6

IDEOLOGICAL TEXTURE

Every theology has a politics

In 1975, John Gager raised the issue of ideology in the interpretation of early Christian texts. Asserting that conflict reaches its most intense level when it involves competing ideologies or competing views of the same ideology, he presented three critical moments in the history of early Christianity:

(a) conflict with Judaism over the claim to represent the true Israel;
(b) conflict with paganism over the claim to possess true wisdom;
(c) conflict among Christian groups over the claim to embody the authentic faith of Jesus and the apostles.

(1975: 82)

In addition, he proposed that the intensity of the struggles was a function of two separate factors:

(a) the degree to which individuals considered themselves to be members of a group, so that any threat to the group became a threat to every individual;
(b) the role of intellectuals who transform personal motivations into eternal truths.

(1975: 82)

Gager uses the term 'ideology' alternatively with the phrase 'symbolic universe' (1975: 83). For an institution, an ideology integrates 'different provinces of meaning' and encompasses 'the institutional

192

order in a symbolic totality'; for an individual, it 'puts everything in its right place' (1975: 82–3; using Berger and Luckmann 1966: 95, 98).

At present, the spectrum of ideology for socio-rhetorical criticism occurs in four special locations: (a) in texts; (b) in authoritative traditions of interpretation; (c) in intellectual discourse; and (d) in individuals and groups. We will discuss ideology in sections under these headings.

IDEOLOGY IN TEXTS

As mentioned in the previous chapter, John H. Elliott raised the issue of ideological analysis of New Testament texts with special force in his study of 1 Peter (1990a). Setting aside more specialized Marxian and Mannheimian concepts, he adopted a definition of ideology as 'an integrated system of beliefs, assumptions and values, not necessarily true or false, which reflects the needs and interests of a group or class at a particular time in history' (p. 268, quoting Davis 1975: 14). The ideological implications of a text, then, are more than its ideational or theological content or the constellation of its religious ideas. Rather, the task is to explore the manner in which the discourse of a text presents comprehensive patterns of cognitive and moral beliefs about humans, society and the universe that are intended to function in the social order. The investigation especially seeks to identify the intersection of ideas, ideals and social action and to detect the collective needs and interests the patterns represent (Elliott 1990a: 267).

For Elliott, the ideology of 1 Peter is manifested especially in its promotion of a view of Christianity as a Christian household throughout the world in which 'the stranger is no longer an isolated alien but a brother or sister' (p. 288). The ideological implications of this view, he suggests, are embedded in the special interests of a Petrine group that desired 'to stabilize and enhance its position in Rome as well as its influence and authority within the Christian movement abroad' (p. 280). The household ideology linked 'the symbols of the communal dimension of faith (brotherhood, family of God) with the experience of alienated (*paroikoi, paroikia* in society) and collective (household communities) social existence' (p. 283). This ideology provided the resources for distinctiveness, explaining the readiness of Christians to suffer, a radical sense of Christian

193

community open to all and an emphasis on a community of care (pp. 284–5).

One of the central components of ideology is social location, since 'one's social location or rhetorical context is decisive of how one sees the world, constructs reality or interprets biblical texts' (Schüssler Fiorenza 1988: 5). Subsequent to Elliott's analysis, I developed a model for investigating the social location of the discourse in a text (Robbins 1991a), and Jerome Neyrey has applied this model to Jude and 2 Peter with excellent results (1993: 32–41, 128–41). The model correlates the rhetorical strategies of the implied author/reader, narrator/narratee and character/audiences (Chatman 1978) with the social arenas of previous events, natural environment and resources, population structure, technology, socialization and personality, culture, foreign affairs, belief systems and ideologies and political-military-legal system (Carney 1975). Since an implied reader personifies the discourse of a text in terms of its 'implied author', the essay explores the social location of the discourse in the mode of the implied author in the text. The exploration reveals a location of the thought of Luke-Acts among adult Jews and Romans who have power in cities and villages. The discourse speaks upwards toward Roman officials with political power but considers Jewish officials to be equal in social status and rank. The rhetoric of the discourse calls for distribution of wealth among the poor, but it does not argue for permitting the poor to become landowners or householders. The discourse claims that Christians are an authentic part of the heterogeneous population of the Roman empire and identifies some political-military-legal personnel as members of the Christian movement. Vigorous confrontation with Jewish people from whom it claims its heritage interweaves with direct but polite communication with Roman officials. Overall the discourse exhibits boldness of speech and action throughout the Mediterranean world, yet there is an ambivalence born of subordination: political-military-legal people both protect Christians and imprison them in an environment where conflict continually develops between Christians and Jews (Robbins 1991a: 331–2).

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza has emphasized for some years that interpreters should investigate the 'ideological script' of a text (e.g. 1988: 15; 1989: 12). In 1991, Elisabeth A. Castelli's analysis of the discourse of power in Paul's statements concerning imitation of him appeared in print, and she exhibits how an interpreter may launch a programmatic analysis of ideology in a text. To establish a

context for her analysis, she discusses traditional interpretation and briefly shows how most interpreters do not analyze the ideological aspect of Paul's discourse. Instead of investigating how a text has set up issues as a way of getting to certain kinds of 'answers' or goals, interpreters either spiritualize the text – removing it from any historical or social context that implies complex dynamics of conflict and competition – or they presuppose or assert continuity, authority and unity in tradition (Castelli 1991: 24–32). Castelli cites John Howard Schütz's investigation of the anatomy of apostolic authority in Paul (1975) and Benjamin Fiore's study of personal example in Socratic and Pastoral Epistles (1982) as two important exceptions to traditional approaches. Also, she once cites Graham Shaw's investigation of letters of Paul and the Gospel of Mark from the perspective of 'manipulation and freedom' (Castelli 1991: 114; Shaw 1983), but she might have used this study with greater benefit in her own investigation.

After establishing a context by exhibiting this absence in traditional interpretation, Castelli introduces Michel Foucault's 'analytic of power' (pp. 35–58) to position her own study. She describes her goal as describing 'how the text operates rather than what it means' (p. 18) and locates her interests between literary and sociological investigations (p. 38). Especially helpful for socio-rhetorical analysis of ideological texture, she presents a summary of Foucault's guidelines for analyzing power relations in a text (Castelli 1991: 50, 122), which appeared as an afterword in a major study of Foucault's work (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983: 208–26). Her summary yields the following principles:

1 Define the *system of differentiations* that allows dominant people to act upon the actions of people in a subordinate position.
2 Articulate the *types of objectives* held by those who act upon the actions of others.
3 Identify the *means* for bringing these relationships into being.
4 Identify the *forms of institutionalization of power*.
5 Analyze the *degree of rationalization* of power relations.

