

Herman C. Waetjen (SFTS/GTU), *The Letter to the Romans* (2011),

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I will (A) summarize Prof. Waetjen's postmodern hermeneutics, relying on the Preface to the commentary and on a recent article that he kindly sent me, (B) evaluate the strengths and weakness of the proposed method of interpretation, (C) suggest that a postcolonial reading would shed more light on Romans, and (D) engage in selected exegetical debates.

A. Summary of Prof. Waetjen's hermeneutics

A.1 Prof Waetjen has written the first commentary on Romans governed by a postmodern hermeneutics of disclosure, prioritizing a hermeneutics of subjectivity, therefore, subordinating modernity's objectively oriented hermeneutics of the correspondence theory of truth.¹ This hermeneutics legitimates a fundamental rejection of modernity's subject-object hermeneutics of correspondence, but validates the critical methodology developed by modernist interpreters.² Waetjen claims that a modernist hermeneutics ascribed "being" to the Bible, the "being" of an object for scientific investigation, grounded in the empirical rationality of the Age of Enlightenment philosophy, assumptions that have dominated biblical interpretation for generations. Identification of the text's historical context requires utilizing parallel biblical, parabiblical, and extrabiblical texts, interpretation that is necessarily circular, "for what one takes to be true must be coherent with what one already takes to be true."³ The modernist interpreter actually compares one kind of mental data with another; there is no immediate access to anything external to the mind.⁴ The Bible is used as an object, a thing "present-at-hand." This maintains distance between the subject and object, between interpreter and biblical text; the thinking analytical "I" of the interpreter is prioritized, bracketing the subjectivity of the "I am," which depends on a priori understanding that is *a priori* understanding, prior to experience.⁵ The analytical "I" directs itself to matter that is foreign, therefore, outside of its horizon of experience; consequently subjectivity must be bracketed. But how can the bloodless "I"--divorced from the care and solicitude of its ontological reality of "Being-in-the-World actualize the meaning of a written text? Waetjen generalizes that the bloodless "I" has prevailed throughout the centuries of critical biblical scholarship.⁶

¹ Herman C. Waetjen, "Preface," pp. xi-xxiv in *The Letter to the Romans: Salvation as Justice and the Deconstruction of Law* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2011), xi. Compare Waetjen, "A Postmodern Reading of Paul's Letter to the Romans and Its Disclosure of a New Image of God and a New Understanding of Salvation," *Theology Today* 69/2 (2012), 197-212.

² Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xi.

³ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xii.

⁴ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xii.

⁵ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xiv.

⁶ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xv.

But when the Bible is taken in hand as a tool, it becomes an extension of the reader-interpreter; both the reader-interpreter and the Bible are transformed. The Bible becomes a tool “ready-to-hand”: possibility is higher than actuality. The thinking, analytical “I” is reconstituted into the ontologically prior “I am” of existence and experience. Solicitude characterizes the essence of being human, and is directed toward self-fulfillment and life-enhancing achievements.⁷ In contrast, putting texts back in their historical context does not give us a living relationship with them, but merely an ideative representation. However, interpretations are never presuppositionless, but are predetermined by *a priori* understanding.⁸ This requires a *close reading of the text* (in the original language) and *consistency building*.⁹ The former includes a subjective interaction with the text, and is an event of existential meaning, of experience, of involvement in the text.¹⁰

The objective of interpretation is not a “correct” reading of the text, which is unattainable, but simply a good reading that is both *congruent* and a *plenitude*, with all the details of the whole in harmony.¹¹ In the present case, Romans cannot be perceived at one time, which necessitates a “wandering viewpoint” (Iser). This also actualizes the metaphorical attributions of the text, since the figurative precedes the literal.¹² Ricoeur explains that this involves *selection* and *plenitude*.¹³ Waetjen asserts that all this will make scribal interpolations visible.¹⁴

Prof. Waetjen lists practical, controversial matters in earlier letters that Paul does not raise in Romans, but in contrast, Paul deals in this letter with the fundamental issues of historical existence, which establishes Romans as a singularity among Paul’s letters.¹⁵

A.2 In a subsequent article, Prof. Waetjen extends his reflections. The congruence and plenitude of a postmodern reading interpret justification by faith in terms of justice, transformation of the world,¹⁶ a critique of Augustine and Luther.¹⁷ The incarnation of faith makes Christ present in the life of every believer; social justice and the liberation of the creation are possible to the

⁷ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xvi.

⁸ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xvi.

⁹ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xvii.

¹⁰ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xvii.

¹¹ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xviii. Waetjen, “New Understanding,” 202.

¹² Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xx-xxi.

¹³ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xxi, citing Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977), 96.

¹⁴ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xxi-xxii, which in Romans are 3.22b-26, 5.3-4, 11; 7.25b; 8.9b-10; 10.17; 15.4; 16-17-20, 25-27.

¹⁵ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, xxiii. For an argument against the theological singularity of Romans, see Leander Keck, “Searchable Judgments and Scrutable Ways: A Response to Paul J. Achtemeier,” pp. 22-31 in *Pauline Theology*, vol. IV: *Looking Back, Pressing On*, eds. E. Elizabeth Johnson and David M May (Symposium; Atlanta: Scholars, 1997): Romans is not a summary of Paul’s theology, e.g. he hardly alludes to Jesus’ parousia, the Lord’s Supper, or the church.

¹⁶ Waetjen, “New Understanding,” 202.

¹⁷ Waetjen, “New Understanding,” 202, n. 15; 203, nn. 16-19.

extent that love is fulfilled in everyday life.¹⁸ For Luther Jesus' death on the cross is construed to be the "sufficient satisfaction for our sins," so that God would never have to be propitiated again.¹⁹ His sacrificial death removes the sins of the world and terminates the law, but the human condition of sin remains unaffected. Luther's appropriation of Augustine's doctrine of original sin prevented him from discerning the ultimate truth of the Christ event, that is, the eradication of the underlying condition of sin.²⁰

John Calvin acknowledged that the gospel reveals the righteousness of God, but unlike Luther, Calvin did not understand the law to be the agent through which sin exercises its dominion over us; therefore, Christ did not remove the law of Moses.²¹ The cause of sin is rather the corrupt desire of our flesh; the law, like the gospel, discloses the righteousness of God. For Calvin the death of Christ engendered the efficacious destruction of the depravity of the flesh.²² Is the "righteousness of God" a genitive of origin, so that righteousness is imputed, or is the phrase an objective genitive, therefore a quality that God requires of those who participate in salvation?

