

The History of Religions School Today

Edited by
THOMAS R. BLANTON IV,
ROBERT MATTHEW CALHOUN
and CLARE K. ROTHSCHILD

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament*

340

Mohr Siebeck

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zum Neuen Testament

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Essays on the New Testament and Related Ancient
Mediterranean Texts

Edited by

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With sincere gratitude to our mentor and friend,
Hans Dieter Betz

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In his book, *Consilience: The Unity of All Knowledge* (Knopf, 1998) evolutionary biologist Edward O. Wilson argues that one grand scheme explains and unites everything that human beings know and can know. The author describes his initial captivation by this idea as *Ionian enchantment*. He explains the experience in Chapter 1 of the book as follows:

Preferring a search for objective reality over revelation is another way of satisfying religious hunger. It is an endeavor almost as old as civilization and intertwined with traditional religion, but it follows a very different course – a stoic's creed, an acquired taste, a guidebook to adventure plotted across rough terrain. It aims to save the spirit, not by surrender but by liberation of the human mind. Its central tenet, as Einstein knew, is the unification of knowledge. When we have unified enough certain knowledge, we will understand who we are and why we are here. If those committed to the quest fail, they will be forgiven. When lost, they will find another way. The moral imperative of humanism is the endeavor alone, whether successful or not, provided the effort is honorable and failure memorable. The ancient Greeks expressed the idea in a myth of vaulting ambition. Daedalus escapes from Crete with his son Icarus on wings he has fashioned from feathers and wax. Ignoring the warnings of his father, Icarus flies toward the sun, whereupon his wings come apart and he falls into the sea. That is the end of Icarus in the myth. But we are left to wonder: Was he just a foolish boy? Did he pay the price for hubris, for pride in sight of the gods? I like to think that on the contrary his daring represents a saving human grace. And so the great astrophysicist Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar could pay tribute to the spirit of his mentor, Sir Arthur Eddington, by saying: Let us see how high we can fly before the sun melts the wax in our wings.

To my mind, Wilson's expression of the almost religious enchantment of scientific discovery captures well the humanistic, daring spirit of honorable challenge and wonder Betz fosters among students at Chicago. This volume is dedicated with utmost admiration and respect to our mentor and friend, Professor Hans Dieter Betz (Shailer Mathews Professor Emeritus of New Testament in the Divin-

ity School, the Department of New Testament and Early Christian Literature, and the Committee on the Ancient Mediterranean World) in the hope that it fosters dialogue of the things discussed.

Clare K. Rothschild (for the Editors)

Chicago, April 1, 2014

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Abbreviations and References

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	David Noel Freedman, ed., <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> (6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1992)
ABG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte
AC	<i>L'Antiquité Classique</i>
AJP	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
AncSoc	<i>Ancient Society</i>
ANRW	H. Temporini and W. Haase, ed., <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1972–)
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
BDAG	W. Bauer, F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> (3rd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999)
BDF	F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961)
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BMC	R.S. Poole, B.V. Head, P. Gardner et al., eds., <i>A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum</i> (London: Woodfall and Kinder, 1873–1929)
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
Budé	Collection des universités de France, publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Bude
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CA	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
CC	<i>Continental Commentaries</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CJ	<i>Classical Journal</i>
CP	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
DK	Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz, <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> (3 vols.; Zürich: Weidmann, 1974–75)
EC	<i>Early Christianity</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GNS	Good News Studies
GR	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>

HBT	Horizons in Biblical Theology
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
Hermeneia	Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
<i>HSCP</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>ILS</i>	Hermann Dessau, ed., <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> (Berlin: Weidmann, 1892–1916)
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JRE</i>	<i>Journal of Religious Ethics</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. S. Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> (9th ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996)
<i>MH</i>	<i>Museum helveticum</i>
MNTC	Moffatt New Testament Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NTA	Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., <i>New Testament Apocrypha</i> (trans. R. McL. Wilson; 2 vols.; rev. ed.; Cambridge: J. Clarke; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991–92)
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
OCD	S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth, ed., <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> (3rd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996)
OGIS	W. Dittenberger, ed., <i>Orientalis graeci inscriptiones selectae</i> (2 vols.; Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1903–5)
OLD	P. G. W. Glare, ed., <i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012)
OTL	Old Testament Library

OTP	J. H. Charlesworth, ed., <i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> (2 vols.; Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1983–85)
Phil	<i>Philologus</i>
RE	Georg Wissowa, et al., ed. <i>Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (München: Alfred Druckenmüller Verlag, 1980)
RTR	<i>Reformed Theological Review</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBL SBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
SBLTT	Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations
SBLWGRW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Greco-Roman World
SCHNT	<i>Studia ad corpus hellenicum Novi Testamenti</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra Pagina
Spec	<i>Speculum</i>
SQAW	Schriften und Quellen der Alten Welt
ST	<i>Studia theologica</i>
STAC	Studien und Text zu Antike und Christentum
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SVF	H. F. A. von Arnim, ed., <i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> (4 vols.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1903–24)
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
TAPhS	<i>Transactions of the American Philosophical Society</i>
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, ed., <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> (trans. G. W. Bromiley; 10 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76)
TDOT	G. J. Botterwick and H. Ringgren, ed., <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> (trans. J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley and D. E. Green; 8 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–)
TRE	G. Kraus and G. Müller, ed., <i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i> (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1976–)
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

