

ANNALI

di storia dell'esegesi

36/1
2019

MATERIALIST APPROACHES
TO EARLY CHRISTIAN
RESEARCH
EDITED BY
EMILIANO R. URCIUOLI



ANNO XXXVI, N. 1, GENNAIO-GIUGNO 2019
SEMESTRALE – € 37,20

Poste italiane S.p.A. – Spedizione in abbonamento postale
Aut. MBPA/CN/BO/0010/2016 – Periodico ROC

ANNALI di STORIA dell'ESEGESI

Rivista semestrale

Centro Italiano di Studi Superiori delle Religioni

Centro dipartimentale di Scienze delle Religioni (CISEC)

Redazione generale: Direttore: Mauro Pesce. Vice-direttori: Edmondo Lupieri (Loyola University, Chicago) per la sezione nord-americana; Claudio Gianotto (Università di Torino) per la sezione europea; Cristiana Facchini (Università di Bologna) per l'età moderna e contemporanea. Redazione: Adriana Destro (Università di Bologna), Alfredo Damanti (Università di Bologna), Cristiana Facchini (Università di Bologna), Umberto Mazzone (Università di Bologna), Enrico Norelli (Université de Genève), Mara Rescio (University of Regensburg), Emiliano Urciuoli (Max Weber Centre, Erfurt). Miriam Benfatto (Università di Bologna) responsabile per le recensioni.

Redazione nord-americana: Edmondo Lupieri (Loyola University, Chicago), Pier Luigi Piovanelli (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris), Michael Daise (College of William & Mary, Williamsburg), Brian Dennert (Trinity Christian College).

Redazione europea: Claudio Gianotto (Università di Torino), Peter Arzt-Grabner (University of Salzburg), Istvan Czachesz (University of Tromsø), Carlos Gil (Universidad de Deusto, Bilbao), Christina Kreinecker (University of Salzburg), Lautaro R. Lanzillotta (University of Groningen), Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte (University of Amsterdam), Tobias Nicklas (University of Regensburg), Marco Pasi (University of Amsterdam).

Comitato scientifico: P. Arzt-Grabner (Universität Salzburg), D. Balch (Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary), M. Bettini (Università di Siena), Ph. Esler (University of St. Andrews), G. Filoramo (Università di Torino), S. Guijarro (Universidad de Salamanca), S.C. Mimouni (EPHE, Paris), F. Motta (Università di Torino), H. Moxnes (University of Oslo), T. Nicklas (Universität Regensburg), M. Simonetti † (Università di Roma), W. Stegemann (Augustana Hochschule), E. Stegemann (Universität Basel), S. Stowers (Brown University), P. Vassiliadis (University of Thessaloniki).

Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi è classificata nella categoria A dell'ANVUR per l'Area 11 e per l'Area 10 settore A4 e nella categoria A e INT1 dallo ERIH (European Reference Index for the Humanities).

All articles are subject to peer review process.

Articles for submission should be sent to: mauro.pesce@unibo.it

For book-review send books to Mauro Pesce, Viale Aldini 2, 40136 Bologna (Italia).

Le riviste per scambio vanno inviate a: Mauro Pesce, Viale Aldini 2, 40136 Bologna (Italia).

ASE is indexed by: ATLA Religion Database; Année Philologique; Scopus; Australasian Union List of Serials in Theological Collections; Index of Jewish Articles; Index Theologicus (IxTheo); Italian Bibliography of the History of Science; New Testament Abstracts; Old Testament Abstracts.

Direttore responsabile: Alfio Filippi.

Abbonamento annuo (2019): Italia € 64,50 – Italia enti € 81,00 – Europa € 90,50 – Resto del mondo € 95,50 – Una copia € 37,20.

Versamento sul c.c.p. 264408 intestato al Centro editoriale dehoniano - Bologna.

Editore: © Centro editoriale dehoniano srl – via Scipione Dal Ferro, 4 – 40138 Bologna.

Redazione: viale Antonio Aldini, 2 – 40136 Bologna.

Anno XXXVI – n. 1 – gennaio-giugno 2019.

Amministrazione Tel. +39.051.3941255, Fax +39.051.3941299;

e Ufficio abbonamenti: e-mail: ufficio.abbonamenti@dehoniane.it

Registrazione del Tribunale di Bologna n. 5825 del 24.01.1990.

ISSN 1120-4001 ISBN 978-88-10-13015-5 *Stampa:* Mediagraf Spa, Noventa Padovana (PD) 2019

Contents

Presentation/Presentazione	7
---	---

In Memoria di Tullio Gregory (28 gennaio 1929 - 2 marzo 2019)	11
--	----

Materialist Approaches to Early Christian Research

Emiliano Rubens Urciuoli, <i>The Continuum of History Blasted Open: A Case for a Materialist Approach to Early Christian Research</i>	13
---	----

The article engages extensively with the question as to why a materialist approach is highly beneficial to early Christian research. At the same time, it deploys a personal understanding of what a materialist approach might mean by setting out an eclectic materialist agenda that blends together different strands of materialisms often considered at odds with each other. In doing this, the paper foregrounds the perspectives carried out by the five articles contained in this monographic issue and aims to show that, their specific hermeneutics notwithstanding, they all belong to a materialist interpretive tradition writ large.

Keywords: Early Christ religion, Materialisms, Ideology and Discourse, Walter Benjamin, Pierre Bourdieu.

James Crossley, <i>Class Conflict in Galilee and the Gospel Tradition: A Materialist Suggestion</i>	39
---	----

This paper will begin by looking at the use, fear, and displacement of categories relating to 'class' in scholarship in the history on the Gospel tradition and Christian origins more generally. It will then move on to propose ways in which 'class' (and related categories) can be employed in the reading of ancient texts and historical reconstructions from agrarian settings. It will especially look notions of perception in light of material change, including urbanisation projects, and how such 'moments' open up a range of reactions (whether reactionary, conservative, utopian), including the possibilities of critiquing pre-existing relations of exploitation. Particular attention will be paid to Antipas' Galilee and the Gospel tradition.

Keywords: Galilee, Class Conflict, Christian Origins, Gospels, Agrarian cultures.

Christina Petterson and Roland Boer, <i>Those Feet in Ancient Times: From Slave to Land (via Allegory)</i>	55
--	----

This article looks at the relation between allegory and land in the Gospel of Mark in an attempt to understand Mark as a product of class struggle, and as such carries the seeds to socio-

economic change. We propose that Mark should be seen as form of responsive metaphorization in which the text responds in complex and mediated ways to a multilayered situation: while Paul's message was based on a narrative of Jesus's death and resurrection, and pushed for a form of Christianity that could appeal across peoples, places, and times (made possible by slave labour), the gospels, beginning with Mark, seek to locate Jesus in a particular place and time. We thus see Mark as an allegorical narrative constructed when the process of indenture was well under way, leading to the colonate.

Keywords: Gospel of Mark, Paul's Letters, Socio-economic change, Slavery, Allegory and location.

Sarah E. Rollens, <i>The Viability of Materialist Approaches to Persecution: Revelation as a Test Case</i>	75
--	----

This essay explores the tension that emerges when scholars try to posit discrete circumstances (e.g., a specific imperial policy against Christian or a regional situation such as a pogrom) to make sense of authors who claim to be undergoing persecution. Using the Book of Revelation as a case study, it will examine how scholars can take seriously the socio-economic and political conditions of an author and still engage in a critical analysis of their rhetoric of persecution, without assuming that the latter accurately describe the former.