Luther and Calvin in their pre-Enlightenment hermeneutics were postmodern, prior to the Cartesian subject/object split.²³ They were directed by care and solicitude; their a priori understanding was existential. But without the control of literary-critical principles, their interpretation was pre-determined by the prejudices adopted from Augustine and others, so that they were unable to grasp the coherent unity of Romans.²⁴

A postmodern reading is radically different. Paul maintains that the law was not constituted by God, but by angels (Gal 3.19). Jesus, as the seed of Abraham, fulfilled the conditions of the original testament that God established with Abraham by eradicating *harmatia* and its consequences of death.²⁵ Only by fulfilling those conditions could the benefits of that testament of inheritance be made available to all human beings. God did not impute righteousness or justice to Abraham simply because he believed; Abraham's relation to God was a relationship of trust that presupposed the doing of justice. Trust is something a human being does, so that there is a mutual expectation of fulfillment. God trusted Abraham to discharge his calling to be a "blessing," so that "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."²⁶ Out of that relationship of trust, doing justice would be a naturally engaged activity. Similarly, the interdependent trust between God and Abraham's descendent, the Christ, enabled Jesus the Christ to fulfill the conditions of the testament of inheritance.

The Reformation doctrine of justification by faith is not Paul's gospel in Romans. Prior to the Sinai Covenant and its law, Abraham's trust was credited to him toward the doing of justice. But

¹⁸ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 204.

¹⁹ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 205.

²⁰ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 205

²¹ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 206

²² Waetjen, "New Understanding," 207.

²³ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 208.

²⁴ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 208.

²⁵ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 208, n. 37, cites Greer M. Taylor, "The Function of PISTIS CHRISTOU in Galatians," JBL 85.1 (1966), 58-76.

²⁶ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 209-10.

post-Sinai, a second justification is necessary, in order to terminate the alienation that the infection of sin produces, estranging humans from each other. Jesus fulfilled the conditions of the Abrahamic covenant: the impossible possibility of the justice of God that the gospel discloses.²⁷

Christ's blood is not analogous to the blood of the Temple's animal cult sacrifices. God is not a punitive deity; God does not punish!²⁸ Salvation is not reconciliation. Salvation begins with Easter, that is, Jesus' resurrection from the dead and our participation in it through a baptism of death and resurrection. Salvation is rising from the dead without the infection of *harmatia* (Rom 6.7). This is the third and ultimate justification.²⁹ "If anyone is in Christ, she or he is a new creation" (2 Cor 5.17).

Contrary to Luther and Calvin, God does not impute righteousness. The interdependent relationship of trust between God and those who have been recreated through a baptism of death and resurrection naturally expects the fulfillment of God's justice. God is not a punitive deity, but there is still an indebtedness to be fulfilled. It is not the indebtedness of the reciprocity code of Deuteronomy, but simply the commitment *to be* and *to live* as a new human being through the eschatological experience of death and resurrection. At the same time it is also the indebtedness of becoming Christ-like by directing "the love that God's Spirit pours into our hearts" to all human beings without any discrimination through the empowerment of God's indwelling Spirit. The paradox of becoming who we have become, and, through God's indwelling Spirit, becoming who we already are, will finally fulfill God's original hope for the creation, as Paul professes in Rom 8.19-21.³⁰

This postmodern interpretation transcends that of Luther and Calvin and offers the impossible possibility of the actualization of God's justice and the transformation of the world.³¹

B. Strengths and Weaknesses of Postmodern Hermeneutics

B.1 Prof. Waetjen's objection to the subject/object split is common in NT studies today. For example, Udo Schnelle, Professor of NT at Halle/Wittenberg, in a textbook that I currently use in introducing Paul at PLTS, affirms: "the knowing subject does not stand above history; it is inappropriate to contrast 'objectivity' and 'subjectivity.' 'Facts' are already interpretations of the past. History is not simply constructed, but *reconstructed*."³² 'History' is selective interpretation of the past for the interpreter's own world, a meaning-creating process. All of us fill in historical gaps, produce something new.³³

²⁷ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 210.

²⁸ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 211.

²⁹ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 211.

³⁰ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 211.

³¹ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 212.

³² Udo Schnelle, *Apostle Paul. His Life and Theology*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 28.

³³ Schnelle, *Apostle Paul*, 30.

This is true both of believing and of unbelieving interpreters: David Strauss and Gerd Lüdemann do not present “objective,” historical explanations of the resurrection, but of *their* own history with Jesus.³⁴ They assume that their analysis of the literary process is authoritative, but these are not assured results. Interpretation depends on the exegetes’ understanding of reality and history. A decision about truth occurs within worldview and life history of interpreters.

Schnelle adds that Paul does this too: he writes history and constructs a new religious world; he interprets his own Judaism in relation to the Hellenistic and Roman worlds.³⁵ He confesses the Christ event (1 Cor 11.23b-25; 15.3b-5), universalizes it, and installs it into history through his successful mission.³⁶

B.2 What are the weakness of this hermeneutics? Self-disclosure: for two decades I was a colleague of Prof., Dean, then President Leo Perdue at Brite Divinity School/TCU, one of the foremost professors of Hebrew Bible in the world. During a sabbatical spent in Göttingen and Heidelberg in 2003-2004, Perdue wrote *Reconstructing Old Testament Theology: After the Collapse of History*, chap. 7 of which concerns “From History to Cultural Context: Postmodernism.”³⁷ For our discussion of Prof. Waetjen’s postmodern commentary at this meeting of the PCTS, I will briefly indicate some of Perdue’s observations/questions.³⁸