Introduction

CLARE K. ROTHSCHILD

I. Introduction

The present volume offers a glimpse at just one albeit thriving expression of the distinguished *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* begun *circa* 1884 at the University of Göttingen in Germany. Today applications of this approach to biblical texts made famous on the New Testament side by scholars like A. Eichhorn, W. Bousset, J. Weiß, W. Wrede, and others are diverse. Scholars young and old, liberal and conservative, all over the world ply this comparative method in the interest of biblical interpretation. German scholars convene over the topic regularly. The new publication, *Reflections on the Early Christian History of Religion*, is just one manifestation of this ongoing dialogue.¹ In North America, no one would dispute that the University of Chicago has long been a hub of this type of scholarly investigation. Although a number of Chicago faculty over the last century have indulged facets of the history of religions approach, undoubtedly the most touted in this regard is Hans Dieter Betz. If best known for his work on the implications of ancient rhetoric for New Testament interpretation, five volumes of collected essays, plus important books and monographs, demonstrate his vital commitment to exploring early Christian literature from so-called history of religions' viewpoints.² Not only did Betz pursue this line of inquiry in his own research, but – in almost forty years of teaching – he trained numerous students to do so. Two outstanding Festschrift volumes sample the industry.³ As contributors to the

¹ Cilliers Breytenbach and Jörg Frey, ed., *Reflections on the Early Christian History of Religion/ Erwägungen zur frühchristlichen Religionsgeschichte* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013).

² For a comprehensive bibliography of the works of Hans Dieter Betz, see *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy* (ed. A. Y. Collins and M. M. Mitchell; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 501–12. Since 2001, Betz's work has continued unabated and additional volumes have appeared: *Gottesbegegnung und Menschwerdung: Zur religionsgeschichtlichen und theologischen Bedeutung der 'Mithrasliturgie'* (PGM IV.475–820) (Hans Lietzmann Vorlesungen 6; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001); *The "Mithras Liturgy": Text, Translation, and Commentary* (STAC 18; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); *Paulinische Theologie und Religionsgeschichte: Gesammelte Aufsätze V* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009).

³ Festschrift #1 = *Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Bible and Culture: Essays in Honor of*

present volume note, however, these impressive works were published while Betz was still teaching. They do not, therefore, include the last cohort Betz trained. What is more, although the approach has remained essentially intact for more than a century (a testament to its enduring value), it has never been without rivals and opponents. Recently, attacks have flared warranting a response. The present volume attempts to address these two *desiderata*. It is neither a Festschrift *per se*, nor a volume dedicated solely to method. Rather, it is a collection of essays in which a handful of Betz's most recent 'generation' of students plies the history of religions school together with other historical-critical methods as a means of not necessarily discussing, but *demonstrating* various ways in which it is being used and adapted. No single adaptation is identical to another. As we will see, however, a few distinct themes are traceable throughout the studies.

II. History of Religions School

It might be helpful to begin by clarifying what the history of religions school is, particularly vis-à-vis the so-called historical-critical method. Although the two are sometimes indiscriminately referred to as one and the same, the history of religions school's approach to the interpretation of biblical texts is only one in a group of critical approaches to biblical texts often referred to today by the umbrella term, 'historical-critical method(s)'. Somewhat ironically, the history of religions school approach originated as a *reaction* to literary approaches such as source and form criticism now appreciated alongside it. Furthermore, as Gerald Seelig has shown, today the "history of religions school" is variously understood. Sometimes it refers to a highly dogmatic way of reconstructing the history of a religion. Gerd Lüdemann and others in Göttingen undertake such work.⁴ The term "new history of religions school" has been applied to the work of Martin Hengel, Larry Hurtado,⁵ and others – rather different from the work of Lüdemann and others in Göttingen. The methods Hans Dieter Betz uses and teaches offer yet another iteration of the history of religions school today.⁶ Since definitions of the method are slippery, the position this volume represents is explained next.

Hans Dieter Betz (ed. Adela Yarbro Collins; Scholars Press Homage Series; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars, 1998); Festschrift #2 = *Antiquity and Humanity* (see n. 1).

⁴ Gerald Seelig, *Religionsgeschichtliche Methode in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart: Studien zur Geschichte und Methode des religionsgeschichtlichen Vergleichs in der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft* (ABG 7; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001), 151–76.

