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Item Type	Article
Authors	WAN, Sze-kar
Publisher	Institute of Sino-Christian Studies; Institute of Comparative Scripture and Inter-religious Dialogue, Minzu University of China
Rights	Institute of Sino-Christian Studies (ISCS) ; Institute of Comparative Scripture and Inter-religious Dialogue, Minzu University of China
Download date	2026-09-25 15:04:04
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/166798

God or Caesar?

A Postcolonial-Critical Reading of Mark 12:13-17

上帝或凯撒？对《马可福音》
12 章 13 至 17 节的后殖民解读

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Abstract

It has been common practice to interpret Jesus's saying on Caesar *versus* God in the Gospel of Mark 12:13–17 as a separation between religion and politics. This essay shows that a postcolonial reading that takes seriously the complicated web of personal and power dynamics in first-century Palestine yields a Markan Jesus actively taking part in the injustice and oppression his people experienced under the yoke of Roman imperial and colonial policies. Jesus' solution to the Roman problem is not to take up arms in revolt but to appeal to the moral and theological conscience of the local elites put in charge of their own people, Rome's middlemen who do their bidding, the Judean *maibans* who are more concerned with their personal interests than with the good of their own kinsfolk. Mark's Jesus challenges these collaborators to side with the people, with whom God, the true master of the land, the final source of authority, the real owner of the vineyard, ultimately sides.

Keywords: Jesus, Mark, Pharisees, Herodians, postcolonial studies, Roman Empire, power

The pericope concerning God and Caesar in Mark 12:13–17 has been the default weapon of choice to partition Christianity off from political involvement. When Jesus says, “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mark 12:17),¹ so goes the argument, he consigns the religious to a private and personal realm that must be strictly isolated from any rational discourse in the public square.² Accordingly the “church” is permanently divorced from the “state,” and the two morph into mutually irreconcilable, mutually exclusive spheres. This, however, is the very thing this pericope cannot mean, not the least because it is historically implausible. No one in the ancient Mediterranean world would have regarded the religious and the political as incompatible with each other. On the contrary, there is ample evidence that the Roman imperium marshaled religious symbols for political control. One need look no further than Cicero’s *Somnii Scipionis* in Book 6 of his *Res publica* and Vergil’s *Aeneid* to see that religious resources were an indissoluble part of Roman governance. Even if we bracket off the emperor cult, which was

¹ Unless noted to the contrary, all citations are from the *New Revised Standard Version*. Here I have substituted the literal *Caesar* for *the emperor* in the NRSV.

² If we trace the rise of secularism in Europe, the notion of religion as a private concern came as the result of a political compromise reached after the religious wars. Secularism was a historical construct first designed by princes after Westphalia for the purpose of placating ecclesial powers. The popular image of the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 ending the so-called “War of Religion” is anachronistic, according to Cavanaugh, “A Fire Strong Enough to Consume the House”: The Wars of Religion and the Rise of the State,” *Modern Theology* 11 (1995): 397–420. “Religion” was a post-Westphalian construct aimed at isolating religion from a supposedly separable “secular” space. The Thirty Year War was waged by warring princes with both Protestants and Catholics fighting on each side. See Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), pp. 21–66.

popular mainly in Greek cities and not in the city of Rome,³ there is plenty of material and literary evidence to document the integration of the cultic into the government of the empire. Likewise, religious movements like Judaism and emerging Christianity were deeply concerned with and involved in what moderns call social and political questions. Periodic outbreaks of messianic claimants in Judea are clear indications that for many adherents devotion to the Jewish God included key political aspirations, not the least of which was to gain independence from the Romans. The Messianic sect that eventually grew into Christianity was equally steeped in the political issues of his day. That their founding leader was executed as a rebel rouser by the Romans was a deeply embarrassing, even scandalous, problem for followers of the sect. That discomfort grew into paranoia when the Romans identified Christianity as a superstitious sect and began prosecuting its followers in the cruelest manner possible.⁴

Framing the issues in terms of “religion” *versus* “politics” is admittedly a nod to scholarly construct, *viz.* Western scholarly construct less. These are decidedly modern – indeed modernist – constructs that would have confounded Jesus and his contemporaries.⁵ Insofar as they are etic tools on which enquirers of ancient texts must rely to fashion questions productive to scholarly endeavors, they are indispensable in

³ See especially S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

⁴ A local persecution of Christians broke out in Neronian Rome in 60 C.E., if Tacitus is to be believed. A larger-scale persecution, in all likelihood under Emperor Domitian in late first century, was probably behind the writing of the Book of Revelation.

⁵ See Bruce Malina, “‘Religion’ in the World of Paul,” *Biblical Theological Bulletin* 16 (1986):92-101.

informing my methodological starting point. As this essay unfolds, however, it will be apparent that they are not where I would like to end up: it will be clear that my reading of the story in Mark in fact critiques such separation between religion and politics. For now, it remains a heuristic tool useful not for its historical value but for its modernist, secularist assumptions that I intend to challenge. I use these received categories for my reading of Mark precisely because they are problematic.

To that end, I will attempt a postcolonial reading of the debate between Jesus and the Judean authorities which culminates in the pericope on God *versus* Caesar. Alongside the stated purpose outline above, such a reading also enables me to make some methodological observations on postcolonial criticism. I want to raise the question whether so popular a reading strategy among North American biblical scholars is applicable in China as well. If it is, the second question is in what way it might contribute to the study of Confucian Classics.

