

Chapter One

Class Struggle in the New Testament!

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Back in his 1992 presidential address to the Society of Biblical Literature, Norman K. Gottwald observed that the embodiment of biblical studies in a pervasive capitalist culture “blunts or denies” the existence of class divisions within society. This functions as a blind spot within exegesis. He suggested that “[e]xtremes of wealth and power tend to make their appearance in biblical studies—as in popular opinion about contemporary society—as if they are given ‘facts of nature,’ requiring no further explanation.”¹ Writing from the perspective of social-scientific biblical criticism, Gottwald made a case for the analysis of class as an important interpretive category within the study of the ancient world.

Gottwald’s address came at a cultural moment when class analysis, although practiced in biblical studies for some time, had undergone significant adjustment, if it had not been abandoned altogether. A number of prominent North American scholars were increasingly dissatisfied with what they saw as a clunky and obtuse category. These same scholars preferred to speak of “social status,” which could take account of the multiple and intersecting indicators of identity that were embedded within a particular socioeconomic milieu, for instance, gender, ethnicity, legal status, education, and other forms of social privilege and, conversely, disadvantage. In some cases, it was suggested, ancient people exhibited significant levels of “status inconsistency” in which they enjoyed high status in one category, say gender or legal standing, but lacked social power in several others. Moreover, in the Roman world, slaves could take on any number of roles in society and were occasionally vested with considerable privilege and power, despite remaining unfree and subservient to their masters. Traditional class analysis, it was thus asserted, did not adequately take account of this social complexity.

Recent momentum, however, suggests that class might once again be emerging as a significant analytical category in biblical studies. This collection of essays you hold in your hands is part of a broader effort to reinvigorate an exploration of class and class struggle within the study of the New Testament and its world. Authors variously draw on the tools of critical theory and contemporary debates about class to unpack both the political and emancipatory potential, and unsubversive and counterrevolutionary elements, of this corpus of ancient religious texts and traditions. In doing so, the volume seeks to offer new and innovative ways of engaging class and class struggle that move beyond the so-called “reductionistic” or “essentializing” application of yesteryear (however much this charge was overblown). While some chapters utilize a more traditional Marxist take on class, as signifying one’s relationship to the means of production, others take class as a point of departure in tackling exegetical or ideological issues at the intersection of collective struggle, economics, entrepreneurialism, imperialism, the military, slavery, gifting, cultural production, and individual populism. Class thus features as the unifying concept but is by no means its only focus.

DEFINING CLASS AND CLASS STRUGGLE

The *Communist Manifesto*, coauthored by the revolutionary socialists Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx in 1848, famously begins with the declaration “The history of all existing society is the history of class struggles.”² Class struggle signifies a sense of social and economic conflict. From a Marxist perspective, this conflict arises because of an inequitable relationship between the classes in a particular society over the control and ownership of the production process, that is, the *means of production*. At its broadest signification, “class” refers to divisions in society. It comes from the Latin *classis*, introduced by Servius Tullius (57–34 BCE), who divided the ancient Romans into various classes for military purposes. This resulted in the production of two opposing groups in Roman society: the aristocrats and the commoners or plebs. According to Marx, every culture involves a class conflict between a minority of people who own the means of production and a larger group of people who do not own the means of production and so are forced to sell their labor in order to survive. Class within the Marxist tradition is necessarily a relationship. This relationship is intimately connected to the relations of production in which men and women engage in the processes of economic production and are further defined either through property relations or as labor relations. Within this volume, then, class is not reduced to an isolated

marker of individual identity (see below), but rather is understood within this broader context of struggle over resources, ideas, and power.

Marx located the central conflict driving capitalism—that is, the political-economic system that has dominated the West and now the globe since the industrial revolution—as occurring between the bourgeoisie, who own the means of production, and the proletariat, who own nothing but their labor power, which they are forced to sell in order to survive. It is the essence of a class society that the smaller class, in virtue of its control of the means of production, can exploit, or appropriate a surplus off, the larger class group.