⁵ Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

⁶ See Jörg Frey, "Eine neue religionsgeschichtliche Perspektive: Larry W. Hurtados 'Lord Jesus Christ' und die Herausbildung der frühen Christologie," in Breytenbach and Frey, *Reflections on the Early Christian History of Religion*, 117–70.

First and foremost, *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* implies that Christianity, with an emphasis on Christian religion or cult (as opposed to doctrine), is the object of pioneering research devoid, to the extent possible, of dogmatic presuppositions, and specifying presuppositions that cannot be suspended. Its primary interest is historical phenomena that developed over time within a variety of concrete Christian communities usefully compared to other roughly contemporaneous religious and non-religious groups. Among such groups, practitioners of this method typically assume a level of syncretism. The canon is not privileged in terms of its representation of the early Christian communities. Literary criticism and tradition history – active demurrals of the original school (as noted above) – is almost always incorporated in contemporary applications. Frequently, but not always, connections to dimensions of the field of Classics are made.

III. Some Objections

All of these approaches – frequently dubbed ‘historical-critical’ – have been the subject of recent public attack. While objections to historical-critical scholarship are by no means uniform, postmodern challengers object unanimously to the following ideas: (a) textual meaning as an ideal; (b) primacy of the authorial voice in interpretation; (c) commitment to the concept or concepts of truth; and (d) the history under investigation as ancient and not our own (personal or collective).⁷ A general accusation is that anyone utilizing a form of comparative interpretation is guilty of naive optimism. Walter Grundmann, Martin Hengel, Jörg Frey, *et alii* have been criticized.⁸ History itself is considered a byproduct of the nationalist and colonialist age. To purify the scholarly discourse, the idea is that it must be purged of any and all elements of nationalism and colonialism.

To be sure, in every generation, the academy must vigilantly guard against the effects of larger ideological discourses on its work. In this work, many regard scholars such as Rudolf Bultmann and Martin Hengel as earning high marks. Bultmann’s critical application of form criticism to the Synoptic Gospels and Hengel’s seminal investigation of Judaism vis-à-vis Hellenism are lauded for breathtaking diversity, deep immersion in the widest possible range of primary sources, and incisive critical acumen.⁹ Distinguished scholars including feminists and poststructuralists such as Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza and Elizabeth Clark

⁷ George Aichele, Peter Miscall and Richard Walsh, “An Elephant in the Room: Historical-Critical and Postmodern Interpretations of the Bible,” *JBL* 128 (2009): 383–404.

⁸ Todd Penner and Davina C. Lopez, “Homelessness as a Way Home: A Methodological Reflection and Proposal,” in *Holy Land as Homeland? Models for Constructing the Historic Landscapes of Jesus* (ed. Keith W. Whitelam; Sheffield, England: Sheffield-Phoenix Press, 2011) 151–76.

⁹ “A New Introduction,” in Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos: A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus* (trans. J. E. Steeley; repr.; Waco: Baylor University

praise the liberation historical criticism brought. Together these men and women have, in their own individual ways, built upon the progress made by previous scholars. This point is lost on opponents advocating the demolition of the old foundation to lay a new (non-) foundation of scholarly discourse.¹⁰ As Margaret Mitchell argues (and exemplifies) in her book on Paul's art of hermeneutical interpretation in 1 Corinthians,¹¹ continuity exists between ancient scholars and post-Renaissance inquiries into Christian origins. Contemporary historical-critical scholarship is positioned in a grand arch of historical scholarship and, to this grand arch, self-assessment and criticism are integral. The landmark works of Albert Schweitzer on the historical Jesus (1906, 1910) and E. P. Sanders on Paul (1977) are cases in point. Both argue that existing scholarship fails to examine itself adequately. William Baird's *History of New Testament Research*¹² (or other similar works) often accurately situates historical-critical scholarship in an unflattering light.¹³

Thankfully, movements objecting to historical criticism(s) did not sweep the guild of Biblical Studies rendering older methods obsolete, as they did in departments of literature across North America in the 1990's.¹⁴ Rather, historical methods have continued in force across a full spectrum of international scholarship. As a result, the study of the New Testament and early Christian literature is

Press, 2013), v–xix; L. W. Hurtado, “Martin Hengel’s Impact on English-Speaking Scholarship,” *ExpTim* 120 (2008): 70–76.

¹⁰ See John J. Collins, *The Bible After Babel: Historical Criticism in a Postmodern Age* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

¹¹ *Paul, the Corinthians and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹² *History of New Testament Research* (3 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992–2013). Note esp. the third volume, a survey “from C. H. Dodd to Hans Dieter Betz.”

¹³ On the other hand, objections to postmodern approaches to biblical studies often include the following: (a) Postmodern scholars are only interested in biography: talking about themselves; they are not interested in other, ancient, historical people or groups. (b) Historical-critical methods are perfectly suitable tools for answering the kinds of questions historians ask. (c) Likewise, post-methodologies are not helpful for answering the kinds of questions we want to ask. (d) Postmodern approaches to biblical studies lack philological rigor. (e) Postmodern approaches to biblical studies reflect naiveté concerning both philosophy and literary criticism.

