

implications and are no less historical in approach than previous scholarship. Paul will have to be liberated from all who, for whatever reason, try to make him proponents of their own agenda. A further volume of essays should contain what Given identifies as lacking in the present volume, namely, essays on post-colonial criticism of Paul and on Paul and sexuality. In addition, Paul's use of Scripture and its significance for his self-understanding, ministry and theological arguments deserves a solid introductory essay. One might also ask what further fresh perspectives would arise if the solitary figure of the 'free-lance Paul', as traditionally understood, was seen more in the context of his co-workers, mission partners and churches and also in the context or even as part of the other 'early Christianities' such as Jerusalem and Antioch. Has Paul been understood far too long and too exclusively against his own, heavily rhetorically shaped statements in Galatians 1-2?

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Documents and Images for the Study of Paul

Neil Elliott and Mark Reasoner (eds.).

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2011; xi + 418 pp. Pb.; ISBN 978-0-8006-6375-9.
£25.00

RÉSUMÉ

Les éditeurs de cet ouvrage offrent ici des ressources diverses apportant un éclairage sur l'apôtre Paul et son temps. Parmi les sujets abordés figurent l'esclavage, les philosophes, la pureté, la rédaction de lettres, l'empire romain, le judaïsme et bien d'autres. Les images sont accompagnées d'explications. Des pistes sont proposées pour poursuivre l'étude. C'est là un ouvrage de référence excellent pour la recherche académique et la prédication.

SUMMARY

The editors present a variety of resources which shed light on Paul and his times; issues covered include slavery, philosophers, purity, letter-writing, the Roman Empire, Judaism and many more. The images are provided with explanations, and there are suggestions for further study. The book is an excellent resource for academics as well as preachers.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Herausgeber legen eine Vielfalt von Ressourcen vor, die Paulus und seine Zeit beleuchten; die Themen beinhalten Sklaverei, Philosophen, Reinheit, die Kultur des Briefeschreibens, das Römische Weltreich, Judentum und vieles mehr. Die Bilder sind mit Erläuterungen versehen, und Vorschläge zu weiteren Studien werden gemacht. Das Buch ist ein ausgezeichnetes Hilfsmittel für Wissenschaftler und Prediger.

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The present volume offers well-selected and well-introduced sources from the Greco-Roman world for understanding the life and theology of Paul. The volume is intended to provide a firsthand encounter with the world of Paul and is to be a

window onto ideas and images that can be used to help us understand Paul. None of the documents and images presented here is offered as a claim regarding the source of Paul's ideas. We cannot prove what Paul had read, seen, or studied... But we can encounter some of the ideas and images from the worlds in which Paul and his first communities lived and thus form a better picture of Paul's context (1).

The introductory chapter, 'Exploring Paul's Environment', begins with a cautionary note on the use and significance of such parallels, describes other available resources for appreciating the backdrop of Paul, and discusses what differences parallels can and should make to our reading of Pauline texts.

The first of six substantial chapters provides documents and images for understanding 'Paul's Self-Presentation'. Discussion includes Paul's self-designation 'slave of Christ, called an apostle', the figure of the philosopher, attitudes towards manual labour and weakness, the obedience of faith among the nations, and background material to Paul's autobiographical statements. For each heading, texts and images are provided together with short introductions. Each chapter closes with suggestions for further study. All chapters offer a good combination of literary texts, inscriptions, numismatic evidence and photographs of other material remains.

Chapter two is devoted to 'Paul's Gospel and Paul's Letters' and covers Paul as writer of letters, the purpose of letters as a means of connecting people, letters of exhortation, types of ancient letters, the Gospel in Paul's letters (turning from idols to serve the living God), the public face of ancient piety and Paul's expressions 'the word of the cross' (on ancient execution and crucifixion) and 'this present evil age'.

Chapter three sketches 'The Gospel of Augustus' which permeated 'a large part of the environment in which Paul and the members of his assemblies lived' (119) as a backdrop to Paul's understanding of the Gospel (the 'gospel according to Virgil', the achievements of Augustus and their presentation, Claudius' death and Nero's accession, the disdain of the upper classes for their inferiors).

Chapter four provides documents and images for understanding Paul's statements on Israel, an aspect of his life and theology not given due attention in earlier collections of sources. The present volume reflects the emphasis on Paul's Jewish identity in the research of the past two decades. Included is a short introduction to the New Perspective on Paul and quotations, mainly from Jewish sources, on the Diaspora, the Jewish rejection of idols, the tension between Rome and Jewish communi-

ties and Jewish attitudes to Roman rule, and on early Jewish soteriology.