Keywords: Persecution, Book of Revelation, Authors' social conditions, Roman Empire and Christianity, Rhetoric and narrative.

Daniel Ullucci, <i>The Anonymity of the Gospels κατά Pac-Man</i>	95
--	----

This paper reassesses the anonymity of the New Testament gospels by considering different ways in which creators are or are not directly associated with their products in different arenas of cultural production. It stresses that the audience, not the author, determines the extent of the connection between an author and a text. This challenges predominant models of anonymity which assume that the gospels were intentionally written anonymously to stress the message over the messenger. Reconsidering the role of consumers in preserving or not preserving the names of authors forces a reconsideration of the role of texts in earliest Christian groups. The paper supports a growing trend of seeing textual producers and users as a minority in early Christian groups, thus rejecting the long-held assumption that Christianity was, from its beginning, a "religion of the book."

Keywords: Anonymity, Gospels, New Testament, Text production, Relation between author and text.

Roberto Alciati, " <i>God Is Never Anything Other Than Society</i> ": <i>A Materialist Interpretation of Tertullian's Theodicy in De Praescriptione Haereticorum</i>	117
--	-----

According to Pierre Bourdieu, theodicy is always sociodicy, that is, theodicy functions as an important rhetorical device which does not deal with an eschatological compensation for present suffering but rather with the justification of God and its creation. In this sense, the religious dimension of the problem of evil is replaced by three other aspects that characterize the sense of theodicy (and sociodicy): (1) every form of the sacred has its profane complement; (2) the question of the origin of evil becomes a questioning of the meaning of human existence only in the privileged classes; (3) people who ask this question are interested in a justification for existing in a determinate social position and existing as they exist. Aim of this paper is to profitably apply this Bourdieu-oriented understanding of theodicy to Tertullian's treatise *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*.

Keywords: Tertullian, Pierre Bourdieu, Theodicy, Sociodicy, Heresy.

History of Biblical Interpretation

Lorenzo Perrone, <i>Origen's Interpretation of the Psalter Revisited: The Nine Homilies on Psalm 77(78) in the Munich Codex</i>	139
---	-----

The nine sermons on Ps 77(78) constitute the largest series in the newly discovered twenty-nine *Homilies on the Psalms* by Origen. Though the preaching at first sight betrays the ambiance of the school with the interaction resulting between the teacher and his pupils as regards the interpretation of Scripture, it addresses properly an ecclesiastical community around the middle of the 3rd century C.E. The homilies then deal with some of the typical problems for that period as the conflicting relations between 'orthodoxy' and 'heresy,' Christianity and Judaism, or the penitential discipline. If we analyse the performance of the preacher, we observe the astonishing polyphony and rhythmic fluidity that characterizes his exegesis. Contrary to the impression often determined by the fragmentary evidence of the *catenae*, Origen exploits the exegetical units of the biblical lemmas in a way able to create a symphonic movement of interpretation. While the historical narrative of Ps 77(78) mostly does not raise problems at the level of the letter, we observe a constant concern for elucidating its deeper meaning and procure a spiritual profit for the community. In creative fidelity to the original intent of the Psalmist, the most frequent way consists in regarding the vicissitudes of the elect people in its relation to God as a term of comparison for the actual life of the faithful. By polemically responding first of all to the Marcionites, Origen again and again extracts from the psalm the idea of the goodness of God, both in creation and in the history of redemption, while stressing the overall providential nature of his 'economy' towards men.

Keywords: Origen, Homilies, Psalter, Hermeneutics.

Dan Batovici, <i>Commenting on 1 Pt 4:7–11: A Case Study in Patristic Reception</i>	163
---	-----

This contribution is a study of the patristic exegesis of 1 Peter 4:7–11, which focuses on the treatment received by this pericope specifically in exegetical works devoted to the Petrine letter in order (1) to take steps in clarifying the history of the interpretation of 1 Peter and (2) to raise a number of questions with regard to the process of writing exegetical treatises in Late Antiquity.

Keywords: 1 Peter 4, Catholic Epistles, Reception History, Patristic Commentaries, Novum Testamentum Patristicum.

Esteban L. Noce, <i>Gentilitas y paganismus en los sermones de Máximo de Turín: reconsideración de una sinonimia infundada</i>	175
--	-----

By reading the *Sermons* of Maximus of Turin (...398...423) it has been traditionally argued that the fight against a still very lively "paganism" was one of the main concerns of his episcopate. Analysis of sermon XLVIII will allow us to meet the double aim of this paper: on the one hand, to refute this statement, showing that it is based on the acceptance of an unfounded synonymy between the terms *gentilis-gentilitas* and *paganus-paganismus*. On the other hand, to demonstrate that Maximus referred with each of those terms to two entities which were not only different, but also opposed in their fundamental characteristics.

Keywords: Maximus of Turin, Sermons, Episcopate, *paganismus*, *gentilitas*.

Michał Wojciechowski, <i>Exegetical Method in Oecumenius' Commentary on Revelation</i>	205
--	-----

Oecumenius (*Oikoumenios*), who wrote a commentary on the Revelation of John, was possibly a lay Greek scholar from the sixth century C.E., known from Severus' letters. It is the oldest preserved Greek commentary on Revelation, even if based on earlier traditions. The methods of Oecumenius, in spite of his mistakes, seem near to the modern scholarly approach, because he looked for the intended, correct meanings of images from the text. He explained some of them in their historical context and he considered the composition of the book. He avoided an earlier tendency to read the Revelation in a literal way. He did not reduce it to eschatological prophecy. On the other hand, he avoided excessive spiritual allegorizing, because he looked for the intended symbolic sense, realizing what was the literary genre of the book. He studied the theology of the book, stressing its orthodox Christology.

Keywords: Oecumenius, Ecumenius, Revelation of John, patristic commentaries, exegetical method.

Leo Peppe, <i>Recent Legal Studies on Paul's Roman Trial</i>	217
---	-----

The article takes into consideration some recent studies on Paul's trial from the point of view of the history of Roman Law. In particular the author examines Anna Maria Mandas's book, *Il processo contro Paolo di Tarso. Una lettura giuridica degli Atti degli Apostoli (21:27 - 28:31)*, in which the narrative of Acts is confronted with contemporary procedures of Roman Law.

Keywords: Paul's Trial, Roman Trial, Acts of Apostles, Roman Citizenship.

Isabella Adinolfi, <i>La gloria nelle Pensées di Blaise Pascal</i>	231
---	-----

Blaise Pascal sees the quest for *grandeur* and *gloire* as rooted in the most intimate essence of human beings. The examination of Pascal's idea of glory is therefore a way to penetrate into the heart of his complex religious anthropology.

Keywords: Blaise Pascal, Religious Anthropology, Glory, God, Human being.

Judaism in Modern Italy

Cristiana Facchini, <i>The Making of Wissenschaft des Judentums in Italy. Judaism and the Bible between Risorgimento and Fascism</i>	245
--	-----

This article argues that, while adhering to a chronological pattern that highlights the several distinctive features of the Italian *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, scholarly practices of the study of Jewish culture in Italy were also influenced and challenged by intellectual traditions that aimed at offering alternative religious identities as well as coherent worldviews, like socialism, nationalism, and communism, amid the backdrop of the conflict between Church and state. Even state-controlled institutions like universities, eager to offer positions to Jews as scholars of Judaism, would pursue topics of research that might reflect the wider cultural and religious debates of the time. Therefore, in order to appreciate the achievements of the Italian *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, the analysis of its authors and their works should be evaluated in relation to the broader network of scholars, but also in terms of an ongoing reciprocal relationship with local and national cultures.