¹⁴ The group includes very respectable, critically trained scholars such as Michael C. Legaspi, the recipient of a Templeton Prize for Theological Promise. Recently, he published, *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). In Great Britain, the Templeton Foundation and Oxford University Press are powerful financial backers of this trend. In North America, Fortress is a major champion of the approach. The following Fortress publications participate in the discussion: Yvonne Sherwood and Stephen Moore, *The Invention of the Biblical Scholar* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011); Joseph Marchal, ed., *Studying Paul's Letters: Contemporary Perspectives and Methods* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012); and Christopher Stanley, *The Colonized Apostle: Paul in Postcolonial Eyes* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011). Prior publications, such as Hector Avalos, *The End of Biblical Studies* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2007) and Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005) have also played important roles in this conversation.

largely unaffected by the method-exhaustion that literature and other neighboring fields experience today. At a time when scholars of Islam, such as Gabriel Said Reynolds,¹⁵ influenced by the venerable tradition in Biblical Studies, are making significant inroads into questions about the Qur'an and life of Muhammad, scholars of early Christianity should hardly move *away* from, but seek to sharpen the methods, questions, and conclusions they pioneered.

IV. Present Volume

This collection of papers represents practitioners of the history of religions and historical-critical approaches to the study of early Christianity at work. The volume has five parts: Paul, Deutero-Pauline letters, Gospels/Acts, Jewish Christianity, and Related Ancient Mediterranean texts.

New Testament

Paul

As one would expect given Betz's rich legacy to Pauline studies, four of this volume's essays are dedicated to Paul and deutero-Pauline letters. The first essay, "Paul's God of Peace in Canonical and Political Perspectives," by Mark Reasoner (Marian University) considers Paul's phrase "God of peace" which occurs four times in the undisputed letters. The phrase is not attested in the LXX, and only rarely occurs in the pseudepigrapha. Reasoner asks why Paul uses the expression "God of peace." Similar expressions in 1 Cor 14:33 and 2 Cor 13:11 demonstrate that such phrases can be used as slogans for the domestic politics of church life. Paul's phrase "God of peace" appearing near the end of 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, and Romans, however, combines Paul's reading and interpretation of scripture with his exposure to political propaganda celebrating Roman peace.

In "Romans 1:18–32 among Ancient Accounts of the Origin of Religion," Robert Matthew Calhoun (Houston, Tex.) sets out to explain the remarkably obscure beginning of Paul's argument in Romans (i. e., 1:18–32). According to Calhoun, what Paul wants the passage to do is sufficiently plain: he designs it to serve as the foundation for his contention that all humanity stands condemned before the eschatological tribunal, an argument that reaches its climax in 3:9–20. Problems accumulate, however, when one tries to explain how 1:18–32 contributes to this goal. In this essay, Calhoun argues that Paul is constructing an account of the foundation of pagan polytheism. Paul's narrative of the invention of (bad) reli-

¹⁵ *The Emergence of Islam* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012); idem, *The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext* (London: Routledge, 2010); idem, *A Muslim Theologian in the Sectarian Milieu: 'Abd al-Jabbār and the 'Critique of Christian Origins'* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); A. J. Droge, *The Qur'an: A New Annotated Translation* (Sheffield and Bristol: Equinox, 2013).

gion also explains the origin of the gospel, since it identifies the historical reasons for why God needs to intervene to save humanity in the first place.

Meira Z. Kensky (Coe College) also addresses Paul's letter to the Romans. In her essay, entitled "The Hymnic Conclusion to Romans 11," Kensky observes that Paul's faith, as described in his undisputed letters, often strikes students as unwavering and absolute – grounded in certainty and complete trust, not only in God and a divine plan, but in Paul himself and Paul's own confidence and certainty. This type of faith strikes students as unrealistic – a trust that contravenes the natural human tendency to doubt. Early Christian texts witness to the problem of doubt on a significant scale in the post-apostolic period. Christians suffer "shipwreck in the faith" (1 Tim 1:19) and are swept away by "youthful passions" (2 Tim 2:22). The problem of apostasy looms large in Hebrews, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, 2 Baruch, 2 Peter, 2 Timothy, and James. According to Kensky, at many points throughout his epistolary corpus, Paul anticipates this future problem of doubt. In this essay, Kensky focuses on a crucial moment in Romans in which Paul builds into his teaching how future Christ followers can effectively treat the repercussions of widespread doubt in their communities.

