

# **The Rise of Rome: The Emergence of a New Mode for Exploring the Fourth Gospel**

by

**Beth M. Sheppard, Southwestern College**

Each discipline establishes defining parameters for its practitioners, and at the current time, the field of New Testament studies is poised at the point of genesis for an exciting new breakthrough in exegetical endeavors—the consideration of Roman influences and backgrounds for New Testament texts. Might such an innovation in the field constitute a new paradigm for New Testament studies? As defined by Martha Hale, who was focusing on the profession of library science, “a paradigm is the lens through which members of a discipline observe the phenomena in their areas of responsibility.”<sup>1</sup> Such a lens has an impact on the scholars of a discipline to the extent that paradigms assist them in determining what questions are suitable for academic investigation.<sup>2</sup> Generally, such alterations in the fabric of a discipline’s expectations and definitions, which have alternately been described as “paradigmatic shifts” or “revolutions,” are recognized only in hindsight. Thomas Kuhn, who studied the paradigmatic shifts that have marked the history of physics, maintains that academic revolutions are visible in the publications of a discipline and the formation of specialist societies. Further, when the shift has been fully actualized, elements associated with the new paradigm are incorporated into the curriculum of the discipline.<sup>3</sup> For libraries, changes in an academic field may have an impact on collection development and even reference services, a point that will be further explicated at a later juncture in this paper.

New Testament interpretation has already undergone a number of major paradigm shifts. Some of these revolutions have taken centuries to achieve, while others have gained currency in a relatively short period of time. There is little doubt that one of the most dramatic shifts occurred with the rise of historical criticism, which dominated biblical studies from the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> A second shift occurred in the middle of the twentieth century with the rise of literary criticism.<sup>5</sup> Other paradigmatic revolutions may not appear to be so vivid, altering just a few presuppositions and expectations rather providing a complete overhaul for the discipline.<sup>6</sup> At the current time New Testament studies is poised on the brink of a new paradigm, one that takes into consideration not only Jewish or Greek influences on the text, but also Roman. The first to formally recognize the new model that is just appearing on the horizon is Gregory Riley. He observes that the prevailing tendency for New Testament studies is to focus on the Jewish origins and influences of early Christianity. Riley astutely comments,

We seldom read of “the Greco Roman background” in the same sense as “the Jewish background,” meaning the derivation of Christianity from Greece and Rome . . . Yet each of these cultures, and others besides, contributed to the store of ideas and doctrines that eventuated in the church.<sup>7</sup>

The remark has already been made that paradigms provide the boundaries for scholarly inquiry. The Israel-alone model, the prevailing paradigm that focuses only on the Jewish background of the text, does just this. As long as the "Israel-alone" model exists, the questions that scholars ask of the text and the answers obtained will be Israel-alone questions and answers.<sup>8</sup> Riley suggests expanding the field of study to include both Greek and Roman realms. His acknowledgement of the contribution of Rome is the most radical aspect of his vision. Indeed, the role of Greek culture has already gained a foothold in the discipline and is becoming a more frequent topic of study. This is only natural, since the language in which the New Testament is written is Greek and works that focus on Hellenism have long been a staple of the larger field of biblical studies.<sup>9</sup> The search for Roman elements within the New Testament milieu, however, has been virtually untapped. A perusal of Riley's book itself reveals an index in which Greece is mentioned four times more frequently than Rome.

