

Through the Eyes of Another: Intercultural Reading of the Bible

Hans de Wit, Louis Jonker, Marleen Kool, Daniel Schipani, editors

This book documents an unprecedented three-year research study centered on the story of the encounter of Jesus with a Samaritan woman. The study involved a unique partnership of committed and creative ordinary readers, expert teachers and other pastoral leaders, and Bible and theology scholars, representing many countries in five continents.

The book starts with a thorough description of the research project together with colorful windows on the actual experience of groups who read the John 4 story and interacted with other readers from very different cultural backgrounds. It continues with several case studies that helpfully focus and deepen those observations, with special attention to contextual and intercontextual dynamics. Then follow critical analyses of various dimensions of the hermeneutical and communication processes involved in the experience. Finally, a number of implications are drawn for practical theology and theological education, hermeneutical practices and studies, and ecumenical and missiological endeavors.

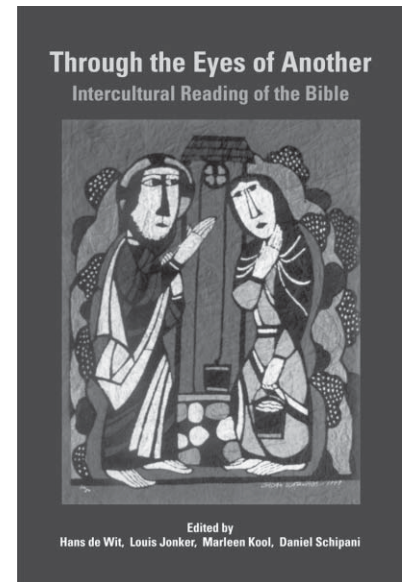
Readers will find in this volume a special testimony to the fascinating nature of intercultural Bible reading and its potential contribution to the life of faith communities and to the work of church agencies and scholars. Far from considering this effort a finished product, the editors present it as an invitation to further reflection, dialogue, and collaboration.

In every respect, the intercultural Bible reading project documented in this volume is a major and praiseworthy achievement. It takes various critical, ecclesial, and theological developments a significant step forward: reader response criticism, with its concern for real readers and their reading sites; basic communities, with their focus on community pairings and sustained interchange; and global Christianity, with its emphasis on intercultural exchange and a worldwide network of readers and groups. All of this by way of a focused discussion on a coordinating text—the encounter of Jesus and the Samaritan woman in John 4. Through the Eyes of Another presents a path-breaking model for future research and reading in intercultural criticism.

*Fernando F. Segovia, Oberlin Alumni
Professor of New Testament and Early
Christianity, Vanderbilt University*

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3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, Indiana 46517-1999
USA

Telephone:
574 296-6239
E-mail:
bngingerich@ambs.edu
Web site:
www.ambs.edu/IMS

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