment that 'the Second Epistle of Peter is allied to no New Testament writing more closely than to his first'¹⁸⁹ (he presumably did not count Jude!). Yet this is also true of the book of Revelation and the gospel of John, but the differences of style and cast of mind have convinced most critics that they cannot be by the same man. Apparently impressive comparisons of word-counts have a habit of breaking down and tend simply to prove how variously statistics can be presented.¹⁹⁰ One is

¹⁸⁷ *II Peter Reconsidered*, 31. ¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁸⁹ *A Manual of Introduction to the New Testament*, ET 1887, II, 165.

¹⁹⁰ Thus Green adduces the findings of A. E. Simms, 'Second Peter and the Apocalypse of Peter', *The Expositor*, 5th series, 8, 1898, 460–71, that I and II Peter are as close on word-score as I Timothy and Titus, where few would question

inclined to apply Kelly's comment¹⁹¹ on A. Q. Morton's disclosure,¹⁹² also seized on by Green,¹⁹³ that the computer reveals the two epistles to be linguistically indistinguishable: 'Most readers of Greek would agree that this conclusion illustrates the limitations of the method.'¹⁹⁴

Of course there *are* similarities of diction¹⁹⁵ – it would be astonishing if there were not – but, with the exception of the opening salutation 'grace and truth be multiplied to you' (I Peter 1.2; II Peter 1.2), most of them are fairly inexact or of the kind that might be found almost anywhere in the New Testament.¹⁹⁶ They certainly do not add up to what Green calls 'the extreme similarity in turn of phrase and allusion'.¹⁹⁷ Zahn, surveying the same evidence, concludes that 'the agreements in thought and language' are 'very few'.¹⁹⁸ Since Green cites Mayor's comment that in grammar and style 'there is not that chasm between them which some would try to make out',¹⁹⁹ it is only fair to give the full conclusion of his exhaustive examination:²⁰⁰

On the whole I should say that the difference of style is less marked than the difference in vocabulary, and that again less marked than the difference in matter, while above all stands the great difference in thought, feeling, and character, in one word of personality.

unity of authorship: I Timothy has 537 words and Titus 399, with 161 in common; I Peter has 543 words and II Peter 399, with 153 in common. It sounds impressive until we look at the figures which Green does *not* quote from Mayor (lxix–lxxiv) that show that in the vocabulary of I and II Peter 'the number of agreements is 100 as opposed to 599 disagreements, i.e., the latter are just six times as many as the former' (lxxiv). It looks as if both sets of figures cannot be right (they may not be as far as I know: I have not counted). Yet though the former is for the total number of words and the latter for each individual word (however often it is used), Simms' proportion of 153 shared words out of a *combined* total for both epistles of 942 is still only a proportion of about 1:6 (indeed slightly less).

¹⁹¹ *Peter and Jude*, 235.

¹⁹² A. Q. Morton, 'Statistical Analysis and New Testament Problems', in *The Authorship and Integrity of the New Testament* (SPCR Theological Collections 4), 1965, 52f.

¹⁹³ *II Peter and Jude*, 17.

¹⁹⁴ On the place and limitations of the computer in biblical criticism, cf. Bruce, *BJRL* 46 (1964), 327–31.

¹⁹⁵ For a detailed list, see Mayor, *Jude and II Peter*, lxix.

¹⁹⁶ The next nearest parallel is between *ἀπόστολοι καὶ ἀπόστολοι* in I Peter 1.19 and *ἀπόστολοι καὶ ἀπόστολοι* in II Peter 3.14. But, apart from the fact that one refers to Christ and the other to Christians, the words (in reverse order) are not even the same. *ἀπόστολος* is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament and suggests a different hand. The nearest true parallels for II Peter 3.14 are Col. 1.22; Eph. 1.4; I Tim. 6.14.

¹⁹⁷ *II Peter and Jude*, 13.

¹⁹⁸ *INT* II, 271.

¹⁹⁹ *Jude and II Peter*, civ.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, cv.

I have laboured this because I wish to go on to support Green in his critique of pseudonymity. But that the two epistles can in any immediate sense be the product of the same mind, let alone of the same pen, seems to me highly improbable. Chase, to whom Mayor²⁰¹ paid the deserved tribute of saying, 'I have found . . . his articles on Peter and Jude in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* by far the best introduction known to me', assessed the matter thus:²⁰²

The difference between the two Epistles [viz., I and II Peter] in literary style and tone and teaching are, as it appears to the present writer, so numerous and so fundamental that no difference of amanuenses or 'interpreters' can account for them unless we are prepared to admit that, in the case of either one or both of these letters, the substance and the language alike were left absolutely in the hands of the apostle's companion.

