

Christina Harker

The Colonizers' Idols

Paul, Galatia, and Empire in New Testament Studies

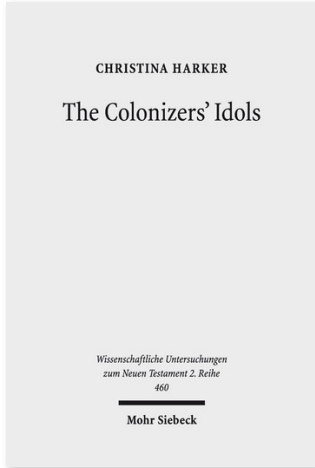
[Die Götterbilder der Siedler. Paul, Galatien und das Kaiserreich in der neutestamentlichen Forschung.]

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In this work, Christina Harker deconstructs the prevailing treatment of the New Testament as anti-imperial by contextualizing both New Testament scholarship and the Galatian experience within imperialist discourses that survived the dissolution of conventional empires in the twentieth century. She critiques simplistic treatments of empire as post-imperial (that is, replicating patterns of imperialist ideology, albeit unwittingly). To solve the problem, a new interpretation of Galatians is proposed that reworks and complicates the portrait of the Galatians themselves, rather than Paul, within what then emerges as a diverse social world peopled by complex individuals with heterogeneous social and cultural identities. The author is thus able to show how New Testament scholars who rehabilitate the Bible and Paul as anti-empire perpetuate the same imperialist modes of interpretation they seek to repudiate.

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