Castelli does not attempt to follow these guidelines as actual steps in her investigation of texts (pp. 89–117), but after her analysis and interpretation she presents a paragraph for each principle, explaining what her investigation has revealed (pp. 122–4).

IDEOLOGY IN AUTHORITATIVE TRADITIONS OF INTERPRETATION

Ideology resides not only in biblical texts; it also resides in interpretive traditions that have been granted positions of authority. One form of ideological challenge has come from Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, the first woman president of the Society of Biblical Literature, who has called on the guild of American biblical scholars to identify and evaluate the political ideology that guides the interpretations it sanctions and the series of publications it nurtures (1988). Her call was based on a critical theory of rhetoric that considers discourse to generate reality, not merely be a reflection of it (1987: 387). In other words, discourse creates a world of pluriform meanings and a pluralism of symbolic universes, and this means that discourse is always implicated in power (1988: 14). The discourse of historical interpretation, therefore, has ideological texture:

> In the very language historians use to describe their projects they not only provide a certain amount of explanation or interpretation of what this information *means* but also give a more or less overt message about the attitude that the reader should take with respect to the historical 'data' and their interpretation.
>
> (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985b: 50)

The emphasis here lies on the ideology of a dominant tradition of interpretation, and her essay on 1 Corinthians will be used here to exhibit the manner in which a rhetorical interpretation can challenge the dominant ideology (Schüssler Fiorenza 1987). Working carefully in a mode of critical rhetorical analysis, Schüssler Fiorenza identifies an ideological feature in contemporary investigations where all interpreters 'follow Paul's dualistic rhetorical strategy without questioning or evaluating it'; namely, they presuppose that 'he is right and the "others" are wrong' (p. 390). Careful analysis of rhetorical arrangement and the rhetorical situation evoked by the discourse suggests that Paul countered the baptismal self-understanding of the Corinthians – whereby their community relationships overcame patriarchal divisions between Greeks and Jews, slave and free, men and women, rich and poor, wise and uneducated – with a patriarchal line of authority through himself (God, Christ, Paul, Apollos, Timothy, Stephanas and other local co-workers) which introduces patriarchal subordination of women to

men (God–Christ–man–woman: 1 Cor. 11.2) (p. 397). I will build on these excellent analyses of 1 Corinthians by both Castelli and Schüssler Fiorenza in my analysis of ideological texture in 1 Corinthians 9 at the end of this chapter.

Another set of ideological challenges has come from Jonathan Z. Smith. His works, using 'critical anthropology', challenge New Testament interpreters to examine the innermost nature of the discipline itself, including the 'myth of origins' in which biblical interpreters embed their interpretive practices. For many interpreters this is embedded in a Protestant ideology, now even promulgated by some Roman Catholic scholars, in which earliest Christianity is a unique phenomenon – a phenomenon without analogy in the history of religions – which, of course, deteriorates rapidly into early Catholicism (J. Z. Smith 1990). Since one of the characteristics of scientific (*wissenschaftliche*) anlaysis is to hide its ideological foundations, it is natural that New Testament interpreters have been reluctant to evaluate their deepest commitments programmatically and to submit them to public scrutiny. Socio-rhetorical criticism calls for interpretive practices that include minute attention to the ideologies that guide interpreters' selection, analysis and interpretation of data.

Another challenge has recently been formulated by Amy L. Wordelman as she has identified 'orientalizing' in traditional interpretation. Her study focuses on Acts 14, which narrates a visit of Paul and Barnabas to Lystra in Lycaonia, where the people think Paul and Barnabas are Hermes and Zeus (1994). As she worked with traditional interpretations of the passage, she became conscious of an 'ideology of difference' that regarded the Lycaonians as backward, rustic, superstitious, barbarian people. Through a survey of literature on stereotyping, she concludes that the particular kind involved here was described well in Edward Said's well-known study entitled *Orientalism* (1979). Much of Western literature, Said reveals, contains an orientalizing ideology that caricatures people of the East as unintelligent, unrefined people, in contrast to people in the West, who are intellectually astute, democratically civilized and theologically sophisticated. The rhetoric of orientalism, Said proposes, communicates 'gross generalizations about "the Orient" as some kind of organic whole, completely opposite of and essentially inferior to "the Occident"' (Wordelman 1994: 17). The particular figures of speech vary within different authors, exhibiting a variety of stereotyping genres: 'a linguistic Orient, a Freudian Orient, a

Spenglerian Orient, a Darwinian Orient, a racist Orient – and so on' (Said 1979: 22). In each instance, the people of the Middle East and Asia are characterized as socially, culturally, morally and mentally inferior – sub-human, alien 'others' – to European people.

Equipped with a basic description and typology of orientalizing ideology, Wordelman analyzes traditional interpretations of Acts 14. Calvin, writing during the sixteenth century, stereotypes the Lycaonians as 'barbarous men', 'superstitious', 'infidels', 'unbelievers' and an 'unlearned multitude'. He uses this language especially for the priest of Zeus who prepares to make sacrifices in honor of the arrival of the gods in their midst, and he directs this language toward the Roman Catholicism of his day (Wordelman 1994: 31–2; Calvin 1844, II: 1–31). His virulent description is a launching pad for a wholesale attack on Catholicism in France, with an assertion that the superstition of the Greco-Roman world had lived on in the institutions of his day: 'the priests of France begat the single life of the great Cybele. Nuns came in place of the vestal virgins. The church of All Saints succeeded Pantheon' (Calvin 1844, II: 15, quoted by Wordelman 1994: 31–2). Thus, the stereotyping of the Lycaonians does not keep its focus on the people of Lystra; rather, this language is a medium for Calvin to describe the religious opponents against whom he sets himself as a reformer.

Sir William Mitchell Ramsay's use of terminology during the nineteenth century is not far behind. He characterized the Anatolian plateau in which Lycaonia is located as 'vast, immobile, monotonous, subdued, melancholy, and lending itself to tales of death' (Wordelman 1994: 73–4). The people who live in it in modern times (Turkey), he claimed, are '[s]impleminded, childish, monotonous, fickle, changeable, sluggish, obedient, peaceable, submissive' (p. 77). General Anatolian religion, in his view, was constituted by elaborate and minute ritual which was 'a highly artificial system of life' that perpetuated a 'primitive social condition' on a 'lower moral standard'. It glorified the 'female element in human life', which reflected its national character as 'receptive and passive, not self-assertive and active, and it emphasized rituals connected with graves (p. 87). For Ramsay, the goal was to authorize the Christian apostles as 'Hellenistic' in contrast to the Oriental spirit of the people whom they converted. Asia Minor, he proposed, was 'Greco-Asiatic', containing people with an oriental spirit and piety in a context of some Greek forms of culture and organization. Ramsay considers Paul's letter to the Galatians to exhibit the challenge for the apostles in an

exemplary manner: formerly the people were enslaved to elemental spirits who were not God but cycles of nature; the apostles converted them to the true God and 'belief' rather than superstition (pp. 83–6). Ramsay does not use this analysis to attack Catholicism, as Calvin did, but to equate his form of European Protestant Christianity with enlightened Hellenistic belief and worship in contrast to the 'general Anatolian type', which was morally, spiritually and intellectually inferior.

