
WE AND THEY: DECOLONIZING GRECO-ROMAN AND BIBLICAL ANTIQUITIES

International Conference

9-12th August 2016

Aarhus University Conference Center at Sandbjerg Estate, Denmark

In much recent scholarly literature on the antiquity, one often encounters a "We" and "They" approach. Assuming such a dichotomy, scholars often too quickly resume to act as the

interpreter for ancient people.

These natives, we are enlightened, thought in utterly different categories than "We" do. While originally a much needed corrective for all too easily assuming an unbroken continuity (especially between "us" and "The Bible" or Classical Antiquity), it has, more often than not, simply engaged another extreme: no meaningful comparison applies between antiquity and modernity. This conference is meant to address these binaries and offer more



nuanced alternatives. The politics that such comparisons entail will be analyzed as well, and therefore attention will be devoted not only to who is included in the "They" of the ancients, but also who is excluded from the "We" of the moderns. Thematically, this three-days conference will include discussions of gender and sexuality, language and materiality, and race and ethnicity, and will address literary and other evidence from Homer to Augustine. Participants will be encouraged to submit a revised version of their paper to a peer-reviewed conference volume to be published in 2017.

The Conference is funded by The Danish Council for Independent Research Sapere Aude Fellowship as a part of the project *Wrestling with Archons: Gnosticism as a Critical Theory of Culture*. The Project is affiliated with the Centre for the Study of Antiquity and Christianity at the School of Culture and Society of Aarhus University

For further details see <http://projects.au.dk/wrestlingarchons/>

Arrival Day: 9th August

- 16:00 *Arrival at Sandbjerg*
- 18:00-18:15 *Welcome and Presentation of the Conference Theme*
Jonathan Cahana (Aarhus University)
- 18:15-18:30 *Greetings and Welcome to Sandbjerg*
Anders-Christian Jacobsen (Aarhus University)
- 18:30-20:00 *Opening Address*
Jorunn Økland (University of Oslo), "To Read Early Christian Texts on *Porneia* through the Lens of Modern Theories of Sexualities and Sexual Orientation."
- 20:00 *Reception*

Day 1: 10th August

- 8:00-9:00 *Breakfast*
- 9:00-10:15 *First Keynote*
Karmen MacKendrick (Le Moyne College), "At the Edge of a Revelation: Materiality, Language, and Divinity"
- 10:30-12:00 *Session 1*
Chair: **Anders-Christian Jacobsen** (Aarhus University)
L. Stephanie Cobb (University of Richmond), "Reclaiming the Miraculous in Early Christian Martyr Texts"
Blossom Stefaniw (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität, Mainz), "Academic Fictions, the Western Imagination, and Writing the Tura Find"
Erin Evans (Independent Scholar), "Ignorance and Arrogance: Language, Myth, and Marginalization in Gnosticism and Modern Scholarship"
- 12:00-13:00 **Lunch**
- 13:30-15:30 **Outing to Dybbøl battle site and museum guided by Jakob Engberg (Aarhus University)**
- 16:00-18:00 *Session 2*
Chair: **Karmen MacKendrick** (Le Moyne College)
Rhiannon Graybill (Rhodes College), "Day of the Woman'?: Sexual Violence and Feminist Horror in Judges 4-5"
James Crossley (St Mary's University, Twickenham, London), "The Historical Jesus: A First-Century Sexual Revolutionary?"
Jonathan Cahana (Aarhus University), "A bitch, a mother, a sinner, a saint: Gnostic Sophia Reconsidered through Radical Feminist Lens."
Makiko Sato (Toyama University), "The Rape of Lucretia: Sanctity of Body and Soul in Augustine"

18:00-20:00 *Dinner and social evening*

Day 2: 11th August

8:00-9:00 *Breakfast*

9:00-10:15 *Second Keynote*

Manuela Giordano (University of Calabria), "Empathizing with the Enemy or 'Orientalizing' Them? The Case of Aeschylus' *Persians*"

10:30-12:00 *Session 3*

Chair: **Jakob Engberg** (Aarhus University)

Pieter W. van den Horst (Emeritus, Utrecht University), "Religion and Politics in the Jewish-Christian War in Sixth-Century Himyar (Yemen)"

Yifat Monnickendam (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), "Why is Late Antique Christian Law Hardly Studied? Legal Theory and its Influence on Legal History"

Thomas E. Hunt (Newman University, Birmingham), "Decolonisation and alterity in Francophone interpretations of the late antique past during the Algerian War."

12:00-13:00 *Lunch*

14:00-15:00 *Session 4*

Chair: **Manuela Giordano** (University of Calabria)

Jessica van 't Westeinde (Durham University), "Liberating Levi: a cultural evolutionary approach to Aramaic and Greek Levi beyond denominational essentialism."

Anna Usacheva (Aarhus University), "A complex epistemology and a verified belief in Origen and Gregory Nazianzen."

16:00-18:00 *Concluding discussion: Towards a joint publication*

Chair: **Jonathan Cahana** (Aarhus University)

18:00-20:00 *Farewell dinner*

Day 3: 12th August

8:00-9:00 *Breakfast*