

<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>KuD</i>	<i>Kerygma und Dogma</i>
<i>LNPF</i>	<i>Latin Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i>
<i>LThK</i>	<i>Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche</i>
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codices
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
PG	Patrologia graeca, 162 vols.
PhB	Philosophische Bibliothek
QD	Quaestiones disputatae
<i>RE</i>	<i>Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>RGG</i>	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> , 7 vols., 3rd ed., or 8 vols., 4th ed.
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>SPhilo</i>	<i>Studia philonica</i>
StPB	Studia post-biblica
STW	Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigraphica
<i>ThLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>ThPQ</i>	<i>Theologisch-praktische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>ThRev</i>	<i>Theologische Revue</i>
<i>TRE</i>	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
<i>VuF</i>	<i>Verkündigung und Forschung</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
<i>ZRGG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte</i>
<i>ZThK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

INTRODUCTION
BIBLICAL THEOLOGY: REALITY AND INTERPRETATION
ACROSS DISCIPLINES

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1. BIBLICAL THEOLOGY AND REALITY

The history of biblical interpretation has long been a branch of biblical theology that bypasses those biblical scholars and their achievements rendered obsolete by new developments in the technology of biblical research. More recent critical approaches to the Bible usually consign to mausoleums of the past what once broke new exegetical ground. In this regard, the theme of the history of biblical interpretation as a key issue in biblical theology might arouse quaint curiosity at best, mere indifference at worst. Others might argue with scholarly seriousness that the history of biblical interpretation serves as a prelude to the more important task of constructing a biblical theology for the contemporary context. History is significant only to the extent that it marks exegetical paths exhausted by those who have traversed them.

It is precisely the relation of the history of biblical interpretation to the question of reality that is the particular focus of this volume. Access to history is guided by questions posed in and quite possibly for the present, and this hermeneutical assumption already implies the philosophical question of reality to be decisive for the interpretation of history. Any serious encounter between present and past, any wrestling with transhistorical items of interest, presupposes a common reality to be investigated. Without consensus regarding the one world that is experienced and known in different ways and articulated in diverse culturally located expressions, the attempt to know for oneself would be hermetically sealed off from the intersubjective inquiry into truth and knowledge. Transhistorical dialogue assumes a common interest in the world, and in the case of religious dialogue, a common interest in the relation of the world to a power that creates and sustains it. With agreement in place, the methodologically controlled, hermeneutical practice of dialogue with the past can begin. Access to the past by a critical and sympathetic apparatus is the method established by historiographical consensus in order to understand it in terms that the past can claim as a true description. The determination of what kind of world is

given to be known is inherently a metaphysical question with hermeneutical implications.

The historiographical task of extracting the past in its individual uniqueness and of distinguishing it from the present, requires the disentanglement of past construals of reality from present ones. One way to be attentive to historical distance is to describe conceptual differences between present and past conceptions of reality. The question of change in time was the question that Aristotelian physics wisely linked to metaphysics; relations of change require reasons that are, more often than not, built into the very description of these changes. Where the phenomenon of aging is observed, for example, an Aristotelian potency-act metaphysic might be helpful in describing both that aspect of identity that changes through time and the other aspect that remains self-identical. Each historical epoch has its own categories for describing the relations of motion. Yet each presupposes the reality of motion, the flow from past to present that establishes continuity while highlighting difference, and the interpretative encounter between present and past that gives life to the past while making the present more rich.

These are deeply metaphysical questions. The relation of change to self-identity, particular to universal, and appearance to reality are age-old philosophical questions. The question of reality has remained a stable object of human curiosity, at least in Western philosophy. Philosophers, since Plato, have marveled at the world of taste and sound, and have sought to determine stable reality behind Protean appearance. Where the phenomenon reveals itself in all its mystery, there it is to be related to enduring substance. If the world is characterized by appearance, then where is its ground, its stability, its promise that it will not revert back to the nothing from which it came? With a passion for the philosophical argumentative finesse characteristic of the medievals, the debates concerning universals have witnessed to the human soul's longing for metaphysical clarity.