After an extensive analysis of other commentators in addition, to exhibit the presence of an orientalizing ideology in traditional interpretation, Wordelman turns to ideology in the text of Acts. To what extent does the text itself exhibit an orientalizing ideology? To draw a conclusion about this, Wordelman investigates the 'geo-cultural map' manifest in the text, which extends from Jerusalem in the East to Rome in the West. Her conclusion is that Luke operates with a geo-cultural map in which the island of Malta is clearly a 'barbarian' culture but Lystra is not (p. 147). Lukan discourse refers to the people of Malta as barbarians (Acts 28.2, 28.4), and in this setting Paul heals but does not preach the gospel. This evokes a perception that the people are able to respond to religious belief on the level of miraculous cure but not on the level of understanding a system of belief. In turn, these friendly barbarians offer hospitality and bestow honor (pp. 144–5). The account at Lystra, on the other hand, has many parallels with the account of preaching and healing in Jerusalem (pp. 149–55). This suggests that Luke's geo-cultural map includes Lystra in the 'East' along with Jerusalem, and in the East, from the perspective of Lukan discourse, both wonderworking and preaching occur (pp. 150–61).

In contrast to both Malta and the East, however, in both Athens and Rome Paul speaks and argues with the people, but he does not heal anyone. This suggests to Wordelman that Luke imagines a religious and cultural ethos in Athens and Rome in which supernatural or wondrous deeds are problematic. For Athens, the challenge is philosophical, and for Rome the challenge is to convince Jewish leaders through explanation, argument and testimony. Paul's approach is somewhat different, but in neither locale does he attempt to convince the people through miraculous deed. In Wordelman's view, then, Lukan discourse presents a form of 'proto-orientalism': the West is 'the realm of rational thought', and the East is 'the realm of irrationality where exotic, wondrous, and supernatural things can happen' (pp. 172–3). Cultural-geographic

location plays a greater role than religious location or identity. If Jews or Gentiles are in the East, miracles occur in their midst and early Christian leaders preach in the context of these exhibitions of God's power. If Jews or Gentiles are in Athens or Rome, Paul argues with them or teaches them, but no wonders occur in their midst. The only location for 'barbarians' on this geo-cultural map is the island of Malta. Here there is no attempt to preach, argue or give verbal testimony. Rather, communication between God and these generously hospitable people occurs only through miraculous escapes from danger and death and benevolent healings through the prayers and hands of people endowed with divine powers.

After this investigation of ideology in traditional interpretation and ideology in the text, Wordelman extends her analysis and interpretation toward a full socio-rhetorical project. This means that she does not limit her study to ideological texture but moves on to major aspects of the inner texture, intertexture and social and cultural texture of the text. She begins with 'historical' intertexture in the account. Observing a series of assertions that imply the presence of certain historical phenomena at Lystra, Wordelman makes an extensive exploration of archeological, inscriptional and literary data to ascertain the relation between assertions in the text and outside historical evidence about Lystra, both material and textual. The major questions are as follows. Is there any material or literary evidence that:

(a) people in Lystra spoke Lycaonian during the first century CE (Acts 14.11);

(b) a priest was appointed to Lystra to oversee a cult to Zeus (Acts 14.13);

(c) a temple dedicated to Zeus existed 'in front of the city' (Acts 14.13)?

Inscriptional evidence offers reasonably good support for worship of Zeus and Hermes in the region of Lycaonia and possible support for worship of them in Lystra (pp. 90–101). In Wordelman's words, 'it would not be unrealistic to suppose that Lystra had a temple to Zeus' (p. 211). No archeological evidence, however, has been found for a temple of Zeus at Lystra (p. 211), nor is there evidence of an appointment or selection of a priest for Zeus worship there. There is ample evidence for 'worship of Zeus – under various local designations – in Phrygia' (p. 212), and evidence that the local population in the mountainous regions directly south of Lycaonia in Cilicia

'Graecized the Hittite weather-god Tarhu(nt), calling him Zeus; and the divine protector of wildlife, Ru(nt), calling him Hermes' (pp. 212–13). By extension, then, a person may argue for the possibility of similar worship at Lystra, but again, there is no direct evidence for worship of either Zeus or Hermes there.

If Wordelman's study stopped at this point, it would not be a truly socio-rhetorical investigation of Acts 14. But her investigation continues. Given the plausibility but not the certainty of Zeus worship in Lystra, she returns to the inner texture of the account and performs a careful analysis of its 'cultural' intertexture in relation to the image of Lycaonia and the nature of mythical accounts of Zeus and Hermes in Greek and Roman literature. Her results are stunning. Her search takes her beyond Ovid's tale of Baucis and Philemon, which many commentators have cited in relation to the account in Acts. In this story, 'Zeus and Hermes appear in human form to ordinary people, and they do something miraculous' that exhibits their identity (p. 217). The problem is that the story occurs in Phrygia, and the Acts 14 story occurs in Lycaonia. The last story in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* features King Lycaon of Arcadia, and word-plays in literature show that Mediterranean people have fun with Lycaon as a person (King Lycaon), a place (Lycaonia) and being wolf-like (*lykon*) (pp. 231–8). The King Lycaon episode is 'the final straw which drives Jupiter and the other gods to destroy the world by flood' (p. 222). Jupiter, to test rumors that humans have become impious, descends from Mount Olympus and travels up and down the land as a god disguised in human form. Worrying most about King Lycaon, who is 'well known for his savagery', Jupiter travels to Arcadia, 'gives a sign that a god had come' into their midst, and the common people begin to worship him. King Lycaon does not believe the human-looking stranger is a god, so he puts him to a test. He makes a plot to kill him in his sleep, but serves him a meal of the flesh of a human hostage before sending him off to bed. Jupiter, knowing the flesh is human, destroys the house with a mighty thunderbolt, and when Lycaon tries to escape he gradually turns into a wolf, 'the same picture of beastly savagery' he had in his human form (p. 223). In Wordelman's words, 'Lycaon's new form as a wolf, reveals for all time his character as a human king' (p. 223).