So what is the alternative? There would appear only to be one. 'Scarcely anyone nowadays doubts that II Peter is pseudonymous', says Kelly;²⁰³ 'though it must be admitted', he goes on, 'of the few who do that they defend their case with an impressive combination of learning and ingenuity.' Now if 'their case' is confined to doubting pseudonymity (as opposed to asserting identity of authorship), I believe indeed that there are points to answer which the proponents of pseudonymity pass over too hastily.

There is an appetite for pseudonymity that grows by what it feeds on. Thus M. Rist,²⁰⁴ believing that possibly two-thirds of the New Testament writings are pseudonymous,²⁰⁵ says, 'This, alone, [sic] shows the influence of pseudepigraphy in the early church.'²⁰⁶ If you believe it is everywhere, you cease to have to argue for it anywhere. Perrin writes: 'Pseudonymity is almost a way of life in the world of the New Testament and also in the New Testament itself.'²⁰⁷ Certainly it is among New Testament scholars! There is also a tendency to lump together very different categories of pseudepi-

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, ix. ²⁰² *HDB* III, 813f. ²⁰³ *Peter and Jude*, 235.

²⁰⁴ 'Pseudepigraphy and the Early Christians' in Aune, *Studies in the NT and Early Christian Literature*, 75-91 (89).

²⁰⁵ As we have seen, van Manen went further and said of the Pauline epistles: 'They are all, without distinction, pseudepigrapha' (*EB* III, 3625).

²⁰⁶ *Op. cit.*, 89. Similarly Nincham, in Cross, *Studies in Ephesians*, 22, appeals to the 'very common . . . practice of pseudepigraphy', citing *inter alia*, from the New Testament, the book of Revelation (but this makes no claim to be by John the Apostle) and, from outside the New Testament, II Clement and the Epistle of Barnabas. But these latter are *anonymous*, and do not themselves purport to be by the writers to whom tradition has ascribed them: in this they are comparable with Hebrews, rather than Ephesians or I and II Peter.

²⁰⁷ *NTI*, 119.

graphy.²⁰⁸ Thus Jude, for instance, readily accepts, at any rate for the sake of the argument, that what we call I Enoch was written by 'Enoch, the seventh from Adam' (14). The convention of ascribing apocalypses to patriarchs, like psalms to David or wisdom to Solomon or prophecies to Daniel, was of course fully established. Indeed the novelty about the New Testament Apocalypse is that it is neither anonymous nor pseudonymous. Later, too, not only apocalypses but gospels, acts and epistles were freely ascribed to long dead apostles (and to no one less than Peter). But there is no firm evidence for this until the mid-second century. In heretical circles too there were documents claiming to be by apostles (like the gospels of Thomas and Philip), but these were never accepted as such by the church. If we ask what is the evidence for orthodox epistles being composed in the name of apostles within a generation or two of their lifetime, and for this being an acceptable literary convention within the church, the answer is nil - *unless* Ephesians, the Pastorals, I and II Peter, Jude, and any other canonical books one cares to add, are their own evidence. In each instance we have examined so far the case cannot be said to have been made. It really is necessary to have at least one hard example established on its own merits before relying on the cumulative argument. II Peter could well be that example and it is certainly the most promising. But, as Green²⁰⁹ and Guthrie²¹⁰ quite legitimately argue, it would go against the stream of such evidence as we have rather than with it.

There is no doubt of what Paul thought of those who circulated letters claiming to come from him (II Thess. 2.2; 3.17): *he* knew of no harmless literary convention. Later Green quotes two instances which elucidate the church's attitude at the end of the second century. First, Tertullian²¹¹ tells us that the author of the Acts of Paul and Thecla was deposed from the presbyterate for the sole reason that he had tried to pass this work off under Paul's name.

The author of these *Acts*, like the author of II Peter, was orthodox; he, like the author of II Peter, made strenuous efforts after verisimilitude. He was, further-

²⁰⁸ Even Mayor, usually so discriminating, is guilty at this point.

²⁰⁹ *II Peter Reconsidered*, 32-7: *II Peter and Jude*, 30-5; cf. earlier Zahn, *INT* II, 270-3.

²¹⁰ D. Guthrie, 'Epistolary Pseudepigraphy', in *NTI*, 671-84; 'The Development of the Idea of Canonical Pseudepigrapha in New Testament Criticism', *VE* 1, 1962, 43-59, reprinted in *The Authorship and Integrity of the New Testament*, 14-39. The latter article is a reply to K. Aland, 'The Problem of Anonymity and Pseudonymity in Christian Literature of the First Two Centuries', *JTS* n.s. 12, 1961, 39-49, also reprinted in *Authorship and Integrity*, 1-13.