Exploring Roman concepts in relation to the New Testament is still limited, in large part, to areas where Roman elements are explicit in the text itself. Thus, scholarly attention has concentrated on topics like Paul's Roman Citizenship from Acts,<sup>10</sup> the institution of Roman slavery in relation to Paul's letter to Philemon, and emperor worship in Revelation.<sup>11</sup> A few brave souls have attempted to wade further from these topics by inquiring as to the relationship of Rome to the Bible and the early church, but even so, with only the rare exception,<sup>12</sup> this is done without venturing very far from Pauline texts or Acts.<sup>13</sup> This limitation of a new concept, such as the relationship between Roman culture and New Testament texts, to a handful of well-defined areas of application is characteristic of emerging paradigms.<sup>14</sup> This tendency is only natural and may be explicated by expanding upon a metaphor offered by George Riley. Riley describes the New Testament as a river into which empty numerous tributaries, represented variously by Jewish, Greek, Roman, and other Near Eastern and Mediterranean components. To enlarge upon this image, one may point out that on rare occasions when tributaries join a larger body of water, elements of the contributing streams are still distinguishable in terms of varying currents, temperature differentiations, and even color gradations. This last is certainly the case at Passau, Germany, where the Danube, Inn, and Ilz converge. Each has a distinctive coloration from the silt accumulated on its respective journey, and the three particular hues, blue, green, and black, are still readily apparent for the first mile or so that the three are joined together. The further down river one travels, though, the more the three tributaries mix together, until the three shades of color merge and can no longer be distinguished. New Testament scholars who concentrate on texts in which Rome or Roman cultural distinctives are readily apparent are limiting themselves to spheres of investigation where they can justify their observations by pointing to clearly defined links between their chosen texts and Rome. They are, as it were, not far from the point where the Roman tributary enters the river. What is needed, however, are forays further downstream, where Roman, Greek, and Jewish traditions have been blended. At that juncture, scholars may likely take two methodological approaches in describing the relationship between Roman elements and New Testament literature. Each of these will now be briefly explicated.

## The Roman Empire and the New Testament: Two Methodological Approaches

Linking Rome and the New Testament, particularly the Gospels, in the same breath may prove to be a tricky business. Proponents of the “Israel-alone” paradigm will point to writings that indicate that Jewish culture was given special dispensation and privileges by the Romans,<sup>15</sup> privileges which they may presume permitted the Jewish culture to exist untainted from the spread of Roman influence throughout the Empire. Still another group will be reluctant to admit Roman influences on New Testament texts, because its proponents fear that such admissions may diminish the luster of Christianity’s unique contributions to First-Century society. New Testament exegetes are no strangers to this particular outlook, which constantly resurfaces in scholarship. After all, the gospel genre,<sup>16</sup> early Christian rhetoric,<sup>17</sup> and more recently even metaphors relating to early Christian families<sup>18</sup> have been described as blossoming *sui generis*. Eva Marie Lassen demonstrates this position vividly in her analysis of the relationship between metaphors concerning family relationships in early Christian writings and Roman concepts of family. She concludes that the family metaphors contained in the Gospels describe inter-human relationships rather than the hierarchical power relations that characterize the Roman family and thus are a unique contribution of Christianity to the wider culture.<sup>19</sup> One may wryly wonder how the Gospel message would have garnered converts throughout the Roman Empire if its metaphors had been deemed radical or foreign by potential Roman converts<sup>20</sup> or even by Roman Christians, some of whom were in mixed relationships with pagans, while others had been married in accordance with Roman conventions.

One methodological approach employed by those who wish to examine Roman strands within the Gospels will attempt to skirt both of these objections by the application of reader-response techniques. In such a method, scholars will posit hypothetical ancient Roman readers and will inquire to what extent Roman elements might be recognizable to such audiences. Those employing this method seek to determine whether or not a Roman reader, whether correctly or incorrectly, might have drawn parallels between the New Testament text and his or her own situation and context in the first century. Thus, one dodges the issue of whether or not the elements of the New Testament themselves are unique, special, or radical. Instead, the focus falls upon how Romans might have made sense of the texts.

This reader-response mode of argumentation on the part of those investigating Roman contexts also attempts to circumvent criticism from the Israel-alone camp. Indeed, even those who are adamant that only Jewish backgrounds exist for New Testament texts at the level of the original authors or audiences may concede that at some point in the history of the text’s transmission, the New Testament was no doubt read by Roman citizens. As a consequence, scholars may talk of “the understandings of Roman readers” who may view the text from the perspective of their own Roman milieu. This methodological sleight of hand on the part of the interpreter allows consideration to be given to Roman contexts and influences without first attempting to convince proponents of the Israel-alone position that

the text itself, or even the author, was aware of Roman conventions.<sup>21</sup> At the present time, this may be the only methodological option open to those scholars who, to refer back to the river metaphor, assume the existence of a Roman tributary to the river of Christianity but have waded into the waters at a point at which the pericope under examination may not exhibit any obvious Roman elements to justify queries concerning Roman backgrounds.