What is Postcolonial Criticism?

The methodological ballast of this essay is termed postcolonial *criticism*, not postcolonial theory. That is a crucial distinction. If, as R. S. Sugirtharajah notes, a theory in the Foucauldian sense is “the deduction, on the basis of a number of axioms, of an abstract model applicable to an indefinite number of empirical descriptions,”⁶ then the reading

⁶ R. S. Sugirtharajah, *Postcolonial criticism and Biblical Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 11-42; repr. as “Charting the Aftermath: A Review of Postcolonial

strategy adopted by most postcolonial biblical scholars could hardly be called theory. Postcolonial criticism makes no claims about the nature of the text or assumptions on how it should be read, and what makes it less a theory is that it has little predictive power. It is fundamentally different from historical criticism, for example, which makes certain assumptions about the biblical text and its value and efficacy in granting historians a straightforward access to the past, provided they adhere to an agreed-upon canon of historical standards or, using Foucault's term, axioms. Once these axioms are accepted, they can be applied to any ancient text that promises to yield information about the past. Postcolonial criticism, on the other hand, makes few assumptions about the text save one – that the text is formed in the nexus of political struggle for power. As Edward Said has demonstrated with regard to nineteenth-century literature, even works that ostensibly do not speak of political power or colonialism wittingly or unwittingly participate in the empire's construction of its colonial mission to and subjugation of “uncivilized” inhabitants. Literary production is part and parcel of a desire to impose the order of the imperium upon the imputed chaos of the world. Postcolonial biblical criticism foregrounds the question of political power but otherwise makes no assumption about how a text must be read or what sort of interpretive mechanism could or could not be applied to it. If historical criticism can be called a “method” in the way Hans-Georg Gadamer uses it,⁷ postcolonial

criticism,” in R. S. Sugirtharajah, ed., *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader* (Malden, MA; Oxford; Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 7-32; all citations in this essay are from the reprinted edition. Foucault's quote is found on page 9 and is taken from R. J. C. Young.

⁷ See Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (2nd ed.; New York: Crossroad, 1991).

criticism might well be compared to Gadamer's "prejudgment" (*Vorurteil*) or "preunderstanding" (*Vorverständnis*), whose main purpose is to sensitize the interpreters to the type of political questions that need to be raised when one confronts and is confronted by the text.⁸ Fernando Segovia has called this way of raising questions a postcolonial "optic," because it trains interpreters to see the text through a new postcolonial lens. But this way of approaching texts stops short of dictating what "method" must or must not be applied to a text in interpretation.⁹ Inasmuch as historical criticism and postcolonial criticism occupy different moments in this hermeneutical circle, the two can complement each other.

More than any other critical theory, postcolonial criticism is notorious in its variety of amorphous definitions. In the way I use it in this study, I take postcolonial criticism as a way of raising questions prompted by a condition of postcoloniality, under which the natives respond to their loss of social or political power as a result of foreign subjugation, domination, and imposition of a new sociopolitical order

⁸ See discussion of Gadamerian hermeneutics and its problematic application to Asian American biblical interpretation in Sze-kar Wan, "Betwixt and Between: Towards a Hermeneutics of Hyphenation," M. Foksett & J. K.-J. Kuan, eds., in *Ways of Being, Ways of Reading: Asian-American Biblical Interpretation* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2006), pp. 137-151; especially pp. 142-146.

⁹ See Fernando Segovia, "Biblical Criticism and Postcolonial Studies: Toward a Postcolonial Optic," in R. S. Sugirtharajah, ed., *Postcolonial Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), pp. 49-65; repr. in R. S. Sugirtharajah, ed., *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader* (Malden, MA, USA; Oxford; Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 33-44. I have consistently used "method" in quotes in the hope of neutralizing the word's pretension to objectivity. I use it in the sense of the Foucaultian "theory," which is predicated on the acceptance of historical axioms and the application of said axioms to the production of interpretive results.

by means of violence, violence that might come in the form of militarism, threat thereof, or cultural domination. As this definition impinges on my reading of Mark 12:13–17, I want to highlight three corollaries. First, I place the stress not so much on the imperial presence of Rome as on its impact on the colonized and their reaction to colonization. The Romans ruled their colonies indirectly by coopting local elites, by means of enticement and threat, to be their intermediaries in governing their own people. This was nowhere more true than in Judea. First through the Herodian family and then secondarily through the temple authorities, Rome ruled Judea effectively with little need to show its military might except in case of unrest. They did not even have to maintain a physical presence: the mere knowledge that Roman legions were garrisoned somewhere in the land was often enough to ensure stability. Within this framework, experience of Roman imperialism in everyday life was indirect, refracted through local rulers and magistrates (e.g., tax-collectors) put in charge of their own people.

Second, this particular definition of postcolonial criticism privileges the perspective of the subjugated populace, the common folk, or, in Spivak's term, the subaltern. In Mark's narrative, Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (11:1–10) marks a watershed moment in his relationship with the crowd. Prior to entering Jerusalem, Jesus avoids them and travels with only his closest disciples; afterwards the people publicly embrace him, and he seems to have accepted it, at least initially. More than once, his popularity keeps him out of the authorities' grasp. In the aftermath of the incident that destroys the

chief financial operations of the temple (11:15–17), the authorities plot to arrest Jesus, but the text emphasizes that they “were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching” (11:18 NRSV). The same holds true after he bests the authorities and criticizes them for betraying God in the Parable of the Vineyard (12:12). Mark presents Jesus as a representative of the people whom the ruling elites try hard to lure away from Jesus. The authorities’ failure in doing so evinces that Jesus remains the *vox populi* and that he continues to speak on behalf of the people.

