

1: Paul in the Greco-Roman world : a handbook in SearchWorks catalog

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From Stoicism to Platonism: June 15, Troels Engberg-Pedersen ed. Reviewed by Lloyd P. Gerson, University of Toronto The present volume is the fruit of a conference in Copenhagen in The hypothesis that Engberg-Pedersen offered to the conference participants was twofold: A bit of context will perhaps help here. During this period, in addition to the philosophical schools of Platonism and Peripateticism, there arose to prominence the Stoic, Epicurean, and Academic Sceptic schools. By the end of the period covered in this book, Platonism and Stoicism were already dominant, Peripateticism was rapidly fading, Epicureanism stood outside of the professional philosophical debates, and Academic Scepticism had withered -- on the one hand, folded back into Platonism, and on the other, mutated into a revival of a radical Pyrrhonic Scepticism. By the beginning of the 3rd century or so, Platonism had completely overwhelmed every other philosophical school to the extent that few if any Stoics or Peripatetics are even known. Most of the essays focus on the interaction of Stoicism and Platonism, with the asymmetry in this relation revealed in the polemical reaction to, and sometimes unspoken appropriation of, Stoic doctrine by Platonists. And just to round out the story, just as Platonism gradually overwhelmed Stoicism and the other Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic schools, so eventually Christianity overwhelmed Platonism, basically putting an end to public pagan philosophy in the conveniently datable year when the Academy in Athens was closed by the emperor Justinian. A notable feature of the book is the inclusion of essays that focus on the interaction of Hellenistic Jewish and early Christian thinkers with ancient Greek philosophy during this period. Here is the Table of Contents: Features Stoic-Platonist or Platonist-Stoic? Alexander, Mantissa Chapter 17" by Charles Brittain. Long undertakes what the editor calls the "eirenic appropriation" of Plato by the Stoic Posidonius in the characterization of the passions. Unlike the main figures in the Old Stoa, Zeno, Chrysippus, and Cleanthes, by the 1st century BCE Stoics seemed prepared to use the insights of the "ancients" to articulate and refine the Stoic position. The Posidonian innovation is the introduction of the term "affective movements" of the soul to indicate "pre-passions" precisely what are found in children who have not yet attained the age of reason. The fact that children can be trained before they are rational gives us the ability to understand better the emotions in adults. Not surprisingly, Cicero was most keen to appropriate Platonic ideas in his political works, *De republica*, *De legibus*, and *De oratore*. Cicero himself was a self-proclaimed Academic sceptic, a position that does not sit well with devotion to any doctrine, let alone any systematic doctrine, whether that be of Plato or of the Stoics. Boys-Stones provides a vigorous argument against the term "transitional" to describe the philosophical period covered in this book. As he points out, any period in the history of philosophy can be viewed as "transitional" if it stands between two periods containing philosophers with markedly different orientations. Hatzimichali takes an original tack, trying to discern from the fragments associated with the 1st century BCE doxographer "Arius Didymus" what the "lay of the land" was with regard to Platonism and Stoicism in that period. In addition, we can tell that by the time of this doxographer, there was a nascent dogmatic Platonism which evidently was content to use classificatory schemes from the "dominant mode of discourse" of Stoicism. Hatzimichali suggests, plausibly enough, that the systematization of Platonism was in response to the refined Stoic system. Intriguingly, our scattered evidence for Arius does not clearly identify him as a Stoic or, indeed, as belonging to any philosophical school. If, indeed, he was an "independent" philosopher, this fact would perhaps be our earliest example of such a vocation in Hellenistic culture. The use of the concept in Stoic ethics is fundamental in their account of human development and human good. But it is also fundamental in the ethics of Antiochus of Ascalon, self-declared founder of a new version of the Old Platonic Academy. Gill argues for the former, as do most modern scholars, but the question is complicated by the fact that both Platonists and Peripatetics, like Stoics, had teleological conceptions of the human good and, again like the Stoics, believed that virtue was, with certain rather vague qualifications, necessary and sufficient for human happiness. Antiochus may well have thought that his own act of appropriation simply allowed him to cast his

