

The Thracian Rider Gods are represented by *Hērōs Aulōneitēs*, revered by Thracians (580/G488), Romans, and Greeks (616/L227–629/G757). (The first number lists the inscriptions by site of discovery; the number after the slash refers to a previous ordering that P. had made, dividing the inscriptions into L for Latin and G for Greek.) Devotion to the Thracian deities Suregethes (133/G441) and Rincaleus (189/L026) also continued into the Christian era. The Roman Silvanus had a popular following, and as elsewhere, was connected with the private domain of the non-elite (see list in 163/L002). The cult of Dionysus had a long life in the area. A famous, lengthy third-century inscription found at Doxato, a village north of Philippi, describes the eternal bliss of a bacchant in Elysium (439/L078). There are also references to devotion and worship of Diana (167/G005–174/L011), Isis (175/L012), Jove (177/L014), Cybele (054/L045), Venus (057/L046), Nemesis (142/G562), Pluto (527/G208), Liber, Libera, and Mercury (094/L590), Neptune (388/L566), as well as Horus, Apollo, and Harpocrates (191/G300). In 092/G496 someone offers a dedicatory inscription to a *theos hypogaios* (092/G496, cf. Phil 2:10 *epigeiōn kai katachthoniōn*). Who? Pluto/Hades? *Di-Manes* (divine dead)? Finally, the gravestone of Flavius Nikostratos Aurelius Oxycholios is significant for it mentions the Jewish synagogue (387a/G813).

Regarding the imperial cults, stones refer to *flamines* from Julius (700/L738) to Antoninus Pius (395/L780) along with numerous references to the *se(x)viri Augustales* (037/L037). One inscription honors together the emperor Hadrian, Jupiter, Juno, and Sabina, Hadrian's wife (208/L461). Marcus Velleius records on his grave inscription that he was a member of the (*se[x]viri*) *Augustales* as well as a *dendrophorus*, a member of a guild devoted to Cybele (321/L377). As a freedman of Tiberius (36–37 C.E.), he honored the emperor (282/L370, cf. Phil 4:22). Those officials had reserved seats in the theater (145/L73), so they probably rushed in at the last minute in proper array, like Canadian provincial officials at the Shakespearian Festival in Stratford, Ontario.

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TOM THATCHER, *The Riddles of Jesus in John: A Study in Tradition and Folklore* (SBLMS 53; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000). Pp. x + 306. \$45.

This is a volume with a wide-ranging and far-reaching revisionist agenda for Johannine Studies. Its argument, briefly put, runs as follows: the Gospel is replete with riddles; such riddles appear throughout Jesus' dialogues and account for their basic structure as riddling sessions; such use of riddles and riddling sessions proves crucial for interpretation, particularly with regard to questions of literary unity; Johannine scholarship has completely ignored their presence in and significance for the Gospel; acknowledgment of such presence and significance leads to the need for a fundamental overhaul of standard approaches and positions in Johannine studies. Key components of this overhaul include: riddles and riddling sessions as elements of early Johannine tradition; dialogues as literary unities; John 13–17 as a literary unity. The work itself may be described as an exercise in literary criticism, given its focus on genre (the riddle) and structure (the riddling session).

Revisionist agendas are by nature interested in first principles, and this project is no exception. Thus, before turning to an analysis of the Gospel, Thatcher covers much methodological and theoretical ground in order to secure a proper foundation for the proposed overhaul. In chap. 1, he sets the stage with a critical review of how Johannine scholarship

on the tradition history of the Gospel has bypassed the riddles. This established approach, T. argues, falters on two counts: first, traditional form criticism proves ill-equipped to identify folk forms (like the riddle) in written texts; second, Jesus' speeches are viewed as largely devoid of early traditions. A new type of form criticism is thus very much in order.

Thatcher proceeds to lay the foundations for the proposed new approach in chaps. 2–4. First, T. takes up the question of orality (chap. 2). After a sustained critique of its operative concept in traditional form criticism (oral words as physical things), he offers an alternative approach by way of folkloristics: oral words as events, interactions between persons in specific social contexts. Then T. addresses the question of oral forms or speech genres (chap. 3). After a lengthy review of language theorists, he advances a situational definition with an emphasis on function, dialogics, and ideology, the set of parameters that govern verbal interaction in a rhetorical situation. T. goes on to describe the Johannine rhetorical situation in terms of the ideological posture usually ascribed to the Gospel in contemporary scholarship: a subculture (Jewish heterodox) with a hostile posture (anti-language) toward the group at large (mainline Judaism). Finally, T. focuses on the riddle as a form or genre to be expected within such a situation and thus throughout the Gospel (chap. 4). After a lengthy analysis of studies on riddles, he offers a general definition: a concise and interrogative unit of language that intentionally and at once conceals and reveals its referent with a single set of signs.

