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**The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in the Early Christianity**

**by Susan K. Hedahl**

The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in the Early Christianity By Richard I. Pervo. ISBN-13: 978-0-8006-9659-7. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010. xv & 376 pages. Paper. \$21.12

Pervo sums up his objective in writing on Paul this way: "... to describe how this protean apostle came to take his shapes." (x). This work is a thorough, comprehensive, and well-documented view of a variety of biblical, pseudo-and post-Pauline works which have historically had a significant say in defining Paul.

The document's collections which Pervo assesses include an initial overview of the genuine Pauline letters in the Bible. Pervo then discusses the pseudepigraphic Pauline letters; the epistolary Paul in early Christianity; Paul in various "Acts of. ..."; "those who wrote against Paul (surprise!--the Gospel of Matthew is one such example!); and Paul as interpreted by various patristic authors.

One of the interesting and helpful parts of the book are the eleven Tables which look at Paul's works from various perspectives, including the differences between Paul and Jesus and a fascinating table which charts how the Book of Acts construes the parallel "passions" of both Jesus and Paul (Table 9). Pervo also includes an Appendix: "A Pauline Family Tree," which charts the dates and evolution of Paul works and those who comment on him.

Pervo fine-tunes the way in which he will address the "protean apostle," beginning his work in this fashion: "Even among the mainstream of traditional, Western, interpreters there is no reigning consensus about the center of Paul's own theology, and this tradition can no longer claim either objectivity or exclusive authority. The thrust of the following pages is towards defining profiles of Paul and Paulinism in terms of the needs, questions, and values of the persons, groups, or movements represented in various texts." (xii)

Pervo succeeds splendidly in accomplishing this monumental task. This is a superlative work and one that should particularly inform those who teach biblical studies, patristics and homiletics.

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["The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in the Early Christianity"](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0MDO/is_4_38/ai_n58070777/). Currents in Theology and Mission. FindArticles.com. 12 Sep, 2011.  
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