The thicker-skinned scholars may simply forego the reader-response veneer, taking their cue, instead, from the work of several secular historians of the classical world. Indeed, classicists today are not necessarily discussing whether items and texts are or are not Roman or to what degree. Instead, they are inquiring to what extent texts might reveal Romanization. Ramsey Macmullen describes “Romanization” as “. . . progress toward one single way of life, a thing to be fairly called ‘Roman civilization of the Empire,’” which he notes received its greatest impetus during the lifetime of Augustus.<sup>22</sup> Romanization, as defined by Clifford Ando, is the “absorption and local application of the forms and structures of Roman political and legal thought.”<sup>23</sup> Ando is a political historian, and one may add to his definition that not only is Romanization apparent in the political and legal realm but also in art, local speech, architecture, clothing, leisure, and even family structures—any and all cultural and social elements of Roman civilization that were adopted by the provincials in the ancient world. The New Testament canon, as a collection of texts produced in the Eastern Empire, provides an excellent window through which the process of Romanization may be viewed. The procedure in this mode of investigation is simple. The scholar need only compare various biblical passages with Roman documents or the findings of classical historians to determine whether or not evidence of Romanization may be detected. To illustrate this particular methodological approach, attention will focus on John 17 and the relationship of Jesus to the Father.

### **John 17: The Father-Son Motif as a Clue to Romanization**

When one speaks of Romanization in relation to the Gospels, for better or worse the primary images that may come to mind are those from a movie entitled *Monty Python's Life of Brian*. Though the movie is designed as a “spoof” of early first-century life and believers, the script writers have done an excellent job of portraying Romanization in the Eastern Empire. For instance, the main character, Brian, though a Jew, was fathered by a Roman soldier. Also, there is a delightful scene in which Brian attempts to write graffiti on the walls of several public buildings in Jerusalem. Selecting Latin as the language most suited to convey his message he writes “Romans go home.” The humor in the situation is made manifest when a Roman soldier reads the mural and corrects Brian’s grammar, as the miscreant has not conjugated the verb properly. Ultimately, evidence of Romanization is present in the fact that Brian ends his life on a cross, the Roman means of putting criminals to death.

The writers of this comedy, in depicting life in ancient Israel, were simply embroidering upon information present in the Gospels. In the text known as the Fourth Gospel, for instance, a number of Roman elements are apparent. Jesus is

interrogated by a Roman governor, Pontius Pilate (18:28–19:16), Roman soldiers play a game of dice to win Jesus' garments (19:23–24), and the inscription on the cross upon which Jesus was executed in Roman fashion was written not only in Greek and Hebrew but also Latin (19:20), the language of Rome. While these verses obviously reveal some degree of Romanization, one wonders whether other passages might do the same. The 17<sup>th</sup> chapter of John's Gospel has been selected for this investigation.

John 17, the last chapter of a collection of Jesus' sayings known as the "Johannine Farewell Discourses," takes the form of a prayer. The opening verse is addressed by Jesus to his "Father" and sets out the dominant motif, that of a father-son relationship. This theme is found elsewhere in John's Gospel. For instance, John 20:31 is a verse in which the author of the Gospel asserts that the entire book had been written in order that readers might accept Jesus' identity as the Christ, the Son of God. The Gospel even begins in a similar vein with John the Baptist bearing witness that Jesus is the Son of God. The motif is again employed by Jesus himself when he overturns the tables of the money changers in the temple, a structure that Jesus describes as his "Father's house" (2:16).