The third and final corollary follows the first two: namely, I pursue postcolonial criticism as a tool for recovering indigeneity. One advantage of postcolonial criticism over other critical theories is that it transcends the simply binary of good *versus* evil. The romantic notion of “evil colonizers” *versus* “innocent victims” is replaced in postcolonial criticism by a more realistic assessment of the colonized space as a site of ambivalence that admits of both resistance and mimicry, a place where both the colonial and the subjugated have influenced each other and where hybridization ineluctably conditions participants on both sides of the colonial divide. All are complicit: the overlords, the willing and reluctant middlemen, the demagogues, the rabble-rousers, the ordinary citizens, the peasants. Still, what makes postcolonial criticism post-anything is the restoration – however contingent, impure, or incomplete it might be – of agency to a heretofore subjugated people. Whatever else might have motivated the crowd to hail Jesus as king in his public entry into the city, political and therefore territorial self-determination is surely an irreducible part of their aspirations. The

return path to the paradisaical pre-colonial past is now irrevocably closed, but post-colonial autonomy very much lies open in the immediate future, and that is the proper domain of postcolonial studies.¹⁰ Postcolonial criticism is therefore applicable even where colonial rule is still in force, for it interrogates how coloniality affects all participants and, in the case of my reading of Mark, how agency and indigeneity can be recovered in spite of, even in the presence of, Roman rule in Judea and beyond. In fact, an aspiration to recovering indigeneity seems the best way to understand the temple incident of Mark 11:15–17 as Jesus’ attempt to restore the temple to its proper functions:

He was *teaching and saying*, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers” (11:17; emphasis added).

That he is describes as “teaching” the crowd suggests that the Markan Jesus embraces self-consciously his role as a representative of the people, in the best Greek and Roman tradition as a public orator espousing the cause of the people. The crowd understands Jesus’ intention perfectly as well, for they are said to be “spellbound” (11:18; *epiplessein*, lit. “to be utterly overwhelmed”), taking “delight” in his teaching (12:37).

¹⁰ I use the hyphenated *post-colonial* to describe the historical aftermaths of a colony’s liberation from its imperial master, but the non-hyphenated form *postcolonial* to describe the conditions created by coloniality. Strictly speaking, therefore, postcolonial conditions still obtain even during and in midst of colonization.

Contradiction and Tension Judean Hybridity

From the vantage point of the common folk, the concrete manifestation of colonialism is the middlemen. These are elites recruited by the colonial power to govern the local populace, and they are often eager to comply because of the enormous benefits the position affords them. By doing the bidding of their foreign masters, they exercise certain power over their own people. Even if it is only derived and refracted power, it is real enough to provide them the wherewithal to implement desired changes, be they aim at personal gains or nobler benefits the people. They therefore occupy the border between the colonizers and the colonized, a liminality that is at once powerful and precarious. While they rise above their own kinsfolk, they personally bear the brunt of popular resentment otherwise directed towards the absentee foreigner master. Animosity towards these colonial appointees is often even deeper and more severe, because they are universally regarded and treated as turncoats who collaborate with foreigners for the subjugation of their own people. Fairly or unfairly, a motive of avarice is often affixed to their governance.

While they wield power over large segments of the population, however, the basis for the power of the middlemen is forever unstable and precarious. Their power is never so absolute as to grant them decision over life and death, and yet they must make such decisions while deferring the ultimate authorization to the foreign overlord, the puppet-master who wields real power. According to Homi Bhabha, these middlemen are hybrids who bear the pedigree of both the

colonizers and the colonized, but because they are imperfect copies of both they find themselves in a perpetually unstable state marked by turmoil and rejection. On one hand, though they bear the mark of the empire, their imitation of their master is never so perfect as to be accepted unproblematically into the imperial ranks. The harder they try to assimilate, the sharper is the distinction between the ruling class and themselves – their accent is wrong and their “civility” is wrong in the eyes of the foreign power. On the other hand, they are rejected by their own people not only because of their liminality but especially because of their mimicry of their foreign masters. Their adoption of the master’s way renders them pseudo-foreigners but more importantly enfleshes a cultural hierarchy that ranks the native at the bottom.¹¹

In nineteenth-century Canton and Macao, the *maibans* (买办), *compradors* (康白度) in Portuguese, occupied such a position of liminality. Their connection to American and British corporations brought them wealth and power far above what was available to their own compatriots. Out of vested personal interests, they helped

¹¹ Homi Bhabha has famously argued that hybridity, because of its destabilizing effect on the univocal, monolithic veneer of the colonizers, carries with it a transgressive power that will eventually spell the demise of the empire; see his “Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche and the Colonial Condition,” in P. Williams and L. Chrisman, eds., *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 72. Suffice to say the point is controversial; in the semi-colonial environment of China, at least, hybridity has never been viewed with unanimous enthusiasm; For an Asian-American ambivalence towards the postcolonial notion of hybridity, see Sze-kar Wan, “Does Diaspora Identity Imply Some Sort of Universality? An Asian-American Reading of Galatians,” in *Interpreting Beyond the Border*, ed. F. Segovia (The Bible and Postcolonialism, 2; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), pp. 107-131, especially pp. 108-112; idem., “Asian American Method,” in *Paul and Critical Approaches*, ed. J. Marchal (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), pp. 175-190, especially pp. 176-181.