Wordelman then reads the story in Acts 14 in relation to this myth of Zeus at the end of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Paul and Barnabas come into Lystra, and Paul heals a man who was crippled from

birth. The local residents, seeing the deed and knowing the story of Zeus/Jupiter, are not fooled. They know that Paul is Hermes and Barnabas is Zeus, appearing to them in human form, so they cry this out 'in Lycaonian' (Acts 14.11). When the priest of Zeus begins to prepare sacrifices of oxen and garlands in honor of the visit of the gods, Paul and Barnabas are 'caught in this latest version of an ancient tale and largely unaware of their predicament. As Paul and Barnabas finally do catch on and object to the proceedings, the tone of the episode changes from one of entertainment to one of edifica- tion' (p. 240). But this is not the end of the story. Immediately after Paul and Barnabas clarify for the people who they really are and what they believe, 'Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium; and having persuaded the people, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead' (Acts 14.19). Who, then, takes on the nature of a wolf-like creature? 'Wolf-friendship', Wordelman explains, is 'friendship characterized by an initial show of friendliness, which quickly turns to enmity or hostility' (p. 246). In Acts 14.18 the people 'are ready to serve a banquet to their guests', but 'the next minute they prefer to destroy them'. '[T]hrough the wolf analogy . . . the behavior of the Lycaonians becomes indicative of the larger persecution and rejection themes of Luke's narrative' (pp. 249–50). And then Wordelman expresses her shock:

> The analogies with primary themes in Luke's narrative jump out starkly from the page. 'The Jews' who rejected Jesus are responsible for his death, i.e., 'they' have tasted the flesh of a human victim. They have 'tasted kindred blood' with tongues and lips now unholy. The Lycaonians are that docile mob. Paul, the Roman citizen, is unjustly accused, dragged out of the city, and left for dead (14.19). Contact with 'ravenous wolves' has transformed the originally docile and worshipping Lycaonians into ravenous wolves themselves.
>
> (pp. 250–1)

Wordelman does not go on to analyze the social and cultural texture of this discourse in the socio-rhetorical manner recommended in the last chapter. I would suggest that Wordelman's analysis shows once again the dominant conversionist nature, in Wilson's termin- ology, of Lukan discourse. Paul and Barnabas take Christianity on the road to change people's attitudes to their worship. This conver- sionist argumentation is supported by thaumaturgic rhetoric about

healing (Acts 14.8–10), which provides the occasion for the conver- sionist discourse but is also moderated by a general thesis about God's creating and nurturing of the universe and the people in it through the ages (Acts 14.15–17). Culturally, Lukan discourse pre- sents Christianity as a Mediterranean subculture that understands and participates in Greek and Roman life. The narrator reveals that he knows Greek and Roman mythology and can use it to play with and persuade his reader/audience. Also, Christianity's belief system fulfills the highest values of Greek and Roman life: doing benevolent things that bring happiness to heart and body (Acts 14.17). This sub- cultural discourse, however, is embedded in *contra*cultural Jewish discourse. The fun the narrator has with his culturally informed audience occurs at the expense of Jewish tradition. Jews, whose overall behavior is 'wolflike', transform the hospitable Lycaonians into wolflike people, willingly stoning Paul and leaving him for dead after they had initially been hospitable. Despite all the 'Jewish' tradi- tion that informs the Lukan story, what the reader hears again and again is rhetoric that suggests that Christianity is something quite distinct from, and quite opposed to, 'the Jews'.

Before leaving this section, I should mention a recent volume on ideological analysis containing a series of essays by biblical inter- preters (Jobling and Pippin 1992). Some of the essays move toward socio-rhetorical analysis; others do not. Socio-rhetorical criticism, as a critical theory of rhetoric, calls for analysis of the ideological texture of authoritative traditions (cf. Clark 1994) in the context of careful analysis of biblical texts themselves.

IDEOLOGY IN INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSE

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, John Gager identi- fied the role of intellectuals who transform personal motivations into eternal truths as an especially important issue in biblical inter- pretation (1975: 82). This issue, of course, involves this entire book: its presuppositions, its use of language, its format and its goals. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza has raised this issue in the form of an ethics of historical reading (1988: 14), an ethics of accountability (1988: 15) and a critical theological hermeneutics (1992: 133–63). In this section, then, the entire issue of how one interprets, and how one interprets in intellectual modes, moves to the forefront.

Fortunately, the field of New Testament studies has a number of people who have been working on these issues.

The ideological issues at stake in intellectual discourse are being explored brilliantly at present by Stephen D. Moore. Two major literary figures lying behind the part of Moore's work I will discuss here are Jacques Derrida and Paul de Man. I will present Moore's analysis of them for biblical interpreters in this section, rather than go to the texts of these writers themselves. The interest in this chapter is to discuss biblical interpreters, among whom Moore is becoming a major figure. His distinctive contribution lies in the arena of the ideological analysis both of biblical texts and of interpretations of biblical texts. His first book focused entirely on biblical interpreters of the Gospels in the New Testament, exhibiting the nature and limitations of their work (Moore 1989). His second book explored Mark and Luke from poststructuralist perspectives (Moore 1992). His third book explains poststructuralism through extensive analysis and interpretation of the work of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault (Moore 1994). For the purposes in this section the reworked excerpts on Mark from his second book, which were printed as a separate essay in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (Anderson and Moore 1992: 84–102), are most helpful for the investigation of ideology in intellectual discourse.

As Moore explains in the opening pages of his essay, a major problem with modern Western thought is the manner in which it is 'built on binary oppositions: soul/body, nature/culture, male/female, white/nonwhite, inside/outside, conscious/unconscious, object/representation, history/fiction, literal/metaphorical, content/form, primary/secondary, text/interpretation, speech/writing, presence/absence, and so on' (p. 84). I introduced this problem in the introduction to this work in the form of 'mind/body' dualism, and we have seen Castelli's analysis of such oppositions in Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians 1–4. The practices of Western thinking introduce subordination in each pair rather than equality: the first term is superior to the second, so the relation between the two terms is hierarchical (superior/inferior), not reciprocal. One of the major ways this has influenced biblical interpretation is in the establishment of 'poetic boundaries', an issue discussed in chapter 3, where the interpreter sets up a strong opposition between the 'inside' and the 'outside' of the text. Another major influence has been the opposition of 'speech' and 'writing', also discussed in chapter 3. These traditional perspectives play into binary Western

thinking where the first terms are the 'good' ones ('inside' and 'speech'), while the second terms are inferior, ordinary, lifeless or corrupted imitations of what is most true and real. Unfortunately but not surprisingly, these oppositions breathe through both biblical interpretation and Christian theology – since both are products of Western thought – establishing their agendas, goals and strategies. After addressing some of the oppositions in biblical interpretation, this section will turn to the problem of these oppositions in intellectual discourse, which includes not only biblical interpretation and Christian theology but also the disciplines of history, literary studies, linguistics, sociology, anthropology, philosophy and psychology. Instead of rehearsing specifically what Moore has done, I will use Moore's work as a medium to explain yet further the nature of socio-rhetorical criticism.