Access to appearance and reality is not unbroken. Where the phenomenon appears to conceal while revealing, there the metaphysical question is intimately concerned with the methodological one. What instruments are applied rightly to perceive appearances? What tools are used to correct misperceptions, and by what means are diverse phenomena classified and divided? The question of reason, its limits and its capacity to categorize data intuited, perceived, and felt, exposes the complexity of encounters with reality itself. Perception and judgment are embodied together in the complex interweave of spirit and nature. The Enlightenment contributed to the carving-out of a realm of *Geist* in order to determine the spiritual and epistemological factors in getting at causal, narrative, or logical relations in reality. Kant's transcendental analysis exemplified the modern turn to the subject. And the post-Kantian turn to reason's incarnation in language, culture, and history placed the metaphysical question in full view of the historicity of all reality as schematized by that most historical of beings, the human itself.

It was Heidegger's early work on being and time that consolidated the claim for

twentieth-century philosophy that the question of being (*Sein*) is really the question posed by that being (*Dasein*) capable of asking this question: the human being. The mere articulation of this question reveals the transparency of human being to being itself and the constitutive characteristic of being, its historicity. There is no other reality except the one constituted by the historicity of human existence, and there is no other reality except one that humans produce through action and reflection. History is what humans do because of who they are.

If the question of reality is the question of reality's historicity, then the determination of metaphysical constituents is itself a historical-philosophical theme. Metaphysics, at least in the Western philosophical tradition, has studied the constants of self, world, and God in relation to each other. Since Kant's Copernican revolution, those same metaphysical constants have been filtered through the requirements of critical philosophy. The three transcendental ideas of reason—self, world, and God—were, for Kant, the unifying functions of reason (*Vernunft*) that grounded the phenomenal objects of experience in a supra-phenomenal or noumenal unity. Kant's ideas of the self, the world, and God that replaced the rational psychology, rational cosmology, and rational theology of the preceding Leibnizian-Wolffian school, became paradigmatic for post-Kantian metaphysics. Whether in its Absolute Idealist form, as is the case with Fichte or Hegel, or in its realist form, as is the case with Schleiermacher, post-Kantian metaphysics wrestled with the inherently historical and hermeneutical ways of framing the metaphysical question. The historical dimension to metaphysics was opened up by posing the question regarding the world's historical development in relation to its ground in the Absolute as that relation could be known by the human self. The hermeneutical dimension to metaphysics took seriously the linguistic expression of all claims to knowledge and the intersubjective nexus in which those claims were made.

History as constitutive of reality and the self/world/God relation as constitutive of metaphysics are academic issues intimately related to the Enlightenment and the post-Enlightenment study of religion. At least in one of its modern forms from the nineteenth century, the study of religion determines a theory of religion according to the self/world/God constellation, and then applies this theory to the comparison of particular historical religions. This form of the study of religion has, with good reason, been maligned for privileging Christianity (usually Protestant Christianity) in the typology developed from the application of theory to practice. Although this model is no longer tenable in the contemporary study of religion, it does provide one significant bone to chew on if religion is not to lose its necessary relation to the metaphysical dimension posed inherently by historical religion. Such a model offers a powerful description of religious reality according to a philosophy of religion's construal of metaphysical constants in order to give conceptual constancy, making comparative work at all possible. By defining the nature of religion in the terms of a self/world/God relation, metaphysics stipulates a minimum of conceptual requirements that can be used when interpreting past records of religion. The

hermeneutical task of determining manifestations of religion in the past require such metaphysical markers. Although this volume does not advocate a retrieval of a nineteenth-century form of the study of religion, it does argue for a serious turn to metaphysical questions in order to understand the history of religion.

