Paul and the Emergence of Christian Textuality

Early Christian Literary Culture in Context. Collected Essays, Volume 1

by Margaret M. Mitchell

DESCRIPTION:
The apostle Paul was the inaugurator of early Christian literary culture, not only through the writing of his own letters (ca. 50-62 CE) - which were to become surprisingly influential once collected and published after his death - but also through the successful propagation of a religious logic of mediated epiphanies of Christ, on the one hand, and of "synecdochical hermeneutics" of the gospel narrative about Christ, on the other. He set the precedent that the Christ-believing movements were to be rooted in texts and textual interpretation. Already in his own letters, Paul began a process of ongoing articulation and reinterpretation of the gospel narrative and the various means by which it could be replicated in each new generation and locale. This process was to continue through the letters written in his name, the Acts of the Apostles, and apostolic imitators and expositors in the centuries to come.

These 15 essays by Margaret M. Mitchell are accompanied by an introduction that lays out thirteen propositions for the development of early Christian literary culture from its inception in the astounding claims of Paul, the self-styled "apostolic envoy of Jesus Christ crucified," up through Constantine.