Keywords: *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, National culture, Jews in Italy, Catholic Church, Church and State.

Book Reviews	267
---------------------------	-----

Books Received or Signaled	293
---	-----

Christina Petterson and Roland Boer

Those Feet in Ancient Times: From Slave to Land (via Allegory)

In his poem *Jerusalem* from which our title is taken, William Blake presents us with an allegorical vision of Jesus walking the green hills of England as a contrast to the “dark satanic mills” of industrialization. In *Jerusalem*, then, there is a connection between Jesus, allegory, and socio-economic change, which is connected to our main argument in the present article, namely that the gospel tradition was part of a larger movement from an economy based on slave labour to one based on land through allegorization.

Such an argument not only historicizes allegory in a particular socio-economic context, it also attempts to bolster Fredric Jameson’s claim to allegory as a properly historical materialist interpretation. In his formidable book, *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson develops a Marxist strategy of reading ultimately based on the patristic and medieval system of allegorical interpretation and four levels of scripture—a technique he appropriated from literary critic and Blake scholar Northrop Frye. Jameson’s strategy intends on bringing out the political unconscious of the texts in question, be they overtly political or not. In his preface, he characterizes *The Political Unconscious* as embodying an *interpretative approach*, i.e. how we read the texts, rather than foregrounding the texts’ “objective structures,” i.e. the context-specific and historical limits of the text in question.¹ To biblical scholars, and others familiar with the debates of allegory, this is akin to the question of the difference between performing an allegorical reading of a non-allegorical text, e.g. Homer,² or dealing with a written allegory, such as Prudentius’ *Psychomachia*.³

¹ Jameson 1981, ix.

² Lamberton 1989.

³ Verdoner 2006.

In our recent book on a new economic framework for early Christianity,⁴ Roland Boer and I argued that allegory was one of the means by which Christianity anticipated the profound socio-economic shift from labour to land as the primary focus. In the book, we suggested that the interweaving between allegory, pilgrimage and canonisation was the way in which Christianity anticipated this shift, and we claimed that the threads to this development in the late third century were already present in earlier material. Examining one of the threads is the task of the present article, which looks at the relation between allegory and land in the *Gospel of Mark*. In order to set the scene for our reading of Mark, we first briefly summarise our main argument, then move on to a discussion of allegory primarily through scholarship on Paul and Philo.

I. TIME OF TROUBLES

In *Time of Troubles*, we argued that early Christianity functioned as a mode of *régulation* which largely followed in the wake of, and provided ideological justifications for, both the colonial and slave regimes.⁵ The colonial regime was based on a primary distinction between *polis* and *chōra*, which the Romans inherited from the earlier Greek occupation of the Near East. In a colonial situation, the *polis* became the form of colonial presence while the *chōra* designated the rural land dominated and exploited by the *polis*. Side by side was the slave regime in other parts of the empire, predicated on the central economic and social role of slavery. Relating to the colonial regime, we argued that early Christianity should be understood as a *polis*-based movement, and as such, its textual products saw the *chōra* through *polis* eyes. In terms of slaves, we identified a tension within the early movement between a drive towards equality, as expressed in Galatians 3:28 and the reality of slaves as enabling the spread of the early movement. We argued that Paul—the man who breathed the *polis* and who owned slaves as a matter of course in the context of the Christian *koinōnia*—was precisely the one who saw this contradiction and provided an attempted resolution at an ideological level:⁶ the slave metaphor for the Christian life, a metaphor

⁴ Boer and Petterson 2017.

⁵ By mode of *régulation* we mean the various cultural assumptions, social norms and networks, institutions, patterns of conduct, and belief systems that enable and condition the stability of specific regimes. However, because mode of *régulation* provides stability, it also attempts to deal with challenges to a given regime, and thus incorporates the tensions of impending change or challenge. Thus, unwittingly, it anticipates the shape of a new order, and thus anticipates this change at ideological and organizational levels.

⁶ Paul as slaveowner is inferred from: 1. the *Letter to Philemon* which in Ulrike Roth's interpretation suggests Paul as co-owner of Onesimos (see Roth 2014; 2016); 2. the depiction of Paul as slaveowner in Acts, where Paul has power over the body of Timothy (Acts 16:3), and

that took on a life of its own in the subsequent Gospels and then in the very structure of Christian teaching and practice afterwards.

In the late third century, the colonial and slave regimes were superseded by the land regime. This regime entailed a seismic shift from labour to land, in which all people were tied to a particular location (*origo*), whether estate or village. While strands may be detected centuries earlier, as we will see, its first explicit identification appeared with Diocletian's decree of the late third century C.E., only to be enthusiastically enforced by Constantine. It would lay the groundwork for European feudalism. In this case, Christianity took on a somewhat different role. Here its role was more anticipatory, providing the means in practice and belief for the fundamental shift from labor to land. To argue this point, we look at the Gospel of Mark as embodying the seeds to the transition from slave to land. This takes place by understanding Mark as an allegorical narrative of Pauline Christianity that focuses more decidedly on land. This argument also entails denying that Mark is the closest historical source to the rural context of Jesus' ministry—indeed, we see all the gospels as products of the *polis* and its urban outlook. In the following, we take a look at the question of land, first in Paul, then via Philo in Mark. Through this we aim to show that while the land plays no role in Paul, it does however play a role in Mark as the allegorical vehicle.

II. PAUL

Paul, who as we said was an ideologue of his times, was however not particularly interested in land, be it Roman Palestine, Corinth, or Galatia. In 1 Corinthians 15:3–8, for example, Paul narrates the transmission of the resurrection of Jesus as follows:

For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to someone untimely born, he appeared also to me.⁷

lives off the labour of Timothy and Silas in Acts 18:1–5 after commanding them to join him in Acts 17:15 (see Petterson 2012, 86); 3. the presence of slaves in the early church as testified in the letters, which was crucial to the correspondence networks of the early church (see Boer and Petterson 2016, 172–74, building upon Roth's work).

⁷ Quotations are taken from the NRSV and modified.

As William D. Davies points out, these occurrences are “not geographically located” in Galilee, Jerusalem, or Damascus. As they stand, they constitute a “series of occurrences, unique in character, unrepeatable, and confined to a limited period,” but *not* fixed in geographical locations.⁸ Another example, and of great interest for us, is the allegory of Hagar and Sarah from Galatians 4:21–31.

Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a slave woman, the other by a free woman. But he *who was* of the slave woman was born according to the flesh, and he of the free woman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written:

“Rejoice, O barren,
You who do not bear!
Break forth and shout,
You who are not in labor!
For the desolate has many more children
Than she who has a husband.”

Now we, brethren, as Isaac *was*, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him *who was born* according to the Spirit, even so *it is* now. Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.” So then, brethren, we are not children of the slave woman but of the free.

This text is Paul’s reinterpretation of Genesis 16 and 21, and his scriptural basis for the argument against the Galatian community of converts. Here Paul contrasts the two sons of Abraham as being born through flesh and through promise, and through their mothers and the two covenants, ultimately connecting this with Jerusalem now and Jerusalem above. However, we should take note of the emphasis on slave and free in this allegory, which is the overriding concern and into which the two Jerusalems are fitted. The point of the allegorical reading of Sarah and Hagar and the etymological reading of Hagar is to argue that the ethnic Jewish identity and its centrepiece (Jerusalem now) is connected with slavery, whereas the Christ-believers are the true inheritors of the promise to Abraham, and thus free.⁹ If indeed, as we will ponder in this article, Paul and Mark all make use of a similar allegorical approach, the

⁸ Davies 1964, 166. Wilken nevertheless calmly assumes that Paul is referring to Jerusalem because it was an *intractable fact* that “the chief events of Christ’s life had taken place in the city.” Wilken 1992, 62–63.