dogmatic Platonism into the contemporary idiom over against the Academic scepticism that he firmly rejected. The paper by Bonazzi aims to connect the development of systematic Platonism in the post-Hellenistic period to its confrontation with or "polemical appropriation of" Stoicism. Bonazzi focuses on the fundamental epistemological problem of the criterion. He explains that the Stoic criteria of knowledge were empirically derived *ennoiai* "conceptions". Platonists in our period embraced the criterion but only within the context of a theory of recollection according to which Forms were cognized prior to embodiment. But, as Bonazzi shows, the insufficiency of empirically derived conceptions to guarantee knowledge is mirrored in the insufficiency of recollection to guarantee knowledge, too. Thus, the sceptical argument against Stoic dogmatism was equally an argument against Platonic dogmatism. Stoics and Platonists agreed that certainty was necessary for knowledge but neither school had at this time a clear argument that certainty was attainable. Ironically, though Bonazzi does not mention this, the criteria utilized in the development of empirical epistemology beginning in the 17th century were just those employed by Academic sceptics. Reydams-Schils explores the post-Hellenistic afterlife of the famous Platonic exhortation in *Theaetetus* to "become like god as far as possible by becoming just and holy with wisdom". In the *Didaskalikos* of Alcinous, we see a defense against an implied Stoic attack on the apparent tension in Plato between "becoming like god" as otherworldly assimilation to a purely contemplative deity and the social dimension of virtue. Alcinous, reflecting on *Timaeus* and *Laws*, tries to bring together the providential and relational aspects of divinity. For Plutarch, the divinity to be imitated is clearly the Demiurge, especially in his relational aspect as craftsman of order in the universe. Thus, the practice of virtue is a kind of crafting of order. Reydams-Schils suggests that Plutarch could have drawn on material from, among others, Musonius Rufus and Epictetus to appropriate the Stoic idea of a virtuous deity. Runia focuses on a work by Philo of Alexandria, *De providentia I*, the first book of a treatise extant only in an Armenian translation. In addition, and against the Stoic doctrine of cosmic renewal unconnected with providence, the providence of the divine creator is also manifested in judgment of the wicked and the potential destruction of the cosmos. He does this by making Platonism the philosophical expression of the truth that Moses received from God. Since God or the Demiurge is good, it is not possible that he is the source of the universal conflagrations posited by the Stoics. Having made the world, if God destroyed it or, what amounts to the same thing, if he had given up governance of it, he would have had actually demonstrated an ignorance of what is good for himself. According to Philo, the Stoics must either abandon the very idea of a materialistic theology, or if they insist on retaining theological doctrine, it must be somehow assimilated to Platonism. The paper by Sterling treats an unusual topic for the subject of this volume, namely, the Septuagint Old Testament Wisdom of Solomon, written sometime between the middle of the first century BCE and the middle of the first century CE. It is a work written in Greek and intended for the Jewish Greek Diaspora, utilizing Greek philosophy to give the most favorable expression possible of Jewish doctrine. The work uses both Stoic and Platonic material unapologetically. Sterling attempts to assess the philosophical commitments of the author of this work as well as his understanding of post-Hellenistic philosophy generally. He considers a number of texts which clearly show that the author is inclined to mine Platonic doctrine to the extent that it can be put to the service of Hellenized Judaism. The author of the *Wisdom of Solomon* is even willing to use the language of Stoic physics to explain Biblical miracles, raising the intriguing question of what then remains of the miraculous. But for the author, *Wisdom* is an intermediary between God and humanity, equivalent to the Philonic *Logos* or to a Platonic Demiurgic deity, not the first principle of all represented by the Stoic Zeus. Long is concerned with the question of whether or how Plato and Platonism affected Stoic philosophy in the period covered by this book. As Long nicely puts it, in Epictetus the contrast is between the carnal and the spiritual, not as in Plato between two substances, the physical and the non-physical. Thus, Epictetus can explore the relationship between mind and body as an ethical question, not a metaphysical one. Generally, Long argues, Stoicism from its inception embraced a form of dualism with definite Platonic echoes and overlapping images, but without its immaterialism. The mind for Stoics is unqualifiedly corporeal, albeit of the most refined sort, though it is not, as in Epicureanism, an emergent property of the body. It is no doubt the shared ethical orientation of Stoicism and Platonism with respect to the superiority of the mind to the body that later Platonists found easy to appreciate at the same time

as they rejected the underlying physicalism. The paper by Stowers is another unusual one for such a book. It focuses on the use of philosophical terms and concepts by Paul of Tarsus of the New Testament, in particular those of Platonism and Stoicism. Stowers argues that Paul in his letters draws on Platonic doctrine in his moral psychology along with a Stoic-like role for *pneuma*, variously construed as wind or air or breath, as constituting the substance of the divine. Human mental *pneuma* is an inferior version of divine *pneuma* and Platonic assimilation to divinity is construed by Paul as the refining of the former into the latter. This is not, as Stowers, emphasizes, the separation of the intelligible from the sensible, but an indication of a cosmic hierarchy of substance, more Stoic than Platonic. He sought to give an account of divinization decidedly more Stoic than Platonic in its anthropomorphism and rejection of a rigorously non-sensible realm. So, at the core of Christian doctrine we find a Stoicizing Platonism, something anticipated by Antiochus of Ascalon, a figure who looms in the background of this book. Inwood presents the most radical proposal in the book. He argues that the universal categorization of Musonius Rufus as a Stoic "in the strong sense" is based on insufficient evidence. By this Inwood means that the views of Musonius cannot be taken as indicative of Stoicism in the first century CE. Considering the evidence, including testimonia, Inwood claims that, though there is Stoic language in Musonius, this is also true for self-declared non-Stoics like Philo. And though Musonius says many things that a Stoic would endorse, it is also the case that Epicureans, Cynics, Platonists, and Peripatetics could share these views. Inwood speculates that the attribution of a Stoic connection to Musonius is owing largely to his having been the teacher of the unqualifiedly Stoic Epictetus and to his having influenced the Stoic Marcus Aurelius. The paper by Attridge follows the theme of the conference from which this book is derived by showing that the development of philosophy in the first century CE from a dominant position of Stoicism to a dominant position of Platonism is, at least in part, owing to Jewish and then, most prominently, Christian appropriation of ancient Greek philosophy for theological epistemology. Platonism, Attridge argues, provided better conceptual tools than did Stoicism for explaining how we can have cognitive access to the transcendent. Attridge examines this Gospel, along with some Gnostic texts, to demonstrate the appropriation of Platonic epistemology through Philo by early Christians. The overriding claim is that God has made his true name and so his essence known in the person of Jesus. Nevertheless, there was a core disagreement, traceable ultimately to Stoic materialism, that prevented anything like an assimilation of Stoicism to Platonism. Plutarch saw Platonism, as he understood it, as much closer to Stoicism than to Epicureanism. The Stoic commitment to the sufficiency of virtue for happiness and divine providence are two fundamental areas in which the Stoics reach more or less correct conclusions though their rationalistic materialism prevents them from getting these exactly right. What Alexander is seeking is an authentically Aristotelian solution to the problem of the first *oikeion*. The problem he faces is in accounting for the initial desires of pre-rational children. It is at this point that Alexander takes on the Stoic account of the actions of children who, though not rational, act according to their nature. All in all, these are fine papers on a period of philosophy very difficult to appreciate owing to the paucity of evidence. For example, we know the names of scores of self-declared Platonists from this period about whose views we know nothing. Nevertheless, high-quality collections like this one are contributing to bringing one neglected period of the history of philosophy into the mainstream.

2: Taking the Apostle Paul seriously

Paul in the Greco-Roman world: a handbook / Paul, adoption, and inheritance / James C. Walters Paul, virtues, and vices / Troels Engberg-Pedersen.