Biblical scholars have long looked at the relationship between Jesus and his father in terms of the concept of "agency," a practice in Judaism in which a son may represent the interests of his parent.<sup>24</sup> Though not denying Jewish influences upon the text, there is also the possibility that this particular concept reflects Romanization as well. For instance, Sjef Van Tilborg, who studied the Gospel in relation to the city of Ephesus, a locale with which the Fourth Gospel has been linked in the writings of the Church Fathers, comments that the practice of agency also has correlates in Roman culture. For instance, emperors frequently sent their imperial heirs to reestablish and confirm the power of Rome in Asia. Indeed, Agrippa, Gaius Caesar, Tiberius, and Germanicus all served in this capacity for their natural or adopted fathers.<sup>25</sup>

Yet, the concept of agency alone, be it understood from either a Jewish or Roman perspective, does not explicate Jesus' obscure assertions in chapter 17 with regard to the possession and ownership of Jesus' followers. For instance, in verses 9–10 Jesus states, "I am not praying for the world but for those whom thou hast given me, for they are yours; all mine are thine and thine are mine and I am glorified in them."<sup>26</sup> This peculiar comment may reveal something of Roman family structures and how property ownership was handled within the Roman family unit.

In the Roman world the notion of "family," or *familia*, was a broad concept that included family members associated with the traditional nuclear family as well as servants living within the domicile. The head of the family was known as the *paterfamilias* and was usually the eldest living male and head of the household. The *paterfamilias* exercised *potestas*, or authority, over all members of the family and was the sole possessor of all property.<sup>27</sup> Adult children, including adult married children, even if they did not live in the same household as the *paterfamilias*, were still regarded as subject to the *potestas* of the eldest male. Oddly, not only might adult sons still be in the power of their fathers, but all income that these sons earned did not belong to them; rather, it became the property of the *paterfamilias*. J. A. Crook explains the situation when he writes,

. . . in private life it mattered nothing that you might be forty years old or married or consul of the Roman people; if you were *in potestate* you owned nothing, whatever you acquired accrued automatically to your *paterfamilias*, you could make no gifts, and if you borrowed money to give a dowry to your daughter it was a charge on your *paterfamilias*.<sup>28</sup>

To compensate for the fact that adult sons might be in the position of owning no property, the Romans developed the *peculium*. Although Beryl Rawlson describes this as an allowance or “pocket money,”<sup>29</sup> it might be a substantial sum of money, property, or even slaves<sup>30</sup> over which the adult dependant was given almost complete administrative freedom. Nevertheless, this fund or group of slaves ultimately still belonged to the *paterfamilias*, might be withdrawn by the *paterfamilias* at any juncture, and were part of the estate of the *paterfamilias* when he died.<sup>31</sup>

Jesus’ assertions in chapter 17 that those individuals entrusted to his care really were properly the possessions of his father accords well with the idea that God is Jesus’ *paterfamilias* and that those placed under Jesus’ influence and management were, essentially, Jesus’ *peculium*. In sum, then, this particular pericope reveals a fairly sophisticated degree of Romanization, when that concept is defined as the application of Roman views of family and property to a motif designed to affirm the father-son relationship between Jesus and God.

If scholars, however, are to pursue additional links between the Roman world and the Fourth Gospel, they must have the resources at their disposal to do so. Thus, this emerging trend in New Testament scholarship will have an impact upon theological libraries.

### **The New Paradigm: Implications for Theological Librarians**

The emergence of a new research paradigm that takes into consideration Roman as well as Greek and Jewish aspects of New Testament texts has ramifications not only for Bible curriculums but also for the librarians who support the research efforts of those engaged in the field. A major shift in scholarly focus will require reference librarians to keep abreast of developments and master new areas of expertise. The most obvious implication is the necessity to achieve familiarity not only with Greek and Hebrew, the usual languages associated with biblical studies, but also Latin, a language that heretofore has been the provenance of church historians. Many Protestant biblical scholars have little or no formal training in Latin, which means that they may need to rely upon the expertise of librarians, should they wish to access databases such as *Patrologia Latina* and *L’Année Philologique*. Reference librarians also must be prepared not only to refer researchers to the American Theological Library Association database or other more familiar indices and abstracts such as *New Testament Abstracts* but also to classical resources. Thus, reference librarians may be required to foster skills similar to those employed at institutions that boast integrative studies or multidisciplinary programs at the undergraduate level.