⁹ This is a condensed summary of the argument in Tronier 2001a. For Galatians and allegory, but with an emphasis on Jewish identity, see Boyarin 1994.

difference lies in the *vehicles* of the allegory, which for Paul is slavery and for Mark is land.

The common approach to which we refer is an allegorical method from the first century which retains the historical referent or vehicle while adding a symbolic level to its meaning, namely that of Philo of Alexandria—who incidentally was also very interested in the land. Such an approach, which sees the historical referent as firmly tied to the allegorical interpretation is naturally of great interest to any materialist understanding of ancient material. This particular approach to Philo is taken from Henrik Tronier’s work,¹⁰ whose reading of Mark we return to below.

1. *Philo*

Based on his analysis of the allegorical commentaries of Gen 12:4–6 (*De Migratione Abraham*) and Gen 15:2–8 (*Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres*) Tronier argues that a basic feature of Philo’s allegorical method is “that he maintains the literal, historical truth character” of the stories from the Hebrew Bible.¹¹ This is primarily due to the Platonic rationality inherent in the metaphysics of Philo, in that his system is “a unified system of dualities” of epistemological, ontological, and anthropological kind. The epistemological duality is between sense perception and noetic comprehension, with corresponding ontological objects: those that are grasped through the senses, and those that are grasped through the noetic vision. These are related to the anthropological duality of body and soul as that instrument which grasps these ontological levels.¹²

These three levels are connected through the *logos*, as that which constitutes the unity of the created order, as well as that which effects the epistemological transformation of Moses’ *nous*, which enabled him to comprehend the allegorical meaning of Abraham’s migration—a migration which itself was set in motion by the transformation of his *nous*.¹³ We thus have several interconnected levels here: first, the historical level of Abraham, who underwent an epistemological transformation, then the narrative level of Moses’ account, who saw Abraham’s epistemological transformation as a result of his own epistemological transformation and thus is able to record the former in his (Moses’) text.

In this way Philo anchors his postulate of two levels of meaning—the literal and the allegorical one—to be found in the historical facts of

¹⁰ For an English-speaking audience we refer to Tronier 2006. For English material which makes use of Tronier’s understanding of Philo, see Petterson 2015 and Nordgaard Svendsen 2009.

¹¹ Tronier 2006, 11.

¹² *Ibidem*, 13.

¹³ *Ibidem*, 14.

Abraham's migration no less than in Moses's account of them in a thoroughly Platonic world-view. The literal meaning corresponds to sense-perception, to the visible, particular objects of sense-perception and to the body. The allegorical meaning, by contrast, corresponds to the noetic vision, to the intelligible, invisible world and to the rational part of the soul, *nous*.¹⁴

This has important implications for the understanding of the historical or concrete level of the allegory, to which we—in our compartmentalizing, modern and idealist way of thinking—cannot immediately resort. Because of the activity of the logos as the provenance of these various levels, Abraham's actions are the visible action of the logos:

The consequence of this is that by this constructive application of Platonic dualities, Philo achieves a rational, hermeneutical basis for claiming that the *universal*, transcendent world of God's logos (ontology) and the perfected, transcendent vision and knowledge of the world (epistemological and anthropology) are historically stamped *only* in the particular, historical, visible, bodily actions and words of those elect men of wisdom in Israel's past.¹⁵

The historical level is thus the concrete expression of the universal, the logos' revelation in the concrete as that which points the way to the revelation of the universal. There is thus a firm and inseparable connection between the two levels of the allegory, both indispensable because they both are part of the same created order.

But there is more. Through his migration, Abraham left his family of blood to create a new people, according to the promise of God. The Chaldeans, who were left behind, were both and simultaneously a family of blood and an epistemologically-anthropologically deficient kinship, which is why Abraham had to leave them and create a new people founded on mutual transcendent apprehension:

Who belongs to the new people elected by God and founded by Abraham? The answer is given at the end of *Quis Heres*: it is the wise man who has himself received God's sophia and has been transformed by the diaretical activity of God's logos, that is, the allegorical readers of scripture themselves, people who like Philo himself will recognise that the allegorical meaning of a text that tells about Abraham's (and Moses's) historical migration(s) is themselves since *they* are precisely defined by having activated the transcendent epistemological nature given by God's logos and by their capacity to apprehend the whole Platonic system of dualities from which began in the form in which Philo finds it in Scripture.¹⁶

The diaretical activity of God's logos is the self-unfolding and self-dividing of the logos into particular phenomena and concepts. This

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, emphases in original.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, 16, emphasis in original.

means that the *logos* is ontologically embedded in every particular phenomenon, and the hermeneutical activity is thus to discern, through the noetic vision, the rational structures of objective reality through and in the particular phenomena. The noetic vision is enabled by the cognitive transformation of the *logos*.¹⁷

The new people, then, is a community of cognitively transformed readers who can *recognise* the allegorical meaning of the text, because their epistemological ability has been generated by the self-same activity which has eventuated the concrete doings in history and transmitted them through the text. The two levels with which we began this article (allegory in text or allegorical reading of text) has thus been collapsed into one level, where the reader's *nous* is at one with the epistemological level of the text. These readers presumably constitute Philo's Jewish community in Alexandria, a point which is important for Tronier, as we will see later. For us, here, the importance lies in the sophisticated and highly complex nature of Philo's allegorical hermeneutics and the role of the concrete/historical within, which seems to have been dismissed, or underappreciated by some of his harshest critics.¹⁸ We now turn to the main text under actual examination in this article, the Gospel of Mark.

III. MARK

In his reading of the Gospel of Mark, Fernando Belo attempts to capture the "messianic narrative" as the throbbing materialist vein of class struggle in Mark, which has been domesticated by the "theological discourse" also present in Mark and favoured by exegesis. This is, thus Belo, "the rationalist expulsion of the miraculous from 'history,'" which dominates any messianic narrative present in the gospels.¹⁹ What he thus performs with his dual reading is (in our words) showing a typologizing of the divine event, or messianic narrative, while attempting to recover the messianic narrative for contemporary readers.

While we are greatly sympathetic to such an endeavour, and find much of value in his reading,²⁰ our approach is different. While Belo is focusing on class struggle within Mark, we are in the following focusing on Mark as a *product* of class struggle.

¹⁷ See also Petterson 2015.

¹⁸ Such as, e.g., Williamson 1970. Less harsh, but a good example of the compartmentalizing reading of Philo is Hanson 1959.

¹⁹ Belo 1981 (1974), 239–40.

²⁰ See for example the magnificently indignant outburst where Belo notes the bourgeois intelligentsia's proclivity for focusing on "infrastructural violence" as a way of distracting attention from class struggle (Belo 1981 [1974], 311 footnote 87). Such a comment is as relevant today as ever.

The decision to choose Mark over against Matthew or Luke is based on the scholarly assumption that Mark is the earliest gospel, and the one who most consistently displays Jesus in his original rural environment.²¹ This is not to say that we agree with the accuracy of this representation, in fact, we spend some time in *Time of Troubles* arguing against the rural organicism of Mark, and indeed any other gospel. Our argument is that the gospels present a *polis* outlook on the hinterland of the urban centers, an argument we base on—among other things—the slaveholder perspective so dominant in the texts. Nevertheless, land is important in Mark, but, as scholars have long agreed, Mark’s use of landscape and regions is symbolic rather than geographical, as evidenced, for example, by the well-known theological opposition between Galilee and Jerusalem, as well as by the wild and untamed nature of the *chōra*. We would like to take this a bit further, and, returning to Tronier, read Mark as an allegory and show what this means for the relation to the land in the narrative.