This particularly nineteenth-century Western understanding concerning the reciprocal relation between historical-religious and metaphysical subject matter need not result in stiff competition between two antagonists. The Western tradition has admittedly, at times, supported a supersessionist relation between the two, yet at other times has acknowledged their productive complementarity. Some of the Absolute Idealists under consideration in this volume, for example Hegel, conceptualize the expressions of religion and philosophy in a relation of sublation. Although the content of religion is the same as the content of speculative philosophy, its narrative form does not bring the content to truthful unity with its more adequate speculative form in the concept. It is perhaps this model, in which philosophy is seen as a corrective from "on high" to religion, that is the foil of contemporary religious studies. Nevertheless, another model, one provided by Schleiermacher for example, distances the two discourses from each other. Philosophy is dialectics, the study of the production of knowledge under the conditions of intersubjective rationality, and the study of religion is the historical investigation of lived forms of faith. According to Schleiermacher, dialectics only inform religion in the extreme formal sense of prescribing rules for the intersubjective pursuit of making claims of religious and theological knowledge. Schleiermacher's model, even if not deemed a viable solution to the ills of contemporary religious studies, does offer a way of conceiving the relation between the empirical study of religion and the inherent rationality of its claims on philosophical grounds. Philosophy does not bring conceptual specification to religious narrative elements, but treats religion as an inherently historical expression of human nature; its forms are the historically situated forms at its disposal, and its symbols, the products of art and culture (*Bildung*). It is this model of complementarity that, at the very least, argues for a bridge between those two aspects of knowledge that biblical theology has traditionally tried to span. If the empirical and conceptual sciences are brought into a productive and nonpolemical relation with each other, then the historical study of religion can be opened for philosophical and theological study as well.

In whatever way the relation between philosophy and the study of religion is conceived, both disciplines require concrete manifestations of religion in order to proceed. The privileged sources for religious descriptions of reality are those accounts that have been established as transhistorically powerful to shape the history of their interpretation. The scriptures of a historical religion are very viable candidates for this purpose. In the Jewish and Christian religions, the scriptures are the anchor to specific narratives of religious reality. Individual and communal expressions of religious experience are recorded in these key texts that have shaped centuries of religious life and thought. It is in these texts that the foundational claims of a self/world/God relation are documented, although such a stable world-

view shows remarkable flexibility throughout a history of variation. The adaptability of a particular religious perspective to new historical contexts can be demonstrated both intratextually and extrabiblically. For example, texts like Job and Ecclesiastes continue to exert their interpretative power in new generations longing to explain the coexistence of good and evil to the satisfaction of a theodicy. Biblical texts are persuasive in their descriptions of reality from a religious perspective because they have the capacity to absorb manifold disparate phenomena and yet remain foundational in such a way as to invite their reconceptualization and recontextualization in light of philosophically distinct epochs.

2. BIBLICAL THEOLOGY AND INTERPRETATION

The relation between religious reality and its articulation in various expressions, including linguistic forms, is both a philosophical and biblical subject of inquiry. How does the experience of reality find its expression in language? From a philosophical perspective, this question explores the onto-anthropological relation between experience and expression, the nature of reality in relation to its individual and communal schematization, and the mechanisms by which expressions are produced and tested for their truth value. From a biblical perspective, this same question covers the historical analysis of the move from oral source to written form, the history of text production that includes the social-cultural context of production as well as reception, and a description of the precise reality expressed in those texts. The overlap in subject matter, historically situated experience as it is expressed in language, permits both conceptual and empirical research access. A mutually informing inquiry between philosophical and biblical study can take place when the philosophical questions concerning language, truth, and reality are brought into relation to biblical questions concerning text, referentiality, and context. History is the medium of both perspectives of inquiry; their common focus is tuned to that which constitutes the human and its experience in the first place.