On the one hand, the bourgeoisie own the means of production and are employers of wage labor. The means of production refers to the land, factories, and machinery necessary to produce commodities, as well as capital to invest in such infrastructure. As the bourgeoisie were the creators and principal benefactors of the capitalist system, the term has developed negative connotations in left-wing circles. At the same time, however, Marx and Engels assert that the bourgeoisie had been in an earlier day a revolutionary class because it challenged a decaying feudal economy in which the aristocratic class were the holders of political power and property through birthright. The bourgeois revolution had resulted in a giant leap forward in the productive forces of society. With the advent of industrial capitalism, however, the bourgeoisie was seen by Marx to have fulfilled its purpose and acted only as a barrier to further development of human potential.

On the other hand, the proletariat (sometimes referred to as the “working class”) does not own the means of production and must sell its labor power in order to survive. Labor power refers to the skills or strength of workers to produce commodities which are sold on the market for a profit which is then fed back to the bourgeois class. The term “proletariat” derives from the Latin *proletarius*, referring to the lowest class of Roman citizen who contributed nothing to society except for his offspring (*proles*). The proletariat was held by Marx to be the only true revolutionary class within capitalist society, primarily because the conditions of industrial employment had concentrated workers of this type into factories and other communal workplaces, thereby developing their class consciousness and making them easier to organize for revolutionary action.

According to Marx, the class antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is grounded in the bourgeoisie’s goal of turning a profit on the sale of commodities produced. To do so, they pay the workers the lowest possible wage while having them attain the highest level of productivity, thereby producing “surplus value.” These basic social relations lay a foundation upon which various legal and political institutions are determined;

a society's politics, laws, education, and culture are enmeshed by the fundamental antagonism that undergirds the dominant arrangements of power within that society.

While the class struggle under capitalism consists of this basic distinction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, it is possible to identify further nonbasic class groups which may or may not feature in the struggle. This includes, for instance, landlords and other social groups such as the intelligentsia and "petite bourgeoisie" made up of aspiring shopkeepers, clerks, and students. On the other extreme are the *lumpenproletariat*, which consists of the unemployed, criminals, and those residing outside of the wage-labor system. These additional classes complicate the pattern of class relationships somewhat. However, it should be noted that while Marxist analysis emphasizes the role of certain classes or groups in the struggle, this does not mean other nonbasic classes or societal divisions (e.g., gender, ethnicity, race, culture) are irrelevant. Within Marx's original theory, however, the proletariat is the only true revolutionary class within capitalism, for the structures of their particular working environments fosters an ability to become conscious of their class existence; the first stage required to overthrow the exploitative chains of capital!

While some may object to using categories developed primarily to address industrial capitalism to investigate the ancient world, or indeed any other context, analysis of class is nonetheless an extremely useful and legitimate heuristic tool that can bring out aspects of ancient society often ignored or misunderstood by contemporary interpreters. Even when the categories of class and class struggle do not appear to fit, they prove decisively just how different the ancient world was from the modern one. The agrarian world of the New Testament was, of course, precapitalist and so not built on a class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Regardless, the antagonism refracted in its texts and traditions still constitutes the control of the means of production by one class (namely, the propertied elite) over another (the peasant and unfree). Because in antiquity, land and slaves were the principal means of production, a small class of wealthy landowners was able to extract a weighty surplus. This became the indispensable basis of the political-economic system.

The New Testament writings were composed in various locations that all fell under the purview of the Roman Empire, which played a significant contextual role in the formation and development of early Christianity. In recent years, much scholarly attention has focused on the pervasive imperial structure of ancient Rome and what this would have meant for Jesus, his earliest followers, and the various authors of the New Testament. In such a hierarchical structure, the Emperor ruled autocratically along with the help

of a small ruling elite scattered among the provinces and among whom most of the wealth, land, and social power was concentrated. The bureaucrats, military leaders, and religious-political officials that comprised this elite population consisted of a small minority of the total population. To put it in simple Marxist terms: this small class of mostly city-based elite controlled the means of production.