Deutero-Pauline Letters

In his essay entitled, "Missiles, Demagogues, and the Devil: The Rhetoric of Slander in Ephesians 6:16," Jeff Asher (Georgetown College) argues that, whereas the translation of Eph 6:16 is fairly straightforward, its interpretation is not. Although it is common practice to read this verse in light of parallels with the Jewish scripture and certain literature from Qumran on the one hand and parallels with Hellenistic moral philosophy on the other, Asher examines this passage in the context of ancient rhetorical invective and the social values informing that invective. The essay, thus, argues that what is important is not what the missiles represent, but the fact that only a worthless scoundrel (*πονηρός*) uses missile weapons (*βέλη*). In addition to the title of the adversary as a *πονηρός* Asher draws on the conventions of slander in the Greco-Roman world, the shameful, ineffective nature of missile weapons, the association of missile weapons with women and barbarians, and more to demonstrate how the author uses invective to position the Devil in the cosmic hierarchy.

Gospels and Acts

Laurie Brink (Catholic Theological Union) takes up yet another important aspect of Betz's work, the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount. Her essay, "Going the Extra Mile: Reading Matthew 5:41 Literally and Metaphorically" argues that, thanks to Matthew's use of the verb *ἀγαπεύω*, the Roman practice known as *ἀγαπεία* is exclusively cited as the backdrop against which Jesus' imperative to go the extra mile (Matt 5:41) is read. A review of the inscriptional and literary evidence concerning *ἀγαπεία* demonstrates, however, that the official practice

concerned the transportation of goods not the wanton pressing of individuals into forced labor. Freed from a strictly imperial context, Matt 5:41 might more accurately be interpreted as an example of extortion – compelling the services of another. The Matthean Jesus advises that those disciples who are compelled to go a mile must actually go further. Set in the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, the extra mile logion offers an example of fulfilling the Law (Matt 5:17) by exceeding it. Read in this light, it bolsters Jesus' accusation that the scribes and Pharisees neglect the laws they compel others to uphold.

David G. Monaco (Pontifical College Josephinum) develops the themes of rhetoric and mission from Betz's rich corpus of publications. In his essay, "The Rhetoric of Narrative in Acts 8:26–40: Ramifications of the Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch for the Author of Luke-Acts," Monaco argues that Philip's baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch presents the reader with a powerful text of liberation. The author uses this story to advise the early community – most notably its Hellenistic Jewish element – of how they should respond to persecution: refusing to retreat. Given that the preceding chapter of Acts chronicles Stephen's death by stoning and persecution against the church in Jerusalem, Monaco suggests that, with the tale of the Ethiopian eunuch, the two episodes together offer proof of the famed final version of the quotation often attributed to Tertullian, that "the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians."

The Apocalypse

In his essay, "The Scroll, the Temple, and the Great City: The Crisis in the Asian Assemblies and the Interlude of Rev 10:1–11:13" Paul B. Duff (The George Washington University) addresses the designation of 10:1–11:13 as an interlude or parenthesis. A variety of puzzles are associated with the interlude. Of these, perhaps the most difficult has to do with its intrusive character. In this exploratory essay, Duff queries the relationship of the interlude the rest of the book. Specifically, he asks about its placement between the sounding of the sixth and seventh trumpets. Consisting of two distinct stories, Duff examines each of the narratives in turn, highlighting various interpretive problems, and looking briefly at the crisis in John's communities that the seer was attempting to address.

Jewish Christianity

Nearly fifty years ago, Hans Dieter Betz offered critical remarks on Georg Strecker's republication of Walter Bauer's *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum*. Fundamentally appreciative of both Bauer's thesis and Strecker's correctives, Betz wished to push the discussion forward by highlighting broader, "still unresolved" problems for Christian origins. In the essay entitled, "Orthodoxy, Heresy, and Jewish Christianity: Reflections on Categories in Edwin Broadhead's *Jewish Ways of Following Jesus*," Matt Jackson-McCabe (Cleveland State University) takes a slightly different tack toward the same goal. Rather than

revisiting a classic study, he focuses on an important new one. Edwin Broadhead's recent monograph, *Jewish Ways of Following Jesus: Redrawing the Religious Map of Antiquity* (WUNT 266; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010) seriously engages the series of interrelated issues that Betz once highlighted. Betz's examination of classic studies in the 1960s and early 1990s identified problems of scholarship; Jackson-McCabe's study helps us to see where the issues stand today.

Jeffrey A. Trumbower's essay (Saint Michael's College), "Christians, Sabbateans, and the Dead Sea Sect: A Comparative Case Study in Jewish Sectarian Logic," compares Christianity and Sabbateanism in their earliest manifestations. Like Jainism and Buddhism, Christianity and Sabbateanism are two species comprising a single genus, namely, Jewish messianic movements that spawn durable new religions. Of all the Jewish messiahs over the centuries, only two, Jesus of Nazareth (ca. 4 B.C.E.–ca. 30 C.E.) and Sabbatai Tsvi (1626–1676), left a legacy of new religious communities that ultimately diverge from their Jewish roots to form a new religion. Analyzing how that process unfolded in each case raises questions not arising from the examination of either one in isolation. Further comparison with the Dead Sea sect – although it neither spawned a new religion nor focused on the arrival of a messiah – illuminates aspects of Jewish sectarian logic across time and space.

