

composed specifically for the Masoretic sequence. In the end, Brodersen has provided a treasure of insightful observations that constitute a great resource not only for scholars working within *Psalterexegese* or those interested in these five psalms, but also for scholars interested in how to possibly identify and assess references in biblical compositions.

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Paul and Seneca in Dialogue

Ancient Philosophy & Religion 2, Leiden: Brill, 2017, Hardcover,
340 pages, €138.00, ISBN: 978-90-04-34135-7

I was thrilled to stumble upon this volume since I have given some attention to both Paul and the writings of Seneca in my own research from the standpoint of their practices in quoting interlocutors. I have therefore read this piece with great interest and attention. The authors contributing to this anthology are aiming at exploring similar theological and philosophical strands in the writings of Paul and Seneca. Previous explorations of the thought worlds of these two authors are said to have happened sporadically and not given comprehensive attention to many of the close similarities in the writings of Paul and Seneca. The purpose of this collection of articles is to put these two authors in dialogue, and one way in which this is done goes through comprehensive cross-references.

One of the first things the cautious reader notices are the letters that are attributed to Paul in this volume. Hebrews is the only missing letter of the fourteen that traditionally have been attributed to the authorship of Paul. Thus, the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians are both assumed to adequately represent the mind of one of the authors in this comparative enterprise. Except for some sporadic references to Seneca the Elder, a total of seventeen letters of Seneca the Younger constitute the primary comparative material to the thirteen considered to be Pauline. This choice will without a doubt subject many of the conclusions in this anthology to critique of several claims made that otherwise

could not be drawn from a different “pool” of comparative material. As it stands now, many of the conclusions will be looked upon as tentative.

One of the strengths of this anthology is, nevertheless, that it is open for noticing dissimilarities between the ancient authors. Such is the case in Timothy Brookins contribution wherein certain dissimilarities between the outlooks of Paul and Seneca on slavery are noted and discussed. Such an approach is refreshing in that it is far too often the case that anthologies of this kind do their best only to find correspondences between author A and author B. What such comparisons miss, and what is often equally interesting, is not merely correspondences in conclusions, but that it is also informative to find an overlap in the choice of themes. Interesting as such overlaps in themes may be, the reader should not be blinded to the fact that not all themes are created equal. Some themes are too broad in scope and too unfocused to offer material for any broader claims regarding affinity in writing. There are some questionable themes of this sort in the present anthology.

Michelle Lee-Barnewall has, for instance, put a lot of effort in considering both authors from the standpoint of how they utilize the metaphor of the body. Since similar metaphors are to be found in many other authors from antiquity, the question I as a reader am forced to ask is what makes such an overlap special for Paul and Seneca? I am not hereby implying that such a comparison is not interesting, but rather how it is motivated from the standpoint of this volume’s guiding assumption that Paul and Seneca resemble each other in ways they do not resemble other authors.

Another essay compares Paul’s letter to the Philippians and Seneca’s *Epistle 93* with special attention to “Life after Death and Its Present Implications.” Troels Engberg-Pedersen initiates his comparison by following what he calls the “lex Meeks” by which he understands the enterprise of comparison as furthering a better understanding of each author (268). To reach a more profound understanding for a particular author by way of comparison with another is an enterprise tangible upon that the authors are mutually informative in the proper sense. Authors who are culturally distant will without a doubt highlight either similarities or

dissimilarities that are not necessarily disclosing personal traits as much as cultural heritage and universal human conditions. Is it then a distinguishing similarity that both Paul and Seneca cope with issues relating to death? Seneca is addressing Lucilius' lamentation of the short lifespan of an acquainted Philosopher that he thought should have lived longer. In his address, Seneca explains to Lucilius that the fulfilled life is a good life. The attention is thereby drawn from the extension of the life to its qualitative contribution and fulfillment. Seneca is then utilizing the fulfilled life as the model for the present life. In Paul's writing, Engberg-Pedersen finds a more distinct separation between the present and the future in what he calls the pilgrimage motif. There is a joyful longing to abandon the present and live in the future, a longing that is not distinctly found in Seneca. A common concept in both is the relaxed attitude towards death. Engberg-Pedersen also finds a similarity in that both authors view the model of a fulfilled hereafter as informative for the here and now, in Paul's texts through the concept of the Pnuma.

The reader is, however, left with the unanswered question in what way one hereby does understand Paul and Seneca better individually? The conclusions drawn for the individual authors are not tangible upon the chosen author of comparison. As such the essay is more descriptive than analytical from the standpoint of how the perspectives of one author unlock a "deeper" understanding of the perspectives of the other. We return thus to our initial question; is this comparison disclosing something that is not explained by the shared human condition? If we evaluate this from the standpoint of Engberg-Pedersen's conclusion that life and death are for Paul and Seneca like informative aspects for the here and now, I do not think the target is met. The common human condition and the unavoidable separation from life is something that is expected to be instructive for the here and now and is furthermore highly dependent upon whether a hereafter is imagined. In the two extreme scenarios either as a springboard for experience while time lasts, or in the other case to accumulate something thought to be a valuable commodity in the future. There is no surprise thus that both Paul and Seneca, sharing a concept of a hereafter, also come closer to the latter

viewpoint when they contemplate in which way the hereafter is informative for the here and now. To strengthen the comparative analysis, I think Engberg-Pedersen would have to ask *how* this informativeness is imagined coming about by the two authors and *what* content the authors believe to be the commodity to be inquired in the here and now. Asking these questions, I think Engberg-Pedersen would add a more analytical element to his inquiry and potentially have found aspects in the thought-worlds of Seneca and Paul that would be more mutually informative.

Even though I am a bit reserved to many of the conclusions drawn in this anthology, I would still commend it for being refreshing and thought-stimulating. There is a lot of potential in comparative studies to this, which I think will come to fuller fruition as the theories and methodologies develop.

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Paul and the Greco-Roman Philosophical Tradition
 LNTS 527, London: T&T Clark, 2017, Hardcover, 320 pages,
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In this anthology, the reader encounters the subject of Pauline Christianity's relationship to Greco-Roman philosophy from the standpoint of difficulties involved, potential new fields of study, and reinterpretations of popularly held views. Since the contributors represent diverse scholarly backgrounds, there are to be found arguments of both technical and exegetical nature alike. A total of seven letters traditionally attributed to Paul have been included and analyzed. The Greco-Roman source material is on the other hand extensive enough to include as late authors as Augustine, but limited in the sense that non-literary sources are excluded. Most attention has been given to Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

Runar M. Thorsteinsson has in his essay "Paul and Pan(en)theism" taken upon himself the task of looking at Paul's concept of God from a new perspective. Paul has traditionally been understood monotheistical-