1. Mark as Allegory of Paul

In a nutshell, Tronier’s argument is that Mark is an allegorical biographization of Pauline Christology, which Tronier sees as an adaptation of Philo’s allegorical theory of knowledge.²² The Christ-figure in Paul’s letters thus becomes the medium through which traditional values are turned on their heads, and thus the early Christian communities are interpretative communities who subscribe to this inversion of cultural and social values.²³ Mark, then, is to be seen in extension of this process, and the agenda of Mark, as Tronier following many others sees it, is to continue in overturning Judaism’s ethnic markers and socio-cultural hierarchies:

What Mark does more concretely at the very highest compositional level of the gospel, is to stretch out the Christ-figure’s cosmic movement between heaven and earth in Paul, narratively, in the landscape as a horizontal, geographical movement between periphery (Galilee and surroundings) and centre (Jerusalem). He does this with the same cognitive point as Paul: Christologically speaking, the main point in both Paul and Mark is the link between glory/authority and cross, held together through the movement of the Christ-figure; in Paul cosmic-vertically, in Mark geographically-biographically horizontal. And in both this movement is linked to the reinterpretation of the values

²¹ Cadwallader forthcoming; Collins 2007; Marcus 1992.

²² Tronier 2001b; 2002; 2004.

²³ Interestingly, as Robin Hock has argued in relation to Paul, that while Paul had a view of menial labor appropriate to the upper classes, he worked to indicate loss of status, thus inverting social norms. See Hock 1978.

inherent in the status-hierarchies, including, and especially, the ethnic status-hierarchy.²⁴

Mark and Paul thus share a belief-system and both desire to dissolve the distinction between clean and unclean, thus including gentiles into their understandings of salvation. They both express these beliefs allegorically, with the keys given to the reader in Galatians 4:21–31 (Sarah and Hagar) and in Mark 4:10–20 (the parable of the sower). Their difference lies in the settings and forms in which they present their allegories. Paul develops his allegory vertically in relation to earthly and heavenly Jerusalems, while Mark stretches his allegory out onto the landscape of Roman Palestine, between Galilee and Jerusalem. Indeed, in his discussion of allegorical understandings of the parables over against a non-allegorical understanding, C.H. Dodd draws attention to this passage in Mark 4:11–12: “And he said to them, ‘To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; in order that they may indeed look, but not perceive, and may indeed listen, but not understand; so that they may not turn again and be forgiven.’” Dodd interprets this saying as very unlike the other sayings of Jesus, for it uses a terminology which is much closer to that of Paul and suggests that the differences create the presumption that we are dealing with a piece of apostolic teaching rather than the words of Jesus.²⁵ If we turn this on its head, and see Mark as unfolding Paul’s allegory, then the issue does not have to be one of interpolation.

Mark 4:11–12 is, perhaps unsurprisingly, the key in Tronier’s interpretation of Mark, in that this is where Mark reflects its “hermeneutics of reading” and tells its readers how it is to be understood: “Here [Mark 4] Jesus is presented as speaking both in and about parables.”²⁶ Situating this key in the middle of the chapters which most explicitly address the gospel’s rejection of traditional borderlines between clean and unclean, Tronier argues that this is where we see that Mark’s use of land and landscape serves an explicitly allegorical function and intends to present allegorical reading as the new ethnic criterion. The “everything” (*ta panta*) in 4:11 refers not only to spoken parables, but Jesus’s actions, that is, all events in the gospel. This theory of parables in chapter 4 presents four points:

1. Mark’s account of Jesus-events has two levels of meaning: an empirical level, which is accessible for all through seeing and hearing, and a hidden level only accessible to the elect, i.e. the reader.

²⁴ Tronier 2004, 244–45, translation Petterson.

²⁵ Dodd 1961, 13–15.

²⁶ Tronier 2006, 24.

2. This relationship is a continuous set of complementary symbolic relations as it presented in the relation between the parable in 4:4–9 and its interpretation in 4:13–20.
3. The function is the constitution of allegorical competence in relation to the text of Mark as the new criterion for inclusion.
4. Finally, the readers are to see themselves as part of this allegorical process, in that they—and their hermeneutics, self-understanding, and practice, constitute the allegorical meaning of the text, in that this is where the meaning is realized (both cognitively and as in “made real”).²⁷

What we need from this interpretation is the following. If Mark is using a structurally similar method for producing his Jesus narrative to that of Philo, and uses the land as the concrete level of understanding, then what does this mean for the role of land, if, in Philo, the historical level is a fundamental part of the allegory? Tronier does not address this question, because he is interested in the epistemological transformation generated by the text, and its significance for the community of Mark. Nevertheless, the land is important in his conceptualization of Mark’s allegorical method, to which we now turn.

2. *Travelling the New Testament*²⁸

In an unpublished meditation on the relationship between pilgrim-esque travelling in the landscape of Palestine and the rationality of literary and post-structural biblical scholarship, Tronier argues that one should use the initial contradiction between narrative a-historicity and the reality of the Holy Land as point of departure for further reflection upon the relationship between pilgrimage and literary analysis of the New Testament texts. In such a move, thus Tronier, the insights gained from literary and narrative analysis of the texts can cast light on the pilgrimage, if only one suspends the usual obsession with the relationship between figures of the text, episodes, places, and sites of pilgrimage and rather

inquires into the relationship between the perceptual interest and process which undergirds the tradition’s constant pinpointing of sites of pilgrimage in the landscape, on the one hand, and the process of the gospel’s construction of the narrative of Jesus as a journey in the landscape, on the other. It is in this perspective that a cognitive yield appears. For we realize that, cognitively speaking, it is the same that happens in these two places: the ongoing localization of sites of pil-

²⁷ *Ibidem*, 32–33.

²⁸ The foundations for this interpretation of Mark are to be found in the summer of 1998, where Tronier was one of the participating staff-members travelling with a group of 40 postgraduate students from the Faculty of Theology in Copenhagen on a three-week trip to the Middle East (Syria, Jordan, and Palestine/Israel).

grimage is a continuation of the process which led to, and is ongoing in, the gospels' construction of the narrative about Jesus.²⁹

By seeing the construction of the "Holy Land" and its pilgrimage sites as an extension of the formation of the gospel narrative, Tronier has resolved the contradiction between a narrative approach's historical disinclination and the actual reality of the Christian Holy Land: they both become narrativized. While this is an excellent point, the question still remains: why this focus on the land as a way of mediating the message about Jesus? Why the shift from Paul to Mark? We would like to consider the socio-economic shifts as a fundamental reason for this shift. In presenting such a consideration, we are underway in the move from the New Testament text of Mark to discussing the shift to the land regime as that which explains the shift in focus to land, but we still have more to say on Mark.³⁰

We propose that Mark should be seen as form of responsive metaphorization in which the text responds in complex and mediated ways to a multilayered situation: it emerges from the period after the Roman legions of Vespasian and Titus carved a bloody path, with the customary Roman practice of widespread terror, through the troublesome region; it constructs its narrative when the process of indenture was well under way, leading to the colonate; the founder of the movement came from a context, the *chōra*, where it did not take root.³¹