If the historical subject matter is expressed in language, then its study must take into account its linguistic incarnation. It is hermeneutics, the modern science paradigmatically associated with the name of Friedrich Schleiermacher, that has taken its place as queen of contemporary arts and sciences. The modern commitment to the linguistic expression of knowledge acknowledges hermeneutics to be the discipline informing all areas of academic investigation. The "art of conducting conversation" was Schleiermacher's own conviction against the Absolute Idealists that every pursuit of thinking (that leads to knowledge) is conducted in an intersubjective milieu.¹ That milieu discloses reason's own capacities for the logical and metaphysical dimensions

1. Schleiermacher's own dialectic, his theory of the production of knowledge, is attuned to the linguistic form of the type of thinking required for the pursuit of knowing (pure thought) and to the intersubjective milieu in which all linguistic expressions are articulated. See Friedrich Schleiermacher,

of the search for knowledge; only in intersubjective argument are the presuppositions, aims, and procedures of dialogue unveiled. Modern philosophy is characterized precisely by its attentiveness to the linguistic incarnation of reason. From a Wittgensteinian approach to the investigation of meaning in contextual use to recent developments in critical theory that stipulate the responsibility of disclosing the biases of scientific perspective, modern research tools have deepened this insight into the discursive inevitability of all discussions of subject matter. History and interpretation are inextricably linked.

The idea that reality is linguistically constituted in some way is a philosophical assumption of modern academic study. This assumption, however, does not preclude paying attention to the nondiscursive, emotional, and attitudinal involvement with reality. In fact, as Schleiermacher and Heidegger have argued, mood (*Befindlichkeit*) is perhaps constitutive, in the deepest way, of all ways of being in the world. And in current research, criticism has been raised against the excessive fixation of some research programs on texts. Nevertheless, in view of records of human experience from the past, texts are the privileged bearers of revelation. Texts are representative in revealing individual and communal categorizations of reality in their linguistic expressions of it. They are transhistorical documents that give interpretative access to the ways in which reality has been interpreted in the past. In virtue of precisely their referential capacity, texts from the past are relevant for subsequent generations. They give in language something of the world to be known. With this claim, texts enter into the intersubjective and transhistorical discussion concerning the multitude of ways in which the predicates of the world are schematized. Reality can never be exhausted by discrete encapsulations in language, and conversely, texts perpetually open up domains of experience in the history of their reception for experience, resting, and comparison. Reality and interpretation are intimately conjoined in a relationship of surplus; reality perpetually supercedes its interpretation and interpretation continues to betray infinite variety in historically located experience. The power of texts rests precisely in their transhistorical potential to speak to subsequent readers about the reality articulated in them.

Language has the capacity to open up as well as to occlude reality. Interpretation carves out a piece of reality and casts it in finite light. Where one dimension of reality is disclosed by language, another might be concealed, to use Heidegger's insight borrowed from Nietzsche. From both a subjective and an objective perspective, interpretation and language give finite contours to reality and experience. If the question of knowing the individual is problematized in modernity by Leibniz, Kant, and Schleiermacher, then the question of individual perspective is made the methodological requirement of critical theory. In epistemological terms, on the one hand, categorial knowledge is essential in determining the predicates of a particular

object; the individual is known in comparison with empirical knowledge of individuals of its same species and in light of speculative knowledge concerning its genus, as the classic definition of the definition stipulates. Yet Kant, who knew no concepts of singulars, could not determine an individual qua individual,² and left to posterity the question of access to the individual through categorial knowledge, the analogy, and a variety of hermeneutical strategies. In methodological terms, on the other hand, the notion of individual perspective has greatly affected the contemporary determination of method. Each method applied to the subject matter is shaped by subjective perspective. Although the study of method has raised consciousness about different ways of interpreting reality and has contributed to the scientific control of subjective factors, method itself is determined culturally; it imposes a subjective standpoint onto inquiry. Neither epistemology nor individual perspective shields against the "surplus of subjectivity." Yet it remains the critical standpoint of intersubjectivity to investigate where subjectivity occludes aspects of reality that must necessarily be part of its description. The trustworthiness of any discrete interpretation of reality is itself established in the context of intersubjectivity.

