

Sommario

Ekkehard Stegemann, *Did Something Go Wrong in the Beginning?*

7-19

Did something go wrong in the beginning – and, we must add, since when, and just why? It is obviously an apocalyptic myth or a messianic dream that inspired Paul and Jesus, as it did other witnesses after Paul. Krister Stendahl's honorable search, however, for an alternative to or a disarmament of the shameful anti-Jewish self-definitions of Christianity will in the end – I believe – not really reach its goal if restricts itself only to a better and more insightful interpretation of Paul and the New Testament. Paul's apocalyptic framework is not repeatable. What went wrong, I think, is that the necessary shift from an apocalyptic self-definition through dramatizing the present as the end of time to a post-eschatological self-definition, which acknowledges the ongoing process of the old theatre of the world, armed itself with the weapon of superiority-claims and blamed the Jews. Although we must protect Paul from interpretations which legitimate racism and supremacy, we have to admit that we are responsible for our mental and political attitude, and therefore cannot hide or creep away from the teaching of contempt only by appealing to a better understanding of Paul. But, of course, a better understanding helps.

Jason David BeDuhn, *The Myth of Marcion as Redactor: The Evidence of "Marcion's" Gospel Against an Assumed Marcionite Redaction*

21-48

Marcion's appeal to text, and the canonization process he advanced as part of his bid to define the Christian movement, must be accounted one of the key turning points of Christian history. In many corners of the tradition, it took quite a while for this development to catch on. When it did, the terms had been largely set already by Marcion. Even the Christian adoption of a fairly non-standard medium for text – the codex – appears around the time of Marcion's canonization project, and therefore it is worth pondering the role Marcion played in this development, since Marcion's canonical revolution depended upon binding together Paul's letters in a single, ordered volume, the Apostolikon. But most of all, Marcion's textual and canonical turn enabled a disembedding of Christian religious authority from an environment of traditional paradisis in which the assumptions of Jewish religious culture quite naturally prevailed.

Eliana Stori, *Edessa la città benedetta: alcune note sui primi gruppi cristiani in Siria*

49-61

In the first two centuries of the common era several Christian groups were active in the area of Edessa, some of them was of Syriac origin, others were born elsewhere, but in this area they

found fertile ground and existed for a long time. The main character of the Christian faith in Syria is a strong ascetic tendency, well shown by the so called «Encratite» and «Thomasine» Christianity. The picture that emerges is that of a variegated faith. There are in fact competing and seemingly conflicting images of early Syriac Christianity: Tatian the Encratite, Bardaisan the court philosopher, the Marcionites, the Thomasine Christianity, Valentinians and Ebionites. Most of these various groups originated perhaps independently of one another, before a more unified picture of Syriac Christianity emerged.

Daniele Tripaldi, *Alessandria d'Egitto e i gruppi "gnostici": annotazioni preliminari a margine di tre volumi recenti* 63-71

By reviewing three recent books dealing with Alexandrian Christianity and 'Gnostic' groups, the article tries to sketch a new agenda for the study of the latter as integral part of the multifaceted early Christian movement in the Egyptian metropolis. Three points are underscored as pivotal to the project: the creation of a dossier of Jewish and early Christian texts actually circulating in the city; the inclusion of all the available sources in the process of historical reconstruction; the downplaying of the classical 'history of ideas' approach in favor of a more critical and deep-ranging sociological perspective, focused as it is on the interlace of ideology and social practices, conflict and identity formation.

Marco Zambon, *Chiesa, comunità filosofica e comunità ascetica nella scuola di Didimo il Cieco* 73-109

The present article investigates Didymus the Blind's understanding of the function of school in the life of the Church. Not differently from Clement, Origen and other Christian Alexandrian scholars before him, Didymus (313-398) had a wide philosophical culture and used working methods similar to those of the philosophical schools of his age. Nevertheless, he considered his own function to be in the service of the Church's tradition of faith. Despite the rise of the Episcopate and monasticism, Didymus continued crediting the Christian masters with a prophetic and apostolic charismatic function of mediating the Revelation by means of the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures and the struggle against heresy.

