

variety as evidence of a world of the spirits which, during the foundation period of the church, communicated with Christians (151) and he translates: “now concerning spiritism”. In the following, T. decides on the exegetical agenda: already in chapter 1 in case of a missing definite article in front of *pneuma hagion*, or *pneuma theou* (as in 12:3), he defends the translation “a holy spirit” or “a spirit of god” (49f.). T. perceives the plural forms in 12:10 (*diakriseis pneumatōn*), 14:12 (*zelotai este pneumatōn*) and 14:32 (*pneumata profeton*) to be indicators pointing to a “spirit communication” with “holy spirits” (50-53, 207-213, 262-266), although T. himself has to admit that “Paul never qualifies the plural ‘spirits’ with the adjective ‘holy’” (271). How does the alleged plural “holy spirits” match Paul’s insisting on the “same Spirit” (12:4) and the “one Spirit” (12:9, 11) as the origin of the various gifts? T. is determined to find here a generic singular to denote spirits (271). He assumes the notion “one” in Israel’s confession “the Lord, our God, is one” is best understood in terms of “supreme” or “number one”, not that there is literally only one god” (189, cf. also 1Cor 8:4-6). T.’s comparison of the “one spirit” in 12:9, 11 with the image of the “one body” in 1:10-11 and 3:3-4 is full of twists and turns. As the many members (mentioned by Paul) would form one body, so the many spirits (introduced here by T.) would make one world of spirits (193). By doing so, T. is smoothing the last uneven patches in the text which through this reading unanimously testifies to a spiritual world of good and evil, unholy and holy spirits. Therefore, T. continually translates “there are different distributions of gifts, but the same spirit [world distributes them all]” (12:4 cf. 12:11; 279).

At the end of his survey, T. articulates pithily “in the NT, ‘the holy spirit’ is a collective noun” (272). Is this really true? T. seems to have succumbed to the same mistake against which he warns in view of projecting a later pneumatology into the statements of the apostle Paul: he cancels out Paul’s statements on the Spirit by subjecting them to his perspective of a “world of the spirits” from other sources of Antiquity. Paul is not allowed to have said anything else. Is it really unimaginable that Paul should echo the ancient worldview when he speaks of spirits in the plural, but that he would place his own theological accents carefully (i.e. “one Spirit” in 12.11 may in fact well mean “one Spirit” and not “one world of spirits”)? T., following the history of religion school, arrives at an artificial contrast between an original experience and a dogma which seems to eclipse the former. Thus, not only the text of Scripture, but also other sources are at times interpreted in a peculiar way.

Annex 1 (279-283) comprises the Greek text and that eccentric translation of 1Cor 12 and 14; annex 2 (285-305) includes a parenthesis with regard to the meaning and use of the term ‘spiritism’ in the Old Testament; and annex 3 (307-319) presents a statistical analysis of the different grammatical forms of *pneuma* in the NT. Various indices conclude the volume.

Someone who, like the author of this review, is unable to follow T. in his exaggerated thesis, may still benefit from this stimulating and at times irritating book: first of all from the background material on contemporary Jewish and pagan sources. Likewise, the repeated and thus tedious warning against a dogmatically prejudiced interpretation is legitimate, especially when it encourages perceiving the texts with their tensions. The passages in which T. demonstrates the empirical relevance of Paul’s statements on the Spirit prove to be thought-provoking: it makes a difference whether we envisage the experience of God’s Spirit in terms of a romantic-artistic inspiration in which the individual person always keeps in control of the Spirit, or whether we expect to be overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit and enthused by the witnesses of the New Testament (166).

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*Pauline Persuasion: A Sounding in
2 Corinthians 8-9*

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Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000, 203 pp., £65
hb; ISBN 978-184127-149-1

SUMMARY

O’Mahony uses 2 Corinthians 8-9 as a test case to investigate the value of Hellenistic rhetoric for understanding Pauline persuasion. He seeks to show that Paul had an extensive Hellenistic education and that, for this reason, one should use classical rhetorical theory to help interpret Paul’s letters. The major contribution of this work is the demonstration of how 2 Corinthians 8-9 fits together as one unit rather than as two letters (as Betz argues). The overall conclusion of the work – that Paul must be understood in light of both Judaism and Hellenism – pushes at an open door.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

O’Mahony verwendet 2. Korinther 8-9 als Testfall um den Wert hellenistischer Rhetorik für das Verständnis der paulinischen Überzeugungsstrategien zu untersuchen. Er versucht zu zeigen, dass Paulus eine ausführliche hellenistische Bildung genossen hat und dass man aus diesem Grund die klassische rhetorische Theorie als Hilfe bei der Interpretation paulinischer Briefe benutzen sollte. Der Hauptbeitrag dieses Werkes besteht darin, dass es zeigt, wie 2. Korinther 8-9 als Einheit zusammenpasst und nicht zwei Briefe darstellt (wofür Betz argumentiert). Die übergreifende Schlussfolgerung des Werkes – dass Paulus sowohl im jüdischen als auch im hellenistischen Lichte verstanden werden muss – rennt offene Türen ein.