Postmodernism is difficult to define, partially since it embraces a variety of viewpoints, many of which are in opposition to each other. They agree on the death of the Enlightenment, but unfortunately, the less thoughtful among them harangue against other approaches, while assuming that their own is immune to criticism.³⁹ Perdue charges that less careful postmodernists offer no possibility of understanding, since reason is an outmoded epistemology (241). Typical of the flavor of Perdue’s critique is the following: “Postmodernism seeks to ... grapple with things that truly matter.... I am not sure how a postmodernist would determine what truly matters, except that he or she simply says it does. Are the values of life, freedom, love, joy or their opposites things that truly matter? To assert the value of something is to make a judgment ... that would involve analysis, dialogue, and agreement ..., yet value judgments are rendered by analysis, criticism, and the engagement of debate. These are mental activities that smack of rationalism.” (242)

Postmodernism seeks to overcome the gap between culture’s creators and those who experience the products of culture. “The temporal notion is effectively eliminated in hermeneutics. There is no past, present, or future in the engagement of the subjective knower and the object known,” which results in an antipathy toward historiography. (242)

³⁴ Schnelle, *Apostle Paul*, 417. Schnelle, utilizes the category of “transcendence” in this debate, citing (425, n. 126) A. Schutz and T. Luckmann, *Structures of the Life World* (Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy; Evanston: Northwestern University, 1989), vol. 2, chap. 6: “The Boundaries of Experience and the Boundary Crossings.”

³⁵ Schnelle, *Apostle Paul*, 32.

³⁶ Schnelle, *Apostle Paul*, 35.

³⁷ Leo G. Perdue, *Reconstructing Old Testament Theology: After the Collapse of History* (Overtures to Biblical Theology; Minneapolis: Augsburg/Fortress, 2005).

³⁸ Perdue, *Reconstructing*, 240.

³⁹ Perdue, *Reconstructing*, 241-42, citing the Postmodern Collective, *Postmodern Bible*, 9.

There is the typical denial that one cannot get “behind” the text to ascertain what really happened. The text does not allow the interpreter to use it to see the world that gave it birth. The boundary between “what happened” and “what is invented” dissipates (243). Nothing objective exists “out there,” apart from the human mind. (243) Truth for postmodernists does not exist as an objective, one-dimensional understanding; there is hermeneutical truth, meaning that comes when the object known is engaged and understood by the objective knower. (243)

All elements of culture betray features of oppression and/or transformative struggle, an interesting claim, Perdue observes, since the original context cannot be known (243-44). Knowledge is a grasp for power, designed to legitimate those who profit from it. (244) Modern historical criticism by elite, educated, Western academics is but one form of domination that creates oppressive social systems. Perdue asks, is not postmodernism guilty of the same elitism it finds in modernist interpretations?

Postmodernism completely rejects meta-narratives of any kind; there is no unifying vision that brings all things together. Rather there are many narratives with significant differences in content. (244) Christianity’s unrealized apocalyptic dream, Hegel’s self-revelation of *Geist*, old liberalism’s human progress, and Marx’s dialectical movement have no claim to truth. (244) Plurality characterizes all things, people, objects, and interpretations; there is no commonly held understanding of anything. (244-45) Postmodernism is anti-foundational.

Here I insert one paragraph to note an assertion by Johann Baptist Metz, who spoke at JSTB’s graduation ceremonies a year or two ago.⁴⁰ Metz claims that the story of the passion of humankind survives postmodernity as a grand narrative. No religion or hermeneutics can ignore the suffering of others. Metz agrees that Enlightenment reason withdrew into forgetfulness. Greek Hellenistic metaphysics too was alien to the subject and to history. But humans are their own memory/narrative. Christology is not pure theology, but rather is narrative. Metz opposes Augustine’s emphasis on sin and guilt. Rather, following Jesus he argues, believers must be mystics of com-passion (not Nietzsche’s *Mitleid*). Is Christianity a religion of sinners or of sufferers? Metz claims that there is a negative universality: Catholic priests and atheists opposed Hitler. This is a pluralism that unites. Metz objects that postmodernist ideology gives up the critique of cultures and religions.

Perdue agrees, citing (269) the criticism of postmodernism by Habermas⁴¹: the complete immersion of the individual or point of view into localities makes it impossible to judge its veracity; indeed it would lead to inescapable accommodation with the culture. Habermas continued to affirm the Enlightenment.

⁴⁰ Johann Baptist Metz, *Memoria passionis* (Freiburg: Herder, 2006).

⁴¹ Jürgen Habermas, *Truth and Justification* (Cambridge: MIT, 1987).

Jameson,⁴² a Marxist literary critic, laments that the postmodern position so legitimates heterogeneity that cultural products are rendered incapable of issuing meaning-laden metaphors and ideas, which can expose and oppose the exploitation of the marginalized. (268)

Said⁴³ contends that the critic is obligated to diffuse the power of culture that legitimates the dominant and controlling entities within its field of social operation. (268-69) He has not been enamored with Derrida, who denies the ability to decide between alternatives and to shape a new semantic vision that liberates the downtrodden. Said criticizes as vapid postmodernists' inability to establish a politics of struggle against oppression. For Said political struggle requires negating dominant cultural symbols that dehumanize ethnic and social groups, and then retelling the history of those groups in a more authentic way. Diversity is one thing, but amoral affirmation of the legitimacy of diversity that rejects criticism is at best useless and at worst counterproductive. The true scholar cannot abandon being a critic of culture.

These criticisms by Habermas, Jameson, and Said make Prof. Waetjen's claim that postmodernist hermeneutics can promote justice problematic. I am not a philosopher, but I refuse to believe that poverty in El Salvador is only in my mind. Rather, as a matter of external fact, the rich quatorze familia of El Salvador, supported by millions of dollars sent by Presidents Reagan and Carter, bombed thousands of peasants to hell, a fact outside my mind that describes immoral military and economic North American imperialism.

Perdue characterizes (245-48) Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault, which I will not try to summarize, and then observes ways they have been utilized in Biblical interpretation. He argues that "since the nineteenth century, historical critics have recognized that interpreters have read their own values in the construal of the meaning of a text; interpreters are active participants in the shaping of what texts mean. (248) He objects to postmodernists, in their eagerness to posit something new, maligning, at times unfairly, practitioners of historical criticism by attributing naiveté to them. Perdue argues that there is a difference of degree between those who argue that they can be aware of their own views and interests, and those who argue that all interpreters inevitably read themselves and their views into the text. (249) What of a wealthy interpreter who articulates the exploitation of the poor by condemning those who violate justice and deny marginal's human dignity? It is simplistic to argue that all interpreters support their own self-interests.