It is this problem of the imposition of a subjective standpoint that has plagued both the historical and the theological disciplines. On the one hand, historical objectivity has resulted in, at least at one level, an antipathy toward the speculative disciplines that are alleged to impose their speculative fictions onto the subject matter. On the other hand, theological doctrines tend to abstract their conceptual normativity from any intimate association with lived religious practice. This inevitable abstraction has tended to result in charges of imposing subjective norms onto material that, when investigated with historical-critical tools, reveals another reality. For example, the seventeenth-century doctrine of a complete canon inspired by the spirit does not hold in light of historical study of the growth, development, and shaping of the canon in the early stages of the Christian church. Nevertheless, the standoff between history and theology is untenable on hermeneutical grounds. Historical description is inevitably shaped by subjective mood and location. Theological description inevitably uncovers the ways in which individuals and communities from the past determine the self/world/God relation; the history of theology offers powerful explanations for human motivation in thought and action that cannot be dismissed by the historical allegiance to "objectivity."

If history and theology are close allies in conceiving the relation between subjective engagement and objective reality, then their proximate tasks would together help shape new ways of relating biblical and theological studies. A close look at the history of biblical interpretation from the perspective of their cooperation in view of the determination of reality represents this volume's biblical-theological theme. In

Kritische Gesamtausgabe, vols. II.10/1-2, *Vorlesungen über die Dialektik* (ed. Andreas Arndt; 2 vols.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003).

2. See Manfred Frank, "Unendliche Annäherung": *Die Anfänge der philosophischen Frühromantik* (6th ed.; STW 1328; Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1998), 83-84; also more recently, idem, *Selbstgefühl: Eine historisch-systematische Erkundung* (STW 1611; Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2002), 44-51.

fact, Marvin A. Sweeney's essay, "The Democratization of Messianism in Modern Jewish Thought," is representative in pointing out the limits of historical-critical questions and in highlighting the theological and philosophical issues at stake when biblical passages are actualized in new contexts. By integrating conceptual concerns with historical study, this volume is critical of the usual, and often superficial, charge of "dogmatic imposition" onto historical description. This charge assumes a dualism between description and prescription that is untenable on epistemological grounds, and confuses hermeneutical prejudice, interpretative sympathy, and subjective location with subjective imposition. The contributions in this book, each in its respective way, argue for the legitimacy of conceptual questions on hermeneutical, methodological, and historical grounds. Subjective engagement is not only admitted but is in fact condoned, as it succeeds in opening up dimensions of the subject matter that might be concealed by alleged descriptive objectivity. A dialogical encounter between present and past presupposes some sympathy with the past on the transhistorical ground of subject matter. Biblical theology cannot avoid assuming or arguing for specific constructions of reality, the reality of biblical "authors," their traditions, and their interpreters. In fact, hermeneutical honesty permits a probing of philosophical issues embedded in any expressions of experience.

Perhaps the philosophical-hermeneutical issues at stake in biblical theology are best attested by what some might consider to be the extreme speculative case of nineteenth-century German philosophical interpretation of scripture. Some might balk at the legitimacy of speculative questions and ridicule the answers allegedly yielded from the Bible. What a study of these philosophers, Hegel and Schelling, for example, shows, is the conviction that the Bible does answer questions of metaphysical truth in relation to historical contingency. The biblical interpretation of these philosophers discloses the questions driving their own epoch: questions concerning the relation between reality and the ways by which reality can be known and the structures of the world that reveal their relation to a ground that sustains their freedom and dependence. A view of biblical interpretation from its nineteenth-century "Berlin" perspective shows that interpretation is moved by those important questions arising from human experience. The Bible is a common dialogical point precisely because it offers both answers to those questions and a language for conceptualizing the answers.

3. BIBLICAL THEOLOGY ACROSS DISCIPLINES

The interdisciplinary nature of biblical theology is shown in this volume by the dialogue it stages among historians, biblical theologians, systematic theologians, practical theologians, and philosophers. The common field of vision of different perspectives is the one question regarding the hermeneutical encounter between different conceptions of reality as presented in the history of biblical interpretation. The first aspect to the central question in this volume's dialogue concerns the his-

torical issues at stake in various hermeneutical proposals regarding reality. An answer is offered by a detailed look at renowned figures in the history of biblical interpretation who have significantly shaped their contemporary perceptions of reality by transformative encounters with biblical texts. Such an encounter might yield the inscription of biblical stories into contemporary reality (to use Maren R. Niehoff's phrase), or the enscripturation of philosophical concepts in biblical terms (to use Karen Jo Torjesen's term), or result in hermeneutical novelty when the reception of biblical texts is concretized in distinct historical and cultural situations. The first section, "Historical and Theological Interpretation," promises such a look at notables from the past: Josephus, Philo, Origen, and Heracleon, and studies them with an eye to the fact that biblical interpretation has the power to shape the future of biblical reception.

