The six chapters that present interpretations of Paul in dialogue with the six cultures mentioned above are preceded by brief biographies of the three authors, detailing their ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as the experiences that enable them to discuss cultures other than their own. Herold Weiss, despite his German family name, was a *rioplatense*, born in the River Plate region shared by Argentina and Uruguay, and therefore is familiar with the Latin American culture. In addition, through his academic travels to Moldova and Russia, he was exposed to Russian Orthodoxy. Khiiok–Khng Yeo is a Malaysian Chinese with deep roots in Confucianism, but has acquainted himself with Native American cultures through a study of published material on and interviews with Native Americans. Charles Grove is a German–Irish American but has dedicated several years to the study of African–American history, religion, and politics.

In their interpretations of Paul from the perspectives of their home cultures and those to which they were strangers, the authors contrast what they take to be the peculiar traits of these cultures with the Pauline theology of the human predicament (the Fall and personal sins), eschatology, freedom, ethnic particularity (nationalism), suffering, and blessing. The insights contained in these six essays are extremely rich and even overwhelming in their diversity. Each author highlights aspects of the cultures under investigation that they consider most characteristic and most amenable to a critical appropriation of Pauline theology. Weiss highlights Latin American tristeza, caudillismo, and fatalism. Of pre-1917 Russia he notes its emphasis on human freedom, the incarnation, deification, asceticism, suffering, mysticism, sacred objects, and apophatic theology. Yeo highlights the Chinese cosmology of *Dao De*, the immanence of *Tian* [Heaven], and the Confucian ethics of *ren ren* [the loving person] and contrasts them with Paul’s eschatology, theology of God the creator, and cruciform love respectively. Of the Native American culture, he notes its emphasis on creation rather redemption, earth rather than heaven, space rather time, “ceremonies” rather than “worship,” ecology rather than eschatology. Cosgrove points to individualism, self-reliance, respect for human rights, freedom (not so much *for as from*), pursuit of happiness and personal self-realization as characteristics of the Anglo-American ethos. Of the African American heritage he highlights five aspects: freedom from slavery, formation of an alternative society to the White one (*marronage*), the dignity and beauty of blackness, the unity and equality of all peoples, and suffering.

Needless to say, a book with a scope as large and a theme as varied as this one is liable to multiple criticisms. The authors themselves have preempted four possible objections: they should not have written from the perspectives of the cultures not their own; being all male, they should have canvassed a female viewpoint; being all academics, they can provide only a bookish cross-culturalism; and the chapters deal with such disparate themes as not to permit a synthesis. Whatever merits these objections may have, and I believe that they have been successfully obviated by the authors, the book represents a path-breaking achievement. I most strongly recommend this book for all courses on Paul, in conjunction with another book, From Every People and Nation: The Book of Revelation in Intercultural Perspective, edited by David Rhoads (Fortress Press, 2005), which also has been reviewed in these pages (*Dialogue & Alliance* Vol. 19-2).

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**Post-Missionary Messianic Judaism : Redefining Christian Engagement with the Jewish People.**

By Mark S. Kinzer.

This is a book written from within the messianic Jewish movement and is directed especially to the Christian world. It is not a statement by the group which calls itself Jews for Jesus. Rather, messianic Judaism is a movement of Jews who accept Jesus (Yeshua) as the messiah while maintaining their Jewish identity and religious expression as intrinsic to their messianic belief. The author argues that faith in Jesus as messiah establishes Jewish identity, and does not undermine it. He further argues that Christianity and Judaism are not two separate religions, but two distinct forms of the *ekklesia* which resulted after God had sent Jesus.

Kinzer is a trained scripture scholar and argues his case carefully especially through an analysis of the New Testament. A foundational point for him is that the New Testament as a whole treats Jewish practice as obligatory for Jews, for Jews who accept Jesus, but not for
Gentiles who believe in Jesus. Supersessionism, which has historically argued that the Jewish tradition has been rejected, is based on a misreading of scripture. Kinzer proposes that the New Testament affirms the continuing covenantal significance of the Jewish people regardless of their acceptance or rejection of Jesus as messiah. The New Testament data shows that such a thesis can be argued. The Jewish people should be seen as a holy people involved in God’s ongoing redemption of the world.

In subsequent chapters Kinzer proposes that what we call the Christian church should be one reality existing in two forms. Jews and Gentiles of many nationalities should form a transnational *ekklesia* to embody and proclaim faith in Jesus. The Jewish part of this church, however, will share fully in the life and practices of the wider Jewish world.

Was such a tolerant understanding of a Jewish/Gentile church ever upheld and practiced in the nascent communities of the first century? Through an analysis of New Testament texts, substantiated by reputable authors, Kinzer argues in the affirmative. The separation of Judaism and Christianity owes more to historical events and misunderstandings than to an intrinsic rift between the two. Historical rejections by the two religions do not negate the fundamental union of Jesus-Israel church. In his treatment of the history of supersessionism, which was based on a mistaken reading of New Testament texts, Kinzer foresees that Israel and the church can be reunited within the twofold community of the messiah. The conclusion that Kinzer draws is that there is no insuperable obstacle to arguing for the compatibility of the Jewish religious tradition, including rabbinic Judaism, with the message of Jesus in the New Testament. The final chapter provides a helpful sketch of Jewish groups in recent centuries that have attempted reconciliation with Christianity through messianic Jesus awareness.

The author is to be commended for a careful analysis of New Testament texts in which he argues for plausible conclusions rather than proofs. His footnotes indicate a reliance on contemporary, reliable authors, most of whom realize that in post-Holocaust times a re-reading of parts of the New Testament, especially Paul, is in order. The church will not be whole until it finds its intrinsic connections with Israel. On another note, it should be noted that the book was largely directed to a Christian audience. Perhaps Kinzer’s next book will try to tweak

Jewish religious consciousness concerning Jesus as messiah. Since this Messianic Jewish Movement is quite small, will Jews perceive it as a fringe movement or a small prophetic voice? Kinzer might also have to treat issues other than Jesus as messiah. Issues such as divinity in Christ and Trinity lurk in the background of the Jewish-Christian dialogue. Yet, that is the future. In the present moment Kinzer has given us a bold, clear step for overcoming a first century division that need not have occurred.

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Cinéma Divinité: Religion, Theology, and The Bible in Film.
Edited by Eric S. Christiansen, Peter Francis, and William Telford.

As books proliferate that engage some conception of religion with some conception of film, the possible ways of considering and comparing these complex subjects also proliferate. As anyone who reflects on religions or films knows, there is no shortage of data to consider and no shortage of theory to go around. And while theory in the study of religions and film becomes ever more sophisticated, I suspect that many decisions about whether or not to read a particular book on “religion and film” are still made by a cursory glance at the list of films the authors or editors happen to have considered. Are they films I like or have seen? If not, we often pass on. To make matters more complicated, those who aspire to write comprehensive works in this area need also to stay abreast of the rapidly growing discourse on religion and film. The challenge, then, is to engage the familiar and unfamiliar—in both religions and films (and their theories)—in ways from which both the generalist and specialist can gain benefit.

Somehow, the editors and contributors to this volume have succeeded on all of these fronts, moving from broad considerations of religion, religious studies, and theology—and film studies—to specific considerations of films, film genres, and religious phenomena. Teachers and students of religion and film should add this work to their collections, and interested readers who desire a comprehensive, comprehensible, and sophisticated introduction to the key issues, questions, and writings in this area will benefit from reading this book. Though