maintain a continuation of colonial and semi-colonial occupation by dealing with the locals on behalf of their foreign employers.¹² As Chinese citizens *maibans* used their legal status to make purchases of properties otherwise denied to foreign concerns, amassing great personal fortunes through these transactions. Yet, because they were working for foreigners, extraterritoriality was extended also to them, thus protecting them from Chinese laws that might otherwise restrict their movements and business practices. Many such *maibans* became spokespersons for foreign concerns and rose to great power and influence.¹³ While they might seem to have the best of both worlds, they were often treated as second-class lackeys by their American and European employers while being reviled by the Chinese as unscrupulous collaborators or “pseudo-foreign devils” (假洋鬼子), eager to trade in their own people’s interests for selfish gains.

The temple authorities, the chief priests and the scribes, later joined by the elders, who begin to hound Jesus after the temple incident (11:18, 27; 14:43, 53; 15:1, etc.), are just such *maibans*. Their liminality is clear from their having to negotiate delicately between the Romans and the crowd while being hamstrung by both, as the unfolding passion narrative in Mark makes clear. At first, they are unable to arrest Jesus – even after they have concluded that he is a dangerous demagogue that could potentially plunge Jerusalem into a

¹² I use the masculine for the *maiban*, because he is resolutely male. Patriarchy’s connection to and dependence on colonialism is a little-discussed theme in postcolonial criticism.

¹³ He Dong (何东) was a well-known *maiban* in Hong Kong during the early British colonial days. His family later soared to great height of influence in Hong Kong society because of the work he did for the British.

confrontation with the Romans that could only end in ruinous tragedy – because, according to Mark, they fear the crowd (11:18, 32; 12:12). Later, when they are finally able to arrest Jesus, by treachery and under the cover of darkness, away from the adoring crowd, they have no legal authority to charge him formally except to extradite him to Pilate (15:1). When Pilate, the Roman governor, alone holds sway over Jesus' fate, these Judean *maibans* are reduced to powerless bystanders whose only recourse was little more than cajole an unruly mob to demand execution of an agitator. This exposes the illusory nature of the *maibans'* power.

Political Nature of the Confrontations

The political nature of the passion narrative has often been lost on modern readers who locate its religious dimension in isolation from the social and political realm. The mere fact that Jesus was executed in the manner of a seditious revolutionary, as generations of failed Judean rebels had been, should clue us in on the political aspect of his ministry. To the Romans, he was a rebel rouser, a messianic pretender who must be eliminated before the situation deteriorated into full-scale revolt. The job for sounding the alarm and alerting the Romans of incipient trouble belonged to the middlemen, the high priests, scribes, and elders who had their ears close to the ground and whose allegiance was pledged to maintaining peace at all cost, including sacrificing a popular leader of the people. They were informants and accusers, ready to suppress any and all unrests. There is no need to attribute any malice to

their action; in the world of *realpolitik*, their concern was purely pragmatic: how to maintain a harmonious society so as to forestall the violence of Roman police action. In that context, the clashes between Jesus and the authorities must be evaluated first and foremost as political conflicts over the hearts and minds of the people. Both sides instinctually understand the critical role the crowd plays in this political theater, not in the modern democratic sense but in what they might do to provoke possible intrusions by Romans troops. Both Jesus and the Judean authorities sidle up to the crowd as basis of their power. On part of Jesus, his popularity with the crowd proves to be his protection. On the part of the authorities, the crowd play a more negative role: any unrest or social instability would mean the loss of control and ultimately the loss of their privileged position as guarantors of peace in the eyes of the Romans.

An extended public confrontation between Jesus and the Judean authorities in Mark 11:27-12:12 demonstrates the political nature of this dispute. The authorities are upset at Jesus over the temple incident (11:15-19), in which Jesus drives out the vendors and overturns money-changers' tables, most likely in the outer court of the temple.¹⁴ The temple authorities immediately interrogate Jesus: "By what

¹⁴ The temple incident is based on old historical tradition and might even go back to the historical Jesus; so Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), pp. 527-529. The incident, in Yarbro Collins's judgment, must have taken place in the outer court of the temple. Whether the court was considered part of the sacred space inside the temple or the end of the profane outside, owing to Herod's construction of it along the line a Greek *agora*, was hotly debated by ancient Jewish writers; Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, pp. 527-528. For detail, see her "Jesus' Action in Herod's temple," pp. 53-57.

authority are you doing these things (*tauta*)? Who gave you this authority to do them?” (11:28).¹⁵ The question has to do with the nature of Jesus’ power and the identity of his political backer.¹⁶ They are looking for a partisan answer: Which political party might be backing Jesus and at whose bidding might he be carrying out these actions? They place Jesus in a position analogous to their own – as an intermediary with derivative authority whose power base lies elsewhere. This line of questioning and the assumptions on which it is based betray an understanding of power that is binary in nature – the colonizers *versus* the colonized. Whoever has access to greater power has the upper hand. Since they assume they have the greatest imperial power behind them, the Romans, by their colonial reasoning, Jesus must not. Their interrogation of Jesus is intended as a showdown over what they take to be competing bases of power, power conceived strictly within the architectonic framework of colonialism.