The second section, "Philosophical Interpretation," might on the surface appear to be an esoteric addition to the volume. When philosophers such as Mendelssohn, Fichte, Schleiermacher, Hegel, Schelling, and Feuerbach are brought as relevant experts to the topic of biblical exegesis, then the results, as is no surprise, are often shocking. What does Athens have to do with Jerusalem? Yet the inclusion of these philosophical notables, who concentrated their work in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Berlin, is more than the accident caused by celebrating Berlin, the site of the Society of Biblical Literature's International Meeting in July 2002. The central question tying together all the contributions in this section is the question concerning the relationship between philosophy and biblical interpretation. The details of this relation are worked out in view of epistemological questions, such as the grounding of reason in the Absolute, and metaphysical questions, such as the constitution of reality according to an appearance/power metaphysic. Even at their speculative best, the philosophers under investigation engage the biblical texts in such ways as to tease out insights crucial to their own understanding. The relevance of biblical texts to philosophical questions is the plot of this section. Its yield is the demonstration of scripture's power to challenge, inspire, and articulate distinct religious views that are worked out in philosophical terms.

The first section ("Historical and Theological Interpretation") begins with Bernd Janowski's essay, which sets the conceptual and historical parameters for this volume's biblical-theological theme. In his chapter, "Biblische Theologie heute: Formale und materiale Aspekte," Janowski provides a brief history of biblical theology and discusses the twofold meaning of the term "biblical theology" in order to identify the discipline's contemporary task as one tailored to both historical reality and normative expression. Janowski argues that the descriptive aspect, focused on the canon's formation and the diversity of its textual material, accesses historical reality by both presupposing the conceptual distinction between text and subject matter and assuming that biblical discourses articulate experiences of the transcendent. The reality accounted for in the text is also the subject of theological inquiry. Diversity at the descriptive level is correlated to its unity, a common subject matter funding

the complex interrelations between the parts (*Sachzusammenhang*). The fit, for example, between a history of religions approach to the Bible and a theology of the Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament is a natural consequence of locating the subject of inquiry in history.

Maren R. Niehoff's chapter, "New Garments for Biblical Joseph," addresses the interpretations of the biblical Joseph story in the works of Flavius Josephus and Philo of Alexandria. The study of each and the comparison between the two biblical interpreters reveals the significant point that biblical interpretation does not only reflect contemporary views of reality, but that it can be used to shape that reality as well. According to Niehoff, Philo depicts the Joseph story in his own Egyptian context in order to shape Jewish identity in that land. Philo contrasts Jewish values with those of the Egyptians and aligns them with the Roman elite living in Egypt. Joseph serves as the model on which Philo hangs the garments of Jewish religion and culture (to continue Niehoff's metaphor). One generation later, Josephus appeals to the Joseph story in order to tailor this exemplary figure to his own circumstances. For his particular Roman context, Joseph embodies the image of a peace-loving person who was victimized by his brothers. This image resurfaces in Josephus's autobiography and may have served as a model for the historian's justification of his own relationship with fellow leaders in the early stages of the great revolt.