At the other end of the spectrum was the broad class of peasants, artisans, and slaves who worked the land, produced goods, and performed other menial tasks, but did not control the means of production. Peasants comprised the overwhelming majority of the population (see figure 1.1). The labor-power of the peasant and artisan classes produced the material wealth that, rendered through taxes and rents, sustained the parasitical lifestyle of the city-based elite. Most peasants lived at, slightly above, or below subsistence level. The smaller subclass of artisans, often associated with urban contexts but more acquainted with peasants and village-life, produced goods and services. Slaves existed at multiple levels of social prestige and carried out a number of household and manual labor tasks. In between the large mass of peasants and the ruling elite was the retainer class, made up of officials, soldiers, household servants, and personal retainers, who served the ruling class in a variety of administrative tasks and duties. Even so, retainers came from diverse backgrounds and could acquire different levels of social power depending on role or function (see below). Entrepreneurial businessmen and women were anomalous to the ancient world. While a minority of merchants were occasionally able to accumulate wealth through trade, they were generally unable to take ownership of the land, which was required if one was to control the primary basis for economic production. It also bears mentioning that we ought to be cautious of simplistically equating the peasant class with the revolutionary (proletarian) class, as some well-meaning liberationist exegetes have done. Beholden to the aristocracy, the peasant class never fully developed a distinctive class consciousness as did the bourgeoisie prior to and during the rise of capitalism.

As in the case of capitalism, it is the essence of a class society that the smaller basic class, in virtue of its control of the means of production (i.e., by owning the factories or in the case of the New Testament world, the land), can exploit, or appropriate a surplus off, the larger class group. While under capitalism, the surplus is typically extracted by the exploitation of wage labor, in the ancient world, exploitation usually took its form in unfree labor (including slavery, serfdom, and debt bondage) and, more typical for first-century Palestine, the letting of land and house property to leasehold tenants, in return for rent paid either in money, kind, or services. Hired labor was also used to a small degree to extract a surplus, but because free workers were

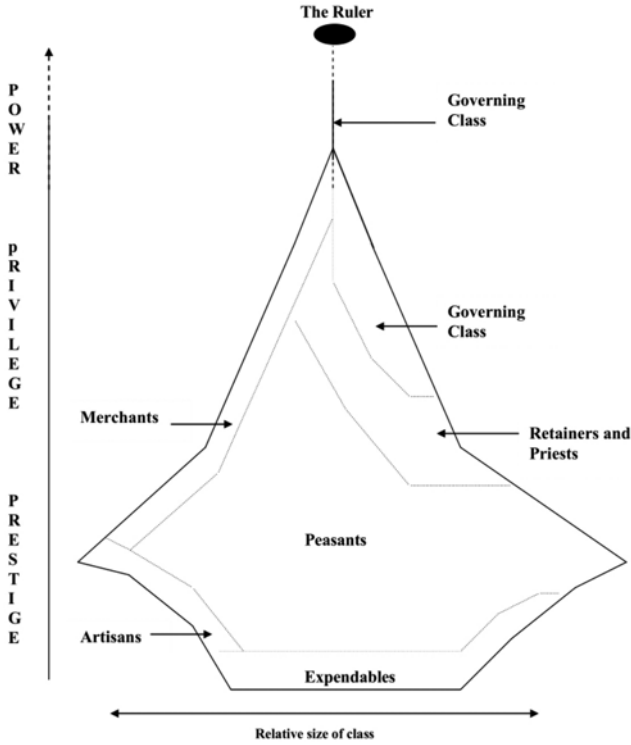


Figure 1.1. Lenski's model of an advanced agrarian society

From *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* by Gerhard Emmanuel Lenski, Jr. Copyright © 1984 by the University of North Carolina Press. Used by permission of the publisher. www.uncpress.org

generally scarce, unskilled, and not overly mobile, it was more practical for the landowners to bond them to particular income-generating properties. The “competition” of slaves and other forms of unfree labor within the equivalent of the first-century “employment market” would have put downward pressure on the wages offered to hired workers.