Does objective knowledge—that has not been formed by context and diluted by self-interest—truly exist outside the knowing mind? Postmodernism responds: No. Historical critics recognize that knowledge is not objective, so they develop arguments to suggest that something occurred, or that a series of factors may have been responsible for an act or result. (249) Faulting historical critics for attempting to find *the* correct meaning is a caricature of the approach. (250)

⁴² Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University, 1991). This book means that working for justice based on a postmodern ethic is highly problematic.

⁴³ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1994). Compare James Barr, *History and Ideology in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2000), 139-40, cited by Perdue, 271.

Perdue then gives (251-66, 269-70) fascinating examples of postmodern interpretation by Walter Brueggemann, Mieke Bal, and Mary Ann Tolbert. Given these examples, Perdue concludes that postmodernists have much to teach us, but when the true believer seems intent on negating the contributions of others, especially of historical critics, the argumentation often becomes arrogant and condescending. (274) The more judicious interpreters, e.g. Mieke Bal, are nothing short of delightful.

In a Postscript, Perdue (275) notes that the epistemological assumptions of postmodernism are not new, but as old as the Greek Sceptics (365-272 BCE) and the Middle and New Academies of Athens (c. 269 to mid-first century BCE), who argued that the external world cannot be known either by reason or by the senses, so that we should suspend judgment.⁴⁴

C. Postcolonial readings shed more light on Romans.

This is not the place to set out an alternative interpretation, but I suggest that a postcolonial hermeneutics would shed more light on Romans.⁴⁵ Prof. Waetjen's Preface and Introduction make insistent claims for God's justice. As far as I can see, however, these claims remain abstract, whereas Paul the missionary was practical and concrete. I repeat one of Prof. Waetjen's concluding generalizations: he refers to "the commitment *to be* and *to live* as a new human being through the eschatological experience of death and resurrection. At the same time it is also the indebtedness of becoming Christ-like by directing 'the love that God's Spirit pours into our hearts' to all human beings without any discrimination through the empowerment of God's indwelling Spirit." (cited n. 30 above) As "a new human being," individual baptized believers are to love "all human beings without any discrimination."

Paul was not as individualistic nor as abstract as Prof. Waetjen's generalization, but rather oriented toward relationships among specific ethnic groups.⁴⁶ That is, Paul lived, thought, and preached in the Roman Empire, which was multiethnic in ways that Athens and Jerusalem had not been.⁴⁷ Paul preached to the Gauls/Galatians, and relevant to our discussion of Romans, intended to proclaim the gospel to those in Spain. Paul selectively Romanized the people of God by making them more multiethnic.

⁴⁴ Perdue, 275, cites A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Scepticism* (London: Duckworth, 1974), who is now retired from UC Berkeley.

⁴⁵ I recommend Perdue, *Reconstructing Old Testament Theology*, chap. 8: "From the Colonial Bible to the Postcolonial Text: Biblical Theology as Contextual."

⁴⁶ Race and ethnicity are difficult to define. See Eric D. Barreto, *Ethnic Negotiations: The Function of Race and Ethnicity in Acts 16* (WUNT 2.294; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), chaps. 1-2. Ethnicities are socially constructed, but nevertheless powerful categories. Compare D.L. Balch and Adam Pryor, "Jesus' Creation Theology and Multiethnic Practice," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 39/4 (Aug 2012), 279-89, an issue entitled "Back to God's Future: Essays in Honor of Ted Peters."

⁴⁷ See Balch and Pryor, 283, and Balch, "Jesus as Founder of the Church in Luke-Acts," pp. 139-88 in *Contextualizing Acts*, eds. T. Penner and C. Vander Stichele (SBLSS 20; Atlanta: SBL, 2003), at 152, 165-73, 180-83, 186-88.

C.1 The Gauls/Galatians were Rome's archetypal enemies. Augustus built a Temple to Apollo that was connected to his house on the Palatine in Rome by a ramp, a temple as important then as St. Peter's is today. Carved ivory panels decorating the doors of this temple visually represented the Gauls driven out of Delphi (Propertius 2.31.12-14), which art historians understand to refer to Apollo, the God of vengeance.⁴⁸ Apollo defended the sanctuary of Delphi against the Gauls' attempt to sack it in 279 BCE. Apollo assisted Octavian in protecting Rome, now not from the Gauls but from the Egyptian Cleopatra (Horace, Ode 1.37, "the fall of Cleopatra"). The defeat of the barbarian Gauls was celebrated both by Calimachus, Hymn IV to Delos, and by the Ephesians by a sculptural relief,⁴⁹ but most prominently by the Altar of Zeus in Pergamon (Asia Minor), now displayed at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin.⁵⁰ Paul proclaimed the gospel to Augustus' archetypal enemies, asking them, Hey stupid (Gal 3.1), why do you all want to fit into that hierarchical, imperial system (Gal 3.28)?

The Gauls were well-known for lavish banquets at which they ate bulls, swine, and sheep, very probably offensive to Paul's co-believers in Judea!⁵¹ But Paul, in the first imperative in the letter, urges the Gauls, "Friends, I beg you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are" (Gal 4.12).⁵² Saul/Paul, the orthopraxic Pharisee (see Phil 3.6), is writing that he has participated in their pork banquets (compare 1 Cor 10.25, 27), and he is urging them to become as he is, that is, no longer "subject to the [Mosaic] laws" (Gal 4.21).

C.2 More relevant to Romans, Paul intends to proclaim the gospel in Spain (Rom 15.28,32).⁵³ This is directly related to 1:14, "To both Greeks and barbarians, to both wise and foolish, I am under obligation" (Jewett's trans.). "Paul's calling as an apostle to the Gentiles is clarified in a remarkable formulation describing his 'obligation' to the hostile poles of ethnicity, class, and education. Although its importance has rarely been recognized, this verse is in several respects the 'key to Romans,' and reveals the 'situation of its composition.' ... 'barbarian' refers to alien tribes who cannot speak Greek or Latin and are uncultured, wild, crude, fierce, and in a basic sense, uncivilized.... Romans viewed barbarians as inherently 'inhuman, ferocious, arrogant, weak, warlike, discordant ... unstable....' Particularly relevant to Paul's letter that prepared the way for a mission to Spain is that the Spaniards were viewed as barbarians par excellence because so large a proportion continued to resist Roman rule.... Cicero (*Quint. frat.* 1.1.27), for

⁴⁸ See D.L. Balch, "Cult Statues of Augustus' Temple of Apollo on the Palatine in Rome....," pp. 413-34 in *Contested Spaces*, eds. D. L. Balch and A. Weissenrieder (WUNT 285; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 419.

