

Millard's *Reading and writing in the time of Jesus* (Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) and Harry Gamble's *Book and readers in the early church* (Yale University Press, 1995). Knowledge of Greek is useful to appreciate the contents but not essential. Those who have read Hurtado's scholarly articles on the subject will not find many new elements here.

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*The Thirteenth Apostle:  
What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*

April D. DeConick

London: Continuum, 2007, xxi + 202 pp., £16.99,  
hb, ISBN 978-0-8264-9964-6

SUMMARY

In April 2006, the National Geographic (NG) Society published a transcription and a translation of the gospel of Judas and featured a televised documentary which portrayed Judas as the closest of Jesus' disciples. In her most recent monograph, April DeConick acts as a spokeswoman for a group of scholars arguing that this new gospel does not rehabilitate Judas, but rather understands him within a Sethian gnostic context as a demon. Her reassessment is based upon six corrections to the original NG translation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Im April 2006 veröffentlichte die National Geographic (NG) Society eine Abschrift und Übersetzung des Judasevangeliums und sendete einen Dokumentarfilm im Fernsehen, in dem Judas als der Jünger dargestellt wurde, der Jesus am nächsten stand. In ihrer neuesten Monographie spricht April DeConick für eine Gruppe von Gelehrten, die argumentieren, dieses neue Evangelium sei keine Rehabilitierung des Judas, sondern es verstehe Judas innerhalb einer sethianischen Gnosis als eine Dämon. Ihre Neubewertung basiert auf sechs Korrekturen an der ursprünglichen NG-Übersetzung.

RÉSUMÉ

En avril 2006, la Société Nationale de Géographie (britannique) a publié une transcription et une traduction de l'évangile de Judas, et a présenté un documentaire télévisé qui faisait de Judas le disciple de Jésus le plus proche du Maître. Dans cette récente monographie, April DeConick se fait la porte-parole d'un groupe de spécialistes soutenant la thèse que ce nouvel évangile, loin de réhabiliter Judas, le présente comme un démon en le situant dans un contexte gnostique. Cette interprétation se fonde sur six corrections apportées à la traduction initiale de la SNG.

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One can categorize DeConick's corrections into three groups. Although she cites semantics and grammar in each case, other factors play a significant role. Two of her corrections deal with lexical semantics (44:21, 46:17-

18), three deal primarily with context (46:5-7, 56:18-19, 56:23), and one deals with an emendation of the Coptic text (46:25).

In the two cases dealing strictly with lexical semantics, DeConick argues convincingly that the NG translators forced the translation to produce a beneficent Judas. Her next three corrections derive largely from context and not grammar. If the extensive lacunae around these three passages were to be restored, the discussion might be renewed. DeConick's analysis of the second passage from this group could be enhanced; in 46:5-7, she correctly cites the particle  $\omega$  as emphatic, but she translates and references it in a footnote as an interjection (pp. 53, 187 en. 29). Likewise, DeConick's gloss could be improved here by reassessing her uses (1) of the Greek loan word  $\gamma\eta\eta\tau\alpha\kappa\kappa\epsilon$  and (2) of the difference between transitive/intransitive and active/passive (pp. 79, 188 en. 9). This passage should read "Master, never does my (emphatic) seed submit to the archons!" Whereas the NG team interpreted this statement by Judas as a question, DeConick correctly renders it as an exclamation. The decision is one that derives more from context than from grammar, however.

One of DeConick's corrections concerns an emendation in the Coptic transcription. Unfortunately, the NG non-disclosure policy forced DeConick to rely on second-hand information in 46:25, where the emendation involves an entire word-phrase rather than one letter as she states (p. 54). The problem is not a supplied <N> as DeConick supposes, but is the correction of the original noun phrase which followed the <N> to a wholly different verbal phrase (<N> $\eta\eta\kappa\kappa\tau\eta$  →  $\eta\eta\kappa\kappa\omega\kappa$ ). DeConick's thesis, however, is firmly supported by the reinterpretation of the phrase "will curse" as "to you and" in this passage, but this is only secondarily related to the text critical/paleographic reconstruction termed "a terrible mistake" (ibid.).

DeConick's most compelling argument for her reassessment of the gospel of Judas does not rest in these revisions to the NG translation. Her Sethian gnostic reading is far more natural than NG team's translation which appears to have been influenced by the patristic descriptions of the gospel of Judas. In particular, she maintains that the appellation "O Thirteenth Demon" (pp. 77, 109-124, 44:21) is an immediate association with the Demiurge, the evil God of the Old Testament. Ironically, the demon Judas understands Jesus better than his disciples – parallel to the demons in Mark's gospel (pp. 103-108). In this manner, the gospel of Judas parodies the "Apostolic" gospels, and argues for a Sethian gnostic worldview (ch. 8).