²¹¹ *De bapt.* 17.

more, inflamed with the noblest *pietas*, love of Paul, and it was with the best of intentions that he wrote. Yet he was deposed – for forgery.²¹²

Secondly, Serapion, Bishop of Antioch, wrote a book *Concerning the So-called Gospel of Peter*, from which Eusebius quotes:²¹³

For our part, brethren, we receive both Peter and the other apostles as Christ, but the writings which falsely bear their names (*ψευδευγραφα*) we reject, as men of experience (*ἐμπειροι*), knowing that such were not handed down to us.

Though the motive of his condemnation of it was the docetic heresy that he heard it was spreading, the criterion of his judgment, to which he brought the expertise in these matters that he claimed, was its genuineness as the work of the apostle. And this was the criterion employed a little later by Origen in relation both to II Peter and to II and III John.²¹⁴ He is doubtful of their genuineness; but there is no suggestion that if they had been pseudepigraphs, or he had known them to be such, it would have made no difference. Nor does he or any other Christian writer hint that there had earlier been any such convention. The fathers may have been uncritical (though hardly Origen) and been deceived, but there is no evidence that they were willingly deceived. In view of the significance usually attached to the lack of external testimony for individual books of the New Testament, it is surely much more significant that at no point is there the slightest external testimony to the collusion in innocent falsification to which appeal is so constantly made for documents like Ephesians, the Pastorals, James and I Peter. II Peter and Jude may still be the exceptions, but they have to be demonstrated as such.

Moving then from the general presumption to the particular evidence, what is to be said?

The very weakness of the external attestation for II Peter (albeit far stronger than that for any rejected writing)²¹⁵ suggests that Origen was not unjustified in doubting its genuineness – though these doubts are the most powerful evidence that the issue was not one that was not thought to matter. Certainly the epistle could be an attempt to silence latter-day scoffers and heretics in the name and authority of the chief of the apostles – although why anyone should resort for this purpose to the mantle of Jude is far from clear.²¹⁶ But it is fair

²¹² *II Peter Reconsidered*, 34. ²¹³ *HE* 6.12.3.

²¹⁴ Eusebius, *HE* 6.25.7–10.

²¹⁵ For the evidence, cf. the full surveys in Chase, *HDB* III, 799–807, and Mayor, *Jude and II Peter*, xciv–cxxiv. Eusebius, *HE* 3.3.1f., while placing II Peter among ἀντιλεγόμενα, or disputed books, has no hesitation in classing the Acts, Gospel, Preaching, and Apocalypse of Peter among the spurious (τὰ νόθα).

²¹⁶ Cf. Streeter, *PC*, 179f.: 'Jude is a person so obscure that no one, desiring to

comment that no other proven pseudepigraphs have this and no other motive. All, including the other pseudo-Petrine literature, had other axes to grind:

They attempted to claim apostolic authority for heretical teaching, or to embody the secret tradition of the apostle concerned, or else to provide a romance, a sort of religious novel, or, perhaps, to answer some of the questions posed by a third generation's insatiable curiosity.²¹⁷

II Peter does none of these things. Moreover, there are relevant questions to ask of this particular case. Why, for instance, does the author mention Paul in such brotherly terms and yet appear to be entirely uninfluenced by his theology – in marked contrast apparently with the author of I Peter? One would have expected him (like Ignatius and Polycarp) to quote or echo something from all those letters of his he claimed to know. As we have seen, he does not even identify the letter to the church to which he is writing – in contrast again to Clement, who when writing to Corinth reminds his readers of I Corinthians (I Clem. 47. 1–4) and echoes its teaching (49.5). Were the epistle genuine, 3.15 could indeed allude to a lost letter, as might the reference in 3.1 to his previous epistle (on the analogy of I Cor. 5.9). But neither of these options is open to a pseudepigrapher, if he wishes to carry conviction. He must in the latter case have been referring to I Peter. Why then did he make so little use of it? Boobyer²¹⁸ makes a strenuous effort to show how he did use it – and on the hypothesis of pseudepigraphy this has to be done. But he himself quotes R. Knopf²¹⁹ and Windisch²²⁰ for the judgment that the two epistles have little or nothing in common; and the connections which he finds are strained. Nor, as we have seen, does the author of II Peter make it clear to what other document he might be referring in 1.15 – unless he proposed to compose one himself and never did. To drop hints for the purpose of identification which merely baffle

give weight to his own views by publishing them under an authoritative name, would ever have thought of him, until and unless he had used up all the greater figures of the Apostolic Age. The epistle must therefore be the authentic work of a Christian leader actually named Judas.' He identifies him with a bishop of Jerusalem early in the reign of Trajan, regarding the words 'brother of James' as a marginal note incorporated into the text. There is of course no evidence for this, but as a last resort it is perhaps less incredible than pseudepigraphy.