⁴⁹ Balch, "Temple of Apollo," 426, with n. 70.

⁵⁰ Aliou Cissé Niang, *Faith and Freedom in Galatia and Senegal: The Apostle Paul, Colonists and Sending Gods* (Biblical Interpretation Series; Leiden: Brill, 2009), with Figs. 1-3. More extensively, Brigitte Kahl, *Galatians Re-Imagined: Reading with the Eyes of the Vanquished* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010).

⁵¹ Niang, *Galatia*, 40, n. 29, citing Athenaeus, *Deip.* iv.154b.

⁵² Nils A. Dahl, "Paul's Letter to the Galatians: Epistolary Genre, Content, and Structure," pp. 117-42 in *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation*, ed. Mark D. Nanos (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2002).

⁵³ Waetjen, *Letter to the Romans*, 9. Robert Jewett, *Romans: a Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 83-84, 87-88, 932, 935, 937-38.

example, classes the Spaniards along with the Africans and Gauls as one of the ‘uncivilized and barbarous nations’ In view of this profound cultural antipathy, it is amazing that Paul dared to link Greeks and barbarians with the connective *te kai* ... to imply an inclusion of opposites....”⁵⁴ Further, “As if the groupings of these two pairs of moral, ethnic, and cultural opposites in a “both/and” syntax were not shameful enough, Paul employs the expression that he is ‘obligated’ Thus, while the Greco-Roman ethic of reciprocity would require obligations to the Greeks and the educated who were perceived to have provided benefits for others, it was a complete reversal of the system of honor and shame to feel indebtedness to barbarians and the uneducated.”⁵⁵

Could a postmodernist read Rom 1.14 and 15.28, 30 this way, as a reversal of cultural values? Perdue, Habermas, Jameson, and Said suggest that the answer to that question would be negative. Jewett dedicates his commentary to Bishop Colenso, a missionary to Africa in 1863, who suggested that Paul aimed to overcome prejudice against allegedly inferior peoples.⁵⁶ Prof. Waetjen writes eloquently about God’s righteousness/justice, but does a postmodern philosophy encourage or even allow this fundamental revision of values?

D. Selected exegetical questions

D. 1 Exegetes of course love to debate the interpretation of specific texts. I have time/space to make only a few arguments. Prof. Waetjen writes repeatedly about the conditions of the Abrahamic covenant.⁵⁷ This is a fundamental misreading of Torah and Paul, a thesis I will argue on a) history of religions, b) literary, and c) redactional grounds.

D.1.a Moshe Weinfeld, a Near Eastern scholar who taught at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, wrote the article on “*berith* (covenant)” in the TDOT.⁵⁸ “Covenants” of course have affinities with Ancient Near Eastern treaties between kings (266), the Mosaic covenant especially with Hittite treaties, but also with Aramaic treaties from the first millennium BCE (267). “The historical prologue in Deuteronomy (chaps. 1-11) recalls ... the historical prologue in the Hittite state treaties.” (267) There are some differences: “while the Hittite treaties and the Sinaitic covenant have a very short list of curses, those of the first millennium and the covenant in Deuteronomy have long lists of curses; Dt. 28 has preserved a series of curses which has an exact parallel in a Neo-Assyrian treaty, the treaty of Esarhaddon with his eastern vassals....” (268) “The exhortations in Deuteronomy to keep loyalty to God are very close in form and style to the exhortations in the political treaties.” (268)

However, besides the covenant between Yahweh and Israel described in Exodus and Deuteronomy, two covenants of a different type are found: the covenant with Abraham (Gen 15; 17) and the covenant with David (2 Sam 7; Ps 89), where *chesedh*=*berith* are concerned with the gift of the land and the gift of the kingdom (dynasty) respectively. “In contradistinction to the

⁵⁴ Jewett, *Romans*, 130-31.

⁵⁵ Jewett, *Romans*, 132.

⁵⁶ Jewett, *Romans*, xv.

⁵⁷ Waetjen, “New Understanding” (cited above nn. 25, 26, 30).

⁵⁸ Moshe Weinfeld, “*berith* (covenant),” *TDOT* 2.253-79.

Mosaic covenants, which are of an obligatory type, the covenants with Abraham and David belong to the promissory type. God swears to Abraham to give the land to his descendants, and similarly promises to David to establish his dynasty without imposing any obligation on them. Although their loyalty to God is presupposed, it does not occur as a condition for keeping the promise.” (270).

An Israeli scholar of the Ancient Near Eastern history of religions denies Waetjen’s thesis that the Abrahamic covenant had conditions.

D.1.b Francis Watson is a literary critic concerned with reading texts,⁵⁹ as is Prof. Waetjen. Watson’s book investigates Paul’s reading of Torah in the context of other contemporary Jewish readings of Torah. In contrast to E. P. Sanders, who defines Judaism contemporary with Paul primarily on the basis of Josephus and later rabbinic texts, Watson studies Jewish readings of Torah. He argues that the Pauline reading of scripture is antithetical (167), specifically referring to tension between Genesis on the one hand, and Exodus through Deuteronomy on the other, that is, tensions between Abraham and Moses.