Related Ancient Mediterranean Texts

The final five essays in the volume take up the important history of religions school theme exemplified at length in Betz's career of treating non-canonical, Christian and other texts, on their own terms, in addition to using them as vehicles of comparison for early Christian literature. In "Παιδεία as Solution to Stasis in First Clement," I argue that although leading French historian of the mid-twentieth century, H. I. Marrou describes *1 Clem.* 21:8 ("Let our children receive the παιδεία in Christ") as the beginning of a long trajectory of Christian education, the point to be adjudicated in *1 Clement* is the restoration of peace from στάσις. Παιδεία, the recommended solution, does not, therefore, refer to "education" per se, but "punishment" in the form of voluntary exile, a life sentence for which there is no second chance. Since παιδεία is a categorical punishment exclusive of viable pedagogical benefits, I argue that *1 Clem.* 21:8 should be dissociated from the trajectory with which Marrou associates it.

In the co-written piece entitled, "Polycarp and Polemo: Christianity at the Center of the Second Sophistic," Matthijs den Dulk and Andrew M. Langford (University of Chicago) explore Smyrna, and in particular, Polycarp, the early Christian figure most intimately associated with this city. Bringing the literary and Christian elements of late ancient Smyrnan society into conversation they examine the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* in light of the Second Sophistic. Comparison with Polycarp's contemporary Polemo, a fellow Smyrnan demonstrates how Polycarp's martyrdom engages both the language and narrative patterns of bib-

lical texts and conventions, values, as well as expectations characteristic of the Second Sophistic as well.

Annette Bourland Huizenga (University of Dubuque Theological Seminary) addresses the topic of wet-nurses in antiquity. Her essay, entitled “On Choosing A Wet-Nurse: Physical, Cultural, and Moral Credentials,” examines a pseudonymous document rarely brought into conversation with early Christian literature: the neo-Pythagorean letter labeled, ‘Myia to Phyllis.’ Composed sometime in the second century C. E., this short letter purports to be from Myia, the renowned daughter of Pythagoras and his wife Theano. It is addressed to Phyllis, an otherwise unknown female recipient. The stated epistolary occasion is advice about caring for a newborn, in particular, the hiring of a wet-nurse. The letter communicates, in the friendly tone and plain style of paraenetic texts, recommendations about this ordinary life situation and in so doing reveals moral conventions for treating women in this role.

Picking up on Betz’s specific, early interest in Lucian of Samosata, in his essay, “Lucian’s *Hermotimus*: A Fictive Dialogue with Marcus Aurelius,” Justin Howell (University of Chicago) argues that the *Hermotimus* – Lucian’s fictive dialogue with Marcus Aurelius about how to present himself as a ruler – suggests Lucian is neither an enemy nor a sycophant, but an individual earnestly attempting, albeit through satire, to offer the emperor constructive criticism about wise and effective leadership. On Howell’s reading, scholars alleging Lucian was antagonistic toward Rome *and* those suggesting he sought to flatter the emperor must take the *Hermotimus*, his longest dialogue, into closer account as a subtle yet forceful charge by a Roman citizen with genuine interest in the good of the state.

The last essay, “*De caelo patrociniūm*: The Economy of Divine Patronage in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*” by Thomas R. Blanton IV (Lutheran School of Theology) aims to delineate social functions of the “economy of the offering” in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*, a text Blanton understands as distinctly shaped by the Roman patronage system. Reliant *mutatis mutandis* upon the sociological theories of Pierre Bourdieu, Blanton attempts to demonstrate how they serve as useful heuristic devices for understanding ancient religions.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, the editors of this volume wish to issue our readers an invitation. We invite you to explore permutations of the history of religions school as practiced today by students and admirers of one of its most significant contemporary proponents. Given the flurry of recent attacks on the method’s quaint or naive notions of knowledge and truth, we welcome you to interact with recent samples of a tradition of scholarship that has continuously, for more than a century, maintained its commitment to understanding past human phenomena

(of which religion is an amazingly revealing prism) and consider whether such demanding work still matters. From our perspective, insofar as the tradition is based on knowledge, it never falls out of scholarly vogue. This is not to say that the limitations of what can be known – ably demonstrated in fields of research from physics to philosophy – should not be admitted, accepted, and embraced. It is, nevertheless, still inherently desirable to let the chorus of voices – those of the texts and their scores of interpreters – speak for themselves to the extent possible, allowing them to serve as facilitators, even broadcasters of the foreign and the familiar, the unique and the universal. Do such messages constitute truth? The aim is not truth, but *understanding*. Painstaking sensitivity to context – to ancient language, history, art, and other aspects of culture and society and to the ways new religious phenomena simultaneously inherit and transform existing traditions – fosters a fuller *comprehension* of our subjects and ourselves. Such a priority, we think, unites the collection of essays offered in this volume.