Malherbe, *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity*. Collected essays, 2 vols. Edited by Carl R. Thompson, and Gregory E. Supplements to *Novum Testamentum*. It is a monument to the care shown by the publisher, Brill, in producing genuinely handsome although terribly expensive! It is a monument to the quite extraordinary care with which the four editors – helped by an army of graduate assistants mentioned at pp. The publisher, the editors and their helpers are to be congratulated and thanked most warmly for their endeavours. Finally, and most importantly by far, it is a monument to Abraham J. And it will also be of special interest to readers of this journal looking for insights into the classical world. What one gets in formal terms The two volumes continuously paginated contain 53 essays pp. Editorial matter includes information on original page numbers most helpfully given throughout the set, and on cross-references between articles reprinted in these volumes. After the last essay come five exceedingly full indices pages! Malherbe himself always adamantly insisted on full indices: From the editorial matter a number of things become clear. In particular, a selection has been made – in agreement with Malherbe himself – among the earliest publications p. On the other hand, the set happily does include a number of works that one might perhaps not have hoped for: Thirdly, the essays have undergone some revision -- not of substance; but bibliography has been updated, footnotes extensively standardized, and a Greek font reintroduced. Malherbe himself managed before his death to read and sign off on all but three of the updated essays p. In a way, this was all intended as preparatory exercises for exegesis:

3: lectio difficilior: Peter-Ben Smit: Making Men “Weakness, Justification, and Andreia in Romans

Troels Engberg-Pedersen is Professor of New Testament at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark. He is the author of Paul and the Stoics, winner of a Biblical Archaeology Society Publication Award.

I argue that weakness, sin, and impiety can be understood as the conceptual counterparts of the virtue of andreia. These theses are the result of pursuing the two following related questions: I will address these questions on a number of levels. First, I will pose the exegetical question regarding the coherence of the three notions just mentioned. Third, I will study the background of these concepts, with an eye to connections between sin, impiety, and weakness. Finally, I will draw some conclusions on the basis of all touching on the interpretation of Romans 5: This can be illustrated by reviewing the most common exegetical options available for it. A Weakness is seen as a reference to the condition humaine, often specifically mortality. This interpretation is frequently associated with reference to weakness in 1 Corinthians. In shorthand, the issues that these raise are the following. Finally, position A, while implicitly also taking as its point of departure a particular anthropology and associated soteriology, does not sufficiently take into account the relationship between weakness and sin as it appears in Romans 5. Weakness in Romans and Romans 5: In line with other Pauline statements about the body, the flesh, sin, and weakness, the relationship between them in Romans seems to be as follows: Weakness, in turn, is related to sin and impiety, conceived as giving in to particular kinds of sinful desires see also Romans. The flesh, because it is so closely associated with weakness, is therefore also associated with sinfulness; or, put differently, flesh, weak as it is, becomes sinful to the extent that it succumbs to desires that affect the flesh because of its weakness. Impiety, Sin, and Weakness vs. Faith, Manliness, and Virtue in Jewish - Pagan Polemic, Especially 4 Maccabees Operating in the context of Hellenistic thought, early Jewish thinkers, such as the authors of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 4 Maccabees or Philo, were concerned with weakness, sin, and impiety in the context of evaluating virtue. This makes their writings an obvious place to look for further answers to the question about the coherence of weakness, sin, and impiety. Various schools of thought proposed ways of controlling the passions. Of interest for this paper is the venue taken by Hellenistic Jewish thinkers. I could prove to you from many and various examples that reason is dominant over the emotions, but I can demonstrate it best from the noble bravery of those who died for the sake of virtue, Eleazar and the seven brothers and their mother. All of these, by despising sufferings that bring death, demonstrated that reason controls the emotions. In this book, challenging circumstances provide one with the opportunity to enact and display manliness. Two kinds of weakness as therefore at play: True piety appears as both the apex of virtue and of rational behavior. This is well in line with a long-standing tradition of thought on this subject. No contradiction therefore arises when some persons appear to be dominated by their emotions because of the weakness of their reason. What person who lives as a philosopher by the whole rule of philosophy, and trusts in God, and knows that it is blessed to endure any suffering for the sake of virtue, would not be able to overcome the emotions through godliness? In this way, Antiochus is in fact proven the lesser, weaker of the two 4 Maccabees 8: Therefore get your torture wheels ready and fan the fire more vehemently! I do not so pity my old age as to break the ancestral law by my own act. O aged man, more powerful than tortures; O elder, fiercer than fire; O supreme king over the passions, Eleazar! For just as our father Aaron, armed with the censer, ran through the multitude of the people and conquered the fiery angel, so the descendant of Aaron, Eleazar, though being consumed by the fire, remained unmoved in his reason. Most amazing, indeed, though he was an old man, his body no longer tense and firm, his muscles flabby, his sinews feeble, he became young again in spirit through reason; and by reason like that of Isaac he rendered the many-headed rack ineffective. O man of blessed age and of venerable gray hair and of law-abiding life, whom the faithful seal of death has perfected! If, therefore, because of piety an aged man despised tortures even to death, most certainly devout reason is governor of the emotions. Well in line with this argument, Eleazar also names the opposite of his own behavior “the option he does not choose” namely to be weak. As he replied to his friends, who suggest that he should give in, in order to save his skin: For it would be irrational if we, who have lived in accordance with truth to old age and have maintained in