This response has two pertinent features. First, the depictions of the countryside features representations of the laborers who at the time of writing were negotiating the process of indenture; the primary contradiction is between *polis* and *chōra*, which is presented in a cosmological framework. To begin with, Mark's gospel is replete with signals of rural laborers, so much so that land, labor, and economic contentions form the background of many key episodes. Obviously, tenants appear, as do the various tasks peasants would undertake, such as sowing, harvesting, cultivating longer yield trees, and fishing (Mark 1:16–20; 4:3–9, 26–29; 12:1–11; 13:28–31). Second, and more importantly, the many "possessed," "unclean," "diseased," and "deformed" of the miracle stories (1:23–34, 40–45; 2:1–12; 3:1–6, 11; 4:1–20; 5:21–43; 6:56; 7:24–36; 8:22–26; 9:14–29, 38–40; 10:46–52) function not so much as echoes of the tough realities of life where disease and hard, repetitive labor reshaped bodies, but as *polis*-based perceptions of the working rural population. Throughout Greek and Roman literature, peasants appear as misshapen, ugly, and unlucky, in contrast to the properly formed

²⁹ Tronier 1998, 15–16, translation Petterson.

³⁰ Sections of this are taken and reworked from our recent book, *Time of Troubles* (2017), chapter 6.

³¹ Moreland 2004.

(*kairos*), beautiful, and lucky dwellers of the *poleis*.³² This is not to say that Mark offers a ruling class perspective *per se*, but that the ideological framework of representation is one informed by the *polis*. This perspective appears in the way the “disabled” become “abled” and functional through the healing stories.³³ In the background are continuous allusions to Roman presence and control (Mark 6:14–29; 12:13–17; 15:1–25),³⁴ especially in light of the fact that the Gospel was written at a time when the colonate was well underway to becoming the overarching determinant of rural life.

IV. THE LAND REGIME

One of the favored topics for Marxist historians is the transition from feudalism to capitalism. This is not only because it follows a historical trajectory of modes of production outlined by Marx and Engels in *German Ideology*, but also because capitalism was the mode of production unfolding during Marx’s lifetime, and one which he watched unfurl with a mixture of horror and fascination. There have been analyses of earlier modes of production, and the transitions between them, but what we want to do in the present article is to illuminate the role of early Christianity in a number of microshifts which eventually will become the transition from the Ancient mode of production to Feudalism. More accurately, we are interested in the shifts from what we call the Slave Regime to what we call the Land Regime. However, the links between the transition from the Ancient mode of production to Feudalism, and the one from Feudalism to Capitalism are interesting here, if we consider the links between explorations and colonisation from the fifteenth century and onwards as analogous to early Christian movements to land. Or, put differently, what was it about early Christianity’s focus on land, which made it so useful for the conquests of early modernity?

To repeat our main point: we propose that the possibility of focusing on the land where Jesus trod was enabled by the process of allegorizing. More sharply, the universal and transcendent features of Christianity enabled the distinct fixation of place, land, and earthly reality that characterized the period of the establishment of the land regime. This

³² Here the Platonic search for the true, good, and beautiful must be located, for these philosophical and moral categories were redolent with class assumptions. See further, Ste. Croix 2006, 338–39; Ste. Croix 1972, 371–76.

³³ Indeed, in the very effort to reveal the transformative power of Jesus, Mark unwittingly gives voice to such a perspective. We draw here on some disability studies that highlight the normative role of the abled body. Toensing 2007, 140–41; Mitchell and Snyder 2007, 178–83. For a broader overview, see Garland 1995.

³⁴ See further Myers 1988; Cadwallader 2007; Cadwallader forthcoming.

process, however, is also connected with the appropriate selection of texts which could be used for such purpose. There are thus three significant and intimately related developments indicate the anticipatory role of Christianity: the allegorical interpretation of the Bible (especially as a way of including the Hebrew Scriptures as the Old Testament), the selection of the appropriate texts to interpret (canonization),³⁵ and the growth of pilgrimages to the “Holy Land.” It should be stressed that these three features were not suddenly invented sometime in the third or fourth century C.E., but that their threads may already be espied from earlier centuries. By the time Constantine gained power in the 312 C.E., these threads had coalesced in way that made his project of turning Palestine into a veritable biblical theme park seem perfectly normal. In the concluding pages, we will zoom in on the coalescence of allegorization and pilgrimage.

*1. “And Did Those Feet in Ancient Times”:
Allegory and Pilgrimage*

We are, in other words, giving an alternative interpretation of the passage from the “Jesus movement” to the church, from Galilee to Rome, from an anti-imperial movement to one that was quite at home with the emperor himself. This interpretation also addresses the question of “holy places” and pilgrimage, in response to Robert Markus’

³⁵ The canonical Gospels themselves, mediated through the eyes of the *polis*, played a significant role in this situation. Indeed, since we have the focus on the land—crucial to the land regime—in mind, then the difference between the canonical and extra-canonical gospels becomes apparent, in that a cursory look through the non-canonical gospels shows a distinct lack of interest in Palestine. This is not to say that there is no mention of, for instance, Bethlehem, Galilee, or the river Jordan, but these are brief occurrences in the texts (the Proto-gospel of James has an account of the census-trip to Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus in a cave there; the Gospel according to the Hebrews mentions Galilee, Jordan, and Bethany; the Gospel of the Ebionites mentions Capernaum and Jordan; the Gospel of Peter refers to the darkness falling over Judea as well as Golgotha; etc.) and do not seem to have quite that same insistence or distention in space as do the canonical Gospels. The non-canonical gospels, in other words, display a more focused transcendent perspective, in contrast to the canonical texts that emphasize in their mediated fashion the historical and geographical. Bart Ehrman paints a vivid picture of the diversity of early Christianity in his book on canonization and marginalization. Was it one God or many? Who created the world? Were the Jewish scriptures inspired? If so, where they inspired by a true God, a Jewish God or an evil deity? Was Jesus either divine or human or both? Did he have flesh or not? Did he die? And if so, did his death bring about the salvation of the world or not? From this bewildering array of possibilities emerged, as we know, the canon of the 27 writings referred to in Athanasius’s Easter epistle in 367 C.E. Ehrmann describes the process as one where a particular form of Christianity, which he names “proto-orthodox,” emerged as “victorious from the conflicts of the second and third centuries” and then proceeded to produce a story describing a process in which, to quote Schröter, “the church ensured continuity with its beginnings and the mutual correspondence of its confession and its writings.” See Schröter 2013, 250; Ehrman 2003.

question “How on earth could places become holy?”³⁶ The majority answer is that the fourth century’s fascination with holy places constituted a massive *volte-face* between the time of Jesus and that of Constantine.³⁷ Earliest Christianity was simply not interested in holy places, fostering a universal creed that appealed across space and time (Paul), while fourth-century Christianity could not get enough of the countryside of Palestine festooned with holy places that were filled with hordes of pilgrims.³⁸ In between these two moments we find only dusty desert space, traversed by odd figures such as Melito of Sardis and Origen.

What we propose, following Tronier’s argument above, is that this period of pilgrimage is a logical extension of what took place in the Gospel of Mark. While Paul’s message was based on a narrative of Jesus’s death and resurrection, and pushed for a form of Christianity that could appeal across peoples, places, and times (made possible by slave labour), the gospels, beginning with Mark seek to locate Jesus in a particular place and time. Whether or not the compilers of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John had ever been to Galilee or Judaea is of little consequence. What is important is that they all situated Jesus within the dual kingdom, namely the biblical land of Israel and the *chōra* of the Roman province of Palestine.³⁹ As mentioned earlier, they did so from the perspective of the *polis*—exactly the same perspective as that of Paul but with a very different result. In other words, the very mechanism of situating Jesus in Palestine is a mediated one. We cannot stress enough this mediation, for it would become a staple of subsequent efforts to focus on the land.