²¹⁷ Green, *II Peter Reconsidered*, 37.

²¹⁸ G. H. Boobyer, 'The Indebtedness of II Peter to I Peter' in Higgins, *New Testament Essays*, 34–53.

²¹⁹ R. Knopf, *Die Briefe Petri und Judä* (KEKNT 12), Göttingen 1912, 254.

²²⁰ H. Windisch, *Die katholischen Briefe* (HNT 15), Tübingen 1915, 99.

is scarcely a convincing procedure. The argument that the personal references in II Peter are too blatant to be credible (or, conversely, that in I Peter they are too obscure) is inevitably subjective. Moreover, one would expect clues to be laid both of place and personalia which would help to add verisimilitude (like the many such details in the Pastorals or the reference to Tychicus in Eph. 6.21f.). But there is nothing – except the curious form of the name ‘Simeon Peter’ in 1.1, which corresponds neither to the address of I Peter, the natural model for a copyist (as in the salutation of 1.2), nor to that of any later Petrine pseudepigraph. In particular, the absence of any reference to Rome, the obvious place of origin to claim on both historical and ecclesiastical grounds, is puzzling.

It is relevant too to ask about the circumstances in which such a pseudepigraph might be composed. We have already noted a number of points which make a second-century date look unlikely (the contrast with the Apocalypse of Peter and later gnostic systems, the lack of reference to chiliasm, and the absence of any concern for organization and the ministry). It is noticeable in fact that in recent commentaries the date is steadily dropping. Kelly²²¹ opts for 100–110, Reicke²²² for c. 90. The latter’s choice of the reign of Domitian is this time neither because of references to persecution (of which there are none), nor because of the break between the church and the synagogue (of which again there is no sign – or, for that matter, of any post-70 situation), but ironically because in his reign prior to 95 the church had peace! II Peter and Jude, he thinks, are concerned to preserve a positive attitude to the state against those who would foment rebellion.

Obviously their authors wish to oppose certain propaganda for political freedom, propaganda which they regard as hostile to the social order, and to which the Christians have been exposed by the magnates and their parties. This fits especially well into the latter half of Domitian’s reign, during which the aristocrats and the senators of the empire fought with desperation against Domitian’s tyranny (Suetonius, *Vit. Dom.* 10).²²³

Yet it is not at all ‘obvious’ that the persons under attack in these epistles were concerned for *political* freedom. The only evidence is that they ‘flout authority’ (*κυριότητες*) and ‘insult celestial beings (*δόξας*)’ (Jude 8; II Peter 2.10). Political disaffection could no doubt be so described on the spiritual level, but there is no suggestion that this in

²²¹ *Peter and Jude*, 236f. ²²² *James, Peter and Jude*, 144f.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 145. He adds that the epistle of James ‘seems to reflect the same political situation’. Yet it would scarcely be possible to find two documents which on the face of it are much more dissimilar in the conditions they presuppose. However Reicke now tells me that he would like to reconsider all these datings.

fact is what is in mind. On the contrary, it is the spiritual authority of the church they are challenging. They have ‘rebelled like Korah’ (Jude 11), that is, against the ordinances of God and the leaders of his people (Num. 16).²²⁴ This is what *κυριότης* means in Did. 4.1, and the rejection of it there is linked with schism (4.3) – as in the split created by the insubordination of Diotrephes in III John 9f. who ‘does not accept our authority’. Neither II Peter nor III John is to be dated by reference to the political scene.

Yet the further back II Peter is pushed into the first century (where all the parallels suggest it belongs), the harder it is, as with the Pastorals, to satisfy the basic condition of pseudepigraphy, namely, that the readers should, willingly or unwillingly, accept the deception. Indeed a comparison with the problem of the Pastorals is instructive. There we argued for the important difference between pseudepigraphy proper and the view that the letters or charges were composed for Paul in his name and with his authority. Under the former hypothesis the persons of Timothy and Titus and all the details of news and travel plans are part of the fiction (or genuine fragments incorporated to enhance the fiction). Under the latter hypothesis the persons and situations are entirely genuine but, for whatever reason, Paul may have got someone else to write the letters on his behalf, though probably dictating the personal messages. It has been suggested – I believe improbably – that this agent might be Luke. But it is the relationship that matters, and this relationship is not that of pseudepigraphy, nor is it the role of an amanuensis played by Tertius in Romans (16.22). Transferring the analogy from the Pastorals to II Peter, the distinction is not so clear, because there are no details by which to assess the genuineness of the situation, as distinct from the identity of the writer. But it is an analogy that I believe it is profitable to pursue. For it seems to have been assumed without question that there is no third term between Petrine authorship (whether through an amanuensis or not) and pseudepigraphy. And both of these alternatives, I believe, are open to almost equal objection – though if faced with the choice I think I should have, with even such conservative scholars as Chase, Mayor and Hort,²²⁵ to plump for pseudonymity.