accordance with law the reputation of such a life, should now change our course become a pattern of impiety to the young, in becoming an example of the eating of defiling food. Therefore, O children of Abraham, die nobly for your religion! And you, guards of the tyrant, why do you delay? Their manliness is even recognized by their tormentor: And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as an expiation, divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been afflicted. She is manly to the extreme – much to the narrative detriment of Antiochus, though it should be noted that she is presented as even more manly than Daniel and Azariah, Mishael, and Hananiah 4 Maccabees As 4 Maccabees comments in its praise of her: O more noble than males in steadfastness, and more manly than men in endurance! From Weakness to Glory: Justification as Obtaining Andreia? Returning with these insights to Romans 5: All this amounts to a demonstration of weakness, which results in sin. Second, Paul describes justification as something that does away with an existence ruled by impiety or vice. However, unlike in early Jewish writings, for Paul, it is not following the Law, but the gift of righteousness through Christ which leads to restored virtue. The kind of virtue that is restored through justification can thus be understood as that of andreaia, which is the counterpart to weakness especially as it results from failing to follow moral precepts and leads to sin. In making this claim, one must bear in mind that andreaia is a virtue, not a physical attribute. This may be a rhetorical ploy, but it may also be something else, given the prominent role of virtues for the description of the relative merits of belonging to different religious groups or philosophical schools. When Paul stated this position in Romans 5: A Commentary Hermeneia Minneapolis: The fact that Romans 5: For a mediating position see: Neukirchener Verlag, , , takes Romans 5: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, , Mohr Siebeck, , 80, has it: Gackle unfortunately, does not address this text extensively in his study. Jewett, Romans, , noting that in 2 Corinthians De Bijbel queer gelezen Vught: Skandalon, , Eerdmans, , Intervarsity, , , T. Carter, Paul and the Power of Sin. Oxford University Press, , esp. Lohse, Brief, , Wilckens, Brief, CERF, , Herder, , , see furthermore Jewett, Romans, This should be regarded as more than a distant parallel as Jewett, Romans, , seems to do. Brill, , Mark Reasoner, The Strong and the Weak. Cambridge University Press, and Thomas J. An Exegetical Study of Rom. All studies agree when it comes to placing Romans 5: Routledge, , , for Philo and 4 Maccabees, see e. University Press of America, , For overviews see e. Jesus and Greco-Roman Masculinity Oxford: Westview, , Thomas Laqueur, Making Sex: Harvard University, , It should be noted that for Aristotle true manliness was only reserved for those who could face death in battle, and therefore women and slaves, for example, were by definition excluded from this virtue. Barbara Koziak, Retrieving Political Emotion. Thumos, Aristotle, and Gender University Park: Pennsylvania State University, , esp. Cambridge University Press, Of course, this is but a general rule. Aristotle for example reserves only the arena of the battlefield for the display of true andreaia. Louis van den Hengel, Imago. Romeinse keizerbeelden en de belichaming van gender Hilversum: Verloren, , , see also: Die Ordnung des Geschlechtslebens im antiken Rom Frankfurt: Campus, ; for 4 Maccabees, see e. For 4 Maccabees the dating remains disputed; an earlier partial consensus about a date in the first half of the second century is now being questioned, see e. Brill,] ; see also the general introduction by the same author:

4: Paul and the Stoics - Troels Engberg-Pedersen - Google Books

Paul in the Greco-Roman world: a handbook. Responsibility Paul, virtues, and vices / Troels Engberg-Pedersen. Supplemental links Table of contents. Subjects.

I argue that weakness, sin, and impiety can be understood as the conceptual counterparts of the virtue of *andreia*. These theses are the result of pursuing the two following related questions: I will address these questions on a number of levels. First, I will pose the exegetical question regarding the coherence of the three notions just mentioned. Finally, I will draw some conclusions on the basis of all touching on the interpretation of Romans 5: This can be illustrated by reviewing the most common exegetical options available for it. A Weakness is seen as a reference to the condition humaine, often specifically mortality. This interpretation is frequently associated with reference to weakness in 1 Corinthians In shorthand, the issues that these raise are the following. Finally, position A, while implicitly also taking as its point of departure a particular anthropology and associated soteriology, does not sufficiently take into account the relationship between weakness and sin as it appears in Romans 5. Weakness in Romans and Romans 5: In line with other Pauline statements about the body, the flesh, sin, and weakness, the relationship between them in Romans seems to be as follows: Weakness, in turn, is related to sin and impiety, conceived as giving in to particular kinds of sinful desires see also Romans 7- 8. The flesh, because it is so closely associated with weakness, is therefore also associated with sinfulness; or, put differently, flesh, weak as it is, becomes sinful to the extent that it succumbs to desires that affect the flesh because of its weakness. Impiety, Sin, and Weakness vs. Faith, Manliness, and Virtue in Jewish - Pagan Polemic, Especially 4 Maccabees Operating in the context of Hellenistic thought, early Jewish thinkers, such as the authors of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 4 Maccabees or Philo, were concerned with weakness, sin, and impiety in the context of evaluating virtue. This makes their writings an obvious place to look for further answers to the question about the coherence of weakness, sin, and impiety. Various schools of thought proposed ways of controlling the passions. Of interest for this paper is the venue taken by Hellenistic Jewish thinkers. I could prove to you from many and various examples that reason is dominant over the emotions, but I can demonstrate it best from the noble bravery of those who died for the sake of virtue, Eleazar and the seven brothers and their mother. In this book, challenging circumstances provide one with the opportunity to enact and display manliness. Two kinds of weakness as therefore at play: True piety appears as both the apex of virtue and of rational behavior. This is well in line with a long-standing tradition of thought on this subject. No contradiction therefore arises when some persons appear to be dominated by their emotions because of the weakness of their reason. What person who lives as a philosopher by the whole rule of philosophy, and trusts in God, and knows that it is blessed to endure any suffering for the sake of virtue, would not be able to overcome the emotions through godliness? In this way, Antiochus is in fact proven the lesser, weaker of the two 4 Maccabees 8: Therefore get your torture wheels ready and fan the fire more vehemently! I do not so pity my old age as to break the ancestral law by my own act. O aged man, more powerful than tortures; O elder, fiercer than fire; O supreme king over the passions, Eleazar! For just as our father Aaron, armed with the censer, ran through the multitude of the people and conquered the fiery angel, so the descendant of Aaron, Eleazar, though being consumed by the fire, remained unmoved in his reason. Most amazing, indeed, though he was an old man, his body no longer tense and firm, his muscles flabby, his sinews feeble, he became young again in spirit through reason; and by reason like that of Isaac he rendered the many-headed rack ineffective. O man of blessed age and of venerable gray hair and of law-abiding life, whom the faithful seal of death has perfected! If, therefore, because of piety an aged man despised tortures even to death, most certainly devout reason is governor of the emotions. Well in line with this argument, Eleazar also names the opposite of his own behavior "the option he does not choose" namely to be weak. As he replied to his friends, who suggest that he should give in, in order to save his skin: Therefore, O children of Abraham, die nobly for your religion! And you, guards of the tyrant, why do you delay? Their manliness is even recognized by their tormentor: And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as an expiation, divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been afflicted. She is manly