For his part, Jesus does not dispute the binary nature of power, but he reconfigures it, via a circuitous route, by means of John the Baptist. In a pattern that would characterize subsequent disputes, Jesus answers them, in good Rabbinic fashion, with a question of his own:

¹⁵ *Tauta* here cannot refer to the withering of the fig tree (11:12-14 and 11:20-26), which has been split into two halves with the temple incident (11:15-19) inserted between them. Mark 11:27-33 is Jesus’ first encounter with the temple authorities since the temple incident; Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, pp. 538-39. Indeed, it is likely that a double intercalation is evident here, with the temple incident and the interrogation originally joined as a single pre-Markan tradition but split by Mark into two (11:15-19 and 11:27-12.12); Sharyn E. Dowd, *Prayer, Power, and the Problem of Suffering: Mark 11:22-25 in the Context of Markan Theology* (Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), pp. 38-40.

¹⁶ The NRSV has “What authority” which seems too weak for ποῖα ἐξουσία. ποῖος; ποῖα exouia poios?, literally “what kind of authority?,” which interrogates the *nature* of Jesus’s authority.

“Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” (11:30). An appeal to John the Baptist might seem surprising at first glance until we realize that he was executed as a political prisoner for criticizing the puppet king Herod Antipas (6:1729). Many commentators have failed to note the importance of introducing John into the dispute, the first of several between Jesus and the temple authorities that would lead inexorably to Jesus’s arrest and execution. But in fact, the explicit comparison between Jesus and John sets the ensuing struggles with the authorities in the context of eschatological and political agonism.¹⁷ As Paul Hollenbach writes,

Whatever may have been the occasion for John’s attack it needs to be stressed that his attack had legal, moral, and political significance. It probably was much more wide ranging than simply a criticism of Antipas’ marriage.... John was calling on Antipas to change himself, his politics, and his policies. He must have also called on him and the Jerusalem authorities to practice piety and justice.¹⁸

¹⁷ I use “agonism” here in the political sense of struggles between diverse stances and political propositions, which should be seen as positive elements in a healthy civil society. It was first formulated against a material Marxism that posited as its utopian ideal the absence of class struggles and social harmony. Today it remains a useful tool to interrogate and disrupt the coercion of social harmony and the hegemony of unification. Michel Foucault sees agonism as a stable element of power while denying power its insinuation of ontological status and appearance of monolithic stability. According to Foucault, “Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategic situation in a particular society”; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), p. 93.

¹⁸ Paul Hollenbach, “John the Baptist,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), p. 895.

Once again, we see the intertwining of what moderns take to be mutually exclusive spheres of influence, religion, and politics. John's attack on the king's personal morality is an inextricable part of his overall prophetic pronouncements on a despotic rule that is backed by the systematic corruption of Roman colonization. Personal impiety implicates systemic injustice.

Jesus invokes John for another reason. John has been and still is regarded by the people of Judea and beyond as "truly a prophet" (11:32) – that is, an *eschatological* prophet. When John first makes his appearance in the Gospel, he is said to administering a "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin" (1:4), and exerting widespread and profound impact on the populace of Judea: "And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins" (1:5). This statement, according to Adela Yarbro Collins, "implies that John was accepted as a prophet, as an *eschatological agent of God*, by the Jewish people, at least by the vast majority of the inhabitants of Judea and Jerusalem."¹⁹ The choice of Jordan as the site of baptism, furthermore, points to the geopolitical dimension of this religious act. As the boundary that separates the land that is holy from all that is unholy and impious, and as the evocative symbol of the miraculous entrance of the Israelites into the promised land,²⁰ Jordan is laden with heavy eschatological and political significance, embodying the hope of the Judean people that God will restore the land to the people and expel

¹⁹ Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, p. 142; emphasis supplied.

²⁰ It is also analogous to the crossing of the Red Sea; Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, p. 142.

the enemies and all who defile the holy land. The enemies at the times of John and Jesus are the Roman colonizers and their *maibans*.²¹

Jesus' introduction of John the Baptist thus accomplishes two objectives at once. First, by drawing a parallel between himself and John he publicly takes up the latter's prophetic mantle and agrees to enter into the same political arena where John lost his life. He is the same eschatological prophet concerned with ridding the land of impure occupiers and their collaborators and restoring it to the people of God. His temple action is a microcosm of what he intends to do. With this explicit comparison to John, however, Mark the storyteller also gestures towards the eventual end of Jesus's own fate, thereby tinting the rest of the passion narrative with a tragic pall. Second, and far more discursively tenacious and insistent, Jesus turns his interrogators' binary on its head. By making them choose between the divine and human origins of John's prophetic mission, Jesus rejects the notion that power can be configured only in terms of the colonizers *versus* the colonized. Instead, he replaces it with a binary between divine and human authority. By implication, Jesus denies the real substance of imperial power by calling it "human" and by subjecting it to the higher "divine authority."