To confront the problem of binary oppositions in biblical interpretation, Moore uses the works of Derrida and de Man in the context of interpretation of aspects of the Gospel of Mark. One example he explores is the boundaries of a text. In contrast to clear boundaries that create an inside and an outside for texts, there are ways in which texts destroy their own boundaries. An excellent example is the end of the Gospel of Mark (pp. 86–7). Copyists wrote at least three different endings when they copied Mark in an attempt to establish a secure boundary at the end of the story. At the end, the text says that the women told no one what they had seen and heard at the empty tomb (Mark 16.8). But if they told no one, the narrative itself would not be able to contain the story: there would have been no means by which anyone could have known about the empty tomb. This contradiction breaks open the end of the text: somehow something had to happen, which the narrative does not tell about, which made it possible to include the story about the empty tomb. A major point with this is that 'inside' and 'outside' break down. Evidence that something 'outside' the text had to happen for the story to be in the text is actually 'inside' the text – namely the story of the empty tomb. Unless something happened outside the text besides the women's 'not telling' anyone, the author could not have included the story in the text (unless the author is one of those women, which Moore does not suggest!). At this point, then, opening–middle–closing texture breaks down the 'inside' and 'outside' of the text: the text contains inside–outside interaction 'in itself', as we would say.

A key example of a positive manifestation of this inside–outside interaction is the use of the term 'parable' in the narrative. At first the Twelve are told that only people 'on the inside', namely them, can understand the parables; people on the 'outside' are not able to understand them. Soon, however, those on the inside, namely the Twelve, are not able to understand what Jesus says and does, even though 'everything happens in parables' (Mark 4.11). The significance of this is that Markan narrative itself contains a term, namely 'parable', that deconstructs the 'inside/outside' opposition which it sets up near the beginning of the story. This is the kind of term both Derrida and de Man look for, namely a term that contains both sides of the opposition in itself and has no opposite in the language of the text itself. Parable is an 'inner–outer' phenomenon in the text itself that 'deconstructs' the opposition between inside and outside which a reader may wish to impose on the text.

Another issue is the opposition of speech and writing in biblical interpretation, which suggests that speech is superior to writing (pp. 89–93). In the text of Mark, Jesus speaks. According to the high evaluation of speaking in Western thought, speaking is superior to writing because the speaker is there to communicate directly. Communication is clear when it is embodied in the speaker himself; there should be no distortion because the speaker is there – everything should become clear through question and answer if it is not clear at first. In contrast, a written text cannot be clarified: it wanders around like an 'orphan', lost from its author/father. The author is not there to clarify the text, so its meanings have been 'lost'. The reader will anticipate me to know that when Jesus speaks in Mark, the disciples, who are supposed to be on the 'inside' of Jesus' 'speech', cannot understand the meaning of what Jesus says. It is as if they are trying to 'read' Jesus as though he were 'writing' and has gone away from his writing. That which is supposed to be true of writing, then, is present in the contexts where Jesus 'speaks' directly to the disciples. Alternatively, the 'reader' of the text of Mark 'understands' what the disciples should be able to understand. Modern biblical interpreters, especially, know what the disciples should have understood when Jesus spoke to them. In other words, those who read the 'written text' of Mark understand it as though it were 'direct speech' to them, while those who hear the spoken voice of Jesus cannot understand it. But is this really the case? The reader of my statements will again anticipate me, to know that Markan discourse deconstructs the traditional opposition between speech and

writing in such a manner that the interpreter's belief that he or she can understand what is written is just as deceptive as thinking that the disciples had no understanding of Jesus' speech to them.

At this point, Moore moves to the opposition between text and reader, which has become another polarity in modern interpretation. Supposedly, either the reader 'imposes' meaning on the text or the text 'imposes' meaning on the reader. Some interpreters have it one way; others have it the other. For some modern interpreters, the reader is supposed to 'get out' from the text what is in it; for others, the reader 'constructs' what is in the text. But Moore shows that the situation is more complicated than this: we all act out something that is inscribed in the text; the question is 'what' aspect of it we act out. In Moore's words:

> The critic, while appearing to comprehend a literary text from a position outside or above it, is in fact being comprehended, being grasped, by the text. He or she is unwittingly acting out an interpretive role that the text has scripted, even dramatized, in advance. He or she is being enveloped in the folds of the texts even while attempting to sew it up.
>
> (p. 93; italics in original)

In other words, the reader is not completely outside or completely inside the text, nor is the text completely outside or inside the reader. Reader and text interact in ways that break down the traditional opposition between the two. This raises interesting issues not only about my own analyses but about Castelli's and Schüssler Fiorenza's analyses of Pauline discourse and Wordelman's analyses of Acts. In what ways are all of us acting out some interpretive role inscribed or dramatized by the text itself as we perform our analyses?

As Moore nears the end of his essay, he begins to play with the word 'cross'. The purpose is to show the fragility of language, to show how language is also not either one thing or another. Words are always in motion, meaning partly one thing here and partly another thing there, as well as partly one thing and partly another both here and there. Mark's theology is a theology of the cross, and the cross crisscrosses through other things said and done in the narrative. In other words, the cross 'crosses out' and 'crisscrosses' through the entire narrative, making Jesus absent where he seems to be present and present where he seems to be absent. Also, it makes

the author absent where we might have thought he was present and present where we might have thought he was absent.

There is a moment in Moore's text that is especially important for socio-rhetorical criticism and its project. In the context of talking about 'cross' Moore introduces 'chiasmus'. 'A cross is also a chiasmus', he says, and he introduces Mark 8.35:

> 'whoever would *save* their life will *lose* it' is inverted . . . to
> 'whoever *loses* their life . . . will *save* it'.
>
> (p. 95)

This is an important moment for socio-rhetorical criticism, because chiasmus is another way to overcome binary oppositions, a way regularly used by 'new historicism'. Chiasmus represents a reciprocity rather than opposition between two things. Reciprocity between Jewish and Greco-Roman culture in the Gospel of Mark stands at the foundation of analysis and interpretation in *Jesus the Teacher* (Robbins 1982, 1984, 1992a, 1990: 47–72/1994a: 109–242). In Stephen Greenblatt's terms, there is reciprocal 'energy' exchanged by two phenomena, and the exchange is not simple but highly complex (Thomas 1991: 182–5, 193–6). To describe relations between texts and society, therefore, new historicists use a chiasmus like:

> the social dimension of an aesthetic strategy and
> the aesthetic dimension of a social strategy.
>
> (Thomas 1991: 193)

For socio-rhetorical criticism, this introduces four chiasmic statements which I have not tried to introduce to the reader prior to this section, but which are at work in each aspect of texture in a text. The four statements are as follows:

(a) inner texture: the textual culture of religion and the religious culture of text;
(b) intertexture: the intertextuality of biblical discourse and the discourse of biblical intertextuality;
(c) social and cultural texture: the sociological and anthropological culture of religion and the religious culture of sociology and anthropology;
(d) ideological texture: the ideological texture of intellectual discourse and the intellectual texture of ideological discourse.