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5: Troels Engberg-Pedersen - Wikipedia

Google Scholar Engberg-Pedersen, Troels 'Paul, Virtues, and Vices', in J. P. Sampley (ed.), Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International): Google Scholar Engberg-Pedersen, Troels 'The Relationship with Others: Similarities and Differences Between Paul and Stoicism', ZNW

The teaching and example of the historical Jesus, the moral boundaries of Torah-loyal Judaism, and Graeco-Roman moral philosophy have all been nominated as the dominant influence in shaping early Christian ethics. Too often, however, either the Jewish or the Graeco-Roman background has been preferred at the expense of the other in discussions of the influences determining moral viewpoints. Such polarizations are simplistic, given the rapid transition of early Christianity from a Palestinian milieu to the eastern Mediterranean basin in its mission, including, of course, the world of diaspora Judaism. Something more complex is happening here. There arose a variety of overlapping communities with overlapping conceptions of morality throughout the Mediterranean basin, but, nevertheless, each community also had its own distinctive ethical and social traits, determined location by location and culture by culture. The issue is well exemplified in the discussion of virtue and vice in antiquity. Lists of vices and virtues were common place in the ancient Near East, in the Graeco-Roman literature, and in the writings of the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism, and the rabbinic corpus. Similar lists of vices and virtues appear in the New Testament, prompting the question whether these lists were directly appropriated from the Graeco-Roman world or indirectly through the traditions of Second Temple Judaism, or both. Consideration has to be given to the degree to which these traditional ethical materials, whatever their source, were adapted and changed in the rhetoric and theology of the early Christians. It is also important to realize that the discussion of the virtues and vices in antiquity was not confined to their appearance in the rhetorical lists of ancient authors. The social outworking of the virtues and the vices garnered intense interest in popular philosophy, civic ethics, honor and shame culture, the household codes, and the paideia education of the classical and late Hellenistic world. All these complex arenas of moral discourse in Graeco-Roman antiquity will be examined in the following sections. Virtue and Vice Lists in Early Christianity and the Graeco-Roman World Discussion of the virtue and vice lists in the Graeco-Roman world and their relation to the New Testament ethical lists has resulted a wide variety of interpretative stances. Remarkably, there has never been a scholarly consensus emerge on the issue, and it looks like that there is little chance of one emerging in the near future. There are a host of presuppositions at work here that might explain how such divergent interpretations have arisen: But, at the very least, this rich diversity of viewpoint challenges scholars to reconsider their presuppositions through a closer investigation of the historical background, both Jewish and Graeco-Roman, along with a renewed appreciation of the distinctiveness of the apostolic tradition in its cultural, social, and ecclesial context. The Catalog of Virtues in 2 Peter 1. Sheffield Academic Press, A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship. Edited by Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. The New Testament lists function paraenetically in different contexts, but they acquire a catechetical function in the apostolic ethical tradition. With the exceptions of Romans 1: Edited by David Noel Freedman, "Six scholarly interpretations are identified. Edited by Colin Brown, "Originally published in in German. Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament. Users without a subscription are not able to see the full content on this page. Please subscribe or login. How to Subscribe Oxford Bibliographies Online is available by subscription and perpetual access to institutions. For more information or to contact an Oxford Sales Representative click here.

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Paul's engagement with Graeco-Roman virtues and vices was marginal and peripheral, whether it was Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, or the early Hellenistic "virtue system." But Paul drew extensively from the virtue system in Galatians, reflecting not just traditional or parenetic approaches but rather a theological worldview.