The dilemma the temple authorities face is palpable: "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But shall we say, 'Of human origin?'" – they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet" (11:31-32). To say John's mission was divinely ordained, they would have to admit that he was wrongly

²¹ Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, p. 142.

executed and that his criticism of Herod Antipas's puppet government was legitimate and true. To say John's mission was human would irk a crowd who are convinced that John was an eschatological prophet sent for the restoration of the land and expulsion of foreign enemies. By admitting the existence of a dilemma with regard to the identity of John's mission, however, the leaders have already lost the argument, because Jesus' binary automatically pits the people against the power clique that compose of the Roman colonizers, their puppet kings, and most of all themselves, the appointed *maibans*.

Finally, to answer Jesus's question with a non-committal "We do not know" (11:33a) is an unwitting admission that the imperial-colonial construct that drives their opening question to Jesus is untenable. Their conception of power in terms of colonizers *versus* colonized collapses in face of Jesus' binary between the divine and human. It is an admission that the imperial might of Rome cannot stand up to the authority of God. In fear of the crowd's reaction, they come to the realization that God sides with the people and not with their absentee masters. But if they cannot acknowledge that openly, Jesus is perfectly justified in doing the same: "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things" (11:33b). The authorities at this point of the narrative know exactly what Jesus knows; their refusal to follow through on their epistemic discovery is now exposed as a morally deficient choice.

To drive home his point, Jesus presses on with the Parable of the Vineyard:

A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the wine press, and built a watchtower; then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants to collect from them his share of the produce of the vineyard. But they seized him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. And again he sent another slave to them; this one they beat over the head and insulted. Then he sent another, and that one they killed. And so it was with many others; some they beat, and others they killed. He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, "They will respect my son." But those tenants said to one another, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours." So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. (Mark 12:1–9)

The story is a thinly disguised attack on the temple authorities. Mark's editorialization that the chief priests, scribes, and elders "realized that [Jesus] had told this parable against them" (see 12:12) grants the hearers permission to read the story as an allegory. Indeed, the story makes little sense unless its details are mapped point by point onto the ongoing confrontation between Jesus the beloved son and the authorities who oppose him.²² Read allegorically, the story has to do

²² Rudolf Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (rev. ed.; New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 177, came to the same conclusion because there is no introductory formula explaining what the story illustrates or what it is being compared to. Whether this story goes ultimately back to the historical Jesus (so C. H. Dodd and Martin Hengel, among others, over against Bultmann) does not deter me, since I am much more concerned with the presentation of the *Markan* Jesus in his confrontation with the authorities within the overall framework of the passion narrative in *Mark*. In any event, the verisimilitude of this story to ancient

with occupied Judea (the vineyard²³) and the relationship of its real owner (God) to his tenants (high priests, scribes, elders²⁴). The Markan Jesus thus compares himself to the son whose mission to reclaim ownership of the vineyard ends in his conspiratory murder (12:6–8). In so doing, Jesus makes his own mission explicit to his detractors but anticipates the tragic end that will come. Here the parallel drawn between himself and John the Baptist is complete,²⁵ and the authorities finally receive the answer to the question they ask Jesus, “By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?” (11:28). Jesus’ answer is that he is the “beloved son” of the real owner destined to inherit his father’s ancestral property, while the authorities are but tenants and hired hands who are in no way entitled to the vineyard and who, worst of all, are plotting to usurp it from its rightful heir.²⁶

agricultural practices under absentee landlords does not foreclose its allegorical values; see Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, pp. 545–546.

²³ So George Brooke, “4Q500 1 and the Use of Scripture in the Parable of the Vineyard,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 2:3 (1995): 284. Drawing on a study of 4Q500, Brooke argues that while the vineyard of Isa 5.1–7, on which the Parable of the Vineyard is based, represents the house of Israel and the people of Judah (Isa 5.7; cf. 5.3), Second Temple interpreters took it to mean Jerusalem. All this is to say that the vineyard of the Parable represents “Israel in miniature, that is Jerusalem, its temple and its cult” (ibid.).

²⁴ So Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, p. 545.

²⁵ The parallel between Jesus and John in this story has long been observed. David Stern even goes so far as to insist that the “son” of the parable be identified with John the Baptist; David Stern, *Parables in Midrash: Narrative and Exegesis in Rabbinic Literature* (Cambridge, MA & London: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 193–194. That is quite impossible, of course, since only Jesus is called “beloved” in Mark (12:6; cf. 1:11; 9:7). The force of the confrontation and the centrality of the tragic figure of Jesus in the passion narrative demand that the “beloved son” here be a self-designation of the Markan Jesus.

²⁶ So Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, p. 547.

The image of the vineyard is derived from Isaiah 5:1-7, in particular the first four lines of verse 2, “He dug it and cleared it of stones,/and planted it with choice vines;/he built a watchtower in the midst of it,/and hewed out a wine vat in it.” Mark’s story adds the important detail of the absentee landlord who rents the vineyard out to tenants, without which the ensuing mistreatment of the owner’s servants and eventual murder of the “beloved son” would lose its narrative frame. Even this addition is paralleled by the promise of judgment in Isaiah 5. The Isaianic song of the vineyard condemns Israel and Judah for their injustice and bloodshed (5:7) and metes out a punishment of destruction: “I will remove its hedge,/and it shall be devoured;/I will break down its wall,/and it shall be trampled down./I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed,/and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;/I will also command the clouds/that they rain no rain upon it” (Isa 5:5-6). In Mark, the bloodshed takes the form of mistreatment of servants sent to collect rent from beating to murder (Mark 12:2-5). All this culminates in the plot to kill the “beloved son” (12:6-8). The dependence on Isaiah 5 helps Mark make a crucial intertextual step towards eschatological judgment: “What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others” (12:9).

