

Paper to Comparative Theology & Feminist Theory.

Men and Unmen in the Parables of Jesus.

Introduction

In this paper I will approach the topic of slavery in the parables of Jesus through the lens of masculinity, and show how a concept of masculinity can be useful when we are interpreting the parables in gospels that describes master/slave relations. Our conception of antiquity, and especially the historical context from which The New Testament originated, are informed by certain dispositions that create blind sides. Slavery is such an issue that has been neglected within New Testament research. If a part of the slaveholder ideology is to erase the slaves' individuality and as consequence negate their existence,¹ it has to large degree succeeded when it comes to history and theology.

Whereas most studies on parables have been on deciphering the meanings of the parables, for instance what Jesus or the redactor of the gospel meant, my perspective is on ideology.² I will investigate what is implied in the parables and what systems of ideas they support, as well as ideological aspects of interpretation. This is done within a discourse of masculinity. There is social and ideological focus³ because it allows to investigate how identity is negotiated in a discourse of domination and performance where difference is created between freeborn men and male slaves.

At current stage this is paper is part of a project in development. Thus there might be some loose ends, and I do not dig deep into the vast world of literature and other texts from antiquity, rather I try to probe it, and show a sample of some possible interpretations. My work is supported by, and have benefitted greatly from, the research project *Jesus in Cultural Complexity*, and I am grateful for the support given especially by Halvor Moxnes and Marianne Bjelland Kartzow. For someone with an above average interest in New Testament studies, they have shown how questions of identity, context, and cross-disciplinary interpretation are both exiting and important. There should be no surprise then that my interests correspond with some the questions they ask.

¹ Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death; A Comparative Study* (Cambridge/London: Harvard University, 1982), see especially chapter on "Honor and Degradation" (77-101).

² With ideology I mean "[...] unified schemes or configurations to underwrite or manifest power." This definition is taken from Eric R. Wolf, *Envisioning Power; Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis* (Berkeley: University of California, 1999), 4

³ This takes its cue from Patterson's seminal work on slavery (*Slavery as Social Death*). Patterson claims that slaves are social dead, i.e. naturally alienated, they are without honour, and can not exercise power directly.

Backdrop

The parable of "the unmerciful servant" (Matt 18:23-34) has traditionally been interpreted as a moral lesson on mercy and forgiveness.⁴ John Dominic Crossan explains that "the ordinary human reaction to such a story would be that the first servant got what he deserved [...]"⁵ Thus he is in line with other commentaries that simply accept the brutal punishment the slave receives.⁶ However, if it was a "the natural reaction", in antiquity at least, we have to interpret the parable in the context of antiquity as a slave society.⁷ Thus, the institution of slavery must have been part of the author's/audience's social and cultural reality.⁸ But little has been done to interpret the parables within a framework of slavery. In fact, the opposite has been the norm.⁹

The failure to recognize the full extent of slavery in antiquity is evident in John Nolland's commentary on Luke 17:7-10. He equals our relationship to God with that of a slave to a master, it is expected that we, without any claim to rewards or praise, but as a consequence of our servile status should submit to the master's will.¹⁰ On the one hand, Nolland capture the logic of of slavery seen from the owner's side; plain obedience is merley expected from a slave, it can not be merit.¹¹ On the other hand, there is an uncanny touch to his interpretation, because he ignores the further implications of what it means to be a slave. The good slave provides servitude beyond expectation, but the more benefits the slave can receive the more he/she has to extinguish his/her autonomy. But this renders slaves as vessels

⁴ See William R. Herzog, *Parables as Subversive Speech; Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994), 134.

⁵ John Dominic Crossan, *In Parables; The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* [org 1973] (Sonoma: Polebridge, 1992), 104.

⁶ For instance N.F. Fisher, *The Parables of Jesus; Glimpses of God's Reign* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 102, W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew; Volume 2*, The International Critical Commentary ed. J.A. Emerton, C.E.B. Cranfield and G.N. Stanton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 794 and 802. The slave's punishment is torture. Some is inclined to reduce the harshness of the punishment, and interpret it as imprisonment, J.R. Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable; Metaphor, Narrative, and Theology in the Synoptic Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 76.