Print or Download When it comes to looking for ethical guidance from the Bible, we all pick and choose. Rodd 1 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. Finally, it stresses that the point of all this lies in our individual and collective calling to put Scripture into practice. Introduction As an evangelical, I would like to believe that my moral judgements are biblical, and that I submit myself to its authority. Others, for a variety of reasons, think that this is not possible. Its purpose is rather to think more carefully about the handling and the doing. If we are committed to the moral authority of Scripture, what exactly is it we are committed to? We are committed to the literary diversity of Scripture There is a tendency in scholarly circles to criticise evangelicals for their reductionism. We can end up in practice denying that Scripture is the Word of God, replacing it with the idea that Scripture contains the Word of God. In spite of its eminent theological pedigree, this ultimately puts our own construction above the historically constituted text. Asked for a general statement of principle, they reply with a little rule about local legal procedures, a story about obscure people of dubious moral character, or a hymn extolling some virtue in God with which human beings are supposed somehow to conform. To take just one example, a consistent critique of materialism can be found expressed in law, as in the rules on not lending with interest or on leaving the gleanings; [8] in wisdom literature: Genre obviously affects meaning. Fraudulent behaviour that serves to make a point in a parable can be condemned in an epistle. The linguistic philosopher John Searle suggested that we use language to do five basic things: Not only does the Bible assert that God has a character wholly good, it commands us to avoid evil and seek good, it promises punishments and blessings, and it expresses outrage at sin and delight in goodness. Most importantly, in the fifth category, it judges us. Promises can raise complex questions about the relationship between ethics and self-interest;[23] feelings may be both outbursts of ethical delight and struggles with sinful desire. We cannot meaningfully say that a song, or an expression of feeling, is authoritative. Nevertheless, we can still insist that authority is the right word in the field of ethics, and that there is a component even within the artistic-expressive elements of Scripture which carries ethical authority. But to see this, we have to consider the idea of moral authority more closely. We are committed to the idea of moral authority We might suppose that the role of the Bible in our moral life is no different from other great literature. Whatever its merits, clearly such an approach does not treat Scripture as authoritative. Is moral authority possible? Self must reign supreme over every other source of moral insight. While it is correct that we have to make up our minds as to what is true and good, we do not think that something only becomes true because we believe it; nor, as theists, can we really think that something only becomes good because we desire it. So what is the relationship between the authority of God and the Bible? The concept of authority varies according to the domain in which it is used. In relation to questions of fact, an authority is someone who can vouch reliably that such-and-such is the case; they are good at giving other people reasons for believing something to be true. A good witness gives evidence with authority. Political authority, by contrast, is quite different. A person has political authority to the extent that they can create new reasons for others to act. Joseph Raz explains the notion of political authority by reference to what he calls exclusionary reasons for action. When we promise to dine out with a friend we commit ourselves to ignoring the balance of reasons for action that evening and to acting on the promise instead. Another example of an exclusionary reason is a rule. The rule that we should stop at a red traffic light is designed to prevent us from considering in each case whether we should or should not stop. It is intended for obedience, not a weighing up of pros and cons. The relationship of moral authority to these two types of authority is problematic and has been subject to a long-standing dispute within theological ethics. However, if we think of morality as a matter of the character of God, we will think of moral authority as evidential authority: God really is faithful; so faithfulness really is

good! On this account, the Bible is authoritative because it reliably tells us how things are about God and ourselves, and these facts have moral implications. To the extent that we are naturally inclined to view things in a distorted and sinful fashion, we will experience the will of God as command, because it can seem as if it requires a disregarding of the balance of reasons. Only to the one perfect in love do his commands cease to appear intrusive. It is noteworthy that the ethical teaching of the Bible often combines what is the case with an imperative: Thus to accept the moral authority of Scripture is to accept both that it informs us reliably about morally-significant truth, and that it commands us to do what we ought to do. This should not surprise us, for faith is both believing and doing together. Autonomy means that I am the court of highest appeal. At its worst this issues in the spurious humility that refuses to be dogmatic about anything and then goes out and does what it likes. For the theologian caught in this Enlightenment tradition, the Bible is an authority, but not fully authoritative. Thus what purports to be the Word of God is not experienced as truth and command but as hypothesis and proposal. Liberals permit themselves to pass judgement on Scripture; evangelicals can never give up the struggle to reconcile their understanding of Scripture with other sources of ethical insight and “if we are true to our convictions” we ultimately obey what Scripture appears clearly to teach, even when it is incompletely comprehended. Only in this way can we let Scripture judge us, rather than become the judges of Scripture. However, we should be careful not to misstate the difference in practice between liberal and evangelical views of Scripture. The process of reading the Bible means that what it teaches, and why it teaches it, are closely intertwined. Making sense of an authoritative text necessarily reduces the gap between what we think we are being told to do and what we think we ought to do anyway. When a clear gap does emerge, as occasionally it must, the difficulty of obedience should not be underestimated. Calvin found it impossible to accept a total ban on interest, since he could not rationally explain it. The problem with liberal views of Scripture is not so much the hard case, but the habit of noting what the Bible has to say and then leaving it to one side. We are committed to the judgements of Scripture. In general, we would want to say that it is Scripture in itself, as a whole, that is divinely inspired. So what is it, within Scripture, that carries authority? A legal judgement declares with authority both what happened and what must be done. So we are committed to the judgements of Scripture. Several points need to be made. First, the judgements of Scripture are not always simplistically borne on the face of the text. The author of Ecclesiastes does not really think that everything is meaningless. Apocalyptic language must be read as symbol, not the endorsement of genocide. Our Western culture tends to think about questions of right and wrong in the abstract. So we ask whether polygamy is acceptable, and having concluded not, think that that is the end of the matter. But ethics is concerned with reasoning about what to do, and abstract moral judgements are only a starting-point. Of course, some implications are quite clear, but it is not at all clear what a convert to Christianity who has already got several wives should do, or what a judge should do when faced with a claim for ancillary relief from a lawfully polygamous immigrant. It is not even clear what to do in a culture in which men are scarce and women existentially dependent on men for support and protection. The judgements implicit in Scripture are contextual, sometimes in contexts radically different from our own; sometimes in contexts which we sense were different but about which we lack substantial information. If we are committed to the moral authority of Scripture we are committed to the view that Paul really was right to advise the Corinthian women when praying or prophesying to cover their hair. To put the hardest case: Third, the judgements of Scripture are audience-specific. Unlike factual assertions, which are implicitly addressed to everyone, norms can be addressed to individuals or groups. That there was a census in the days of Quirinius is to be believed by all, but, unlike Joseph and Mary, we are under no obligation to be counted and taxed. So one immediate question which arises whenever we come across a judgement in Scripture is who it applies to. Some judgements clearly do apply universally. Even the Ten Commandments, so often assumed to be universal prescriptions, are far from straightforward in this respect: And while we may be relevantly similar, we may also be relevantly different. To reason by analogy is always to exercise judgement oneself. To take a judgement seriously is to seek to understand why it was right in the situation in which it was made. What was it about Corinth, women and hairstyles that mattered so much to Paul? Is it therefore wrong to read ourselves imaginatively into the text? How else does God speak to us through his Word except by our willingness to be addressed?