In exposing the temple authorities’ intention to kill him (12:7-8), Jesus issues a stern warning, that the true owner of the vineyard will exact his revenge upon the tenants if they willfully harm him (12: 9). In the context of the binary between the divine and the human set up earlier, the vineyard owner is God. So Jesus’ warning offers once again

the same choice for the temple officials as before: Will they submit to human authority, whether it originates from the Romans or from one of their appointed puppets or governors? Or will they submit to God, the real owner, who stands on the side of the people? In so subverting his interrogators' binary into one that contrasts God to any human power, Jesus compels the Judean *maibans* to recognize their own liminality and places them at the knife-edge of decision either for or against God: Who is the owner of the vineyard? Are you for or against God? But once we recognize the biblical link of the vineyard to Jerusalem, as no doubt both Jesus' interrogators and Mark's audience would have done, the stakes are raised infinitely higher. Jesus's binarism now insists that the second question be raised: *Who* are in charge of the vineyard at present, on the human side of the equation? The allegorical reasoning of the story might point to the *maiban* tenants, but anyone who is in the know would find it impossible not to finger the Romans. The controversy now takes a profound political turn, and this anti-Roman bias becomes explicit in the pericope that immediately follows.

God or Caesar?

The interrogation between Jesus and the Jerusalem leaders' lackeys, the Pharisees and Herodians sent to try to trap Jesus with his own words over whether to pay taxes to Rome (Mark 12:13-17) has often been interpreted as a battle of wits and nothing more. Jesus won the debate with rhetorical cleverness but otherwise raises nothing of

substance.²⁷ There have been attempts to interpret the story theologically,²⁸ but more often than not it is taken to be a Christian blueprint for the separation of church and state. But if one takes seriously the terms of the debate between Jesus and the temple authorities leading up to now from the temple incident, the present controversy has to be interpreted in the context of political, anti-imperial ethos established hitherto.

Then they sent to him some Pharisees and some Herodians to trap him in what he said. And they came and said to him, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?” But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, “Why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it.” And they brought one. Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” They answered, “The emperor’s.” Jesus said to them, “Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” And they were utterly amazed at him. (Mark 12:13-17)

The appearance of both Pharisees and Herodians as co-conspirators (12:13) is more than a little surprising. Pharisees were active among the people of the land, particularly in small towns and villages in the north.

²⁷ So e.g., Robert C. Tannehill, *The Sword of his Mouth* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), pp. 173-177.

²⁸ E.g., John R. Donahue, “A Neglected Factor in the Theology of Mark,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 101 (1982): 563-594.

In their relation to the country folk and people of the land, they were often critical of the city and especially the temple. Their presence in Jerusalem and their role in trying to trap Jesus at the behest of the temple authorities are therefore unexpected.²⁹ Even more unexpected is their cooperation with the Herodians, since Pharisees were known to be loyal to the old Hasmonean Kingdom and hostile to Herod's family. In fact, in all of ancient literature, Mark is the only place where Pharisees are said to be working alongside Herod-sympathizers.³⁰ Matthew, which depends on Mark, in typical fashion, heightens the culpability of the Pharisees by having them send disciples along with the Herodians to Jesus.³¹ Luke omits the reference to the Pharisees and Herodians altogether, making the high priests and the temple leadership ask the question to Jesus directly.

Mark does not tell his audience why the authorities initiate the confrontation, but Luke places the episode squarely in the political arena by adding that the temple authorities confront Jesus "so as to hand him over to the jurisdiction and authority of the governor" (Luke 20:20).³² Given the political nature of the clash thus far, it is not difficult to understand why – They try to trap Jesus with a question on

²⁹ See Anthony Saldarini, "Pharisees," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 295-296.

³⁰ Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, p. 556, suggests the Pharisees were brought in to judge the lawfulness of Jesus's answer (Mark 12:14-15). But *exesti* (v. 14) does not need to be understood in the strictly legal sense; it can simply imply permission, possibility, or propriety of said action. The issue brought before Jesus, in any case, has little to do with *halakic* purity and more to do with political allegiance.

³¹ For Matthew's general intensification of the Pharisees' opposition to Jesus, see Saldarini, "Pharisees," p. 296.

³² Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, p. 556.

paying taxes (12:14), a politically sensitive issue tied directly to the question of loyalty to Rome. Josephus speaks of a Galilean or a Gamalan by the name of Judas who in 6–7 CE had called on the Judeans to refuse to pay taxes to the Romans as a means of gaining independence. The school of thought he founded as a result, the so-called Fourth Philosophy, maintained its influence in Judea and might have provided the basis for the Great Revolt of 66 CE (*Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.1, §§1-10). Judas had allies, even sympathy, among the Pharisees: He was in league with a Pharisee named Saddok, and according to Josephus the Fourth Philosophy agreed with the tenets of the Pharisees in every respect, except that the former advocated throwing off foreign rule as a way of honoring God as the only master of the land (*Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.6, §23).³³