⁷ Moses I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* [org. 1980], ed. Brent D. Shaw (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1998), 77. There is a need to explore further the issue of Judaism and slavery. I am currently reading with two books on the issue, *The Curse of Ham; Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University, 2003) by David M. Goldenberg and *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2005) by Catherine Hezser, but I have yet to finish them and cannot include their insights in this paper.

⁸ "For modern commentators, slaves and slavery have often been, first and foremost, metaphorical. For Jesus, slaves and slavery were part of the fabric of everyday life." Jennifer Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 129.

⁹ Beavis, "Ancient Slavery as an Interpretive Context for Servant Parables with Special Reference to the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-8)" in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 111, No. 1 (1992), 37-38 and 40.

¹⁰ "Just as no thanks are due to the slave for fulfilling his *natural societal role*, so it is in our relationship with God." John Nolland, *Word Biblical Commentary; Luke 9:21-18:34*, eds David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Word Books: Dallas, 1993), 843. Nolland does not condone the institution of slavery, he regards it as a natural institution in the ancient world, therefore it is an "available image" to describe the obligations we own to God.

¹¹ Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, 172.

to reach an objective, thus they are unable to hold subject positions. Without any social recognition they are without honour, they have no role to assert or defend.¹²

The lack of honour and autonomy affected their rights to protect themselves. Slaves were regularly exposed to violence because they were without bodily integrity.¹³ Here we see the connection to masculinity. If the dominant ideology holds that "man" is the perfect human it reduces the quality and dignity of everyone else. This has a profound impact on their social and judicial rights. Jonathan Walters notes that sexual relations with low status women were not the concern of the law. Similarly to slaves they were outside the law and socially they had no honour: "[...] the right to protect one's body from sexual assault [...], is a right only allowed to certain categories of people, those who are respectable citizens of good birth and social standing."¹⁴ This offers us a way to understand the (ab)use of power and authority in those parables because constructions of masculinity served to legitimize violence against slaves.¹⁵

Hypothesis

Both slavery and masculinity are emerging trends in New Testament studies and although these two issues have not been entirely separated, especially the work of Jennifer Glancy have touched upon both slavery and masculinity,¹⁶ they have in general not crossed each others tracks.¹⁷ I will to combine gender studies with studies done on masculinity and slavery in the Greco-Roman world to interpret parables of Jesus where we find master-slave relations (for

¹² Patterson, *Slavery as Social Death*, 79-80 and 96-97. This is only a generalization, we find exceptions of this in the Greco-Roman world.

¹³ Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 12-16. See also DuBois, *Slaves and Other Objects*, 101-13. In some parables we see that violence is in fact quite excessive: torture (Matt 18:34), cut in half (Luke 12:46), or a severe beating (12:47).

¹⁴ Jonathan Walters, "Invading the Roman Body; Manliness and Impenetrability in Roman Thought" in *Roman Sexualities* ed. Judith P. Hallett and Marilyn B. Skinner (New Jersey, Princeton University, 1997), 36.

¹⁵ "In the eyes of the law slaves were property pure and simple [...] Slaves' bodies were entirely at their masters disposal." Craig A. Williams *Roman Homosexuality* [org. 1999] (New York: Oxford University, 2010), 31.

¹⁶ Glancy's "Protocols of Masculinity in the Pastoral Epistles" pages 235-64 in *New Testament Masculinities*, ed. Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, Semeia Studies 45, 2003) deals directly with masculinity, but do not discuss slavery. When it comes to Glancy's work on slavery like *Slavery in Early Christianity* and "Obstacles to Slaves' Participation in the Corinthian Church" in *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 117, No 3 (1998) issues of masculinity are only made implicit, but her work can be transferred to a discussion of masculinity. This is due to Glancy's attention to how slavery and bodies, especially as vulnerable bodies, are connected. Therefore the text that most explicit relates masculinity and slavery to each other have Paul's beaten body at the centre, "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11:23-25) *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 123, No 1 (2004).