²²⁴ Cf. the ‘murmurers’ (*γογγυσταί*) of Jude 16 with Num. 16.11 (and I Cor. 10.10).

²²⁵ Cf. the characteristic remark of Hort’s quoted by Sanday, *Inspiration*, 347, and cited by Mayor, *Jude and II Peter*, xxii, that, ‘if he were asked he should say that the balance of argument was against the epistle; and the moment he had done so he should begin to think that he might be wrong.’

But at this point I should like to return to the relationship between II Peter and Jude. That there is some *literary* connection is indubitable, if only because all the parallels between the two epistles are virtually in the same order, as a glance at any reference Bible will show. Three main explanations have been advanced: (i) Jude is using II Peter (Spitta,²²⁶ Zahn, Bigg); (ii) II Peter is using Jude (the vast majority of other scholars); (iii) Each is using a common source (E. I. Robson,²²⁷ Reicke, Green²²⁸). The claims for priority can often be argued either way, as in the synoptic gospels (e.g. is smoothness or roughness, expansion or condensation, more likely to be original?). But it would seem that, on the assumption of direct dependence, II Peter is likely to be secondary, if only because it is difficult to see any good reason for writing Jude at all with so little fresh matter to add. The hypothesis of a common source, 'a sermon pattern formulated to resist the seducers of the church',²²⁹ is attractive, but like that of 'Q' it is defensible only if it is necessary. There would appear to be no other evidence for such a document as, it is claimed, there is for catechetical summaries, scriptural testimonia, apocalyptic flysheets, or such a moral tract as seems to underlie the 'two ways' material of the Epistle of Barnabas and the Didache.²³⁰ Moreover, what again was the point of producing the epistle of Jude if there was so little material in it independent of its source?

It should also be observed that, though the order of the common matter is the same, the degree of verbal correspondence is a good deal smaller than in those sections of Matthew and Luke that demand a literary and not just an oral connection. The relevant passages are conveniently set out in parallel columns in Moffatt's *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*.²³¹ It will be seen at once that, though the themes and many of the words are the same, there is no direct copying. As Guthrie, who supplies the statistics,²³² says,

If II Peter is the borrower he has changed 70% of Jude's language and added more of his own. Whereas if Jude borrowed from II Peter, the percentage of alteration is slightly higher, combined with a reduction in quantity.

The relationship is much more like that of Ephesians and Colossians.

²²⁶ F. Spitta, *Die zweite Brief des Petrus und der Brief des Judas*, Halle 1885.

²²⁷ E. I. Robson, *Studies in the Second Epistle of Peter*, Cambridge 1915.

²²⁸ Especially in his later book, *II Peter and Jude*, 53-5.

²²⁹ Reicke, *James, Peter and Jude*, 190.

²³⁰ Cf. pp. 323f. below.

²³¹ Op. cit., 348-50; also, in translation, in Leaney, *Peter and Jude*, 101-4. The complete Greek texts of Jude and II Peter are printed in parallel by Mayor, *Jude and II Peter*, 1-15.

²³² *NTI*, 926f.

It is the relationship not of a wooden imitator but of a creative reshaper of the themes – or it represents a single mind writing at much the same time in a somewhat different context. It was the latter alternative that commended itself there, and I am astonished that it has apparently suggested itself to no one here. Let me then propose a hypothesis.

Jude begins by saying that he was fully engaged in writing to his readers about their common salvation when he was forced to break off to send them an urgent appeal to close ranks against the danger of false teachers from within (3f.). I suggest that what he was composing, in the name of the apostle, was II Peter. This was to be a general letter and testament, a 'recall to fundamentals' as the NEB styles I John. But, corresponding to the briefer II John to a more specific and somewhat less advanced situation, Jude also first wrote off a hurried letter on his own authority to counter the immediate menace of the new heretics. This he then incorporated (for the most part in a single block in ch. 2) in the more studied style of the formal encyclical. This would explain the fact that there is no discernible difference in the situation between the two epistles. Both are written to predominantly Jewish Christians in danger of 'losing their safe foothold' (II Peter 3.17), though not from persecution but from error. This similarity was noted by Mayor:²³³

The moral corruption described in the two epistles is the same even in its minutest points; the cause of the corruption is the same, the misinterpretation and misuse of Paul's doctrine of God's free grace (Jude 4; II Peter 2.19; 3.16; cf. Rom. 3.5-8). The agents use the same methods and are described in the same terms.