L. McNamara and R. Matre have written precisely on the difficulties encountered when the boundaries between fields of inquiry become blurred. In an article published in 2002 in the *Texas Library Journal*,<sup>32</sup> the authors begin by discussing the problem of defining “integrative studies” and proceed to cite standard descriptions of such programs. Integrative studies involves merging the methodologies of two or more disciplines to create hybrid disciplines and new fields of knowledge. By contrast, multidisciplinary programs involve the use of information from two or more disciplines. The combination of classics and biblical studies would be representative of this latter category. After setting out their definitions, McNamara and Matre then go on to note several “problems” encountered by searchers in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary contexts. They describe students as “one-stop shoppers,” who will search only one available resource and subject, thus missing much of the potential information on a topic. This tendency produces results that “give a false impression of what is available and how one goes about researching that information.”<sup>33</sup> To solve this difficulty, the authors propose bibliographic instruction sessions that are “problem-centered” and involve the demonstration of case studies in which students are guided in researching single topics through a variety of subject areas. Another roadblock to facilitating cross-discipline research is the Library of Congress Classification system, which creates barriers for browsers. McNamara and Matre recommend the use of interdisciplinary subject encyclopedias and the reference collection before jumping in to browse the general collection. The limits of keyword searches, also a problem in executing interdisciplinary searches, may be overcome by focusing on citation trails rather than subject terms. Finally, the authors advocate steering students and researchers toward thesauri and bibliographies to help them to become familiar with the terminologies and materials from widely diverse fields. Though McNamara and Matre primarily are interested in the fact-finding habits of undergraduates, the principles that they advance are sound even for graduate students and researchers. Unfortunately, since the practice of looking at New Testament texts in relation to Roman elements is a newly emerging trend, librarians do not have the luxury of interdisciplinary encyclopedias. As a consequence, theological libraries, at least initially, may benefit from employing specialist librarians from the field of classical studies, who would be familiar with classical reference works, indices, and languages and might assist researchers in this emerging area of study.

By and large, though, the largest implications involve providing access to necessary research materials, an issue both for resource-sharing librarians and those in charge of collection development. Resource-sharing librarians at “stand-alone schools of theology” with no access to the collections of a university classics department, for example, may need to be aware that with the growing interest in classics, the journal designation JRS, depending if one is viewing that abbreviation from the classical or the biblical studies realms, may stand for either the *Journal of Roman Studies* or the *Journal of Religious Studies* when attempting to place Interlibrary Loan requests. Further, until collection development can catch up with supplying resources within the theological library to support this new trend, resource-sharing departments must be prepared for increased demand for their services.

Those in charge of collection development, though, will want to focus on including a variety of electronic and print reference works in their collections. While most libraries already have the ATLA database, that wonderful tool does not index many journals associated with classical studies. For that, one must turn to *L'Année Philologique*,<sup>34</sup> which has already been mentioned above, and *Gnomen*.<sup>35</sup> *Gnomen*, at the present time, is a free database accessible both in English and German. For original texts, libraries might consider *Patrologia Latina*<sup>36</sup> if that is within budget. If not, paper versions of the classical Latin texts that are associated with the late Republic and Early Empire, preferably either in Latin or in parallel Latin and English editions, would be wonderful additions to collections. Further, three print reference resources are recommended. The first is a solid Classical Latin dictionary. Oxford, in particular, is known for producing “weighty Latin dictionaries,” any of which would fit the bill. A second reference work, also from Oxford, is the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Presently the OCD, to which it is generally referred, is in its third edition. This exceptional resource is valuable not only for its entries but also for its listing of abbreviations associated with both the classical authors and their respective works. Frequently, these abbreviations represent the standard citation form in the field. A third item which libraries might highly consider adding to their reference collections is an encyclopedia set currently being published by Brill, *Brill's New Pauly Encyclopedia of the Ancient World*. This is an English translation of the German *Der Neue Pauly*. Only the first volume of this resource has already been printed, but the set will ultimately contain five volumes focused on the classical tradition and fifteen devoted to Greco-Roman antiquity. The editors have placed special focus on the interaction between Greco-Roman culture on the one hand and Christianity and Judaism on the other. This certainly promises to be an invaluable resource. Finally, no discussion of collection development should overlook serials. *The Journal of Roman Studies* would prove invaluable to researchers.