Mario Girardi, *Dinamiche multiethniche e interreligiose sul limes danubiano nel IV secolo: il martirio di Saba il goto*. 111-130

The *passio s. Sabae Gothi* (BHG 1607) documents the Gospel's spread to the North of the Lower Danube (Gothia), where Christianity found and developed loyal relationships of solidarity and mutual respect among multiethnic and multireligious villages and clans, and defended it to the bitter end even in the face of anti-Christian Athanaric's persecution (369-372). The *passio* insists on the irenic character of Saba and his story in order to convey, inside and outside the Empire, a message of peace and integration with the Barbaricum under the religious protection of the salvific universalism of Christianity. It is a creed of peace and love (represented by Bretanion and Basil, respectively bishops of Tomis and Caesarea of Cappadocia), under the policy of Rome, represented by Soranus, the Roman-Christian governor of the Scythia minor. Soranus acted in close contact with both bishops and was the first Roman authority to help with a *translatio* - which signified the political and ecclesiastical control - of the remains of a "barbarian" martyr to Caesarea, inside the imperial Romania.

Giovanni Antonio Nigro, *Niceta, Inna, e altri martiri goti* 131-147

The paper analyzes some hagiographical sources concerning little-known Gothic saints, such as the *Passio Nicetae*, the *Passio sancti Innae*, *Rimae et Pimae* and the Gothic calendar, together with the data offered by the Church historians Socrates and Sozomen. The aim is establishing both historic reliability of these hagiographic texts in order to reconstruct the widespread of Christianity on the territories beyond the Danube river, and looking at the importance of the

Passiones in the identity building of some Eastern churches. Finally we can see to such a degree real or fictitious tellings become functional to the creation of a Christian network in and out the borders of the Roman Empire and to increase the prestige of some dioceses.

Cristiana Facchini, <i>Culture cattoliche ed ebrei dopo la Shoah. Riflessioni a margine di due recenti pubblicazioni</i>	149-173
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The article analyses and thoroughly comments upon two recent Italian publications devoted to the relationship between the Catholic Church, Jews and Judaism in Italy after the Holocaust. It describes the achievements reached by the researchers, who shed light onto a topic that had been quite unexplored. The evidence is remarkably interesting, because it shows how the Catholic Church had to adjust to the dramatic changes that the war had produced, first of all the destruction of European Jewry, and its newly reconfiguration with the establishment of the state of Israel.

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Jean-Daniel Dubois, *Jésus apocryphe* (J.B.G. Bazan); Frances Flannery - Colleen Shantz - Rodney Alan Werline (eds.), *Experientia*, Volume 1. *Inquiry into Religious Experience in Early Judaism and Early Christianity* (D. Tripaldi); Romano Penna, *Le prime comunità cristiane. Persone, tempi, luoghi, forme, credenze* (M. Grosso); Anthony Le Donne, *Historical Jesus: What Can We Know and How Can We Know It?* (M. Grosso); Colleen Shantz, *Paul in Ecstasy. The Neurobiology of the Apostle's Life and Thought* (M. Tubiana); Alison Cornish, *Vernacular Translation in Dante's Italy. Illiterate literature* (D. Ruini); Adriano Rocceci, *Stalin e il patriarca. La chiesa ortodossa e il potere sovietico 1917-1958* (M. Cognolato); Isabella Adinolfi, *Etty Hillesum. La fortezza inespugnabile. Un percorso etico-religioso nel dramma della Shoah* (M. Forunato).

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Tobias Nicklas, <i>Eine neue alte Erzählung im Rahmen antiker Jesustraditionen: Reste eines Exorzismus auf P.Oxy. lxxvi 5072</i>	13-27
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The article deals with a newly edited fragment, P.Oxy. 5072, going back to the turn of the 2nd to the 3rd century CE. It contains remains of three Jesus logia on its verso, and fragments of an exorcism. While this exorcism story shows clear parallels to all synoptic accounts of Jesus' exorcisms, it is very probably neither a harmonization of the synoptic accounts nor a redactionally revised version of only one account. It is, however, argued that it should be understood as a "re-enactment" of the idea that Jesus did miraculous exorcisms, a re-enactment at a time when written accounts of these stories were already extant, but neither available everywhere, nor as important as the stories told about Jesus orally.

David A. Creech, <i>The Lawless Pride. Jewish Identity in the Fragments of Eupolemus</i>	29-51
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The Jewish literature of the Second Temple period provides ample testimony to the importance of Moses and the Law for certain strains of Judaism. Often Moses is depicted as the great hero of the Jews and is revered as such on account of his giving of the Law. While Eupolemus demonstrates a clear respect for Moses, the historian appears to have little concern for the ethical, moral, and legal implications of the Torah. Rather, in the fragments that remain from Eupolemus' work, Moses is simply an authority invoked to buttress cultic claims and bolster national pride. The article proceeds in three sections. The first section attempts to locate Eupolemus in his historical and social context, paying particular attention to his possible identification with Eupolemus son of John who was associated with the Maccabees. The second section addresses the sources for Eupolemus. The third section takes up the subject proper, namely Eupolemus' use of Moses and the Law. The study concludes by relating the findings of the preceding explorations to the historical and cultural milieu in which Eupolemus was located.