Genesis identifies the God of promise as the primary agent in the Abraham narrative rather than Abraham himself (170). Abraham “believed” (Gen 15.6), different from all the other acts attributed to Abraham. The only other figure of whom scripture says “righteousness” was “reckoned” is Phinehas, who killed apostates (Num 25.6-8; Ps 106.28-31, language referring to Gen 15.6). Phineas’ action was “heroic,” but there is nothing heroic about Abraham’s act of believing. He does no more than recognize divine speech (178). To highlight the faithfulness, piety and heroism of Abraham is a misreading of Genesis. Paul’s is a counter-reading against a prior reading, e.g. a contrast to Ps 106. (217)

A second example of Jewish interpretation of Abraham is 1 Macc 2.60-54: Abraham was found faithful when tested (see Gen 22.1). Abraham’s “faithfulness” is detached from Gen 12 and connected instead to Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac, to Abraham’s obedience. In contrast, Paul does not connect Gen 12 or 15 to Gen 22, to Abraham’s obedience, so this forms a fundamental difference in early Jewish interpretations of Abraham (172).

Abraham receives four blessings (Gen 12.1-3, verses 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b). Gal 3.6 reads the promise of universal blessing (Gen 12.3) in light of Gen 15.6, “that Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” Paul emphasizes “by faith”, the phrase from Hab 2.4. At stake is not simply Gentile membership in people of God, but the priority and un-conditionality of the divine saving action in its universal scope. In Genesis the narrative promise is a more fundamental mode of divine discourse than command. Paul links the most important scriptural statement about Abraham’s relationship with God (Gen 15.6) to Gen 12.2-3, so Abraham’s righteousness by faith is pattern for others (189). There is progression from Gal 3.6-9 to 3.13-14: the former is timeless, a deduction from Gen 12, but later “in you” of Gen inductively becomes “in Christ Jesus.” This is how Paul as Christian reads Jewish scripture. (183-89)

The promise of blessing of Gentiles exercises no discernible influence on Genesis narrative; that future is beyond the limits of this narrative. Genesis is moved by promises of “seed” and “land”

⁵⁹ Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (NY: T&T Clark, 2004), ix.

(Gen 12.7). These two become the theme of Gen 15, where both are recognized as problems. Abraham and Sarah assume a need for human initiative, which results in the birth of Ishmael to Hagar (Gen 16). Gen 17 shows that Ishmael is not promised son, that the promise will be fulfilled instead by miraculous divine act. The structure of salvation history as outlined in Gal 3 is foreshadowed in Gen 15-21. (198, 208)

On the other hand, Paul's view of Mosaic law is nothing other than his reading of **Ex, Lev, Num and Deut**; Paul is an interpreter of texts.⁶⁰ If there is a contradiction—implied in Paul's citation of the Leviticus promise of life (18.5) in the same context as the Deuteronomic “curse of the law” (Gal 3.10, 12)--, the contradiction lies not so much in Paul as in the scriptural texts themselves. (354)

Exodus. Paul assimilated the two accounts of Moses' descent from Sinai. What was “carved in stone letters” was the “ministry of death” (2 Cor 3.7). “The letter kills.” Moses advent with the first stone tablets issues in the death of 3,000 people of Israel, who had flouted prohibition of idolatry (Ex 32.6; 1 Cor 10.7; see Exod 32.27-28). Paul concluded, “the writing kills.” (289) Paul is not primarily concerned with eschatological fate of sons of Israel, which he says positive things about elsewhere (Rom 11.25-32). (291)

Leviticus. Paul twice cites Lev 18.5, only to state that what it says is in reality not the case (Gal 3.12; Rom 10.5). The Lev citation encapsulates the fundamental disjunction Paul sees within the Pentateuch. (315) Lev 26.3-6 makes the conditional nature of the earlier offer of life explicit: “if you walk in my decrees and keep my commandments and do them, I shall give you...” (318)

Numbers. Lev most nearly lacks narrative framework; its legislation acquires ideal, timeless quality, so that it seems plausible that commandments represent divinely ordained way to life. But in other Sinai-related books, this is not the case. In Exodus, Num, and Deut, the narrative framework problematizes the conditional promise of life articulated in Lev 18.5 and echoed in Deut 30.19. As narrated in these books, the history of Israel's first encounter with the law is characterized by death rather than life. (354)

Israel's journey in the wilderness is framed by two censuses in which males eligible for military service in conquest of land are numbered tribe by tribe. The first census is in the “wilderness of Sinai” (1.1; see 26.63), the second “in the plains of Moab by Jordan at Jericho” (26.3, 64). At the conclusion of the second census, it becomes clear that entire generation of those numbered at Sinai has perished: “These were those enrolled by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who enrolled the Israelites in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho. ⁶⁴ Among these there was not one of those enrolled by Moses and Aaron the priest, who had enrolled the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. ⁶⁵ For the LORD had said of them, ‘They shall die in the wilderness.’ Not one of them was left, except Caleb ... and Joshua” (Num 26.63-65)

The first census turns out not to be enumeration for military service, but for slaughter. At Sinai the entire adult congregation (as represented by adult males) is marked out for death. All became subject to divine decree: “They shall surely die in the wilderness” (see 14.28-30). In the move from Lev to Num, we find that the law's conditional promise of life (Lev 18.5) is

⁶⁰ Paul is a Pharisee, a reader of Torah, not a theologian reading Augustine or Luther.

overtaken by the reality of death, the destruction of the entire generation that stood before YHWH at Sinai. (355)

Paul's most explicit use of material from Num is not in Rom 7, but in 1 Cor 10.1-13. Warning readers of perils of idolatry and immorality, Paul appeals to scriptural narratives of Israel's experiences in the wilderness, citing the Golden Calf story (Exod 32), and from the book of Num: glut of quails (Num 11), Korah's rebellion (Num 16), plague of snakes (Num 21), seduction by daughters of Midian (Num 25). Each involves mass death—in fulfillment of divine judgment addressed to exodus generation ("your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness" and that "this wicked generation ... shall come to a full end, and there they shall die", Num 14.29-35). (356)

In both Rom 7.7 and 1 Cor 10.5-6 illicit desire leads directly to death, and this combination is not from Gen but from Num. See Ps 105.14-15; 77.26-31; and Num 11.4-6, 33-35 ("tombs of desire"). Desire issues, second, in sex (Num 25.1-2; 1 Cor 10.8): 24,000 died. (366) Third, desire issues in putting Lord to the test (1 Cor 10.9; Num 21.5). Fourth, desire issues in complaining (1 Cor 10.10; Num 14.20-35 and 16.11, Korah). This reads wilderness narratives as a history of desire; death results (1 Cor 10.5; Num 14.16). (368) In three of cases Paul cites (Golden Calf, Moabite women, Korah's rebellion) the occasion of mass death in the desert is people's disregard for law. (370) For Paul the Exodus generation died not simply because it rejected the promise, but above all because it transgressed the law (1 Cor 10; Rom 7). (371)

Watson, a literary critic reading Torah, draws a conclusion similar to Weinfeld's, an Israeli history of religions scholar: there is a fundamental contrast within Torah between Genesis and Exodus, Abraham and Moses, between the God of promise and the God of the Mosaic laws that result in death.