While many other classical resources might be mentioned, the purpose at this juncture is not to provide a comprehensive listing but merely to point the way in which individual libraries may choose to respond to a burgeoning area of research interest amongst New Testament scholars.

## Conclusion

During the course of this exposition an attempt was made to sketch out what may be described as an emerging paradigm in New Testament studies, a current within the existing flow of research in which there is increasing receptivity on the part of scholars to consider early Christian literature in relation to the concept of Romanization. Briefly, the difficulties that scholars may experience in undertaking scholarship from this perspective and two possible methodological approaches were discussed. Then, to demonstrate the rich potential of this mode of enquiry, a brief exegesis of John 17 revealed that the father-son motif present in that pericope accorded well with Roman understandings of the *paterfamilias*, *peculium*, and the role of the son in relation to family property.



Despite talk of methodology and paradigms, such academic investigations cannot occur within a vacuum. Scholars must have access to resources if they are to pursue this line of inquiry. To this end, some recommendations were made with an eye toward theological reference librarianship and collection development. Ultimately, the strength of any scholar will reside in his or her ability to obtain the requisite resources to support specific intellectual pursuits.

Will scholars take up the challenge and look to New Testament texts in seeking evidence of Romanization? Will Latin take its place next to Greek and Hebrew in the curriculum requirements for New Testament doctoral students? Will theological libraries expand their collections to include not only resources traditionally associated with biblical studies but also the Latin classics? These questions merely hint at the considerations that will need to take place in light of what may be a growing trend in New Testament studies. Only time will enable scholars to evaluate the effectiveness and degree of acceptance for this emerging current in scholarship.

## Endnotes

1. Martha Hale, "Paradigmatic Shift in Library and Information Science," in *Library and Information Science Research: Perspectives and Strategies for Improvement*, ed. C.R. McClure and P. Herndon (Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corp, 1991), 343. See also Peter Schwartz and James Ogilvy, *The Emergent Paradigm: Changing Patterns of Thought and Belief* (Analytical Report, Values and Lifestyles Program, April, 1979), 2 and 28.
2. For a fuller exposition, see Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 6.
3. *Ibid.*, 19.
4. This rise of this paradigm is detailed by Edgar Krentz, *The Historical-Critical Method*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975.
5. See the exposition of this paradigm revolution by Norman R. Petersen, *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 25–48.
6. For instance, it might be said that reader-response criticism provided a very real paradigm modification in biblical studies by disabusing practitioners of the assumption that complete objectivity is possible on the part of an interpreter.
7. Gregory Riley, *The River of God* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001), 5.
8. *Ibid.*
9. See, for instance, volume one of Helmut Koester's New Testament Introduction, *History, Culture and Religion of the Hellenistic Age* (NY and Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 1982), or more recently, the volume edited by John J. Collins and Gregory E. Sterling, *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001). In the epilogue of this latter work, Martin Goodman comments that a consensus has arisen over the last twenty-five years in which "no one now would want to deny that many Jews in Palestine were acculturated to some aspects of Greek language, art, commerce, philosophy and literature by the end of the third century BCE" (302).

