
Although these two books are genetically related — Engberg-Pedersen is the advisor and Buch-Hansen the doctoral student — these studies are very different. Engberg-Pedersen’s reads like a lively doctoral seminar and, for those who know him, resembles its lively and gregarious author, while Buch-Hansen’s is more tedious, with all of the standard features of a published doctoral dissertation.

First to the teacher. At the start, Engberg-Pedersen outlines the three foci of the book: (1) both cognitive (e.g., metaphorical) and concretely cosmological (i.e., material) readings are required for an adequate interpretation of Paul’s letters; (2) both exegesis and philosophy, or philosophical exegesis, are necessary as well. The book is with replete with exegesis but not to the exclusion of philosophers, such as Foucault and Bourdieu; and (3) bodiliness is intrinsic to everything Paul says, even to believers who have left behind the world of the fleshly body. “In Paul’s view, these people were just as bodily as anybody else, only in quite different ways” (3).

These foci lead directly to a dominant thesis: the primacy of Stoicism for understanding Paul. Engberg-Pedersen discovers the epicenter of this thesis in the spiritual body of 1 Corinthians 15: “Our guiding question [in chapter one] will be how we should understand the *soma pneumatikon*, and hence the pneuma. The answer to this question will turn out to have huge consequences for everything else we should say about Paul. To bring that out is the topic of the rest of this book” (14). And how should we understand the *soma pneumatikon*? In light of Stoic cosmology, as a material substance. In answer to his own question, “why will Paul’s ‘heavenly bodies’ be specifically ‘pneumatic’?” Engberg-Pedersen responds, “As far as I can see, only one answer is possible: because Paul is also presupposing the specifically Stoic idea that the heavenly bodies that are situated at the top of the hierarchical *scala naturae* are distinctly made up of pneuma … it is a distinctly Stoic idea that ‘heavenly’ bodies are also ‘pneumatic’ ones” (28). How specifically will the bodies of Christ’s followers be transformed into heavenly bodies? By a final conflagration, understood in Stoic terms, that will transform *everything* in the cosmos (1 Cor 15:27-28; Rom 8:19-22). Pneuma, in Stoic thought, was composed of fire and air. In the final fiery conflagration, everything would be transformed into *pneuma*. Therefore, “Paul’s idea of the change, and indeed the transformation, of individual bodies of flesh and blood into pneumatic bodies should be understood on the model of the Stoic idea of the transformation of the whole world into (pneuma and) God at the conflagration” (34; see 72).

This conviction had practical consequences for Paul, his hearers, and his readers. For instance, Paul received the *pneuma* as a material presence into his own body: “You can actually feel the pneuma and it makes you see the world entirely differently, as it were from the inside out. Paul’s knowledge of Christ was derived from a physical takeover that could actually be (physically) felt — just as it could also be directly seen in his body here and now (as he claims)” (152). Again, believers received *pneuma* physically through their ears: “when
his addressees, on their side, understood Paul's word as God's word, that is, believed what he said, and, as he says, 'received the word . . . with the joy of the holy pneuma', the idea would be that they had directly, literally, and physically received the pneuma (presumably through the ears) and because of that responded to Paul's word in the way he had hoped” (195). And finally, in prayer believers "drew on God's pneuma, which was present in them, and through that means — to be literally understood as a duct or channel transporting pneuma back and forth — came directly into the presence of God (or Christ) so as to stand 'before' God (1 Thess. 1:3, 3:9) or 'face to face' with Christ” (74). (Space constraints require that I refer readers interested in a more detailed critique of Engberg-Pedersen's book to my "Paul in the Stoa Poecile: A Response to Troels Engberg-Pedersen, Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul: The Material Spirit," Journal for the Study of the New Testament 33.4 (2011): 415-32, to which Engberg-Pedersen has written a response in the same volume, pages 433-43.)

Now to the student, whose ideas are more tame though no less tenacious. Buch-Hansen situates John's gospel in the context of Stoicism, particularly the conception of a "pneumatic transformation/fusion," as it was mediated through the writings of first-century Jewish Alexandrian philosopher cum exegete Philo Judaeus. (In this respect, her method is reminiscent of Hans Leisegang's magisterial Der Heilige Geist: Das Wesen und Werden der mystisch-intuitiven Erkenntnis in der Philosophie und Religion der Griechen, I/1: Die vorchristlichen Anschauungen und Lehren vom ΠΝΕΥΜΑ und der mystisch-intuitiven Erkenntnis [Teubner, 1919], which situates Philo at the nexus of popular Greco-Roman philosophy and Judaism.) She then applies this transformation to four so-called meta-stories in the Fourth Gospel, each of which can best be understood, she suggests, through Stoic physics: (1) the descent of the spirit on Jesus at baptism, which she interprets as his divine generation (1:32); (2) Jesus' embodiment of the spirit; (3) the ascension as the means by which Jesus is united as spirit with God as spirit (4:24; 13:1; 20:17); and (4) the regeneration of believers through an infusion of spirit or a spiritual fusion (in a Stoic sense; see 3:5, 20:22).

Buch-Hansen's study is less about the spirit than about Stoicism and the Fourth Gospel in general. Finding her analysis of the spirit is a bit like rummaging through a closet to find an old sock. It may be there, but it is hard to find. The book begins with lengthy treatments of Anglo and German scholarship on the Fourth Gospel and continues with detailed summaries of Stoic ethics and Stoicism in Philo before arriving at the Fourth Gospel. There is a glut of information, and I wonder whether she may have lost the forest for the trees. For instance, she interprets John 20:20-22, in which a resurrected Jesus inbreathes the disciples, as a regenerative "infusion" of the spirit by one who has, in a Stoic sense, become spirit; yet she does not take into consideration the narrative details of the scene or the allusion to Gen 2:7 — though she refers many times to Gen 2:7 in Philo's writings. How can she treat such a pivotal text, John 20:20-22, so cursorily, especially when she purports to utilize Philo's writings, which refer repeatedly to Gen 2:7, as a hermeneutical key to understanding the spirit in the Fourth Gospel? There is a certain disconnect here, one that characterizes so much of the book, in which long digressions overshadow what the book promises: to offer a Stoic understanding of pneuma (mediated through Philo) in John's gospel.

Although both books deal with Stoicism, they are different from one another. Engberg-Pedersen's is focused upon the spirit, Buch-Hansen's on Stoicism more generally. Engberg-Pedersen's reads, as I said at the start, like a lively seminar, Buch-Hansen's like an exhaustive