Mara Rescio – Luigi Walt, <i>"There Is Nothing Unclean": Jesus and Paul against the Politics of Purity?</i>	53-82
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What kind of Jews were Jesus and Paul? What was the impact of their personal religious experiences on their own way of being Jewish? And to what extent was the apostle's

Jewishness influenced by Jesus' words and deeds? Moving from these questions, the article aims to readdress the problem of continuity or discontinuity between Jesus and Paul, starting from a broad investigation of their concrete attitudes towards ritual purity and dietary laws. A special attention is given to the puzzling sentence of Jesus transmitted by Mark 7:15 ("There is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile...") and to the radical statement of Paul in Romans 14:14 ("I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean in itself"). Combining the historico-exegetical approach with a socio-anthropological perspective, the analysis attempts to reaffirm the possibility that the Markan saying may go back to the historical Jesus, and even reflect his actual practice of life. If this is the case, Paul's reference to the "Lord Jesus" could be read as the result of both a mnemonic and mimetic continuity.

Matteo Tubiana, *Il viaggio celeste in Paolo: un pattern per l'interpretazione di un'esperienza?* 83-117

After an overview of recent studies on the heavenly journey in Paul, the article concentrates on the question if the ascent to the paradise described in 2 Cor 12 is to be considered as a religious experience or as a literary fiction. The author's opinion is that 2 Cor. 12:2-4 is an account of a contact with the supernatural actually experienced by the apostle, who then interprets it on the basis of the widespread pattern of heavenly journey. Moreover, the context of the passage seems to imply the reference to a direct revelation by Jesus – as a result of a prayer – which contributes to legitimate Paul's apostolic activity. A lexical analysis should permit to understand the heavenly journey's role in the context of other religious experiences of Paul, whose central role is to be admitted in his experience and theology.

Federico Adinolfi, *The Displaced Baptism: Luke 7:29 as the Original Conclusion to Luke 3:10-14 (L)* 119-132

Aiming at a small contribution to Q research, the present study takes issue with the frequent but insufficiently grounded claim that Luke 7:29-30, with its parallel in Matt. 21:32, reflects a Q tradition. While the grammatical clumsiness of Luke 7:29 suggests indeed the redaction of a source rather than a pure composition by the evangelist, a different and fresh source-critical hypothesis is here argued, according to which Luke 7:29 originally represented the conclusion to the L unit in Luke 3:10-14, which the evangelist then dislocated to its present place in order to form, together with the redactionally composed v. 30, an effective bridge between the two Q units 7:24-28 and 7:31-35.

Elna Mouton, *Memory in Search of Dignity? Construction of Early Christian Identity through Redescribed Traditional Material in the Letter to the Ephesians* 133-153

The letter to the Ephesians employs various communicative strategies in responding to the rhetorical situation of its implied recipients. Focusing on their new identity and ethos *en Christō*, the text emphasizes supernatural elements such as resurrection, ascension, heavenly places, revealed mystery, Spirit, and power. At the same time it adopts a rich mosaic of traditional materials, *inter alia* echoing the Hebrew Scriptures, Hellenistic traditions, and early Christian liturgical traditions. The essay explores the dynamic yet complex intertextual fusion and reappropriation of (mainly Jewish) traditions in Ephesians, as the author's experience and understanding of the crucified, resurrected and exalted Christ. Special attention is given to the use of Ps 68:18 (MT 68:19; LXX 67:19) in Eph 4:1-16 – as analogous forms of contact with the supernatural in the construction of Jewish and early Christian identity. In conclusion, the essay investigates the intended *effect* of the functioning of material from the Hebrew Scriptures in the letter – as construction of Christian identity in continuation with the story of Israel and from within the context of Empire.

Bas van Os, <i>The Role of the Apostles in the Letter of Peter to Philip</i>	155-160
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Gnostic Christians had to maintain their identity in respect to other Christian groups who often claimed apostolic authority for their tradition. Some scholars have argued that the use of the names of specific apostles in Gnostic Christian writings, often as recipients of divine revelation, suggests the use of such apostles as an identity marker of the author and his or her community. Thus, one would get Thomas, Judas or Magdalene Christianity. This article demonstrates that in most Nag Hammadi and related texts, the apostles are primarily used in a didactic way and not as identity-markers. This is only demonstrably different in two writings: the Gospel of Philip and the Gospel of Judas. But there the apostles are rejected as followers of the imperfect God of the Hebrews. They are used as negative identity-markers, in the sense that the authors reject the community that claimed their authority.