¹⁷ Most studies on masculinity in The New Testament have had a focus on Jesus or the upper class in society see for instance C.M. Conway, *Behold the Man; Jesus and Greco-Roman Masculinity* (New York: Oxford University, 2008) or *New Testament Masculinities*. Harrill discusses bodies, manhood and slavery in *Slaves in The New Testament*, 35-57, but it he does not develop the theme of masculinity further. There has also been some studies on Paul and masculinity, see "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11:23-25)" and "Paul's Masculinity" by Jennifer Larson (*Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol 123, No. 1 (2004).

instance Luke 12:42-47 and 17:7-10). I will argue that while masculinity is not not explicit present in the parables and reflect the concerns of modern interpreters, there are reasons to consider ideals of masculinity as implicitly present in the relationship between the master and the slave. The implicit masculinity is taken for granted in an ancient context because it constitutes a part of their reality. That masculinity is taken for granted, but always present is not something unique to ancient minds. It is a shared quality within our tradition, and constitutes one of the reasons for why I include masculinity.¹⁸

I work with a hypothesis that consists of three interrelated parts. First, ideologies of masculinity served to legitimize violence of slaves. This is built upon two premises; namely that masculine identity in the Greco-Roman world is defined by self-control and the ability to dominate others,¹⁹ and that it is constructed in opposition of people who are identified as *not-men*.²⁰ Second, gender in antiquity was conceived in as a hierarchy,²¹ rather than a biological binary opposition, and defined through social status and praxis.²² In that sense gender was connected to performance. Being male was to be in a position where one could perform the expected actions connected to one's gender. The strong performative element made gender a relative unstable category or what we may call a fixed/fluid category,²³ meaning that gender was something malleable.²⁴ The consequence is that to be born a man, anatomically speaking, was not a secure position to be defined as a man: "Symbolically, no slave had a phallus."²⁵ Due to the ideologically constructed difference between freeborn men and slaves, my

¹⁸ Stephen D. Moore "O Man, Who Art Thou...?"; Masculinity Studies and New Testament Studies" in *New Testament Masculinities*, 1. Lin Foxhall, "Introduction", in *When Men Were Men; Masculinity, Power and Identity in Classical Antiquity*, ed. Lin Foxhall and John Salmon (London: Routledge, 1998), 1.

¹⁹ Craig A. Williams, *Roman Homosexuality*, 170.

²⁰ Jonathan Walters has dubbed this group unmen, "Invading the Roman Body; Manliness and Impenetrability in Roman Thought". See also Anderson and Moore, "Matthew and Masculinities", 68-71. In this group we women, children, eunuchs, slaves and so forth.

²¹ This is both related to social evaluation and, if one accepts Thomas Laqueur's one-sex model (*Making Sex; Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*, Cambridge/London: Harvard University, 1992), biology.

²² See Conway, *Behold the Man* (New York: Oxford University, 2008), 14-34 and Anderson and Moore, "Matthew and Masculinities" 68-71.

²³ This concept is borrowed from Denise Kimber Buell in *Why This New Race; Ethnic Reason in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University, 2005). Kimber Buell argues that ethnicity/race in antiquity should be understood as both fixed and fluid categories: "[...] by analyzing ancient constructions and negotiations of ethnicity and in terms of a dialectic between fixity and fluidity, we can account for the wide range of elements invoked to define ancient ethnicity/race and the functions of the elements.", 36 see further 37-41. In my opinion this should be transmitted to gender as well.

²⁴ This was not only a rhetoric device to reduce a man's value; ancient people were prone to think that "feminine behaviour" could make men female. Conway, *Behold the Man*, 16-19.

²⁵ Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 25.

proposition is that we need to differ between the oppression of male slaves and female slaves, and that we need to develop analytical tools to that capture these differences.²⁶

Third, masculinity and slavery are significantly related through violence and bodies: “Demosthenes said with a rhetorical flourish (22.55) that the greatest difference between the slave and the free man is that the former “answerable with his body for all offences”.²⁷ Indeed slaves would sometimes just be labeled as bodies.²⁸ How masculinity and violence is connected is shown in the article “Taking it Like a Man” by Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson. They show how Eleazar’s wife and seven sons demonstrate their superior masculinity through their self control during terrible pain and torture.²⁹ Their dignified behaviour and self control is contrasted by Antiochus’ actions who exhibits a complete lack of self control which strips him of his masculinity.³⁰