Harold W. Attridge takes up the issue of differing philosophical conceptualities in relation to exegetical differences in his essay, "Heracleon and John: Reassessment of an Early Christian Hermeneutical Debate." Attridge places Heracleon's commentary on John's Gospel in light of new research on Heracleon's fragments, thereby counteracting the predominant evaluation, set primarily by Origen's synopsis of Heracleon's position, that the "heretic" is to be interpreted in continuity with Valentinian Gnosticism. By demonstrating Heracleon's own careful exegetical work, Attridge argues that both Origen and Heracleon were deeply concerned with preserving a high view of the Logos and a participative view of humans in the soteriological process. Yet it is primarily a metaphysics of motion, borrowed from Aristotle's potency-act distinction, that philosophically shapes Heracleon's exegesis. Heracleon determines a conceptual alignment between God and the world through the action of spirit that preserves, on the one hand, the feature of finitude as subject to change, and affirms, on the other hand, participation in a divine nature. Hence a metaphysical conception of the relation between being and becoming shapes the theological results gleaned from the Johannine material.

Karen Jo Torjesen's chapter, "The Enscripturation of Philosophy: The Incorporation of God in Origen's Exegesis" poses a key question about the relation between the philosophical conception of reality and biblical interpretation. The question Torjesen asks concerns the apparent "collision" between Origen's appeal to scriptural language in articulating his philosophical-theological understanding of divine incorporeality and the fact that biblical-anthropomorphic descriptions of God seem to preclude such a philosophical claim. If incorporeality is absent from biblical depic-

tion, then why does Origen clothe his philosophical doctrine in its language? Torjesen answers this question by showing how Origen "enscripturates" his philosophy by virtue of scripture's own capacity for rendering multiple meaning. Through the application of allegory, Origen can plumb scripture for its philosophical meaning; when anthropomorphic language is read, incorporeality is heard.

The second section ("Philosophical Interpretation") begins with Marvin A. Sweeney's essay, "The Democratization of Messianism in Modern Jewish Thought." Sweeney asks the question of reality in this chapter from the perspective of the contextualization of messianic motifs by three Jewish thinkers. By appealing to the contextualization category, Sweeney argues for the necessity of extending the subject matter of Jewish biblical theology beyond the study of the Bible to the tradition of Judaism. This move is crucial for the posing and answering of theological questions regarding biblical interpretation in the contexts of Jewish exile, the Diaspora, and the Shoah. Sweeney's argument turns on the interpretation of the messianic theme of the Davidic covenant in Isa 55:3 in view of Jewish self-understanding in bringing about the *Tikkun Olam*, the "Repair of the World." This Kabbalistic idea, rather than marginal, is central to modern Jewish thought. It was first articulated by Isaac Luria in the sixteenth century, then developed by Moses Mendelssohn in his conceptualization of Judaism in the Enlightenment philosophical terms of eighteenth-century Berlin, and finally appropriated by Asher Ginzberg (Ahad Ha-'Am) in laying the theoretical foundations of modern Zionism in a nineteenth-century German context. All three thinkers interpret a "democratized messianism" in their respective contexts as the nonpersonalist reality of an inner spiritual essence of Judaism that is externalized by modern forms of Judaism in working out, together with the world, the sanctification of the world.

Another example of contextualizing a distinct biblical passage in the post-Kantian philosophical discussion is provided by Stephan Grätzel in his essay on Fichte, "Verkündigung in Übereinstimmung mit der Vernunft: Fichtes Auslegung des Johannesevangeliums." In this chapter, Grätzel shows how Fichte reads two verses in John's Prologue (verses 1 and 14) as the fact of religious revelation that the philosopher then uses to investigate the metaphysical question concerning the transition from being (*Sein*) to existence (*Dasein*). This transition is revealed paradigmatically in the historical fact of Jesus of Nazareth as a transition to life in the flesh as one constituted by love. Furthermore, this transition reveals the reason for existence in the imperative: "be" (*soll*). Revelation is reason's point of departure for providing a philosophical determination of existence as an interconnected whole that is grounded in a hidden unity. In Fichte's case, religious revelation in the Bible is integrally linked to the operation of philosophical reason in pursuing the metaphysical truth about the reality of and the reason for the relation of existence to its ground.