While this outline of the agrarian class struggle certainly forms the political-economic background to the New Testament, texts are generally regarded as relatively autonomous, and function within their own rules of production and reception. The New Testament both partakes of and contributes to the contestation of ideology in the ancient world, and individual texts are not merely a mirror reflection of specific class interests or political tendencies. Moreover, as we will see below, some contributors to this volume seek to further refine our understanding of the agrarian social formation and its class structure. Roland Boer and Christina Petterson, for instance, emphasize the

importance of slavery in the Roman Empire and early Christianity. Sarah E. Rollens and Christopher B. Zeichmann seek, in different ways, to disturb accepted notions of the retainer class. Alan H. Cadwallader and Robert J. Myles pursue, again in different ways, further variation (or not) within the rather large and unwieldy class of peasants.

CLASS IDENTITY VERSUS CLASS STRUGGLE

Having outlined the basic class dialectic and its heuristic application to the New Testament world, it is prudent to address some of the overarching aims of this volume. Class struggle, as opposed to class identity, refers to the process by which the material social, political, and economic conditions of human life might be transformed, and additionally, the structural means by which the ideology of the ruling class is reproduced and naturalized. It thus means a whole lot more than the performance of a particular group identity within the social sphere. Placing “struggle” at center-stage is important for two reasons.

First, *it broadens our understanding of class beyond its perfunctory role as a signifier of identity*. Struggle indicates conflict: an incompatible clash between two or more sides. It also connotes the efforts one or more sides may take to achieve or attain something in the face of difficulty or resistance. Class packaged *without* struggle, however, is part of the broader trend within today’s capitalist marketplace, swamped by nonsensical products that have their “dangerous” components extracted. As Slavoj Žižek perceptively puts it, “On today’s market, we find a whole series of products deprived of their malignant properties: coffee without caffeine, cream without fat, beer without alcohol.”³ The implicit rule is that you can appeal to class so long as it does not lead to anything too revolutionary. Rather than forming the basis of social and economic reality as it is experienced by people of all genders, races, and cultures, class, when divorced from struggle, becomes a superfluous category.

The notional emphasis on class as an identity transforms it into an irrelevant personal idiosyncrasy, in effect, essentializing class to a private interest. As Wendy Brown contests, the politicization of identities, notably as it has emerged within the United States, is not simply a moral or political choice, but in fact an elaborate historical production. The postmodernist struggles for recognition, she insists, take the naturalization of capitalism as its starting point:

[W]hat we have come to call identity politics is partly dependent upon the demise of a critique of capitalism and of bourgeois cultural and economic values . . .

identity politics concerned with race, sexuality, and gender will appear not as a supplement to class politics, not as an expansion of left categories of oppression and emancipation, not as an enriching augmentation of progressive formulations of power and persons—all of which they also are—but as tethered to a formulation of justice that reinscribes a bourgeois (masculinist) ideal as its measure.⁴

Brown goes on to argue that class has, in fact, become mostly inarticulable in contemporary struggles, while it is often named it is rarely theorized or developed beyond the multiculturalist mantra: “race, class, gender, [and] sexuality.”⁵ While it has become increasingly common for biblical scholars to adopt some version of this “multiculturalist mantra” to speak about the intersectionality of oppression,⁶ the promise of an intersectional focus does not often deliver in terms of specific interconnections such as those between certain signifiers of identity and class struggle.⁷ The proponents of the post-modern irreducible plurality of struggles, among multiple planes, tend to “leave out the resignation at its heart—the acceptance of capitalism as ‘the only game in town,’ the renunciation of any real attempt to overcome the existing capitalist liberal regime.”⁸ This naturally leads to the second reason for placing struggle at the center.

Second, *struggle orients us toward the prevailing ideological-economic conditions under which we currently exist: that is, capitalist realism*. “There is no alternative” was the favored slogan of the Conservative British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. The slogan submits that globalized capitalism, with its free-markets and free trade, is the only viable reality. Such a view encapsulates what the late Mark Fisher described as “capitalist realism”—that is, the dominant and all-encompassing view that there exists no coherent alternative outside of the capitalist system.⁹ So anxious of the pervasive and totalizing atmosphere of capitalist ideology, Fisher struggled with depression and, tragically, took his own life at the beginning of 2017.¹⁰ In today’s liberal-ideological constellation, the displacement of other societal tensions and struggles away from their relationship to class factors—from calling out unacknowledged privilege to conceptualizing mental health in individualistic terms—is part of the obfuscating neoliberal logic that effectively enables capitalism to perpetuate itself unscathed. The reason for this structural avoidance of class struggle, as opposed to class identity, arguably stems from an implicit or default acceptance of capitalist realism in which liberal-democracy and capitalism are regarded as the only feasible political and economic systems.