D.1.c John Van Seters is a redaction critic who writes on *Abraham in History and Tradition*.⁶¹ Gen 15:1, "The Word of the Lord came to...." This is a technical phrase for divine speech to a prophet, which first occurs in Jeremiah, but is common in Ezekiel and Deuteronomy; therefore, it is late.

Gen 15:6, "and he believed the Lord and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness." This is cultic language, e.g. Eze 18:5, 9, 13, 17, 19-21, 26-27, 32, but in *new, non-cultic context*.

Gen 15:7, "I am the Lord, who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." "Ur of the Chaldeans" has meaning only in the late exile, so Genesis is addressing the exilic community. Instead of, "I am the Lord who brought you out of the land of *Egypt*" (Lev 25.38), this author has substituted the late "Ur of Chaldeans."

Ezekiel mentions Abraham once (33.24), the *first* prophet to do so (absent from Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah)! So the emphasis on Abraham is a fundamental shift in whole election tradition. Earlier prophets had emphasized the Exodus tradition, with its conditions. But Israel was in exile; the exile was proof that the covenant relationship with God was broken. Their disobedience had activated God's curses, as Moses promised.

⁶¹ John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University, 1975).

Deutero-Isaiah 41.8-9 changed this! Abraham's election from a distant land is relevant to exiles in that same land. Unlike the covenant with Moses, the promise to Abraham is not conditional. Again, Gen 15:6, "and he believed the Lord, and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness." The exilic community had no temple, no cult; *would they believe* that God had a future for Israel?

Van Seter's conclusion, in my words not his, is that the exilic, Jewish author/redactor of the Abraham stories in Genesis bent the Torah in a Pauline direction. I find it quite striking that this agrees with the Israeli scholar Weinfeld's distinction between the Abrahamic covenant of grant and the Mosaic covenant of obligation, as well as with Watson's conclusion as a literary critic, who distinguishes the God of promise in Genesis from the God of Mosaic laws in Exodus through Deuteronomy, who activates the curses of exile and death.

D.1.d I add the observations of Joseph Fitzmyer,⁶² one of the greatest Hebrew/Aramaic scholars in the world, who with John Reumann was the original coauthor of the "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification" by Catholics and Lutherans. I summarize:

Paul's notion was built on what Hebrews of old had taught about the righteousness of God and his dealings with a sinful people, and about their righteousness with each other. *Tsedeq* or *tsedaqah* was predicated both of human beings and of God. The word connotes a societal or judicial relationship, sometimes ethical and often forensic (related to law courts). (78)

Because Hebrews enjoyed covenant with God, *tsedeq* expressed their responsibility to their transcendent partner in that pact (see Isa 1.21). Many OT passages ascribe their quality to God, not only in his being, but in his dealings with humanity. The older writings have God in a lawsuit with rebellious Israel (Jer 12.1; Hos 4.1-2).

In the postexilic period, *tsedeq* acquired an added nuance, esp. in Deutero-Isaiah, coming to describe God's execution of his role in the covenant, acquitting his rebellious people, manifesting gracious, salvific activity in a just judgment (Isa 46.13; 50.8; 53.11 etc.). The adjective *tsaddiq* came to denote one who stood acquitted or vindicated before a judge's tribunal (Exod 23.7), and it describes the covenantal status of righteousness achieved in God's sight by the observance of the Mosaic law (Ps. 119.1-8). The OT notes how difficult it was to achieve that status (Job 4.17; Ps 143.2; Ezra 9.15).

Many of the Hebrew nuances are also found in the LXX, rendered by *dikaiosyne*. But sometimes the Hebrew is translated into Greek not by "righteousness," but by "mercy (*eleos*), a translation that reveals a softening nuance in the postexilic sense of God's *tsedaqah*. This is also true in Qumran (1QS 11.9-15), a text that 1) synthesizes OT teaching about human sinfulness and God's righteous reaction to such sinfulness. 2) It insists on God's predestinating mercy, so is a Palestinian background to Pauline teaching about human righteousness and justification by grace, although the two are not identical. 3) Though the Pauline phrase *dikaiosyne theou* (the righteousness of God) is found nowhere verbatim in the OT, it does turn up in Qumran (1QS 11.12 and 10.25). (80)

⁶² Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., "Justification by Faith in Pauline Thought: A Catholic View," in *Rereading Paul Together: Protestant and Catholic Perspectives on Justification* (ed. David E. Aune; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 77-94.

Again, I find a striking agreement between Van Seters and Fitzmyer: in the exile deutero-Isaiah bent Hebrew conceptions of God's righteousness toward promise and mercy, toward a Pauline teaching about justification by God's grace, by God who acquits God's rebellious people. The Pauline understanding of the grace of God in Romans has deep roots in Genesis, deutero-Isaiah, and Qumran.

D.1e These conclusions from Weinfeld (history of religions), Watson (literary criticism), Van Seters (redaction criticism), and Fitzmyer (philology) mean that some of Prof. Waetjen's language fails to describe the Abrahamic covenant in Torah and Paul.

“Jesus, as the seed of Abraham, *fulfilled the conditions* of the original testament that God established with Abraham by eradicating *harmatia* and its *consequences of death*.” (cited n. 25 above; my italics) As repeatedly shown above, the Abrahamic covenant did not have conditions, which was the whole point of its creation in the exile by the Jewish authors of Genesis and deutero-Isaiah, who were addressing Jews enslaved in Babylon and without hope. The “consequences of death” belong to the Mosaic covenant, and Jewish exiles/slaves in Babylon did not need convincing that the Mosaic covenant was powerful indeed!