Nevertheless, the immediacy of experience must be regulated by good hermeneutics, and in order to do that we have to ask whether we are indeed addressed by the text, and if not, what can rightly be learnt from the fact that others were addressed in a way that we are not. We are committed to constructing a biblical ethic Photo Credit: Bart Stupak If we are to live biblically, we must move beyond simply identifying and understanding the individual moral judgements of Scripture. We have to combine them into a set of right standards which we can apply to ourselves, in our own situations. We have to construct a biblical ethic. Why should we assume that a single ethic can be constructed out of the disparate texts that make up the Bible? To start with, the unity of ethics is a rational requirement. Since it is logically impossible both to do and to refrain from doing the same act simultaneously; so also it cannot rationally be required that we both ought to do and ought to refrain from doing the same act. Many would go further and assert, with Kant, that there is something universalizable about ethical standards: If we are committed to the whole canon of Scripture as truth, we are logically committed to the unity of its ethic. But we should not assume that this unity is imposed on the Bible artificially; ethical unity is discovered as well. In reflecting on the problems of authority in Old Testament ethics, Christopher Wright identifies four unities which bind us to that past: The classic Calvinist device for handling the Old Testament law is an instance of this:

7: Staff View: Paul in the Greco-Roman world :

Philosophy in Review XXXI (), no. 3 Troels Engberg-Pedersen *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Education[edit] Dr. Engberg-Pedersen completed his Undergraduate studies in Classics at University of Copenhagen , then went on to study ancient and modern philosophy at University of Oxford from 1976, where he was promoted Doctorate of Philosophy. His doctoral studies mark the beginning of his exploration into the influence of Stoicism , on early Christianity , particularly as it relates to the scriptural letters of St. Career[edit] For approximately 25 years, Pedersen has focused his attentions on the writings of Paul the Apostle and on exploring how the structure and content of the Pauline epistles align with themes which are present in Stoic philosophy of the Hellenistic Period. Paul, Hellenistic Social Relationship and early Christianity[edit] Within the Hellenistic Period , the social structure was primarily hierarchical in the Roman Empire. Roman aristocrats were situated at the top of a social pyramid while slaves were the lowest of all society. Unless a generous patron could intercede and assist in facilitating limited mobility of his or her client, the hierarchy stood strong; within smaller groups in Hellenistic culture , such as a family scenario and guilds , this kind of structure was established, as well. Political celebrations and expectations from the Empire, inclusive of those in the early Christian communities Paul founded, proved to be problematic for the members and followers. Maintaining a Christian lifestyle while navigating the sociopolitical factors was the cause of quite a bit of detailed instruction from Paul in some of his letters. Within his written responses and advisement to individual Christian communities, Engberg-Pedersen makes claims that Paul draws from common understandings of societal practices of his time, yet strives to make them applicable to new context for his followers. Engberg-Pedersen draws from the scholarship done by John T. Fitzgerald when discussing how Paul uses the social practice of forgiveness and atonement to illustrate Christian practices. Fitzgerald, in *Paul and Paradigm Shifts: Reconciliation and Its Linkage Group* [4] discusses that in the Greco-Roman world, it was left to a guilty person to appeal to the goodwill of the person that he or she offended, with the hope that the offended person would chose to forgive the wrong. This understanding of forgiveness was fairly dichotomized between how one forgives within a public, social structure and how a person approached a more religious form of atonement. The perspective of Paul and his advice to quarreling communities take on a deeper implication for relationship within members of the church in seeing him interweave these two concepts into one; through his use of the rhetoric of the time, counterbalanced by his own experience of mercy from God in his own conversion, Paul takes the societal attitude toward reconciliation and makes it into a spiritual consideration of forgiveness: God is the initiator of the forgiveness, even when we are sinful. Even though we may offend God, He offers an appeal to reconcile us to himself. Pedersen shows that this directed-ness toward God and Christ manifests itself in becoming other-centered through this relationship. Through individual awareness and a recognition of connection with Father and Son, resulting in the building up the broader community, it is easy to see that this interaction between the human and divine illustrates the foundational tenets upon which the modern structure of church had been established. Throughout the letters, even though it is not with any frequency, Paul is shown to draw upon his own self-awareness and experience of Christ in order to demonstrate how Christians should humble themselves before God in order to serve others through their commitment to Christ. For instance, Paul uses himself as an example of in his Letter to the Philippians: If anyone else thinks he can be confident in the flesh, all the more can I. Circumcised on the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew parentage, in observance of the law a Pharisee, in zeal I persecuted the church, in righteousness based on the law, I was blameless. More than that, I even consider everything a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having any righteousness of my own based on the law but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God, depending on the faith to know him and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead Phil

3: Within this communion as a family of faith, can each member be held accountable for upholding belief and virtue in Christ, and not succumbing to vice Phil 4: It is the very same spirit of communion that he describes in his letter to Philippians which drives Paul to view the corporal Christian church as superseding the faith of the individual person. And if you have a different attitude, this too God will reveal to you. Only, with regard to what we have attained, continue on the same course—but our citizenship is in heaven and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Within Greek philosophy, a movement that Paul describes toward achieving full potential and personhood is referred to as the telos. The influences of the social surroundings within Greco-Roman world heavily influences his letters and provides modern scholarship with significant considerations within the structure we see within the Church today. In the way that he interprets the Letters of St. Bibliography[edit] The Stoic Theory of Oikeiosis: Baker Academic , The First Gospel:

8: The Social Location of Paul: Education as the Key

Here is the Review of Biblical Literature's page dedicated to reviews of Troels Engberg-Pedersens Paul and the www.enganchecubano.com reviews and and a response from E-P. Here is the page summary.