RÉSUMÉ

À partir de l’étude de 2 Corinthiens 8-9, cet ouvrage cherche dans quelle mesure la rhétorique hellénistique permet

de comprendre les procédés de persuasion pauliniens. L'auteur tente de montrer que Paul avait été exposé à une éducation très hellénistique et, par conséquent, que la théorie rhétorique classique doit être sollicitée pour l'interprétation de ses lettres. L'apport majeur de cet ouvrage réside dans la démonstration de l'unité de ces deux chapitres (contre Betz qui y voit deux lettres). La conclusion générale, selon laquelle les écrits de Paul doivent être interprétés en tenant compte à la fois du judaïsme et de l'hellénisme, enfonce une porte ouverte.

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In this monograph, Kieran J. O'Mahony uses 2 Corinthians 8-9 as a test case in his investigation of the potential value of utilizing Hellenistic rhetoric to understand Pauline persuasion. Rather than focusing on 'what' Paul says, O'Mahony examines 'how' Paul says it. He seeks to show that Paul had an extensive Hellenistic education and that, for this reason, one should use classical rhetorical theory to help interpret Paul's letters. As an example, the author investigates 2 Corinthians 8-9 in light of classical rhetorical handbooks.

The use of such handbooks, however, presents a challenge for O'Mahony since these handbooks provide techniques for the construction of speeches rather than guidelines for the analysis of epistles. To get around this challenge, the author draws two primary arguments from the works of Abraham Malherbe, Stanley Stowers, and David Aune. Firstly, Paul's letters should be considered as speeches in the sense that they served as a substitute for Paul's presence; secondly, despite the lack of any explicit theoretical connection between the instruction of rhetoric and of letter-writing, these two must have influenced one another.

O'Mahony then goes on to assert that some passages, such as 2 Corinthians 8-9, were most likely former sermons which the apostle later worked into his epistles. Nevertheless, the author must now confront another problem: Paul seemingly rejects using rhetoric in his preaching and considers himself untrained in speech (e.g. 1 Cor. 1:17; 2 Cor. 10:10). Here, O'Mahony agrees with Margaret Mitchell's conclusion that Paul does not reject rhetoric *per se*; rather, Paul rejects the abuse of rhetoric, the "unprincipled manipulation by words".

For the rest of the work, O'Mahony deals with 2 Corinthians 8-9. He begins with a sketch of the exegetical analyses of this passage from John Chrysostom to Ben Witherington III. Since Hans Dieter Betz has written most extensively on these two chapters, he postpones the detailed comparison of his research with that of Betz until the end of the book. In order to "lay bare the persuasive strategies" of 2 Corinthians 8-9, O'Mahony points out Paul's use of *elocutio*, *dispositio*, *inventio* and *genus* within these chapters. With this done, the author offers an exposition of 2 Corinthians 8-9 in the light of his rhetorical observations. In the final chapter, the author demonstrates the fundamental differences of his

findings with those of Betz. The most obvious and significant observation is that Betz considers 2 Corinthians 8-9 as two distinct letters whereas O'Mahony argues that the two chapters should be seen as one letter in light of the following *chiasm*:

A. Quaestio infinita

8:8-15: Give generously; example of Christ; citation from Scripture.

B. Quaestio finite

8:16-24: Paul's integrity is at stake: he sends others; the churches as witnesses.

B.' Quaestio finite

9:1-5: Paul's integrity is at stake; he distances himself from the administration; possible witnesses to the shame of the Corinthians.

A.' Quaestio infinita

9:6-10: Give generously; relationship with God; citations from Scripture.

Finally, O'Mahony concludes that his interpretation of 2 Corinthians 8-9 demonstrates that, rather than valorising Paul's Jewish background or situating the apostle too firmly with the Greek milieu, Paul must be understood in terms of his "hybrid cultural background" and the interpenetration of Judaism and Hellenism.

This monograph serves as another example of the value of using classical rhetorical theory as one of the tools in interpreting the letters of Paul. Although this method has its limitations and challenges, O'Mahony has shown that it can continue to assist scholars in their pursuit to understand Paul's writings. However, the scholar should also include modern rhetorical theory in the investigation rather than stopping short at classical rhetorical theory as O'Mahony has done here. The major contribution of this work is the demonstration of how 2 Corinthians 8-9 fits together as one unit rather than as two letters (as Betz argues). The overall conclusion of the work – that Paul must be understood in light of both Judaism and Hellenism – merely pushes at an open door. Furthermore, the final assertion that O'Mahony's research demonstrates that Paul *could have* received an extensive Hellenistic education raises at least two questions – how does one define "extensive" and how does one determine it? In passing, O'Mahony suggests that Paul's rhetorical education must go beyond the *progymnasmata* but not to the extent of Philo. This assertion, as well as the monograph, would have been significantly strengthened had the author compared Paul's use of rhetoric in 2 Corinthians 8-9 with the *progymnasmata* and the works of Philo in order to show (if O'Mahony's assessment stands) how these chapters exceed the expectations of the former and pale in the light of the latter. Nevertheless, those familiar with the discussion of classical rhetorical theory and Paul will most likely find this monograph a welcomed addition to the dialogue as it is both thorough and clear.

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