I quote Prof. Waetjen again: “God did not impute righteousness or justice to Abraham *simply because he believed*; Abraham's relation to God was a relationship of trust that *presupposed the doing of justice*. Trust is *something a human being does*, so that there is a *mutual expectation of fulfillment*. God trusted *Abraham to discharge* his calling to be a “blessing,” so that “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”⁶³ Out of that relationship of trust, doing justice would be a naturally engaged activity. Similarly, the interdependent trust between God and Abraham's descendent, the Christ, *enabled Jesus the Christ to fulfill the conditions of the testament of inheritance*.” (cited n. 26 above; my italics)

This language would not have been good news to Jewish exiles enslaved in Babylon, who were living under Mosaic curses. The storytellers of Torah itself (not Augustine or Luther) narrated Israel's complete failure to obey Mosaic laws, and the redactors of Torah were simultaneously describing the self-understanding of their readers, whose exile and enslavement in Babylon were visible proofs that God had cursed them as Moses had prescribed in the Sinai covenant. The late, exilic Jewish authors of Genesis and deutero-Isaiah did narrate good news to these exiles, but it was not about “something a human being does,” or “an expectation of fulfillment.” As Fitzmyer convincingly argues: long before Paul, these Jewish authors proclaimed/narrated the good news concerning God's righteousness, God acquitting God's rebellious people. Paul is not the only Jewish reader of Torah and the prophets, but his reading is a possible one, generated by creative Jewish authors in the exile, centuries before Paul, who by correcting and modifying the Mosaic covenant by the Abrahamic covenant were addressing their enslaved Jewish audience's despair and their lack of *belief/trust* in *God's* future.

D.2 When he argues that Paul issued multiple editions of Romans, one of which was destined for Ephesus,⁶⁴ Prof. Waetjen is arguing against mainstream scholarship today. Karl Donfried, Harry

⁶³ Waetjen, “New Understanding,” 209-10.

⁶⁴ Waetjen, “Introduction,” *Letter to the Romans*, 25-32. For the Greek text of Papyrus 46—the Pauline epistles plus Hebrews but minus the Pastorals, dated c.200 CE—see Philip W. Comfort

Gamble, and Kurt Aland have made compelling cases that the textual history is best explained by an original letter of sixteen chapters.⁶⁵ Wolf-Henning Ollrog made equally compelling arguments that the greetings of Rom 16 are highly inappropriate for the Ephesian setting,⁶⁶ or for any other church where Paul had ministered for a substantial length of time: the personal details concerning some of the persons he greets are formulated as if the congregation as a whole did not recognize their accomplishments. It sounds like Paul is introducing and recommending them as reliable leaders in a congregation where neither he nor they were well known. Other persons are named without any personal greeting, which seems absurd if Paul had worked with them for almost three years. Ollrog also points out that Rom 16 refers neither to Paul's past experience with the congregation nor to its future prospects, which contrasts with other letters addressed to congregations for which he felt responsible as a founder. A new phase of research began in 1977 with the first edition of *The Romans Debate*, which popularized the idea of a situational letter, deriving to a significant degree from the abandonment of the Ephesian hypothesis.

D.3 Perhaps one more point, since this paper is overdue, and its length must be exhausting the readers' patience. Self-disclosure again: I was a student of Ernst Käsemann in 1968-1969, who was criticizing his teacher, Rudolf Bultmann, for failing to see the apocalyptic/cosmic aspects of Paul's gospel. In the following quotation, Prof. Waetjen offers Bultmann's translation: "Salvation begins with Easter, that is, Jesus' resurrection from the dead and our participation in it through a baptism of death and resurrection. Salvation is rising from the dead without the infection of *harmatia* (Rom 6.7). This is the third and ultimate justification."⁶⁷ "If anyone is in Christ, she or he is a new creation" (2 Cor 5.17). (cited n. 29 above)

Lou Martyn⁶⁸ has made this translation of 2 Cor 5.17 quite unlikely. Taking into account the broad context that stretches from 2:14 to 6:10, one is struck by two facts, Martyn writes. "Paul defends his apostleship by various arguments, all of which refer to the turn of the ages... And only at this juncture is a person granted the new means of perception which enable one to distinguish true from false apostles.... Paul's statements establish an inextricable connection between eschatology and epistemology." (91-92) In 5:16 *kata sarka* should be read adverbially. Paul is not speaking about a "fleshly Christ." He is saying that there are two ways of knowing, and that what separates the two is the turn of the ages, the apocalyptic event of Christ's death/resurrection. (95)

The implied opposite of knowing by the norm of the flesh is not knowing by the norm of the Spirit, but rather knowing *kata stauron* ('by the cross'). (108) On a real cross in this world hangs God's own Messiah, the Lord of Glory (1 Cor 2:8)! How can that be anything other than an

and David P. Barrett, *The Text of the Earliest New Testament Greek Manuscripts* (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1999, 2001, 2nd ed.).

⁶⁵ See the good summary by Jewett, *Romans*, 9, citing e.g. Karl Donfried, *The Romans Debate* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991, rev. ed.), 44-52 and 102-25.

⁶⁶ Jewett, *Romans*, 9, citing Wolf-Henning Ollrog, "Die Abfassungsverhältnisse von Röm 16," in *Kirche: Festschrift Günther Bornkamm zum 75. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1980), 221-44.

⁶⁷ Waetjen, "New Understanding," 211.

⁶⁸ J. Louis Martyn, "Epistemology at the Turn of the Ages," 89-110 in *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997).

epistemological crisis? This way of knowing is not the private experience of an individual ecstatic, who partakes of the Lord's Supper by himself (1 Cor 11:21). On the contrary, it is life in the midst of the new-creation community, in which to know by the power of the cross is precisely to know and to serve the neighbor who is in need. (109) The creation is new, the old has passed away. Look!, the new has come (2 Cor 5:17; 6:2).

A final question/puzzlement: in the specific exegetical arguments above between Prof. Waetjen and myself, do his postmodern hermeneutics make a significant difference? Are these exegetical discussions any different because Prof. Waetjen employed postmodern hermeneutics? What effect, positive or negative, does the Preface to the commentary have on the interpretation?