Lastly, I will give a brief comment on Christianity and slavery. Slavery was an object of discussion, but we do not have access to sources that openly challenged the institution.³¹ Rather popular sources like art reified the common and natural existence of master/slave relations, thus it served to maintain slavery as an institution.³² If slavery was a persistent and solid institution in antiquity,³³ is it plausible to imagine that biblical texts challenge it? Due to the lack of other sources, an affirmative answer could easily be accused of a biased reconstruction that sets Christian origins aside from its context and makes it morally superior.³⁴ This is not only methodologically suspect, it also has to ignore significant

²⁶ Here I disagree with Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza who, in the article “Slave Wo/men and Freedom: Some Methodological Reflections” in *Postcolonial Interventions Essays in Honor of R. S. Sugirtharajah* ed. Tat-siong Benny Liew, subsumes both male and female slaves into the category of wo/men (on wo/men see *Jesus: Miriam’s Child, Sophia’s Prophet; Critical Issues in Feminist Christology* [org. 1994] (New York: Continuum, 2004), 42) . But, to put it simply, she overlooks gender difference matters.

²⁷ Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, 161.

²⁸ Glancy, *Slavery in Early Christianity*, 10.

²⁹ Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson, “Taking it Like a Man; Masculinity in 4 Maccabees” in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 117, No. 2 (1998).

³⁰ Moore and Janice Capel Anderson, “Taking it Like a Man”, 254-55.

³¹ Peter Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery From Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1996).

³² Keith Bradley, “The Problem of Slavery in Classical Culture” in *Classical Philology* 92, no 3 (1997), 279-282.

³³ We do not possess a broad range of sources that can reveal how slaves understood slavery. Of course we should expect that they were opposed to their own captivity, but we do not have evidence that manumitted slaves refrained from having slaves themselves or treated their own slaves better than anyone else. Slave dealers were also disregarded: “Ancient slave dealers enjoyed a reputation similar to that of used car-sellers today [...]”. J. Albert Harrill, *Slaves in The New Testament; Literary, Social, and Moral Dimensions* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 126. But that may be a parallel to how executioners were despised, but not the death penalty. Maybe we should conclude that most people did not oppose the slavery as an institution, but to individual episodes of unjust captivity and treatment of slaves.

³⁴ Harrill, *Slaves in The New Testament*, 2.

parts of the textual material in The New Testament. Furthermore we should not automatically expect that Christians did not abuse slaves physically and sexually.³⁵

Masculinity and Antiquity

The introduction of masculinity to the parables is a text external factor, it is not deduced from the text alone. Therefore we have to approach the in a comparative perspective; do we find parallel texts that provides us with interpretive clues? But How did the ancient people understand masculinity? But the sources available to us reflect the elite's view of gender,³⁶ but we do not know to what degree the ideology of the elite corresponded with the popular traditions, if it was entirely different, or if there were several ideologies that opposed each other.

Colleen Conway's response to this problem is to employ the concept of hegemonic masculinity. This could explain how dominant ideologies that supported the elite influenced subordinated groups of people, but still maintain differences between the levels in a stratified society.³⁷ Hegemonic masculinity was introduced in the article "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity" written by Tim Carrigan, Bob Connell (now R.W. Connell), and John Lee.³⁸ First it understands masculinity in plural, we can only speak about masculinities. Second, masculinity is defined through social practice and it is embedded in social institutions.³⁹ Needless to say, it is an anti-essentialist understanding of gender roles. Male identity is fluid and performative.⁴⁰ Third, the introduction of hegemony makes the connection between masculinity and power.⁴¹ First it creates a hierarchy that supports and legitimates the position of the already powerful. Second, since everyone can not inhabit a position of power, we a majority of people who complicitly sustain the hegemony, because it is in their benefit to do so.⁴²

³⁵ In any case we should expect that they did, first, because a prohibition is not explicitly stated, and, second, because it was a common practice in antiquity.

³⁶ Conway, *Behold the Man*, 9. In addition "[...] we need more discussion of the extent to which the social construction of gender in Aramaic-speaking Palestine followed the same lines [as Greek and Roman gender ideology]." Maud W. Gleason, "By Whose Standards (If Anybody's) Was Jesus a Man?" in *New Testament Masculinities*, 327.

³⁷ Conway, *Behold the Man*, 10.

³⁸ Tim Carrigan, Bob Connell, and John Lee. "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity" in *Theory and Society* 14, no. 5 (1985).

