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Warne, Graham J.
Hebrew Perspectives on the Human Person in the Hellenistic Era: Philo and Paul

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This monograph is based on a dissertation supervised by Michael Lattke and Francis I. Andersen at Queensland University, Australia. Warne is interested in the old question of the relationship between Hellenistic and Hebraic thought (pp. 1-2); he focuses his research, however, in a way that touches on an issue in contemporary scholarship. Most broadly stated, he asks whether Paul is as Hellenized as Philo or whether he represents a more classical Hebraic tradition (pp. 26-27). More specifically stated, he examines the anthropology of each through their understanding of the soul. His thesis is that "Philo has portrayed the human person in distinctly Greek (Platonic) terms, while Paul has maintained a fundamentally Hebraic perspective throughout" (p. 254).

The structure of the argument is the most creative aspect of this work. Warne sets out the rationale for his argument in chapter 1. He argues quite rightly that Philo is an outstanding example of Hellenized Judaism. Unfortunately Warne knows none of the recent assessments of Philo's relationship to philosophy (e.g., *The Studia Philonica Annual* 5 [1993] 95-155). More problematically, he argues that Paul represents the classical Hebrew tradition and was primarily exposed to Hellenism after his rabbinic training. Warne is not the sole representative of this view, although it is increasingly difficult to hold in the light of recent research on Paul's use of Hellenistic moral philosophy--work Warne seemingly does not know. Warne does recognize the presence of Hellenistic elements in Paul and accounts for them through several factors, most importantly the apostle's habit of using the language of his opponents. This leads him to Corinth where he argues that Paul's Hebraic anthropology led him to oppose a Hellenistic anthropology held by the Corinthians that was inspired by Philonic Judaism via Apollos.

In order to make this case he surveys the background material: Hebrew (chapter 2) and Greek (chapter 3). He maintains that ancient Hebrews thought phenomenologically rather than metaphysically-ontologically and perceived a human being as a totality rather than

as a composite. He illustrates this with studies of *np̄s*, *b&r*, and *rw̄x*. Early Greeks were not radically different; however, later developments in philosophical circles brought significant shifts, especially in how the soul was understood in Platonism. Platonists understood *yux/h* non-materially: it was not merely the life-force but was ontologically distinct.

Warne uses this background to situate Philo (chapter 4) and Paul (chapter 5). He suggests--quite correctly--that Philo followed the Platonic tradition; but he fails to treat the Middle Platonic tradition that inherited and shaped the Platonic tradition as Philo knew it. The result is that his treatment lacks the sophistication of other recent analyses (e.g., D. Winston, *Logos and Mystical Theology in Philo of Alexandria* [Cincinnati: Hebrew Union Press, 1985] 27-42). Paul, on the other hand, used *yux/h* in much the same way as *np̄s* to mean "animated life." Warne's concentration on specific occurrences of *yux/h* leads him to ignore texts such as 2 Cor 4:16-5:5, where Paul uses Platonic language and may reflect a dualistic anthropology (esp. 4:18 and 5:3; cf. 1 Cor 15:37-38).

The distinction between the Philonic and Pauline uses are set in relief at Corinth (chapter 6). Following the lead of B. Pearson and R. Horsley, Warne identifies Corinthian sapiential speculation with a form of Hellenized Judaism. Unfortunately, he does not know more recent work that has expanded the discussion (e.g., G. Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten* [FRLANT 138; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986] and G. Sterling, "'Wisdom among the Perfect:' Creation Traditions in Alexandrian Judaism and Corinthian Christianity," *NovT* 37 [1995] 355-84). He therefore concentrates on the linguistic contrasts between *t/eleios* vs. *n/hpios* and *yuxik/os* vs. *pneumatik/os* while he ignores the possibility of underlying exegetical differences. He suggests that the "perfect person" is Philo's heavenly person which the Corinthians have modified to fit their spiritual elitism (pp. 226-27). Paul took this over, only reversed the tables by calling the Corinthians "infants." Unlike Philo, who does not juxtapose *yuxik/os* and *pneumatik/os* even though he uses the terms, Paul sets out an antithesis. Once again he challenges a Corinthian adaptation by denying their status as *pneumatiko/i* which is only possible in the eschaton; until then they are *yuxiko/i*, "natural." Warne brings the work to an end with a brief conclusion.

There are several specific problems that should be highlighted. The first is the absence of a good deal of the most recent work in these areas (a consequence of working in Australia?). The problem this creates is that recent discussions would provide nuance and perhaps alter a number of analyses. The failure to incorporate such major works on Philo's anthropology as T. H. Tobin, *The Creation of Man: Philo and the History of Interpretation*, D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*, is serious. No one should read the work who does not appreciate this limitation. The second is that the book is poorly produced. There are an excessive number of typographical errors in the

Greek. The appearance of the work is amateurish. Mellen should be ashamed of releasing such a product, especially at the price it charges.

This is not to say that the work is without merit. Warne's major analyses of Philo and Paul are reflections of well-known positions and useful as points of reference. His basic thesis is sound and developed in a provocative way. While Philo and Paul are Greek-speaking Jews from the diaspora, they do operate in different social contexts that reflect different intellectual allegiances. It might be more helpful, however, to formulate the comparison in a way other than the old Hebrew vs. Greek, which creates almost as many problems as it solves. We might ask how Philo's allegiance to Platonic ontology vs. Paul's commitment to apocalyptic eschatology affects their anthropologies. This is a narrower way of formulating the problem, but it avoids the false dichotomy of Greek vs. Hebrew for two Jewish authors who are unmistakably both. The most important contribution is Warne's analysis of the Corinthian situation: he joins an increasing number of scholars who read the tension between Paul and the Corinthians against the background of Greek-speaking Judaism.