Part One: New Testament

Paul's God of Peace in Canonical and Political Perspectives

MARK REASONER

Paul's phrase "God of peace" occurs four times in the uncontested letters, usually in blessings at the end of letters.¹ The phrase is not attested in the LXX, and only rarely occurs in the pseudepigrapha, most notably in *T. Dan* 5:2.² Why would Paul use the expression "God of peace" for the God he worshipped? Very similar expressions in 1 Cor 14:33 and 2 Cor 13:11 show that "God of peace" can be used not directly as a political slogan against the Romans, but rather as a slogan for what one could call the domestic politics of church life. But Paul's phrase "God of peace" that appears near the end of 1 Thessalonians, Philippians and Romans is a hidden transcript resulting from the intersection of his scripture reading and his exposure to political propaganda celebrating the Roman peace.

I. God Grants Peace Together with Righteousness

Paul's scriptures, including perhaps his favorite scripture – Isaiah – make it clear that the God of Israel brings peace along with righteousness. Thus we read in LXX Isa 9:5b–6 how God will bring both of these virtues:

ἐγὼ γὰρ ἄξω εἰρήνην ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντας, εἰρήνην καὶ ὑγίαιαν αὐτῶ. μεγάλη ἡ ἀρχὴ αὐτοῦ, καὶ τῆς εἰρήνης αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν ὄριον ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον Δαυὶδ καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ κατορθῶσαι αὐτὴν καὶ ἀντιλαβέσθαι αὐτῆς ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἐν κρίματι ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον·

¹ 1 Thess 5:23; Phil 4:9; Rom 15:33, 16:20. In 2 Cor 13:11 he uses "God of love and peace" and in 1 Cor 14:33 Paul says that God is not one of disorder but of peace. Cf. 2 Thess 3:16; Col 3:15; Heb 13:20 for similar titles.

² ἀλήθειαν φθέγγεσθε ἕκαστος πρὸς τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐ μὴ ἐμπέσητε εἰς μῆνιν καὶ ταραχάς, ἀλλ' ἔσεσθε ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἔχοντες τὸν θεὸν τῆς εἰρήνης καὶ οὐ μὴ κατασχῆται ὑμῶν πόλεμος. "Each one of you should speak truth with his companion and not fall into wrath and discord, but be in peace, staying close to the God of peace, and your cause will not fail." (This and all unattributed translations that follow in this essay are mine.)

For I will bring peace on the rulers, peace and health for him. Great will be his rule, and for the throne of David there will be no limit of his peace, and his kingdom will accomplish it and take hold of it in righteousness and in judgment from now and to eternity.

Righteousness and peace also occur together in LXX Isa 32:17: “And peace will be the effects of righteousness, then righteousness will lay hold of rest, and they will live in confidence forever,” και ἔσται τὰ ἔργα τῆς δικαιοσύνης εἰρήνη, και κρατήσῃ ἡ δικαιοσύνη ἀνάπαυσιν, και πεποιθότες ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος. If Paul is interested in one or two of his letters in the condition of divine righteousness, on the basis of his scripture he is also interested in the condition of peace.³

II. False Prophets Who Proclaim Peace Bring Divine Judgment on Themselves

The prophet Jeremiah announces God’s judgment on those who make false proclamations of peace. Thus we read in LXX Jer 6:14–15:

και ἰῶντο τὸ σύντριμμα τοῦ λαοῦ μου ἐξουθενούντες και λέγοντες Εἰρήνη εἰρήνη· και ποῦ ἔστιν εἰρήνη; κατησχύνθησαν, ὅτι ἐξελίποσαν· και οὐδ’ ὡς καταισχυνόμενοι κατησχύνθησαν και τὴν ἀτιμίαν αὐτῶν οὐκ ἔγνωσαν. διὰ τοῦτο πεσοῦνται ἐν τῇ πτώσει αὐτῶν και ἐν καιρῷ ἐπισκοπῆς αὐτῶν ἀπολοῦνται, εἶπεν κύριος.

And the affliction of my people shall be healed; those who are scornful and are saying ‘Peace, peace, yet where is peace?’ will have been shamed because they failed, nor will these shamed ones feel ashamed and their dishonor they will not understand, because they will collapse in their fall and be destroyed in the time of their visitation, says the Lord.

Similarly, LXX Jer 14:13–16 records God’s plan to judge the false prophets who prophesy that God is bringing truth and peace.