He proceeds to detail them. Yet it does not appear to him to require explanation how or why the situations are identical at an interval, on his reckoning, of at least fifty years.²³⁴ Moreover, apart from the less spontaneous and more pretentious level of writing in II Peter which often overreaches itself, the vocabulary and style are indistinguishable.²³⁵ Mayor again in an exhaustive study of the 'grammar and style of Jude and II Peter'²³⁶ observes no point at which the usage of the two epistles diverges. This is surely very remarkable, especially when compared with the strained efforts to show the similarities

²³³ *Jude and II Peter*, clxxiv.

²³⁴ He dates Jude 'nearer 80 than 70' (cxlv), II Peter in 'the second quarter of the second century' (cxxxvii).

²³⁵ An equivalent might perhaps be the difference in formality between Galatians and Ephesians.

²³⁶ *Jude and II Peter*, xxvi-lxvii.

between I and II Peter. The only difference is the format in which the message is couched. When writing in his own name Jude says, 'Remember the predictions made by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ' (Jude 17); when writing with Peter's apostolic authority he says, 'Remember the predictions made by God's own prophets' (II Peter 3.2). Jude is representing Peter rather than impersonating him. But he leaves his own signature. For he calls him what *he* called him – Simeon. The only other person who is recorded as retaining this Hebraic use is his brother James (Acts 15.14): it was in the family.

In one sense this hypothesis is merely taking further the alternative at which Chase hinted when he said that no difference of amanuensis would be a sufficient explanation unless 'the substance and the language alike were left *absolutely* in the hands of the apostle's companion' (italics mine). In other words, he would not be an amanuensis but an agent. The relationship perhaps was best described by Origen,²³⁷ who saw this as a possible (though we should think needless) way of holding that the anonymous epistle to the Hebrews could still be Pauline:

I should say that the thoughts are the apostle's, but that the style and composition belong to one who called to mind the apostle's teachings and, as it were, made short notes of what his master said. If any church, therefore, holds this epistle as Paul's, let it be commended for this also. For not without reason have the men of old time handed it down as Paul's. But who wrote the epistle, in truth God knows.

He then goes on to record suggested guesses of who the agent might be – Clement of Rome and (again!) Luke.

Now if such a solution is possible to the problem of the Pastorals, whether or not it is *necessary*, it cannot be ruled out for II Peter. And in this case one may produce the identity of the agent with a good deal more plausibility. For with Jude the glove fits precisely – even when he is wearing a different hat. Whether Silvanus also stood in the same relationship to I Peter it is impossible to be sure, for we have nothing which comes solely from his pen by which to test it. But it is improbable. For in I Peter 5.12 the 'I' of the writer is clearly distinguished from that of the amanuensis (*if* indeed this is what *διὰ* means). The relationship is subtly but fundamentally different. As we have seen, the amanuensis can insert his own greeting (Rom. 16.22; Mart. Polyc. 20.2). But, like the political speech-writer or composer of an episcopal charge, the apostolic delegate must submerge his identity.

The hypothesis would also help to explain the doubts and hesita-

²³⁷ Apud Euseb. *HE* 6.25.13f.

tions over II Peter in the church – in striking contrast with the remarkably good attestation of the minor and apparently less authoritative epistle of Jude.²³⁸ For the latter authenticated itself – and there really is no case here for pseudonymity, unless again the Greek is, arbitrarily, deemed to be beyond a brother of the Lord. But II Peter is very puzzling. Try to fit it into the style or the situation of I Peter and it is bound to appear doubtful. Indeed, unless it is written by an agent, it must be written by a pretender – and for that, as we have seen, there is precious little motivation or plausible setting.

What then may we say is the setting of II Peter? I believe that Zahn was correct in refusing to see in 3.1 a reference to I Peter (though I think he was incorrect in dating Jude so much later). For the contents of I and II Peter are patently different, whereas the situation presupposed by Jude and II Peter is the same. The latter epistles are addressed to predominantly Jewish Christians in acute danger not from persecution but heresy; whereas I Peter is addressed to predominantly Gentile Christians in acute danger from persecution but with no mention of heresy nor whiff of a gnosticizing menace. To what then is the allusion in II Peter 3.1, where the epistle is described as being the 'second letter' to the same persons on the same subject? I believe two explanations are possible. Either it will refer to a lost letter, for which indeed there is sufficient precedent in Paul's extended correspondence with the church at Corinth. Or – and this is a solution I commend for serious consideration – it refers to the epistle of Jude, which would certainly qualify as far as description of contents is concerned.²³⁹ If then it is asked how the earlier letter could be described as one which the same 'I' sent to the same readers, we should remember that in Jude 3 the author said 'I was fully engaged in writing *to you*' what on this hypothesis is II Peter. The references are merely reversed. The principal and his agent are as one man. This may seem strange to us – though is it really so unusual in literary or official circles today? But it was established Jewish doctrine that, as the Mishnah puts it, 'a man's agent is as himself'.²⁴⁰

Whichever alternative is adopted, the necessity is removed, as Zahn saw, for having to find a setting for II Peter *after* I Peter. The most notable difference between Jude and II Peter on the one hand

²³⁸ Cf. Streeter, *PC*, 179: 'So far as external evidence is concerned, Jude is one of the best authenticated of the catholic epistles.'