In order to examine this mediation further, let us follow two of the earlier “pilgrims” on their path. The first is Melito of Sardis (died in 180 C.E.), who visited Palestine “to the place where these things were preached and done” and returned with a list of the books of the Old

³⁶ Markus 1994, 257–71.

³⁷ See also Taylor 1993, 313–14; Bitton-Ashkelony 2005, 21–22.

³⁸ In her study of the evolution of Christian holy places in Palestine, Joan Taylor argues that pilgrimage, which regards places as being intrinsically holy, did not exist before Constantine. This is the crucial piece in her overall argument against the Bagatta-Testa hypothesis which argues for an original Jewish-Christian veneration of holy sites in Palestine, which were subsequently appropriated by the Byzantine Church. Most studies of pilgrimage to Palestine in the first four centuries distinguish between earlier “scholarly” visits and later “emotional” pilgrimage. However, this distinction does not have a bearing on our argument. Taylor 1993, 310–11; Hunt 1982, 92–93; Wilken 1992, 108.

³⁹ Wilken points out that the beatitude “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” should be better translated as the less abstract: “for they shall possess the land” in the Gospel of Matthew, and connects this with the promise to Abraham in Genesis 15. He notes that the anemic and opaque translation is due to the impression that possessing the land is not something “Jesus or the early Christians would have said” (Wilken 1992, 48).

Testament.⁴⁰ The catch is that this very same Melito had argued in his first homily, *Peri Pascha*, that the Jerusalem here below once had value, but now it is without value because of the Jerusalem from above. How can Melito hold both positions, valorizing the heavenly and universal and yet setting off for Palestine to see where Jesus had been and preached? Before we answer this question, let us now follow none other than Origen, the prince of allegory, who in *Contra Celsum* refuted the idea that the good land was the earthly land of Judaea. He nevertheless set out from Caesarea where he lived, “to trace the footsteps of Jesus” in Palestine.⁴¹ He also uses his visit to Bethlehem to refute those who would deny that Jesus was the savior:

With respect to the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, if any one desires, after the prophecy of Micah and after the history recorded in the Gospels by the disciples of Jesus, to have additional evidence from other sources, let him know that, in conformity with the narrative in the Gospel regarding His birth, there is shown at Bethlehem the cave where He was born, and the manger in the cave where He was wrapped in swaddling-clothes. And this sight is greatly talked of in surrounding places, even among the enemies of the faith, it being said that in this cave was born that Jesus who is worshipped and revered by the Christians.⁴²

Thus, if the prophecy in Micah is not enough, and even if the Gospel history is not enough, then—in correspondence with the gospel (which must be the proto-gospel of James)—a cave in Bethlehem is shown as proof with its manger where the Christ was wrapped in swaddling-clothes. Has Origen finally given up on his elaborate flights of interpretation, which would become the basis for a millennium or so of allegorical exegesis, or something else going on here? To the contrary, we suggest that it was through the universal and transcendent (Melito) and through the allegorical move (Origen) that the fixation on place and land could happen.⁴³ This is due to allegory’s absolute reliance on its vehicle to be valid as shown above in Philo, and the vehicle’s embeddedness in the socio-economic structures of its time.

⁴⁰ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 4.26.14. See the full list of pre-Constantinian visitors in Windisch 1925, 145–58.

⁴¹ Wilken 1992, 108. There seems to be great discomfort with Origen’s trip, and it is hardly mentioned without a speedy qualifier that he was not a pilgrim, but rather a scholar or tourist. See also Taylor 1993, 311.

⁴² Origen, *Contra Celsum*, ed. Chadwick 1980 [1953], 1.51.

⁴³ Another interesting feature is that Origen also compiled a biblical *onomasticon*, which served to explain the Hebrew place names to Greek readers, using the etymological allegorical method. See Hanson 1956. For a good analysis of this form of interpretation, see Dawson 1991, 24–38. Once again Origen’s obsession with the land resurfaces.

V. CONCLUSION: ALLEGORY AND THE GRIP ON THE LAND

So we have described two developments that began to happen in the lead-up to the land regime: pilgrimage to the places where Jesus trod and shift of vehicle in allegorical exegesis. More to the point, the earliest pilgrims were precisely those who brought transcendent and allegorical approaches to a new level. However, in the end, it is allegory—deriving from practices in Greek texts and philosophy—that provides the key *form* of mediation for fixing on the land. Allegory was the process by which the land could be identified and mapped. Allegory embodies the persistent tension in early Christianity between the idealized heavenly homeland and the actual land, which was very much present especially in the great allegorizer himself—Origen. As Davies points out, the land was one of the “most persistent and passionate doctrines with which the early church had to come to terms.”⁴⁴

Other efforts to deal with this tension, or rather mediate the earthly through the heavenly may be seen in debates that raged in the fourth century C.E. and afterwards over the nature of Christ, or indeed the four Gospels and the singular story, but we close by focusing on what is really the end-point of this process that both foreshadowed and then cemented the fixation on the land: the *Onomasticon* by Eusebius from about 330 C.E.⁴⁵ The title proper is *The Place Names of the Holy Scripture* and it includes a list of about 1,000 entries, most of which refer to Old Testament place names in Palestine. According to Stenger, Eusebius’s main concern seems to have been the identification of the ancient places, thus interweaving the spatial and chronological dimensions—that is, late-ancient Palestine with a conjunction of Old and New Testament with Roman times.⁴⁶ Correspondingly, Stenger also regards Eusebius’s purpose as apologetic and concludes:

The gazetteer’s usefulness lies then not so much in each individual entry but rather in the whole picture it evokes. Only when readers have the geographical inventory of the Bible in accessible presentation before them will they form an image of the territory of Palestine in their mind and recognise it as a coherent and well-defined space that is inscribed with Christian memories.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Davies 1964, 5. See also Petterson 2007.

⁴⁵ It is not his most well-known work, but is nevertheless experiencing renewed interest since the initial surge in the last century. For more recent research see Stenger 2016.

⁴⁶ Stenger 2016, 388–89. Wolf shows that the items which occur are biblical places with summaries of events, references to Josephus, locations in reference to fourth century towns and roads, modern name of a place and if relevant present inhabitants, Roman garrisons and forts. Wolf 1964, 76.

⁴⁷ Stenger 2016, 396.

With Eusebius's *Onomasticon* undergirding Constantine's efforts, the grip on the land and the forced conversion of its peasant inhabitants was well underway.⁴⁸

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Benedict. 2006. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised edition. London: Verso.
- Auerbach, Erich. 2003 (1946). *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Belo, Fernando. 1981 (1974). *A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Bitton-Ashkelony, Brouria. 2005. *Encountering the Sacred: The Debate on Christian Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Boer, Roland and Petterson, Christina. 2017. *Time of Troubles: A New Economic Framework for Early Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Boyarin, Daniel. 1994. *A Radical Jew. Paul and the Politics of Identity*. Berkeley: California University Press.
- Cadwallader, Alan. 2007. "In Go(I)d we Trust: Literary and Economic Exchange in the Debate over Caesar's Coin (Mk 12:13–17)." In *Biblical Interpretation* 14/5: 486–507.
- (forthcoming). "Peasant Plucking in Mark: Conceptual and Material Issues." In Sean Durbin and Robert Myles, eds. *Scriptural Radicalism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chadwick, Henry. 1980. *Contra Celsum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Collins, Adela Yarbro. 2007. *Mark: A Commentary*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress.
- Davies, W.D. 1964. *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dawson, David. 1991. *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dodd, Charles H. 1961. *The Parables of the Kingdom*. Rev. London: Collins.
- Dunn, James D.G. 2006³. *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*. London: SCM Press.