This being the case, it has become increasingly apparent that class analysis must be carried out not only of the historical and literary worlds encoded within the texts and traditions of the New Testament but also in light of the contemporary milieu in which biblical scholars are themselves implicated, that is, the shared context of global capitalism. After all, biblical critics

are not just analysts of texts; they are usually also academics hired (on increasingly tenuous conditions) to prepare students ideologically for their respective functions within capitalist society. If Gottwald is correct that the embodiment of biblical studies in a pervasive capitalist culture blunts or denies the existence of class divisions, then we ought to keep an eye on precisely those ways biblical exegesis is itself constrained by and generative of the capitalist culture which engulfs it. Biblical scholarship, like any intellectual enterprise, is implicated by class struggle, regardless of whether one exhibits a self-awareness of this fact.

While this volume places class struggle at the center, it is not our purpose to reductively assert the primacy of class over other struggles. Instead, individual essays present new ways of understanding New Testament texts and traditions in both ancient and modern contexts by exploring the refraction of class through ideological, cultural, political, and economic modes of exploitation. Equally, tools and theories for class analysis which are part of our modern worldview must be acknowledged, subjected to criticism, and used in a self-reflexive way. We should not necessarily expect all authors to agree on definitions or method. Indeed, several authors take different and conflicting positions regarding approach and resultant interpretations. Such diversity demonstrates that more work needs to be done to clarify the various strands and approaches and to further hone how class struggle might be understood in the New Testament and its world.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE? OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

It is to the individual contributions that make up this volume that I now turn. The collection begins with Neil Elliott's "Jesus, the Temple, and the Crowd: A Way Less Traveled." This essay asks probing questions of the political agency of the turbulent crowds which accompanied Jesus on his fateful trip into Jerusalem. Did Jesus act alone when he, for instance, rioted in the Temple? Or does it make better sense to understand him as part of a larger movement, and that Jesus was executed as a consequence of his participation in this collective action? Elliott identifies an apologetic tendency both in the various Gospel narratives but also in modern biblical scholarship to steer clear from the notion Jesus may have been caught up in this failed insurrection.

Following this, Christopher B. Zeichmann, in "Romans Go Home? The Military as a Site of Class Struggle in the Roman East and New Testament," draws attention to the neglected place of the Roman military within studies of the first-century class structure. Rather than lumping the military together with others possessing a small surplus of income, such as priests

or tax-collectors, Zeichmann sinks deeper into the demographics of the military in Roman Palestine, ideologies of wealth in the Roman army, and the economic status of soldiers in selected New Testament texts. In doing so, he reveals the complexity of soldiers' position within the agrarian class struggle. Although at a functional level they served the interests of the ruling elite, their wealth was often inferior to that of other retainers and sometimes even peasants.

Likewise, in "Peasant Plucking in Mark: Conceptual and Material Issues," Alan H. Cadwallader interrogates the category of the "peasant" to determine whether it does, in fact, have accuracy and precision with regard to the class analysis of the Gospel of Mark. Cadwallader suggests that the work of the Marxist classicist G. E. M. de Ste. Croix is a very useful starting point. Cadwallader then explores the issue of diversity of human interaction with the environment to suggest that the category of "peasant" does indeed remain useful, but only after substantial redefinition that incorporates the cultural expression as people of the land in alliance with those of the sea. This is set against the narrative context in which the Emperor of Rome was widely proclaimed as Lord of land and sea.

In what ways are the Gospels as cultural artifacts generative of ideology and class politics? In "IVDAEA DEVICTA: The Gospels as Imperial 'Captive Literature,'" Robyn Walsh pursues a mode of engaging the Gospels as conventional literature of the Roman imperial world, rather than what constitutes the more dominant approach within New Testament studies as records of communal oral tradition and Christian exceptionalism. Walsh begins by pointing out that the Gospel authors "had more in common with other elite Greco-Roman *writers* like Athenaeus, Philo, or Plutarch than with, say, a scribe, an uneducated landowner, a common farmer, or a community of illiterate Christians." She mounts a robust case that the aims of the Gospel authors were necessarily *literary* and, as such, can be analyzed accordingly as artifacts of elite social practice.