και εἶπα ὦ κύριε, ἰδοὺ οἱ προφηταὶ αὐτῶν προφητεύουσιν και λέγουσιν Οὐκ ὄψεσθε μάχαιραν, οὐδὲ λιμὸς ἔσται ἐν ὑμῖν, ὅτι ἀλήθειαν και εἰρήνην δώσω ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς και ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ. και εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς με Ψευδῆ οἱ προφηταὶ προφητεύουσιν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου, οὐκ ἀπέστειλα αὐτοὺς και οὐκ ἐνετειλάμην αὐτοῖς και οὐκ ἐλάλησα πρὸς αὐτούς· ὅτι ὀράσεις ψευδεῖς και μαντείας και οἰωνίσματα και προαιρέσεις καρδίας αὐτῶν αὐτοὶ προφητεύουσιν ὑμῖν. διὰ τοῦτο τάδε λέγει κύριος περὶ τῶν προφητῶν τῶν προφητευόντων ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου ψευδῆ, και ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀπέστειλα αὐτούς, οἱ λέγουσιν Μάχαιρα και λιμὸς οὐκ ἔσται ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ταύτης Ἐν θανάτῳ νοσερῶ ἀποθανοῦνται, και ἐν λιμῷ συντελεσθήσονται οἱ προφηταὶ· και ὁ λαός, οἷς αὐτοὶ προφητεύουσιν αὐτοῖς, και ἔσονται ἐρριμμένοι ἐν ταῖς διόδοις Ἱερουσαλημ ἀπὸ προσώπου μαχαίρας και τοῦ λιμοῦ, και οὐκ ἔσται ὁ θάπτων αὐτούς, και αἱ γυναῖκες αὐτῶν και οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτῶν και αἱ θυγατέρες αὐτῶν· και ἐκγεῶ ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς τὰ κακὰ αὐτῶν.

And I said, “O Lord, behold their prophets prophesy and say, ‘You will not see the sword, nor will there be famine among you, because I will grant truth and peace on the land and in this place.’” And the Lord said to me, “Falsely the prophets prophesy in my name; I did

³ Other texts in LXX Isaiah that link peace and righteousness are Isa 45:7–8, 60:17.

not send them, nor did I command them, nor have I spoken to them. Because they see lies and oracles and omens, and the plans of their heart they prophesy to you. Therefore, thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who are prophesying falsely in my name, though I did not send them, who say, 'There will be no sword or famine on this land' – by a sickly death they will die and the prophets will come to their end by famine, and the people to whom they are prophesying – they also will be torn apart in the streets of Jerusalem by the edge of the sword and by famine, and there will be no one to bury them and their wives and their sons and their daughters, when I pour out their evils on them."

False hope in peace is considered blasphemous by the servants of the God of Israel, who alone can bring peace. More texts from Paul's scriptures will be cited when we move to examine the specific texts where he uses "God of peace," but we have just surveyed enough to show that there is a critical mass of peace theologizing occurring in Paul's scriptures. We move now to the imperial theology of peace.

III. *The Theology of Imperial Peace in the Early Principate*

In his *ANRW* article, "The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology," J. Rufus Fears rightly finds the Roman cult of virtues rooted in Greek theology.

Virtues such as *Eirene*, *Pistis*, *Eunomia*, *Philanthropia*, *Philostorgia*, and *Dikaiosyne* played a fundamental role in the ideological structure of Hellenistic monarchies. ... It was into this ideological heritage that the Roman republic entered, and the cult of Virtues represented a primary conduit by which Roman leadership sought to channel and to utilize this religio-political vocabulary.⁴

The Romans had deified *Concordia* and *Salus* by the end of fourth century B.C.E. and by 200 B.C.E. (Hannibalic War) *Victoria*, *Fortuna*, *Libertas*, *Honos*, *Fides*, and *Spes* all had homes within the Roman cult of virtues.⁵

Ειρήνη was recognized as divine already in Hesiod. Within the Roman cult of virtues, the *pax Augusta* comes into its own in the early years of the Principate. Inheriting his uncle's mission to bring peace to the world, Augustus clearly communicated this mission to his propagandists. The poets Ovid, Tibullus and Virgil were all on board with this perspective on Augustus' reign.⁶ The first verb in Anchises' commission of Roman "arts" to Aeneas is "to pacify."⁷ The Augus-

⁴ J. Rufus Fears, "The Cult of Virtues," *ANRW* 2.17.2:850. The virtues mentioned in this quotation are: peace, faith, well-ordered law, benevolence, affection, and justice.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 830. The virtues mentioned are: social concord, health, victory, fortune, liberty, honor, faith, and hope.

⁶ Ovid, *Fast.* 1.711–12; Tibullus, *Eleg.* 1.10.69–70; Virgil, *Ecl.* 4, *Aen.* 6.851–3. I am indebted to Klaus Haacker, *The Theology of Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 117 for these references.

⁷ *Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento / (hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere morem, / parcere subiectis et debellare superbos* (Virgil, *Aen.* 6.851–53); "Roman, remember by