In chaps. 5–8, T. undertakes the analysis of the riddles in the text. He identifies all of the riddles in question, thirty-eight, and classifies them according to four functions, dramatic, neck, mission, salvation (chap. 5). These are then sequentially analyzed (chaps. 6–8). T. offers key observations. First, the riddles appear largely in clusters, within Jesus' dialogues, which thus emerge as riddling sessions. Second, the riddles largely account for the well-known elements of Johannine irony and misunderstanding. Finally, the presence of riddling sessions underscores the literary unity of the dialogues, including the whole of John 13–17.

Revisionist projects prove most necessary and refreshing in any field of studies, but they may also overemphasize the point. Such I find to be the case with T's proposal. The volume is excellent in many respects, but at times it goes much too far. T. rightfully calls attention to the presence of riddles, extensive and diversified, in the Gospel. His findings and analyses prove to be sharp and insightful. This is a significant contribution to literary critical studies of the Gospel. However, riddles are then pressed to become *the* key to the structure of the dialogues and *the* basis for the claim of literary unity. T. correctly pursues a solid foundation for his project by drawing upon studies of orality, oral forms, and riddles. These critical overviews are thorough and informative. However, they also prove much too detailed for the task at hand. Indeed, after a survey of the highly complex and conflictive literature on riddles, a general definition is adopted that remains largely unrelated to the preceding discussion.

In one respect the volume does not go far enough. T. properly argues for a revision of form criticism in the discipline and of approaches to the dialogues in Johannine scholarship. The critical reviews in both regards are right on target. However, when it comes to a portrayal of the Johannine rhetorical situation, he adopts, without the least hesitation or reservation, the standard sectarian interpretation. Here the revisionist impulse simply, and unfortunately, stops in the light of established opinion.

In conclusion, this book makes a very important contribution to Johannine studies, and its author is a welcome new voice.

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TIMOTHY WIARDA, *Peter in the Gospels: Pattern, Personality and Relationship* (WUNT 2/127; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 2000). Pp. xiv + 276. Paper DM 98.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the validity and usage of what Wiarda terms "a positive intention-reversal structure" in gospel pericopae where Peter appears. To this end, W. surveys Petrine scholarship from a variety of approaches (chap. 2), enumerates the incidents in which the pattern is clearly defined or can be discerned (chaps. 3 and 4), sketches the "characterization" of Peter (chap. 5), elaborates the relationship between Jesus and Peter (chap. 6), shows the function of the reversal pattern in the characterization of Peter (chap. 7), draws conclusions about comparable figures in other literature, and ends with literary and theological reflections (chaps. 8–10).

Outstanding within this impressive volume of research is the study of the relationship between Jesus and Peter. Building upon the list of qualities discernible as characteristics of Peter, W. explores episodes where the teacher-disciple relationship is clearly defined and where it is modified. The complexity of relationships can be seen in this example from his study of Luke 5:1-11: "At the beginning Peter is Jesus' host . . . then he is an uncertain follower . . . finally, he is one who recognizes Jesus' power and authority and is glad to follow" (p. 133). W. concludes that the relationship between Jesus and Peter goes beyond the normal teacher-disciple relationship, in that it is marked by strong personal devotion and concern. Notwithstanding this deep devotion, W. believes that "positive intention-reversal" occurs, because of differing perceptions of the relationship by Jesus and Peter, not differing perceptions of the incident or action at hand.

In the opening chapters, W. articulates his desire to engage a combination of methodologies. He wants to integrate rhetorical, theological, narrative, and historical perspectives in his study of the gospel texts. In critiquing the work of other authors, he points out that they frequently omit valuable insights from other methods. His evidence here is exhaustive and well reasoned, but he presents other scholars' conclusions according to the narrow confines of one method; few, if any, of them are guilty of this.

With W.'s own method there is a difficulty concerning his use of the word "intention," which he uses in several different ways without distinction. In the introductory material W. states, "The primary goal of interpretation . . . is to understand what the AUTHOR SEEKS TO COMMUNICATE through the text" (p. 4). So, intentionality rests with what the author seeks. Throughout much of the remainder of the book, however, W. uses "intention" either to explicate specific clues found in the material which show intention, or to project supposed intention into the mind of the author. The first of these, is, of course, valid. The second may be questioned. The word "intention" is also used to describe the attitudes of other characters toward Peter, and this raises similar questions. To use "intention" in such a manner would require a lengthy explanation, rationale, and defense, but W. does not provide this.

One technique used by W. is categorization of the events in which Peter appears. In some instances, so many categories are noted that one might call in question the value of



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