Each chiasmus turns the initial formulation back on to itself in a manner that raises decisive issues about any mode of interpretation of a text. Every interpretation of a text requires an interpreter to use a mode of discourse. Every mode of interpretive discourse is ideological, but it is not 'just' ideological. All interpretive discourse both reinscribes some aspect of the discourse in the text and enacts an influential mode of discourse in its own time and place. To put it another way, every interpreter acts out both 'an interpretive role the text has scripted, even dramatized, in advance' (Anderson and Moore 1992: 93) and an interpretive role that influential discourse in his or her own time and place has authorized and dramatized. In still other words, the ideological nature of all interpretation manifests itself in the interplay between the choice of a mode of interpretive discourse and the choice of dimensions of the text the interpreter reinscribes. Let us explore this briefly in relation to each chiastic statement above.

Investigations of inner texture act out some configuration of repetition, progression, opening–middle–closing, narration, argumentation and/or aesthetic in the text itself. Yet every interpretation adopts an interpretive role that uses one or more currently available mode of intellectual discourse, such as literary, linguistic, narratological, rhetorical, philosophical, theological or aesthetic discourse. On the one hand, the challenge as stated in the chiasmus above is that Christianity is one of those religions that has created a textual culture that claims to present authentic discourse, perhaps *the only authentic* discourse, about God. On the other hand, it is the nature of text itself to create a religious culture about itself – texts both authorize their own view of the world and create the need for their own discourse. Analysis and interpretation of the inner texture of New Testament texts, then, occur in a space of interplay between Christianity as a religion that authorizes itself through the thought and action it advocates in its texts and biblical texts as a form of discourse in which narrational voices evoke religious authority for themselves and create a need for their own religious discourse. The ideological dimensions of inner textual analysis and interpretation play out some configuration of the authority and needs created by the text and the authority and needs in the discourse the interpreter chooses from his or her contemporary culture.

Investigations of intertexture play out, in one way or another, an interaction between the history, texts, cultures and social situations and institutions biblical texts evoke and the history, texts, cultures

and social situations and institutions interpretations of biblical texts regularly evoke. In other words, individual biblical texts evoke canons, canons within canons and near-canons for their intertextuality. In the context of this multiple display of intertextures, interpreters evoke canons, canons within canons and near-canons for their own interpretive discourse. The ideological nature of a particular intertextual interpretation, then, lies in the interplay between the intertextures of the biblical text it is reinscribing and the intertexture in the intellectual discourse the interpreter has chosen to analyze and interpret this intertexture.

Investigations of social and cultural texture configure together one or more social and cultural roles the religious text has scripted and one or more roles sociology and anthropology have authorized as important and/or definitive. The ideological nature of analyses and interpretation of social and cultural texture lies in the interplay between the selection of special, common and final social and cultural topics and categories in the discourse and the selection of models, typologies, theories and modes of analysis and explanation from the social sciences.

Investigations of the ideological texture of biblical texts configure an interplay between some mode of authority and creation of needs enacted by the discourse in the text and some mode of authority and creation of needs in modern or postmodern intellectual discourse. On the one hand, the discourse in texts evokes literary, historical, social, cultural, rhetorical, ideological, aesthetic and theological modes of inquiry, discussion and interpretation. On the other hand, modern and postmodern intellectual discourse advances disciplinary, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary, eclectic, empirical, theoretical, constructive and deconstructive modes of analysis and interpretation. Ideological interpretation features an interplay between the selection of a particular ideology to enact intellectual dimensions evoked by the biblical text and the selection of particular intellectual modes of discourse to enact the ideological dimensions of the interpretation. For example, the ideological texture of anthropological discourse is regularly distinctive from the ideological texture of historical discourse. But a particular anthropological interpreter may choose an ideological position very close to a particular historical interpreter. The ideological texture of their respective interpretations exhibits itself both in the particular manner in which the interpreter enacts the discourse of the field of anthropology or history and in the particular manner in which the

interpreter enacts an aspect of the anthropological or historical texture or intertexture of the text. Thus, in any ideological investigation there is a reciprocal interaction between the ideological texture of the particular mode of interpretation and the intellectual texture – be it anthropological, historical, literary, sociological, aesthetic or theological – of the ideological interpretation.

In conclusion, any investigation of inner texture must wrestle with the 'baptizing' of text by modern critics just as much as it must wrestle with texts' 'baptizing' of religion. Any investigation of intertexture must wrestle with biblical intertexualities' 'canonizing' of itself as much as it must wrestle with the Bible's 'canonizing' of its own intertextuality. Any investigation of social and cultural texture must wrestle with the 'adoption' by sociology and anthropology of a religious culture for themselves as much as religion's 'adoption' of sociological and anthropological culture for itself. Any investigation of ideological texture must wrestle with the 'ultimate' claim of any form of intellectual discourse for its own ideology just as much as ideological interpretation makes an 'ultimate' claim for its intellectual mode of discourse. Nothing we say, then, can escape the way we say it and the context in which we say it, and the way other people hear it in the context in which they hear it. But there is no cause for alarm. This is the way it always has been and always will be. And this is the context in which we encounter 'truth' as we know it.

IDEOLOGY IN INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

Not only every text but also every interpreter reflects presuppositions, interests, commitments, desires, privileges and constraints which are not simply different personal attitudes, dispositions, interests and convictions, but are part of a particular location in the 'historical web of power relationships' (Schüssler Fiorenza 1985b: 9). Groups find special portions of the Bible that function as paradigms for them, give prominence in analysis and interpretation to certain textures rather than others in these texts and select a particular configuration of intellectual modes of discourse to interpret them. Schüssler Fiorenza used the Markan account of the woman who anointed Jesus (Mark 14.3–9) to launch her book entitled *In Memory of Her* (1983). In a more recent book entitled *But She Said* (1992), the story of the Syro-Phoenician/Canaanite woman in Mark 7.24–30/Matt. 15.21–8 provides the

language, and the book uses a series of stories about women in the Bible to establish its discourse. She uses a combination of rhetorical, historical, ideological, feminist and theological discourse in her commentary on these biblical texts. In many ways, then, Schüssler Fiorenza has been articulating an ideology for women of belief for more than a decade.

This section will repeat an analysis of Clarice J. Martin's study of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8.26–40 which I presented in the introduction to the paperback edition of *Jesus the Teacher* (1992a: xxxiv–xxxvii). The essay is an excellent beginning place for a person who wants to explore in a socio-rhetorical manner the ideology of particular individuals or groups. Martin entitled her essay 'A Chamberlain's Journey and the Challenge of Interpretation for Liberation' (C. J. Martin 1989), and in it she interweaves back and forth through inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture and ideological texture. In the end, she displays a thickly interwoven matrix of meanings and ideologies in and around the text.