²³⁹ Another possibility that has been canvassed is that II Peter is composite, chs. 1–2 or 2 constituting the previous letter. But for such a division there is no evidence, either in the manuscript tradition or even, as at I Peter 4.12, in the suggestion of a fresh start after a closure.

²⁴⁰ *Ber.* 5.5.

and the book of Revelation on the other is that, while they all speak of a similar danger from gnosticizing Judaism, the former two breathe no air of persecution. In this they stand much nearer to the attitude to the civic authorities in the Pastorals (cf. I Tim. 2.1f.) and the closing chapters of Acts. Indeed the atmosphere of II Peter, with the apostle's warning of danger from error and perversion 'after my departure', is closer than anything else to Paul's speech in Acts 20.29f. and to II Tim. 4.6-8. Though in their contexts both *μετὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ἔξοδον* in II Peter 1.15 and *μετὰ τὴν ἀφίξίν μου* in Acts 20.29 must carry allusion to the apostles' deaths, there is no reason why they should not also mean at the literal level 'after I have left you'. The same applies to 'the time of my departure' (*ὁ καιρὸς τῆς ἀναλύσεώς μου*) in II Tim. 4.6. II Peter 1.14 has been taken to imply that Peter is writing (or is purporting to write) on the point of death, though, as we have seen, this is by no means necessarily the implication of *ταχυνή*. In any case, we have argued that the similar language of II Tim. 4.6-8 (reflected also in Acts 20.24f.) came from 58 - a number of years before Paul's death. May it not be that II Peter also represents that apostle's parting testimony to the Christians of Asia before he leaves for Rome? For there is absolutely no suggestion that II Peter comes *from* Rome, unlike I Peter. Where he was at the time of its writing or why he had an occasion to use an agent (unless he was on a missionary tour, whereas later he was settled in the capital) it is useless to speculate. Unfortunately, unlike Paul, he had no Boswell in Luke. Yet it seems highly improbable that neither Acts nor Paul's Caesarean correspondence would have mentioned his presence in Jerusalem in 57-9 had he been there. Nor could he credibly have been in Rome in 57 without the exhaustive greetings of Rom. 16 including him. Moreover Acts 28.15-31 could scarcely have been written as it is, especially when the Jews say in 21f., 'We have had no communication from Judaea, nor has any countryman of ours arrived with any report or gossip to your discredit', if Peter was there preaching to 'the circumcision' (cf. Gal. 2.9) either on Paul's arrival in 60, or, in all probability, during the two years following.

If we ask to what area the internal evidence points for the epistle's destination, the only parallels we have for the kind of gnosticizing tendencies found in II Peter and Jude are either in Corinth (I and II Corinthians) or Asia Minor (Acts 20, Colossians, I and II Timothy, I and II John, Revelation 1-3). We may be fairly sure that Peter had been in Corinth in the early 50s (I Cor. 1.12; 3.22), and the reference in I Cor. 9.5 to him and the Lord's brothers, as examples familiar to the Corinthians of missionaries who had brought their wives, could

suggest that even then he had had with him Jude, the only one of the brothers whom we *know* to have been married.²⁴¹ For all along Peter seems to have been particularly closely associated with the Lord's brothers (Acts 1.13f.; 12.17; 15; Gal. 1.18f.; 2.9, 11f.; and cf. Mark 16.7 with Matt. 28.10; John 20.17). Corinth therefore is a perfectly possible destination for II Peter and Jude - in which case 'your apostles' will be Paul and Silvanus and Timothy (II Cor. 1.19), and Peter's disavowal of 'artfully spun tales' in his preaching to them will parallel Paul's disclaimer of 'the language of worldly wisdom' in I Cor. 1.17; 2.1. Nevertheless it seems improbable that Peter would have addressed so distinctive (and divided) a church as Corinth without any hint or mention of it (contrast again I Clement). For II Peter and Jude share the same anonymity of audience as the Johannine epistles and appear to reflect more scattered communities. In date too the emergence, as far as our evidence goes, of such gnosticizing tendencies in Asia Minor in the latter 50s and early 60s better fits the period we are looking for, and the 'Asian' style which II Peter in particular affects²⁴² points in the same direction.