⁴⁸ For an intriguing argument linking peasant with pagan and the violent destruction of peasant shrines in the wake of Constantine, see Taylor 1993, 301–2.

- Erhman, Bart. 2003. *Lost Christianities: The Battle for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Garland, Robert. 1995. *The Eye of the Beholder: Deformity and Disability in the Graeco-Roman World*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Hanson, Richard P.C. 1956. "Interpretations of Hebrew Names in Origen." In *Vigiliae Christianae* 10/1: 103–23.
- . 1959. *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture*. Westminster: John Knox Press.
- Hock, Ronald F. 1978. "Paul's Tentmaking and the Problem of His Social Class." In *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97/4: 555–64.
- Hunt, E.D. 1982. *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire AD 312-460*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Jameson, Fredric. 1981. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Lamberton, Robert. 1989. *Homer the Theologian: Neoplatonist Allegorical Reading and the Growth of the Epic Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Marcus, Joel. 1992. "The Jewish War and the *Sitz Im Leben* of Mark." In *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111/3: 441–62.
- Markus, Robert. 1994. "How on Earth Could Places Become Holy? Origins of the Christian Idea of Holy Places." In *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2/3: 257–71.
- Mitchell, David and Snyder, Sharon. 2007. "'Jesus Thrown Everything Off Balance': Disability and Redemption in Biblical Literature." Pages 173–83 in Hector Avalos, Sarah Melcher, and Jeremy Schipper, eds. *This Abled Body: Rethinking Disabilities in Biblical Studies*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Moreland, Milton. 2004. "The Galilean Response to Earliest Christianity: A Cross-cultural Study of the Subsistence Ethic." Pages 37–48 in Douglas Edwards, ed. *Religion and Society in Roman Palestine: Old Questions, New Approaches*. New York: Routledge.
- Moxnes, Halvor. 2003. *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom*. Westminster: John Knox Press.
- Myers, Ched. 1988. *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1988.
- Nordgaard Svendsen, Stefan. 2009. *Allegory Transformed: The Appropriation of Philonic Hermeneutics in the Letter to the Hebrews*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.
- Økland, Jorunn. 2004. *Women in Their Place: Paul and the Corinthian Discourse of Gender and Sanctuary Space*. London: T&T Clark.
- Petterson, Christina. 2007. "The Land Is Mine: Place and Dislocation in the Letter to the Hebrews." In *Sino-Christian Studies* 4: 69–93.

- . 2012. *Acts of Empire: The Acts of the Apostles and Imperial Ideology*. Taipei: Chung Yuan Christian University Press.
- . 2015. “Imagining the Body of Christ.” Pages 35–55 in Robert J. Myles and Caroline Blyth, eds. *Sexuality, Ideology and the Bible: Antipodean Engagements*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press.
- Roth, Ulrike. 2014. “Paul, Philemon, and Onesimus.” In *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 105/1: 102–30.
- . 2016. “Paul and Slavery: Economic Perspectives.” Pages 155–82 in Thomas R. Blanton and Raymond Pickett, eds. *Paul and Economics: A Handbook*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Schröter, Jens. 2013. *From Jesus to the New Testament: Early Christian Theology and the Origin of the New Testament Canon*. Waco: Baylor University Press.
- Sleeman, Matthew. 2009. *Geography and the Ascension Narrative in Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Staley, Jeffrey L. “‘Dis Place, Man’: A Postcolonial Critique of the Vine (the Mountain and the Temple) in Teh Gospel of John.” Pages 32–50 in Musa W. Dube and Jeffrey L. Staley, eds. *John and Postcolonialism: Travel, Space, and Power*. London: Continuum.
- Ste. Croix, Geoffrey E.M. de. 1972. *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*. London: Duckworth.
- . 2006. *Christian Persecution, Martyrdom, and Orthodoxy*, eds. Michael Whitby and Joseph Streeter. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stenger, Jan. 2016. “Eusebius and the Representation of the Holy Land.” Pages 381–98 in Serena Bianchetti, Michele R. Cataudella, and Hans Joachim Gehrke, eds. *Brill’s Companion to Ancient Geography: The Inhabited World in Greek and Roman Tradition*. Leiden: Brill.
- Taylor, Joan. 1993. *Christians and the Holy Places: The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Thompson, James W. 1982. *The Beginnings of Christian Philosophy: The Epistle to the Hebrews*. Washington: Catholic Biblical Association.
- Toensing, Holly Joan. 2007. “‘Living among the Tombs’: Society, Mental Illness, and Self-Destruction in Mark 5:1–20.” Pages 131–43 in Hector Avalos, Sarah Melcher, and Jeremy Schipper, eds. *This Abled Body: Rethinking Disabilities in Biblical Studies*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Tronier, Henrik. 1998. “Rejsen I Den Nytestamentlige Fortælling.” In *Ekskursion til Mellemøsten 1998—en rejse i krydsfeltet mellem landskab, fortælling og historie*, 12–19.
- . 2001a. “Den Kosmiske Dualisme Og Abrahamsfiguren I Paulus’ Konstruktion Af Kristusidentitet.” Pages 131–48 in Lone Fatum, ed. *Læsninger I Galaterbrevet*. København: Fremad.

- . 2001b. “Rum Og Krop Som Tankeform I Antik Hermeneutik Og Urkristendommens Kristusfigur.” In *Collegium Biblicum Aarsskrift*, no. Rummet: 7–19.
 - . 2002. “Kosmos, Landskab Og Erkendelse I Paulus’ Og Markus’ Kristusportræt.” In *Fonix* 26/4: 221–38.
 - . 2004. “Markusevangeliet Jesus Som Biografiseret Erkendelsesfigur. ‘Ny Skabelse’ Fra Paulus Til Markus.” Pages 237–71 in Thomas L. Thompson and Henrik Tronier, eds. *Frelsens Biografisering*. København: Museum Tusulanums Folag.
 - . 2006. “Philonic Allegory in Mark.” Pages 9–48 in Troels Engberg-Pedersen and Henrik Tronier, eds. *Philosophy at the Roots of Christianity*. København: Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen.
- Verdoner, Marie Gregers. 2006. “Cultural Negotiations in the Psychomachia of Prudentius.” Pages 227–43 in David Brakke, Anders-Christian Lund Jacobsen, and Jörg Ulrich, eds. *Beyond Reception: Mutual Influences between Antique Religion, Judaism, and Early Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Wilken, Robert Louis. 1992. *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Williamson, Ronald. 1970. *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Leiden: Brill.
- Windisch, D. Hans. 1925. “Die Ältesten Christlichen Palästina-pilger.” In *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 48/1-2: 145–58.
- Wolf, Carl Umhau. 1964. “Eusebius of Caesarea and the Onomasticon.” In *Biblical Archaeologist* 27/3: 65–96.

Christina Petterson
Honorary Lecturer, College of Arts and Social Sciences, ANU
Christina.petterson@anu.edu.au

Roland Boer
Distinguished Professor, Faculty of Philosophy, Renmin University of China
rolandboer@ruc.edu.cn