Martin begins with past studies of inner texture of the story in the Acts of the Apostles where an Ethiopian eunuch, riding back on his chariot after his visit to Jerusalem, converts to Christianity as a result of Philip's interpretation of a scriptural passage to him. The past studies Martin cites proceeded thematically. Many observed the role of the Holy Spirit in the preaching and evangelism in the story of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch itself (8.29, 8.39) and in the broader narrative of Luke-Acts (Luke 4.18; 24.44; Acts 1.8; 4.8–10; 7.55; 10.11–12; 13.4–10; 16.6–7). Others observed Philips' 'witness' to the death and resurrection of Jesus in the story and the theme of witness throughout Luke and Acts (Luke 1.1–4; 24.48; Acts 1.21–2; 4.33; 10.39–41; 22.14–15). Still others observed the 'joy' of the Ethiopian at the end of the story in (8.39) relation to the theme of joy throughout Luke and Acts (Luke 1.44; 2.10; 15.4–7; 19.6, 19.37; 24.41; Acts 2.47; 8.8; 11.18; 16.33) (pp. 106–7).

From these observations about the inner texture of the Ethiopian story and the overall narrative of Luke and Acts, Martin moves to an ideological phenomenon in the inner texture that provides a transition to intertextual analysis. In the story about the Ethiopian eunuch and throughout Luke and Acts, there is a presupposition that Old Testament prophecy is fulfilled in the experiences and activities recounted about Jesus and early Christianity. The Ethiopian eunuch is reading in the fifty-third chapter of the prophetic

book of Isaiah about the lamb that does not open its mouth as it is led to slaughter. Philip, of course, uses the opportunities to tell the eunuch 'the good news of Jesus'. But for Martin, this moment in the story takes us to Isaiah 53. Going to the intertext that is explicitly recited in Acts 8, Martin observes that three chapters later in the book of Isaiah, Isaiah prophesied that eunuchs who keep the sabbath, who choose the things that please the Lord God and who hold fast to the Lord's covenant will go to God's holy mountain, be made joyful in God's house of prayer, and their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on the altar, because the Lord's house 'shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples' (Isaiah 56.4, 56.7–8). This prophecy reverses the prohibition in Deuteronomy 23.1 that forbids eunuchs from entering 'the assembly of the Lord'. With this move, Martin has extended her analysis beyond the oral–scribal intertexture of the story with Isaiah 53 to the broader social intertexture that Second and Third Isaiah nurture within biblical discourse.

Since the eunuch has, according to the story in Acts, gone up to Jerusalem to worship and is now returning home in his chariot (8.27–8), the story enacts the 'social reality' of the temple at Jerusalem becoming a 'house of prayer for all peoples' as Isaiah 56.4, 56.7–8 predicted, since the eunuch has just worshipped at the Temple and is now returning. But the intertextuality of the story with biblical social reality does not end here. The eunuch is not simply a eunuch; he is an Ethiopian. In Psalm 68.31 it says that Ethiopia will 'stretch out her hands to God'. This social reality also has been fulfilled in the story. Without saying that Psalms also are considered to be fulfilled in the activities in Luke and Acts, Martin has expanded the intertexture of the story beyond the specific issue of eunuchs in biblical culture. Her interest lies in an aspect of his identity that extends beyond his being a eunuch. He is an Ethiopian, an issue of special importance for an African-American interpreter of scripture. This story enacts the inclusion not only of eunuchs but also of Ethiopians in worship in the Jerusalem temple. But now we need to know who Ethiopians are. Thus, Martin has found a passageway through oral–scribal, social and cultural intertexture to a context for exploring the ethnographic identity of Ethiopians in Mediterranean antiquity (pp. 107–10).

In summary, adopting the modern mode of discourse regularly called liberation theology, Martin moved from analysis of inner texture to an ideological phenomenon within the text that provided

a transition from traditional oral–scribal analysis of Isaiah 53 and 56 to analysis of Psalm 68.31 where Ethiopians worship the God of Israel. In the context of this intertextual analysis, she moves the issue in which she is most interested, the identity of the man as an Ethiopian, into the center. This opens a passageway into an ethno-graphic exploration of cultural intertexture of the story in relation to Hellenistic-Roman society and culture, which is a prominent aspect of the text of the Acts of the Apostles. Instead of going physi-cally to a particular location as anthropologists do, Martin, like other researchers of Antiquity, does her 'fieldwork' in the literature, art and other cultural artifacts available in libraries, museums, etc.

Aided by Frank M. Snowden Jr.'s studies of blacks in antiquity (Snowden 1976a, 1976b, 1979), Martin brings to the reader's attention that 'Ethiopians were the yardstick by which antiquity measured colored peoples. The skin of the Ethiopian was black, in fact, blacker, it was noted, than that of any other people' (Snowden 1979: 23). In addition, Ethiopians were persistently characterized as having '"puffy" or "thick" lips, tightly curled or "wooly" hair, [and] a flat or "broad" nose' (C. J. Martin 1989: 111). Martin works through classical art to Homer, Herodotus and Seneca to thicken her description of Ethiopians in Mediterranean society and culture (pp. 110–14).

When Martin completes her ethnographic analysis and interpreta-tion, she returns to Luke and Acts to exhibit a thicker texture for its ideology of promise and fulfillment. In Luke there is reference to 'all flesh' seeing the salvation of God (Luke 3.6), to repentance and forgiveness of sins being preached to 'all nations' (Luke 24.47) and to people coming from 'east, west, north and south' to sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Luke 13.29). At the beginning of Acts there is a proclamation that the mission in Acts will reach to the 'end of the earth' (Acts 1.8c). From this thicker picture of the ideology of Luke and Acts, Martin moves to Mediterranean cultural ideology about 'the end of the earth' and concludes, using Homer, Herodotus and Strabo, that Ethiopia lies on the edge of the 'Ocean' at the southernmost limit of the world. Her conclusion, in turn, suggests that the identification of the eunuch as Ethiopian should be significant, because in its context of culture this baptized Ethiopian is returning to his home at the end of the earth. In this context, then, Martin, much like Wordelman, moves to a discussion of the geo-cultural map the discourse in the book of Acts evokes.