Introduction of a Law Students of the synoptic gospels are quite familiar with the chreia, a genre according to which most of the sayings and deeds of Jesus are crafted. Some of the relevant examples of progymnastic genres in Paul include the following. Forbes observes that the form of the comparison is very much like that described in the progymnasmata, that is, Paul compares himself with his rivals crisply point-for-point, and not lengthily quality-for-quality. The encomium served as one of the chief vehicles for learning epideictic rhetoric, i. It taught the student to draw praise from stereotypical categories universally viewed as the primary sources of honor. Nurture and Training education, teachers, arts, skills, laws learned ; 3. Accomplishments and Deeds deeds of the body: As anthropologist teach us, honor has two sources: Ascribed honor is that which is bestowed on someone by a higher ranking person. Noble cities produce noble citizens; noble ethnoi i. The brilliance of a pupil is pegged directly to the honor level of the teacher i. It might be the case that God or some god favored a child at its conception, birth and beyond, thus indicating honor to this person. On the other hand, the ancients achieved honor through prowess, either military, athletic or aesthetic achievements. Contrary to custom, Paul boasts of weakness, not strength In terms of deeds of the soul, As Fitzgerald notes about this material, facing crises and enduring hardships typically demonstrate courage. Where did Paul learn this Greek convention? What kind of education includes this? Thus if any profit is derived by a thoroughly Israelite pedigree, Paul enjoys it. He had superior ascribed honor. In other words, as regards education and mode of life, he was a perfect disciple of a group dedicated to the full keeping of Torah. Shortly he redefines it in 3: The main thrust of the comparison is to build up his honor claims by excelling his rivals according to conventional categories as embodied in the progymnastic exercise known as the encomium. Paul and Judean Messianists V. First, we observe that the sequence of topics in Gal does not strictly follow the list enumerated in the encomium. But new knowledge was given Paul, which replaced his former nurture and training: Paul claims that he did not receive any training from the existing groups of disciples: But with God as his teacher, Paul is a noble prophet and teacher. His immediate departure for Arabia and Damascus distances Paul from Jerusalem and its eye-witness sources of the gospel. Finally, Paul is acknowledged by the Jerusalem elite as one to whom God has ascribed special honor. Paul appeals to another virtue, courage, in describing two incidents. Evidently his boldness and steadfastness won their admiration and also their acknowledgment of his role and status. As Paul describes the scene, Peter Apostle to the Circumcised and Paul Apostle to the Uncircumcised were eating at the common table of the disciples in Antioch. Upon the arrival of brethren from Jerusalem, Peter left the common table and ate with disciples who kept dietary and other such rules; he is, after all, the apostle to the circumcised. Paul then engages in praise and blame, which is often described in the rules for a comparison. In contrast, Paul spoke such that he deserves high praise for his sincerity, truth and courage, the very things Peter lacked. He favors Quintilian, the Roman rhetorician, in his exposition of the background of this rhetorical genre, an example of which goes as follows: A bolder form of figure. By this means we display the inner thoughts of our adversaries as though they were talking with themselves. Or we may introduce conversations between ourselves and others, or of others among themselves, and put words of advice, reproach, complaint, praise or pity into the mouths of appropriate persons Inst. The new speaker in 7: The speaker speaks not only of his happy past 7: Stowers successfully persuades the modern reader of Paul that the apostle was indeed educated in progymnastic learning to write the way he does. What then do we know at this point? Inasmuch as education was status-specific, neither slaves nor scribes would be taught these progymnastic exercises, but a citizen or high-status person would. Scribes learned functional literacy, but hardly the ability to engage, as Paul does, in praise and blame, the aim of epideictic rhetoric. To return to the distinction of John White, slaves and scribes might write documentary letters, but not the literary letters of Paul. Those of high social status would be educated in progymnastic exercises with refined rhetorical sensibilities. All contemporary study of the diatribe in Paul begins with the dissertation of Stanley Stowers.

The diatribe is not the technical instruction in logic, physics, etc. The goal of this part of the instruction was not simply to impart knowledge, but to transform the students, to point out error and to cure it. Typically there is a sudden turning to a fictitious interlocutor, 2. Two types of questions are asked of the interlocutor: All of this is followed by lists of vices. Both objections and false conclusions are cast in the form of questions. The answer might contain an example or chreia to illustrate the argument. Finally, the speaker might employ analogies or comparisons, quotations or sayings of some sage. But what does this imply about his social location? Stowers concludes his presentation by stating that the diatribe is a type of discourse employed in philosophical schools. But let continue and examine what evidence there is that Paul studied philosophy and not just a formal argumentative style such as the diatribe. This, of course, comes from Luke, not Paul. But Acts raises an important question: We propose to examine literary material which may derive from such a formal education: Stoic terminology and argument, 4. Classical Greek morality spoke of four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, courage, temperance and four vices: grief, fear, desire, pleasure. They were frequently employed in protreptic, contrasting the sick soul laden with vices with the healthy soul adorned with virtues. Lists for consideration appear in many Pauline letters, such as Rom 1: Such lists were frequently used by Greco-Roman philosophers to claim virtue and win approval for their way of life. Focusing on the figure of the sage in this cultural world, Fitzgerald shows that catalogues of hardships played an important role in the propaganda and pedagogy of the philosopher, because they serve both a revelatory and a probative function. They show him triumphant over adversity and death, the litmus test of character. In the midst of these, however, the sage triumphs 1 Cor 4: Thus we find a body of Greco-Roman literature on a specific philosophical topic and with specific arguments used in it. Paul indubitably knows this tradition, but the question is how? Acts 17 portrays Paul speaking to both Stoics and Epicureans. Is there evidence in the Pauline letters that Paul a) knew these philosophies and b) sided with one and used its argument and terminology? For example, his remarks in 1 Cor 8: He makes use of Greek philosophic terminology to describe the compulsion whereby he preaches the gospel. Like the Stoics, he labors to distinguish what is in human power and what is not. Paul both hears this in the slogans of some Corinthians and responds to them in a Stoic manner.

9: Table of Contents: Paul in the Greco-Roman world :

In Troels Engberg-Pedersen's "Stoicism in Philippians," he proposes to assess Stoicism and Paul first by identifying several clusters of ideas and terms important in Stoicism and then by investigating whether these cohere as an overall system or argument.

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