Paul Middleton, <i>Enemies of the (Church and) State: Martyrdom as a Problem for Early Christianity</i>	161-181
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The earliest interpreters of martyrdom presented the death of the martyr as a subversive challenge to the power of Satan and Rome. To fail as a martyr was to fail as a Christian and to lose one's identity. Readiness for martyrdom was a sign of Christian 'proto-orthodoxy' and Christian identity. With the development of monarchical episcopacy in the third and fourth centuries, competing constructions of Christian identity emerged. Ambivalence or even hostility replaced earlier expressions of reverence towards martyrs. The issue of martyrdom created a crisis for the construction of Christian identity, as proponents of martyrdom interpreted even ecclesiastical resistance to the martyrs as having a demonic origin. This paper focuses especially on the late third century, where in the face of Roman persecution, martyrs were in a real sense, enemies of both Church and State.

Chiara Spuntarelli, <i>I logoi e l'agorà in Giovanni Crisostomo</i> ..	183-217
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The day after the 387 C.E. Antiochean revolt, the *agorà*, observed Chrysostom, was silent. The *agorà* is the site of the *logos* in that it is a communitarian space designated for confrontation between the rulers and the governed in virtue of its semantic-topographic correspondence to the *basilicalforum*. Likewise, it is the site of the *logos* in that it is a space destined *par excellence* for negotiations, a place for the *logos* in that it is a symbol of Libanian rhetoric. As nexus, it is well known by Chrysostom, and amid politics, community and *agorà*, it implied necessarily that the connection to the pagan *logoi* and their defeat over the political and social plane might pass as a real and figurative emptying of the public square. What emerges from the confrontation with *Antiochicus* of Libanius, is how the reversal of the norms of the epideictic genre of the praise of the city asserted by Chrysostom in the homilies *On the Statues*, corresponds to the delegitimation of places, of space and of traditional symbols of power and of municipal prestige. Such a reversal turns out to be significant on the ideological and aesthetical plane, to the degree in which rhetoric becomes the terrain of religious and cultural confrontation and, both in Libanius and in Chrysostom, eloquence is characterized in an ethnic sense, underlining the inseparability of religious phenomena from *paideia*.

Isabella Adinolfi, <i>Etty Hillesum. La condivisione nel profondo</i>	219-233
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In Etty Hillesum's thought the choice of partaking of her people's "mass destiny", the choice of undergoing the same fate of the Shoah victims has a deep mystical root. A mystic loves the world because he/she can become aware of his/her bond to God, the source of life, which springs within himself. Consequently, the love-compassion that the young Jew lady had for the ill-fated ones feeds itself and gets its strength from God's love; indeed, it is God's love in itself. The love that consumes the mystic – as Henri Bergson said – is God's love for all of His creatures. Through God, with God, the mystic loves the whole humanmankind in a divine love.

M. A. Barbàra (a cura di), *Il simbolismo degli elementi della natura nell'immaginario cristiano*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2010, 302 pp. (C. Pennacchio); Elena Bonora, *Roma 1564. La congiura contro il papa*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2011, 228 pp. (G.L. D'Errico); Francisco García Bazán, *La religión hermética. Formación e historia de un culto de misterios egipcio*, Buenos Aires, Lumen, 2009, 173 pp. (F. Ludueña Romandini); Andrew C. Itter, *Esoteric Teaching in the Stromateis of Clement of Alexandria* (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 97), Leiden, Brill, 2009, XX-234 pp. (P. Druille); José Pablo Martín (ed.), *Filón de Alejandría. Obras completas Volumen III*, Madrid, Editorial Trotta, 2012, 493 pp. (M. Díaz Araujo); Marcelo Merino Rodríguez (edición, traducción, introducción y notas), *Clemente de Alejandría. Extractos de Teódoto. Éclogas Proféticas. ¿Qué rico se salva? Fragmentos* (Colección Fuentes Patristicas, 24), Madrid, Editorial Ciudad Nueva, 2010, 464 pp. (L. Pérez); J. Rousse-Lacordaire, *Ésotérisme et christianisme. Histoire et enjeux théologiques d'une expatriation*, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 2009, 368 pp. (P. Ubierna – D. Santos).