In the main text of the book, DeConick is generally conservative in her criticism of the NG project, but she is less sympathetic in "Appendix 4: Q&A with April DeConick." She describes the NG team's monopoly of the document as having "robbed the academic community of the opportunity to freely discuss this Gospel..." (p. 181) and as "at the expense of our field... in terms of



our reputation as professors and scholars.” This criticism is now known at the popular level through an editorial in the *New York Times* (1 Dec 2007) and at the scholarly level through her *SBL Forum* article ‘More on the Gospel Truth’ in which she notes another significant text critical emendation in 35:26 (article ID 743).

DeConick asserts (pp. 148-154) that the post-Holocaust media has habitually rehabilitated Judas, and that the NG interpretation derived and benefited from this guilt (pp. 180-181). I believe that the post-Holocaust guilt motive was far less influential on the original NG reconstruction than the accounts of the gospel of Judas in the Church fathers which DeConick provides in Appendix 3 (pp. 174-177). I also wonder to what degree the gospel of Judas encouraged the early church (e.g., Origen) to perfect the ransom theory of the atonement (p. 182) as this theological stance already seems mature in the earliest Christian texts (e.g., Mark 10:45, Rom 3:24, Col 1:13, 1 Tim 2:5-6).

This monograph will no doubt continue to play a central and positive role in redefining the consensus on the gospel of Judas and on the ethics of scholarship. Future editions will iron out the wrinkles mentioned above and incorporate recent and future findings related to the topic. DeConick has succeeded in presenting a scholarly argument in a form also accessible to a popular audience. Both audiences will appreciate the appendices which summarize and comment on related literature topics (scholarly, gnostic, patristic, and popular), and many will also find the online discussion questions helpful.

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***The Significance of Salvation:  
A Study of Salvation Language in the Pastoral  
Epistles  
(Paternoster Biblical Monographs)  
George M. Wieland***

Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006, xxii + 344 pp.,  
£24.99, pb, ISBN 1-84227-257-8

**SUMMARY**

George Wieland provides an excellent exegetical study of salvation language in the Pastoral Epistles. Because of the contingent nature of the letters, he analyses each letter separately in order to see the distinctive expression of soteriological concepts within the continuities between the letters. Wieland rightfully recognises how the Pastoral Epistles present a balanced soteriology with a focus not only on this world but also on a strong eschatological hope.

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

George Wieland bietet eine exzellente exegetische Studie zur Sprache der Erlösung in den Pastoralbriefen. Aufgrund der situationsbezogenen Art der Briefe analysiert er jeden

Brief separat, um die besonderen Ausformungen der soteriologischen Konzepte innerhalb der kontinuierlichen Linien zwischen den Briefen zu erkennen. Wieland bemerkt richtig, auf welche Weise die Pastoralbriefe eine ausgewogene Soteriologie präsentieren und nicht nur die Betonung auf diese Welt legen, sondern auch eine starke eschatologische Hoffnung enthalten.

**RÉSUMÉ**

Cette étude exégétique de la terminologie du salut dans les épîtres pastorales par George Wieland est excellente. Par respect du caractère circonstanciel de ces lettres, il analyse chacune d'elles séparément dans le but de mettre en lumière les diverses expressions de concepts soteriologiques dans le cadre de la continuité entre les lettres. Il fait ressortir à juste titre que ces épîtres contiennent une soteriologie équilibrée qui tient compte à la fois de la vie en ce monde et d'une forte espérance eschatologique.

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George Wieland, a lecturer at Carey Baptist College in Auckland, New Zealand, provides an excellent study in the often-neglected Pastoral Epistles (hereafter PE). In particular, he analyses each passage within 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus that contains salvation language (i.e., sw|zw, swth/r, swthri/a, swth/rion). The book is divided into five parts – an introduction, an exegetical analysis of the three letters, and conclusions.

As the fruit of his PhD studies at University of Aberdeen supervised by I. Howard Marshall, this monograph is targeted squarely at the academic community, with its close attention to exegetical detail in the Greek text without losing sight of larger issues. At the end of each letter's analysis he provides a summary of key soteriological issues: the benefits of salvation, God and Christ in relation to salvation, Paul and salvation, and those who are saved. Ultimately, Wieland argues the three letters share a common view of salvation with past, present, and future aspects: God provides eternal life through Christ to those who believe in the true message of Christ and remain faithful to him in the midst of difficulty, and this is consummated at the return of Christ (cf. p. 265).

Wieland notes the regular dependence of previous studies upon prior assumptions that led them to privilege 'certain strands of evidence over others' (p. 11). Accordingly, he seeks to evaluate these letters on their own terms with a focus upon internal evidence. Wieland argues that '...the three PE present exhibit aspects of a common soteriological perspective. There are also, however, particular features that give each letter its own distinctive profile in terms of its presentation of salvation' (p. 244). As a result, 'an appreciation of the viewpoint of each in this regard is more satisfactorily achieved by evaluating their uses of the vocabulary separately rather than by attempting a synthesis of all three, and reading back the results of that synthesis into the usage of each letter' (p. 246). He finds especially distinctive, though not contradictory, emphases with regard to swth/r, epi-