10. For instance, A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Law and Roman Society in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1963), 144–185.
11. While discussions of the realities of Emperor worship and Christian persecutions are usually associated with Revelation, Richard J. Cassidy provided a bold new reading for the Fourth Gospel that considers the machinations of the Romans. *John's Gospel in New Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992).
12. Some discussion has taken place with regard to Roman imperialism and the Gospels. See, for instance, Richard A. Horsley's *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003).
13. Peter Oakes, ed. *Rome in the Bible and the Early Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002.
14. Kuhn, 23.
15. The efficacy of some of the Jewish dispensations has been questioned by Tessa Rajak, "Was There Roman Charter for the Jews?" *The Journal of Roman Studies* 74 (1984): 107–123.
16. This assumption is discussed and ultimately refuted by Charles Talbert in his book *What is a Gospel? The Genre of the Canonical Gospels* (Macon, GA: Rose Reprints, 1985), 8.
17. Amos Wilder, for instance, recognizes that the "speech modes of Jesus and his followers had deep conditioning factors in the rhetorics of their time" (p. 4) but nevertheless emphasizes, "The Christian movement was creative in various ways . . . (and) brought forth not only new vocabulary and oral patterns but also new literary forms and styles." *Early Christian Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 7.
18. Eva Marie Lassen, "The Roman Family: Ideal and Metaphor" in *Constructing Early Christian Families*, ed. Halvor Moxnes (London: Routledge, 1997), 103–120.
19. *Ibid.*, 115.
20. Basing his observations on Ephesians 5:31, Geoffrey Nathan observes that Christianity may have placed more emphasis on the husband and wife bond in marriage than on the parent and child relationship that characterized Jewish and Roman views of marriage. *The Family in Late Antiquity: The Rise of Christianity and the Endurance of Tradition* (Routledge: London and New York, 2000), 39 and 41. Elsewhere, though, he concedes, "It is also clear that the behavior of Christians was not inconsistent with traditional Roman attitudes about the family . . . Barring the discovery of new evidence on the subject, the first three centuries are largely still a mystery" (p. 53).
21. The debates between the Israel-alone advocates and those who accept the possibility of Roman influences on the New Testament can be fierce. The literature concerning the "trial of Jesus" in the Fourth Gospel is a prime example with the scholarly community divided between those who recognize the procedure before Pilate as a "trial" and those who deny that description on the grounds that the procedure before the Jewish authorities was the "trial." For recent discussions on this issue, see Simon Légasse, *The Trial of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1997), 51 ff., or Alan Watson, *The Trial of Jesus* (Athens,

- GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 48 and 140. Those who are proponents of the “reader-response methodology” may attempt to sidestep this sticky issue entirely by observing that whether or not the procedure before Pilate *was* a trial, it had elements that Roman readers would have recognized as such.
22. Ramsay Macmullen, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), x.
  23. Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), xi.
  24. P. Borgen, “God’s Agent in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Religions in Antiquity*, ed. Jacob Neusner, (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 137–148; A. E. Harvey, “Christ as Agent” in *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament*, ed. L. D. Hurst and N.T. Wright (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 237–250; P. Anderson, “The Having-Sent-Me Father: Aspects of Agency, Encounter, and Irony in the Johannine Father-Son Relationship,” *Semeia* 85: 33–57.
  25. Sjef Van Tilborg, *Reading John in Ephesus* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 55.
  26. Translation from the RSV.
  27. R. P. Saller, *Patriarch, Property and Death in the Roman Family* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 74. On *potestas* see J. A. Crook, *Law and Life of Rome 90 BC – AD 212* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), 107–110.
  28. Crook, 109.
  29. Beryl Rawson, *The Roman Family* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 17.
  30. Eva Marie Lassen, “The Roman Family: Ideal and Metaphor,” in *Constructing Early Christian Families*, ed. Halvor Moxnes (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 106.
  31. Crook, 110.
  32. L. McNamara, and R. Matre, “Interdisciplinary Research: The Role of the Reference Librarian,” *Texas Library Journal*, 78, no. 2 (2002): 71–74.
  33. *Ibid.*, 72.
  34. Information about this database may be obtained from [www.annee-philologique.com/aph](http://www.annee-philologique.com/aph).
  35. The free version of Gnomon on-line is located at [www.gnomon.ku-eichstaett.de/Gnomon/Gnomon.html](http://www.gnomon.ku-eichstaett.de/Gnomon/Gnomon.html).
  36. This database includes works from 200CE to 1216 and is based on the work of Jacques-Paul Migne that was originally published between 1844 and 1865. Subscription information is available at <http://pld.chadwyck.com>.