³⁹ Carrigan, Connell, John Lee, "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity", 589-91.

⁴⁰ This must be seen in a historical and social context, not as rapid shifts in male identity and expressions of individuality. Change is more likely to be glacial, we seldom do not notice the process of changes when it happens.

⁴¹ Carrigan, Bob Connell, and Lee, "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity", 578-581.

⁴² Carrigan, Bob Connell, and Lee, "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity", 592.

Hegemonic masculinity has proved to be an influential and adaptable concept that has been employed by several different academic disciplines,⁴³ but it is a severely contested concept.⁴⁴ I am of the opinion that hegemonic masculinity can be useful in this context if we allow it to be modified by its critics. For instance an important feature of hegemonic masculinity is that it is related to social practice, therefore its structure of domination moves beyond a gender division, and over to other social structure: “gender “intersects” - better, interacts – with interacts with race and class.”⁴⁵ Here Connell relates the idea of masculinity to “intersectionality”. Intersectionality seeks to understand human relations as a set of multiplicative categories, rather than binary oppositions. Intersectionality seek to analyse the complicated structures that constructs our identity and material position in society.⁴⁶ But here we reach a dead end of sorts, hopefully it will only be temporary. Part of the work I am doing now is to do more research on intersectionality, and to figure out how hegemonic masculinity can be integrated in the studies of masculinity in antiquity without going into any of its pitfalls.

Finishing remarks

This paper stands as an unfinished product, but I hope I have been able to show where I want to go with my work and why I consider it relevant. It has been important to me to consider a range of possible approaches to the topisc and evaluate them in light of modern theory. Issues of masculinity and slavery is fraught with methodological problems, mainly due to the scarcity of sources, and their skewed character, but since we are working ideological representations of identity, we can investigate the gaps⁴⁷ in the text, search for what is left out, and fill in the gaps with other texts and information that we have at hand. Thus, where the texts stops we move on, and conceptualize further what is only implied in the text. Rather than to limit ourselves to the parables, and submit to the texts regime, we work with *possible*

⁴³ For an overview see R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity; Rethinking the Concept” in *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (2005), 830 and 833-35.

⁴⁴ Unfortunatley I do not have the space to give an overview of the critique, but it is found among others in Stephen M. Whitehead, *Men and Masculinities; Key Themes and New Directions* (Cambridge/Malden: Polity, 2002), Tony Jefferson, “Subordinating Hegemonic Masculinity” in *Theoretical Criminology* 6 (2002), “Connell’s Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique” av Demetrakis Z. Demetriou i *Theory and Society* 30 no 3, 2001. Connell has defended his position to this critique in for instance R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity; Rethinking the Concept”.

⁴⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, (Cambridge: Polity, 2005, 2nd edition), 75.

⁴⁶ Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, “Introduction”, in *Predjudice and Christian Beginnings; Investigating Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies*, ed. Laura Nasrallah and Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Minneapolis, Fortress, 2009), 7.

⁴⁷ See Wolfgang Iser *The Implied Reader; Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* [org. 1972] (Baltimore, The John Hopkins University, 1974), 274-94.

interpretations.⁴⁸ What probably makes it possible to relate modern conceptions of masculinity to antiquity's is the performative element of masculinity: "[...] virility was in antiquity associated not with the heterosexual dyad but rather with mastery."⁴⁹ If masculinity is related to performance we can analyse how the characters in the parables act with attention bodies. This means that whether this approach is useful or not depends on what the models for interpreting the parables contribute something into a New Testament discourse. With this description, I am leaning towards a narrative understanding of history which is heavily influenced by Hayden White.⁵⁰ A second influence can be traced to new historicism.⁵¹

There has never been one consistent conception of antiquity. If history is supposed to be intelligible it has to be arranged into a coherent textual unit.⁵² Such a process can never be entirely objective,⁵³ rather it is influenced by the researcher, the academic community, and the trends and affiliations within this community. Therefore there is a need to be critical of the existing discourses on the objects we wish to study. "Scholars at times uncritically construct the ancient Greeks as our ancestors, as the heroic inventors of philosophy and democracy, almost finding a utopian past in antiquity, a site of democracy and philosophical conversation [...]"⁵⁴ If the process of writing the history of antiquity have been coloured by identification, there have been introduced two disruptions that have rendered the object strange and uncomfortable, namely sexuality and slavery.⁵⁵ The same process of identification accounts for Christianity as well,⁵⁶ so do the disruptions. In this paper I have argued for the need to

⁴⁸ See Schüssler Fiorenze, *Jesus and the Politics of Interpretation* (New York, London: Continuum, 2000), 79.