Christine Helmer's essay, "The Consummation of Reality: Soteriological Metaphysics in Schleiermacher's Interpretation of Colossians 1:15–20," takes up the standard criticism against Schleiermacher's alleged imposition of dogmatic cate-

gories onto his interpretation of the New Testament. In his defense, Helmer argues that the criticism cannot be sustained in the face of Schleiermacher's philological and hermeneutical sensitivity to the New Testament texts: his discovery of the literary parallel in Col 1:15–20 is one example. Rather, the charge must be reinterpreted in terms of the metaphysic that Schleiermacher uses to conceptualize the relation between Christ's work in creation and redemption. Schleiermacher determines a soteriological metaphysic according to the power/appearance dynamic of the inner power of redemption in Christ that permeates reality in extending into the world. Schleiermacher's metaphysical claim, however, overdetermines the Colossians' passage. It seems that the answer to the question of reality hermeneutically privileges Schleiermacher's own position and shapes his interpretation of the text. Whether correct on historical-critical grounds or not, this interpretation serves to argue for the importance of considering metaphysical issues in making judgments upon hermeneutical results.

In his essay, "Die Dialektik von Freiheit und Sünde: Hegels Interpretation von Genesis 3," Joachim Ringleben investigates the way in which Hegel interprets the fall in Gen 3 according to his concept of subjectivity. As is the case with Schelling, Hegel situates his interpretation in the transcendental Idealist philosophical discussion concerning the relation of the subject to its ground. In contrast with Schelling, Hegel offers a rational metaphysical explanation for this relation: the natural genesis of subjectivity toward freedom requires an emancipation from its ground. Necessary disunity, although a transitional state of consciousness, implies the inevitable production of sin and evil. This example of Hegel's biblical interpretation demonstrates both Hegel's method of sublating myth into the philosophical concept in order to tease out its speculative truth and his understanding of the speculative reality intended by the biblical text. Hegel knows that the reality articulated in Gen 3 is neither a historical nor a transhistorical reality, but a speculative one capable of full philosophical determination.

Wilhelm Gräb takes up the nineteenth-century transcendental Idealist question concerning the relation between reason and its ground in being by concentrating on a representative interpretation of John's Prologue. It is the later Schelling's controversial lectures of 1841–1842, the *Philosophy of Revelation*, that serve as the representative text for Gräb's study of a philosophical interpretation of the Bible in the chapter, "Anerkannte Kontingenz: Schellings existentielle Interpretation des Johannesprologs in der *Philosophie der Offenbarung*." According to Gräb, Schelling's philosophical access to John's Prologue provides him with answers to both the speculative and historical questions of existence. The speculative metaphysical question of being is posed when reason asks the question concerning the transcendental condition for the possibility of knowing; the metaphysical answer grounds reason in being that precedes it, never to be exhausted by rational determination. The historical question concerning the contingent relation of individuality to the ground of being is answered by its historical revelation in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. The

reality of historical revelation is transparent to metaphysical reality; contingency witnesses to its ground in God.

Garrett Green discusses the famous projection theory of Ludwig Feuerbach in his essay, "Feuerbach and the Hermeneutics of Imagination," in the context of Feuerbach's theory of religion and its implications for biblical hermeneutics. According to Green, the imagination plays a key role in Feuerbach's construction of religion. It represents one answer to the nineteenth-century question concerning the human capacity for religion that challenges the restriction of this capacity to a rational mechanism. Feuerbach appeals decisively to the imagination in his own philosophy of religion and uses it to explain the metaphysical status assigned to the content of projection. Appealing to the model of objective self-consciousness, Feuerbach shows that the imagination is involved in its own deception. When this theory is extrapolated into the study of the Bible, it explains the imagination's self-deception concerning the literal sense of this written form of revelation. Feuerbach thus uses a philosophical argument to fund a biblical hermeneutic of suspicion that has had a significant impact on both critical theories of religion and biblical scholarship.

The intention of this volume is to provide "local" studies in the history of biblical interpretation with the precise question concerning reality at the forefront of investigation. Whether that reality is conceived historically, contextually, or metaphysically, it is used to inform the approach to a biblical theology that takes seriously the power of biblical texts to address human questions regarding religion, experiences in religion, and the transhistorical relevance of religion.