## Bibliography

- Anderson, Paul. “The Having-Sent-Me Father: Aspects of Agency, Encounter, and Irony in the Johannine Father-Son Relationship.” *Semeia* 85 (1999), 33–57.
- Ando, Clifford. *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

- Borgen, P. "God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel." In *Religions in Antiquity*. Ed. Jacob Neusner. Studies in the History of Religions 14. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968: 137–148.
- Cassidy, Richard J. *John's Gospel in New Perspective*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992.
- Collins, John J. and Sterling, Gregory E., eds. *Hellenism in the Land of Israel*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001.
- Cook, J. A. *Law and Life of Rome, 90 BC–AD 212*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967.
- Hale, Martha. "Paradigmatic Shift in Library and Information Science," in *Library and Information Science Research: Perspectives and Strategies for Improvement*, ed. C. R. McClure and P. Herndon. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corp., 1991.
- Harvey, A. E. "Christ as Agent." In *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament*. Ed. L. Hurst and N. T. Wright. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987: 239–250.
- Horsley, Richard A. *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.
- Koester, Helmut. *History, Culture and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*. NY and Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 1982.
- Krentz, Edgar. *The Historical-Critical Method*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975.
- Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Lassen, Eva Marie, "The Roman Family: Ideal and Metaphor" in *Constructing Early Christian Families*, Halvor Moxnes, ed. (London: Routledge, 1997), 103–120.
- MacMullen, Ramsay. *Romanization in the Time of Augustus*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- McNamara, L., and Matre, R. "Interdisciplinary Research: The Role of the Reference Librarian." *Texas Library Journal*, 78(2), 2002, 71–74.
- Nathan, Geoffrey, S. *The Family in Late Antiquity: The Rise of Christianity and the Endurance of Tradition*. Routledge: London and New York, 2000.
- Oakes, Peter, ed. *Rome in the Bible and the Early Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002.
- Petersen, Norman R. *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978.
- Rajak, Tessa. "Was There a Roman Charter for the Jews?" *The Journal of Roman Studies* 74 (1984): 107–123.
- Rawlson, Beryl, Ed. *The Family in Ancient Rome*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986.
- Riley, Gregory. *The River of God*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001.
- Schwartz, Peter and Ogilvy, John. *The Emerging Paradigm: Changing Patterns of Thought and Belief*. Analytical Report, Values and Lifestyles Program, April, 1979.
- Sherwin-White, A. N. *Roman Law and Roman Society in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1963.
- Talbert, Charles H. *What is a Gospel? The Genre of the Canonical Gospels*. Macon, GA: Rose Reprints, Mercer Press, 1977.
- Van Tilborg, Sjeff. *Reading John in Ephesus*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996.

Wilder, Amos. *Early Christian Rhetoric: The Language of the Gospel*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971.



#### Copyright and Use:

**As an ATLAS user, you may print, download, or send articles for individual use according to fair use as defined by U.S. and international copyright law and as otherwise authorized under your respective ATLAS subscriber agreement.**

**No content may be copied or emailed to multiple sites or publicly posted without the copyright holder(s)' express written permission. Any use, decompiling, reproduction, or distribution of this journal in excess of fair use provisions may be a violation of copyright law.**

This journal is made available to you through the ATLAS collection with permission from the copyright holder(s). The copyright holder for an entire issue of a journal typically is the journal owner, who also may own the copyright in each article. However, for certain articles, the author of the article may maintain the copyright in the article. Please contact the copyright holder(s) to request permission to use an article or specific work for any use not covered by the fair use provisions of the copyright laws or covered by your respective ATLAS subscriber agreement. For information regarding the copyright holder(s), please refer to the copyright information in the journal, if available, or contact ATLA to request contact information for the copyright holder(s).

#### About ATLAS:

The ATLA Serials (ATLAS®) collection contains electronic versions of previously published religion and theology journals reproduced with permission. The ATLAS collection is owned and managed by the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) and received initial funding from Lilly Endowment Inc.

The design and final form of this electronic document is the property of the American Theological Library Association.