The chapter 'The communities around Paul: the *ekklesiai*' is devoted to the particular challenge of Paul of creating holy communities among the nations to whom he was sent. The editors provide parallels for various matters of holiness and impurity, (sexual) impurity among the nations, cases of sexual immorality in the churches, the Roman concern for social order and the challenges of community (giving up the past, social and purity-related tensions at the table, pleas for unity as one body).

A final chapter is devoted to Paul's legacy in apocryphal and pseudepigraphic sources. It covers Paul as the writer of letters (the *Letter to the Laodiceans*; 'Third Corinthians' in the *Acts of Paul*; Paul's correspondence with Seneca), Paul as philosopher and theologian, as an ascetic and as a compelling preacher and wonder-worker. Paul has also been seen as the opponent of the true faith, for example in Ebionite sources and the Clementine Recognitions. The last two sections gather sources on Paul the martyr and on the sword as the apostle's emblem in Christian iconography.

The editors provide succinct introductions to the texts and questions for reflection at the end in order to prompt the readers to see possible similarities and differences between Paul's letters and the roughly contemporaneous texts (7). All photographs are black and white, some are of poor quality. The volume closes with indexes of subjects, references to Scripture and references to other ancient sources. On several occasions, the differences between the Paul of the letters and the presentation of Paul in the Book of Acts appear exaggerated, compare S. E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts*, WUNT 115 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999).

Elliott and Reasoner have put together an excellent, handy resource for the study of Paul's life, letters and theology. They do not argue for a particular view of Paul, but have gathered 'documents and images from his world(s) that bear comparison with one or another aspect of his thought and practice' (6). This book is a highly commendable textbook for undergraduate and postgraduate courses on Paul, a practical reference tool and collection of sources for scholars and a helpful exegetical tool for interpreting Pauline literature. Its many illustrations from the ancient world can be used as illustrations in preaching from Paul's letters.

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Understanding the Social World of the New Testament

Dietmar Neufeld & Richard E. DeMaris (eds.)

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Werk bringt seinen Lesern den kulturellen Kontext nahe, in dem das Neue Testament entstanden ist. Die Autoren sind davon überzeugt, dass die moderne Welt sich in vielem von der antiken Welt unterscheidet. Um diese Lücke zu schließen, stützen sie sich auf Paradigmen, die der kulturellen Anthropologie und Ethnographie entlehnt sind. Derartige Modelle werden verwendet, um uns zu einem besseren Verständnis von Wertesystemen zu verhelfen wie Identität, Familie und Verwandtschaft, geschlechtsspezifische Fragen, Reinheit, landschaftliche Gestaltung und Raumverständnis. Das Buch legt ebenfalls dar, wie das Neue Testament seine Umwelt herausfordert. Es stellt einen wichtigen Beitrag dar, allerdings sollten seine Voraussetzungen nicht unkritisch hingenommen werden; es bedarf der Ergänzung durch traditionelle Einführungen.

SUMMARY

This book introduces readers to the culture in which the NT was written. The contributors are convinced that the modern world differs much from the ancient world and they rely on models from cultural anthropology and ethnographical studies to bridge the gap. Such models are used to help us understand value systems such as identity, kinship, gender issues, purity, landscape and spatiality. The book also shows how the NT challenges its world. This is an important book but its presuppositions should not go unchallenged and it should be supplemented by traditional introductions.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage vise à présenter le monde culturel dans lequel le Nouveau Testament a vu le jour. Les divers auteurs tiennent pour acquis que le monde moderne est très différent du monde d'alors et ils tirent parti de modèles utilisés dans les études d'anthropologie culturelle et d'ethnographie pour établir des ponts entre les deux. Ces modèles sont mis en œuvre pour aider à comprendre les systèmes de valeurs, et notamment les conceptions entretenues sur l'identité, les liens de parenté, les rapports entre hommes et femmes, la pureté, la territorialité et l'organisation de l'espace. Ils tentent aussi de montrer en quoi le Nouveau Testament est critique de la société. C'est un ouvrage important, mais les présupposés des auteurs ne devraient pas être acceptés sans évaluation critique et l'ouvrage ne remplace pas les introductions plus traditionnelles.

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This book serves as a guide to readers unfamiliar with the world of ancient Mediterranean culture. Its essays

set out to develop interpretive models for understanding such values as collectivism, kinship, memory, eth-