⁴⁹ Page DuBois, "Ancient Masculinities" in *New Testament Masculinities*, 321.

⁵⁰ Hayden White *Tropics of Discourse; Essays in Cultural Criticism* [org. 1978] (Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University: 1985) and *The Content of the Form; Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* [org. 1987] (Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University: 1990).

⁵¹ See Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt's *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago, 2000).

⁵² This follows Hayden White's arguments of how history is written: "Many historians continue to treat their "facts" as though they were "given" and refuse to recognize, unlike most scientists, that they are not so much found as constructed by the kinds of questions which the investigator asks of the phenomena before him." See the collection of essays in *Tropics of Discourse; Essays in Cultural*. The quote was from page 43.

⁵³ See for instance Gerald West, *Biblical Hermeneutics of Liberation; Modes of Reading the Bible in the South African Context* [org. 1991] (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 1995), 21-46, and Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said; Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon, 1992), 80-105.

⁵⁴ Dubois, *Slaves and Other Objects*, 6-7.

⁵⁵ Sexuality and slavery have been issues of controversy in classical studies, see for instance Martha Nussbaum ix-xiv in *Roman Homosexuality* [org. 1999] (New York; Oxford University, 2010) by Craig Williams on sexuality, and on slavery Brent D. Shaw in "'A Wolf by the Ears", 5-7 in M. I. Finley *Ancient Society and Modern Ideology in Historical Context*.

⁵⁶ My personal opinion is that this is a stronger trait in theology because of the religious interest invested in theological disciplines. Although I cannot developement this argument further, I agree with many of James G. Crossley's arguments in his critique New Testament research in *Why Christianity Happened; A Sociohistorical Account of Christian Origins* (Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 1-34. In this paper the primary interest lies not on sexuality in itself, but in a discourse of masculinity one can hardly avoid it. Issues of

recognize and include oppressive structures in antiquity that are part of Christianity's cultural origin. It follows a sort of ethos I picked up from Hayden White: "The contemporary historian has to establish the value of the study of the past, not as an end in itself, but as a way of providing perspectives in the present that contribute to the solution of problems peculiar to our own time."⁵⁷

Literature

- Anderson, Janice Capel. and Stephen .D. Moore. "Matthew and Masculinity" in *New Testament Masculinities*. Ed. S.D. Moore and J.C. Anderson. Society of Biblical Literature, Semeia Studies 45. Atlanta, 2003.
- "Taking it Like a Man; Masculinity in 4 Maccabees" in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 117, No. 2 (1998).
- Beavis, Mary Ann. "Ancient Slavery as an Interpretive Context for Servant Parables with Special Reference to the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-8)" in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 111, No. 1 (1992).
- Bradley, Keith. "The Problem of Slavery in Classical Culture" in *Classical Philology* Vol. 92, No. 3 (1997).
- Carrigan Tim, Bob Connell, and John Lee. "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity" in *Theory and Society* 14, no. 5 (1985).
- Connell, R.W. *Masculinities*. Cambridge: Polity, 2005, 2nd edition.
- Connell, R.W. and James W. Messerschmidt. "Hegemonic Masculinity; Rethinking the Concept" in *Gender and Society* Vol. 19, no. 6 (2005)
- Crossan, John Dominic. *In Parables; The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* [Orig 1973]. Sonoma: Polebridge, 1992.
- Crossley, James G. *Why Christianity Happened; A Sociohistorical Account of Christian Origins* (Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 1-34.
- Davies, W.D. and D.C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew; Volume 2, The International Critical Commentary* ed. J.A. Emerton, C.E.B. Cranfield and G.N. Stanton. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991.
- Demetriou, Demetrakis Z. "Connell's Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique" in *Theory and Society* 30 no 3, 2001

sexuality have been, of course, infested with political and religious interests. See Dale B. Martin *Sex and the Single Savior; Gender and Sexuality in Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville:Westminster John Knox, 2006).