From these observations about the cultural ideology and geo-cultural map of Acts, Martin returns once again to Luke and Acts and observes that these two volumes participate in a cultural ideol-ogy that focuses on Rome as the center of the Mediterranean world. As a result of this ideology, using the words of Cain Felder, 'the darker races outside the Roman orbit are circumstantially margin-alized by New Testament authors' and the 'socio-political realities' of this 'tend to dilute the New Testament vision of racial inclusive-ness and universalism' (Felder 1982: 22). When Martin turns to bibli-cal maps for the New Testament to find Ethiopia, she discovers a 'politics of omission'. Only a map of the Roman world at the birth of Jesus in *The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible* includes Meroë (or Nubia). In all other cases, a person can find this area only in some maps for the Hebrew Bible. This 'politics of omission' is not only present in investigations of the New Testament, however. Quoting Snowden, Martin emphasizes that a similar omission has existed in classical scholarship, despite rich data of various kinds. But then, she observes, post-enlightenment culture itself has margin-alized and omitted not only blacks but also women and other groups. It is necessary to activate a hermeneutics of suspicion, she therefore suggests, that can intercept ideologies that thrive on a 'politics of omission' (C. J. Martin 1989: 120–6).

The end of Martin's article addresses the issue of interpretation itself. Her words are as follows:

> If the ongoing process of interpreting biblical traditions is to be in any sense 'interpretation for liberation' – that is, inter-pretation which effects full humanity, empowerment, and justice in the church and society under God – interpreters must continue to critically discern ways in which a 'politics of omission' may be operative in perpetuating the marginal-ization and 'invisibility' of traditionally marginalized persons, groups, and ideologies in biblical narratives. It is only as we undertake such critical analyses that a potentially liberatory vision of biblical traditions can emerge and function as an empowering force in *all* contemporary communities of faith.
>
> (1989: 126)

In Martin's interpretation, then, there is concern about boundaries that nurture a 'politics of omission' and a plea for interpreters to bring to light the ways in which both the texts we interpret and the methods we use to interpret them marginalize, exclude and hide

persons, groups and ideologies. Her article is an excellent model of one way to proceed. Using the discursive power of liberation theology, she works carefully in the inner texture of both Luke-Acts and the Hebrew Bible, identifying ideological moments that expand intertextual exploration beyond a genetic mode to a broader literary mode that leads to social, cultural and ideological exploration of the meaning of the text.

Instead of functioning within tightly sealed boundaries, Martin finds passageways through boundaries into arenas of exploration that shed additional light on the story in Acts. As she moves through passageways to other arenas of exploration, Martin does not forget the text she is interpreting. She continually comes back to it to find the interwoven webs of significance within its inner, social, cultural and ideological texture. Moreover, she does not flee from environments of closure. She continually returns to them to look for passageways to other arenas of disciplinary investigation that have produced data that will help her explore additional webs of significance in the text.

Martin's investigation could have performed an even fuller socio-rhetorical analysis and interpretation if it had analyzed repetitive, progressive, narrational, argumentative and aesthetic features in the inner texture of the account of the conversion of the Ethiopian. Also, it could have explored the nature of the social response to the world in the discourse, which is dominantly conversionist, as we have seen in the previous chapter. The issue of the final categories at work in the narration would also be a highly interesting matter. Acts 8.33 specifically raises the issue of justice in a context of humiliation and Acts 8.39 suggests that a benefit that brings joy is a final category at work in the discourse. In addition, an important aspect of the story is the identification of the converted man as a eunuch, which is an aspect of the story Martin does not attempt to address at any length (cf. A. Smith 1995).

IDEOLOGICAL TEXTURE IN
1 CORINTHIANS 9

Let us move on, then, to analysis and interpretation of the ideological texture of 1 Corinthians 9. While analysis of social and cultural texture yields insights into dialogue among social and cultural systems in the discourse, analysis of ideological texture analyzes the nature of the power struggles in the context of these systems.
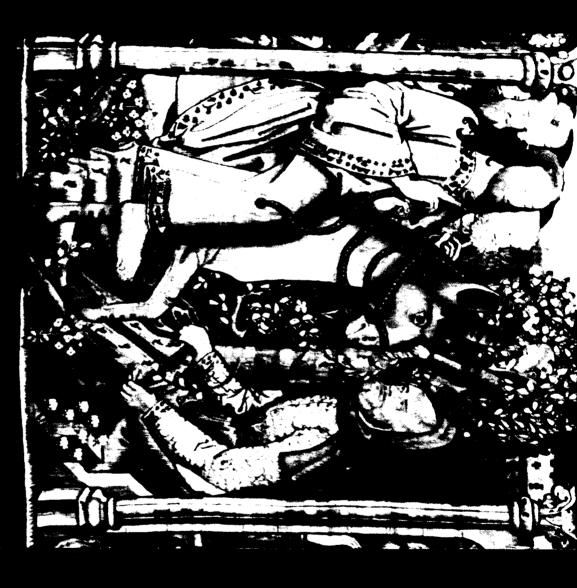
To facilitate analysis of ideological texture, socio-rhetorical criticism investigates a spectrum containing four subsets: (a) ideology in traditional interpretation; (b) ideology in the text; (c) ideology in intellectual discourse; and (d) ideology in individuals and groups.

Ideology in traditional interpretation

Most interpreters accept Pauline discourse in 1 Corinthians as an accurate account of the social situation at Corinth. In other words, interpreters begin with a presupposition of accurate historical intertexture for the discourse and use this presupposition as the point of view for analysis and interpretation of the text. This leads to three overarching practices for interpretation of 1 Corinthians 9:

(a) The interpreter submits to the narrational texture of the discourse. This means that the interpreter takes a point of view that the discourse represents the voice of 'authoritative Paul', true representative of the Gospel, of God and of Christ.

(b) The interpreter adopts the point of view that the discourse is 'representational' rather than 'generative'. The discourse reports the historical and social situation in Corinth rather than creating a particular view of 'historical and social reality' there. No other point of view would be 'God's view'. Paul's account is not biased or self-serving. It presents the appropriate way to understand the situation.

(c) The interpreter reconstructs the historical sequence of interaction at Corinth on the basis of Pauline discourse in the Corinthian correspondence available to us. Any other account that differs from the account in this discourse would be less reliable, because this is a 'first hand, inner account'. While the account is partial, it furnishes true, primary data for writing a history of the church at Corinth.

C. K. Barrett's commentary in 1968 is representative of this approach at a high standard of execution. Some people in Corinth had questioned Paul's apostolic status. Otherwise Paul would not 'have spent so long on the question of apostolic rights' (1968: 200). It is certain that there are real opponents of Paul at Corinth (p. 201) and they 'evidently wished to put the apostle to the test' (p. 202).

While this approach to 1 Corinthians 9 may appear to be 'self-evident', it is in fact an ideological approach to the discourse in the text. Traditional interpretations of 1 Corinthians 9 begin with

the Tapestry of Early

CHRISTIAN DISCOURSE

rhetoric, society and ideology

VERNON K. ROBBINS

ROUTLEDGE