As noted above, class analysis must be carried out not only of the historical and literary worlds encoded within the New Testament but also in light of the contemporary milieu of global capitalism. In "Fishing for Entrepreneurs in the Sea of Galilee: Neoliberal Ideology and Biblical Interpretation," Robert J. Myles suggests the tendency of describing ancient fishermen—such as those called to follow Jesus in the Synoptic tradition—as "middle-class" and "relatively prosperous" relies on capitalist assumptions about the individual operating detached from social, political, and economic forces. Drawing on Ste. Croix, Myles situates the fishermen within the broader peasant masses of the agrarian class struggle. Building on this analysis, he concludes by reading the call of the fishermen narratives as embedded within

a broader context of social upheaval and as gesturing toward peasant social unrest.

In “Hand of the Master: Of Slaveholders and the Slave Relation,” Roland Boer and Christina Petterson jointly explore the use of slavery metaphors in the Gospel parables and Paul’s letters in light of underlying socioeconomic relations, exploitation, and struggle. Slavery was pervasive in the Greco-Roman world and was a constituent part of the agrarian social formation. Boer and Petterson note that the New Testament does not simply reflect the class struggle on its surface, but rather features as an “oblique lens” through which class struggle is mediated in abstracted or refracted forms. In the case of slavery, they find evidence that early Christian communities likely benefitted from the exploitation of slave labor in their missionary activities. This presents a contradiction, of course: how to reconcile the acceptance of slave-ownership with the ideology of radical equality espoused by Paul? The solution, they identify, is found in the early Jesus movement making everyone metaphorical slaves, so to speak, while maintaining and benefiting from the fundamental inequality of this structure at the material level. The Gospels’ “interpellation” of all believers as slaves, and Paul’s use of slavery as an equalizing metaphor, can thus be regarded as an implicit attempt to overcome this contradiction at the level of the political unconscious.

Bruce Worthington’s “Populist Features in the Gospel of Matthew” takes a different direction on the notion of collective action in the Gospel tradition from Elliott discussed above. Accompanied by insights from Ernesto Laclau’s influential work *On Populist Reason*, Worthington identifies a “populist” political texture within Matthew that compares to modern forms of political populism. For Laclau, populist identifications involve: (1) a leader who participates in the substance of the community; (2) an equivalential chain of unsatisfied demands; (3) a partiality which sees itself as totality; and (4) the reconstruction of national identity around a new political core. Worthington suggests several of these features appear in Matthew’s presentation of Jesus and his followers. The partiality of the Kingdom of Heaven is expressed, for instance, by its rejection of the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes, the Temple, and so on. In other words, populist identity is formed through the rejection of some, but in a way that allows the symbolic imaginary to form a cohesive, totalizing identity.

The overwhelming danger in the use of class as an analytical category for studying the ancient world is perhaps the “cookie cutter” approach in which abstract categories are imposed on or simplistically read into texts. Sarah Rollens’s chapter, “Troubling the Retainer Class in Antiquity,” revisits the retainer class which, in dominant models of the class structure of the New Testament world, sits between the small ruling elite and the large and somewhat

diverse stratum of peasants, slaves, and other ancillary workers. Her chapter explores the merits of this label in terms of what it tells us about the people to whom we ascribe such a label. While the retainer class—which lumps together an extremely varied group of priests and bureaucrats to soldiers and officials—may tell us something about their shared economic function, it also risks collapsing an overabundance of complex and conflicting social experiences, perspectives, and goals into a monolithic entity.

One of the great joys of Marxist criticism is its ability to shed new light on existing problems or questions posed by biblical scholars. Taylor Weaver's "Rethinking Pauline Gift and Social Functions: Class Struggle in Early Christianity?" seeks to re-examine recent scholarship on Paul's use of the concept of "gifting" in light of the underlying class dynamics that structured his socio-economic context. Turning to 2 Corinthians 8 and several other Pauline texts, Weaver suggests that Paul's practices agitate through withdrawing from dominant ancient discourses on gifting which, instead, tended to emphasize how benefactive practices should maintain social harmony.