⁵⁷ White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 41.

- Dubois, Page. *Slaves and Other Obejcts*. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2003.
- Page DuBois, "Ancient Masculinities" in *New Testament Masculinities*. Ed. S.D. Moore and J.C. Anderson. Society of Biblical Literature, Semeia Studies 45. Atlanta, 2003.
- Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt's *Practicing New Historicism*. Chicago/London: University of Chicago, 2000.
- Garnsey, Peter. *Ideas of Slavery From Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1996).
- Glancy, Jennifer. "Obstacles to Slaves' Participation in the Corinthian Church" in *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 117, No 3 (1998)
- "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11:23-25) *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 123, No 1 (2004).
- *Slavery in Early Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.
- Gleason, Maud W. "By Whose Standards (If Anybody's) Was Jesus a Man?" in *New Testament Masculinities* Ed. S.D. Moore and J.C. Anderson. Society of Biblical Literature, Semeia Studies 45. Atlanta, 2003.
- Harrill, J. Albert. *Slaves in The New Testament; Literary, Social, and Moral Dimensions*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.
- Herzog, William R. *Parables as Subversive Speech; Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994.
- Iser, W. *The Implied Reader; Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* Baltimore. The John Hopkins University, 1974 [ger. org. 1972].
- Jefferson, Tony. "Subordinating Hegemonic Masculinity" in *Theoretical Criminology* 6 (2002).
- Kimber Buell, Denise. *Why This New Race; Ethnic Reason in Early Christianity*. New York: Columbia University, 2005.
- Laquer, Thomas. *Making Sex; Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. Cambridge/London: Harvard University, 1992.
- Moore, Stephen, D. "O Man, Who Art Thou...?"; Masculinity Studies and New Testament Studies"pages 1-22 in *New Testament Masculinities*. Ed. S.D. Moore and J.C. Anderson. Society of Biblical Literature, Semeia Studies 45. Atlanta, 2003.
- Nolland, John. *Word Biblical Commentary; Luke 9:21-18:34*, eds David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker. Word Books: Dallas, 1993.

- Neyrey, Jerome H. "Jesus, Gender, and the Gospel of Matthew", in *New Testament Masculinities*, Ed. S.D. Moore and J.C. Anderson. Society of Biblical Literature, Semeia, Studies 45.
- Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death; A Comparative Study*. Cambridge/London: Harvard University, 1982.
- Shaw, Brent D. "'A Wolf by the Ears'; in M. I. Finley's *Ancient Society and Modern Ideology* in Historical Context" in *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* [org. 1980], ed. Brent D. Shaw. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1998.
- Fiorenza, E.S. *But She Said; Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation*. Boston: Beacon, 1992.
- Jesus and the Politics of Interpretation (New York, London: Continuum, 2000).
- *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet; Critical Issues in Feminist Christology*. New York: Continuum, 2004 [først utgave: 1994].
- "Slave Wo/men and Freedom: Some Methodological Reflections" in *Postcolonial Interventions Essays in Honor of R. S. Sugirtharajah* ed. Tat-siong Benny Liew
- "Introduction", in *Predjudice and Christian Beginnings; Investigating Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies*, ed. Laura Nasrallah and Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. Minneapolis, Fortress, 2009.
- Walters, Jonathan. "Invading the Roman Body; Manliness and Impenetrability in Roman Thought" from *Roman Sexualities* ed. J. P. Hallett and M.B. Skinner. New Jersey, Princeton University, 1997.
- West, Gerald. *Biblical Hermeneutics of Liberation; Modes of Reading the Bible in the South African Context*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 1995 [org. 1991].
- White, Hayden. *Tropics of Discourse; Essays in Cultural Criticism*.(Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University) 1985 [org. 1978].
- *The Content of the Form; Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University: 1990 [org. 1987].
- Whitehead, Stephen M. *Men and Masculinities; Key Themes and New Directions*. Cambridge/Malden: Polity, 2002.
- Williams, Craig A. *Roman Homosexuality*. New York: Oxford University, 2010 [org. 1999].
- Wolf, Eric R. *Envisioning Power; Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis*. Berkely: University of California, 1999.