Let us then surmise that Peter and Jude, wherever they may be (together or apart), are addressing a final word of apostolic testament to Jewish Christians in Asia Minor prior to Peter's departure for Rome for the last time. Can we put any date to this? We have already seen reason to think that he cannot have gone to Rome before 60 (and probably 62). There is ground too for believing that Jude is unlikely to be writing after 62. For he introduces himself simply as 'brother of James'. This in itself give no indication of whether James is alive or dead. But if he had already suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Sanhedrin, an event to whose impact on the Jews even Josephus testifies,²⁴³ quite apart from its traumatic effect on Christians,²⁴⁴ it would seem incredible that no hint of the tensions it created or of any posthumous epithet, such as *μακάριος* (as in I Clem. 47.1) or *ἀγαθός* (as in I Clem. 5.3) or, particularly in his case, *δικαίος*,²⁴⁵ should have crept into a letter written to Jewish Christians by his own brother. Indeed, as I have said, the most notable absence from these epistles is any reference to persecution, or for that matter

²⁴¹ Cf. again Eusebius, *HE* 3.19f.; 3.32.5, quoting Hegesippus.

²⁴² Cf. Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 366-8.

²⁴³ *Ant.* 20. 200-3.

²⁴⁴ Cf. again Hegesippus, and the space Eusebius devotes to his testimony in *HE* 2.23.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Hegesippus, apud Euseb. *HE* 2.23.4: 'He received the name of "the Just" from all men, from the time of the Lord even to our own; for there were many called James.'

any echo of the Jewish war, let alone the fall of Jerusalem. If these facts are taken into account, then 62 becomes a *terminus ad quem*, and we may date Jude and II Peter in fairly close succession (as Jude 3 indicates)²⁴⁶ between 60 and 62. Since Peter is about to leave, we may put them nearer to the end of that period than the beginning, let us say in 61-2.

Now this is precisely the period to which II Peter was assigned by independent reasoning by Zahn.²⁴⁷ I confess that when I first read him I was incredulous. I expected when I began this chapter that II Peter would either remain a pseudonymous exception (and have to be slotted somewhere into the late first century) or would belong to the gap (if any) between I Peter and the apostle's death. So early a dating will still probably seem incredible to many. Indeed, if the Pastoral Epistles are placed, as Zahn placed them,²⁴⁸ in the mid-60s (let alone much later), it is implausible. But if, as we have argued, these come from 56-8, then there is nothing improbable about putting II Peter some five years later. Yet all this is likely to carry conviction only if, as we have also argued, the gospels and Acts too come from before this date, and if the other comparable documents to which we have been referring, the Johannine epistles and Revelation, are not much later. The dating of Peter and Jude is, as I warned at the beginning, bound, on any chronology, to reflect that of other documents. Yet I believe they have more light of their own to shed than their unpromising matter might at first suggest.

To sum up, then, we may say that Jude and II Peter were written, in that order, to predominantly Jewish-Christian congregations in Asia Minor c. 61-2. Whether Peter then set out for Rome as he hoped or was delayed in Jerusalem to assist, as Eusebius suggests,²⁴⁹ 'with all the surviving apostles and disciples of the Lord' in finding a successor to James, we cannot say. But there is nothing improbable about that. By 64-5 at any rate he was evidently in the capital, from where, we have argued, he adapted preaching material, prepared for the church in Rome under the urgent shadow of the Neronian persecution in the spring of 65, for dispatch as an encyclical to different and more mixed congregations in northern Asia Minor, which there is no

²⁴⁶ So Bigg, *Peter and Jude*, 315-17: 'Jude is practically contemporaneous with II Peter.' But then he has to say, quite arbitrarily, that 'the two Epistles were addressed to different Churches'.

²⁴⁷ *INT II*, 210. He actually says 60-3, but then he dated Paul's arrival in Rome in 61. He ignores the relevance of the death of James, regarding Jude as written quite separately as late as 75.

²⁴⁸ *INT II*, 67. He dated them in 65-6.

²⁴⁹ *HE* 3.11.

firm evidence to suggest that he had ever visited.²⁵⁰ The Petrine epistles therefore throw no further light on the closing months or years of Peter's life and do nothing to modify the provisional conclusions which previously we reached. But whether he or Paul, who appears unlikely to have been martyred by the time of I Peter (cf. 3.13) and may well have been out of Rome at the time (*possibly* in Spain), perished soon afterwards will have some bearing on the dating of the remaining books of the New Testament yet to be considered.

²⁵⁰ Eusebius' statement in *HE* 3.1.2 that 'Peter, it seems, preached in Pontus and Galatia and Bithynia, in Cappadocia and Asia', is obviously only a guess derived from I Peter 1.1.