Finally, in "The Origin of Archangels: Ideological Mystification of Nobility," Deane Galbraith offers an exhaustive examination of the complex development of the archangel through Jewish traditions of royal ancestral heroes. He suggests that early Christianity inherited an intrinsically hierarchical figure of the archangel, underpinned by an ideology which seeks to legitimate an elite class of "nobles." The figure of the archangel, as such, causes the perpetuation of class difference through an imagined alliance of earthly and heavenly elite rulers. This presents a problem for readings of the New Testament that regard the eschatological promise of God's Kingdom as one-dimensionally liberative. On the contrary, as Galbraith posits, these texts only oppose prevailing world empires in seeking to replace them with a Jewish equivalent.

The volume concludes with a postscript by one of the foremost scholars of class and religion, James G. Crossley. Crossley locates the overall contribution of the volume within the broader ideological politics of the disciplines of Christian origins and New Testament studies. Evoking the metaphorical language of Marx and Engels, he observes that class functions as a "specter" in biblical studies: it haunts the history of scholarship only to return at key moments, like the present cultural moment of peak liberalism, that is, the critical point at which liberal identity politics has become equal to its own *reductio ad absurdum*, thus leading any rational person to abandon it for truly progressive ideologies.

How can it be that we continue to find aesthetic, academic, and religious appeal in the cultural artifacts of a vastly different society? We respond to

these ancient texts because our own history links us to their world; we find in the New Testament an undeveloped phase of the world-historical forces which now happen to condition us. The New Testament writings refract the antagonisms of its underlying social formation. Even though the ideology of a text functions relatively autonomously from its class associations, the New Testament, as with all cultural artifacts, is nonetheless imbued with the contradictions of the societies in which it was produced and is now consumed. Exposing these contradictions is the first step of criticism.

It is with these ideas in mind, and with the promise of the explanatory power of class analysis, that we turn to the crucial task of demystifying the class struggle in the New Testament.

NOTES

1. Norman K. Gottwald, "Social Class as an Analytic and Hermeneutical Category in Biblical Studies," *JBL* 112, no. 1 (1993): 3.

2. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," in *Marx/Engels Selected Works*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), 98.

3. Slavoj Žižek, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real! Five Essays on September 11 and Related Dates* (London: Verso, 2002), 10.

4. Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 59.

5. Brown, *States of Injury*, 61.

6. Perhaps the most prominent example is found in the work of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, who coined the term "kyriarchy" (from the Gk. *Kyrios*, lit. "lord"), to replace the more common term "patriarchy." She uses kyriarchy to describe the multifaceted domination of the Emperor, lord, master, father, husband, and elite propertied male. Kyriarchy is deployed through her work as a heuristic or exploratory concept, an "analytic instrument that allows one to investigate the multiplicative interdependence of gender, race, and class stratifications as well as their discursive inscriptions and ideological reproductions." Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Democratizing Biblical Studies: Toward an Emancipatory Educational Space* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 23.

7. Ken Plummer puts it somewhat more cynically in his article on sexuality studies and class when he writes that "despite all the talk about 'intersectionality,' we really do not hear much about class these days." Ken Plummer, "Studying Sexualities for a Better World? Ten Years of Sexualities," *Sexualities* 11, no. 1–2 (2008): 8.

8. Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau, and Slavoj Žižek, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left* (London: Verso, 2000), 95.

9. Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Ropely: Zero, 2009).

10. Fisher often referenced his struggles with mental health in his academic work. For example, in *Capitalist Realism* he asserts: "It is necessary to reframe the growing

problem of stress (and distress) in capitalist societies. Instead of treating it as incumbent on individuals to resolve their own psychological distress, instead, that is, of accepting the vast *privatization of stress* that has taken place . . . the ‘mental health plague’ in capitalist societies would suggest that, instead of being the only social system that works, capitalism is inherently dysfunctional” (19). Cf. Mark Fisher, *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures* (Ropely: Zero, 2014).