In the colonial context of Judea, the question, “Should we or should we not pay taxes to Caesar?” is a test of Jesus’ loyalty towards Rome’s appointed local elites, Herod and his cronies, tax-collectors, and most crucially the temple hierarchy, which is to say, all who act as Rome’s private contractors in levying the people and taking their cut of profit as middlemen. A negative response from Jesus would align him with the teachings of the Fourth Philosophy and pit him against Rome the imperial power, which would constitute an obvious charge of sedition. An affirmative response would alienate him from the people, the base of his influence and source of the authorities’ fear. It would disabuse them of their belief that he is their political savior. Either way, they are trying to reach a denouement to their ongoing conflict with

³³ Summary found in Yarbrow Collins, *Mark*, p. 552.

him by forcing him to declare his intent unequivocally and decisively. The Herodians' presence ensures that the empire's interests and those of the puppet government are protected, while the Pharisees are drafted into action to make sure they would express the people's outrage in the event Jesus advocates appeasement towards the Romans. The Pharisees and the Herodians represent the two major concerns that inform the authorities' frame of reference – the people of whom they are in charge and the empire that exerts constant pressure on the local leadership.

The authorities' question for Jesus is not entirely unreasonable. Given the insistent presence of Roman colonialism, the temple authorities' question is based on pragmatic concerns of *realpolitik*. Their main preoccupation is to make sure that local disturbance would not result in Rome's bringing its military might on little Judea, which would end tragically for the natives. Events unfolding in Jerusalem at the time of Mark's writing amply demonstrates the validity of their fear.³⁴ If they can achieve personal gains while being able to keep a lid of a powder keg, so much the better. In their unstable position of liminality, betwixt and between, all they can hope for is to maintain a semblance of social harmony, holding in contradictory and tenuous tension between the rebels on one side and on other the threat of colonial brutality. If this reading is right, the presence of the two unlikely

³⁴ Many if not most Markan scholar would argue, on internal grounds (e.g., Mark 13, the so-called Little Apocalypse), that Mark or a near-completed version was written during the Great Revolt of 66 CE, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 CE.

partners in crime, the Pharisees and the Herodians, serves to accentuate the authorities' liminality, the razor-thin margin on which they exist.

In trying to trap Jesus between the impossible choices of popular uprising and the threat of Roman brutality, the authorities' still frame their binarism in terms of the colonial reality of Judea. Even though rhetorically this new line of questioning is sharper than before, it really has not advanced in substance beyond their earlier question on the nature of Jesus' authority. Whereas before they questioned the source of Jesus' supposed power, then as now they assume it can be generated only from within a colonial context.

Jesus' rhetorical strategy remains the same as well, answering a question with a question – except this time his critique of Roman colonialism is more direct and his challenge to his interlocutors infinitely sharper. He asks for a coin on which the image of Caesar is inscribed, at which he makes the famous declaration, “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (12:17). Then as now, he subverts the temple authorities' colonial binarism into one between the divine and the human – except here the binarism is even starker than before, as God *versus* Caesar. Since on every Roman coin is inscribed the proclamation of Caesar Augustus as the *filius divi*, “son of god,” Jesus' injection to make a sharp and categorical distinction between God and Caesar in effect denies Caesar of his divinity. If divinity is proper to God alone, then the colonial authority that issues from Caesar has been severely weakened and decisively compromised.

On that theological ground, Jesus turns the table and reverses the challenge on his tormentors. The words “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” to his interrogators veil the question, Whose side are you on, God’s or Caesar’s? Stated even more incisively, What belongs to God, the vineyard owner, should it be returned to him? If the answer is Judea, then the Pharisees and Herodians must make the right choice. They are, after all, only mid- to low-level functionaries not so entrenched in Palestinian politics as to be unable to extricate themselves from the colonial hierarchy and theological quagmire. If Josephus is to be believed, the Pharisees could well be sympathetic to Jesus’ statement that stresses the sole *political* sovereignty of God. If they buy into Jesus’s vision, will they have the courage to make the right choice and help return the vineyard to its rightful owner? There is indeed a monolith of power, but that resides not in Rome but with the God of Israel and the God of the patriarchs. God alone is the sole owner of the vineyard, the heavenly commissioning sovereign of John the Baptist and Jesus, the only divinity, the sole true power against whom Roman imitations pale in comparison. Far from counseling a strict separation between the religious and the political, Jesus in fact challenges his enemies to get involved, to repent, to side with God against foreign invaders. Political involvement is the ineluctable fate for all parties involved; the question is whether at the end we stand on the right side, which is to say God’s side, or on the side of Rome’s earthly power.

A third character in this drama over tax has been neglected thus far in our discussion owing to its silent ubiquity: namely, the crowd.

The crowd plays a decisive role in the conflict even if they have not been given an explicit voice, for it is their support of Jesus that alarms the temple authorities in the first place and has shielded Jesus from harm up till now. The question on taxation is such a clever trap precisely because it could erode Jesus' popular support and sever his relationship to the people no matter how he responds; at least that is the original design of the question. If Jesus rejects Roman taxation, he would be subject to arrest and trial for opposing the Romans, thus raising the cost for the crowd in following him. If Jesus approves of Roman taxation, that would expose him as a feckless hack unworthy of the people's adoration or adulation. Either way, he would lose his popular support, so the temple authorities assume.

At the base of such a strategy is the assumption that the crowd is an unwilling colonial subjects that oppose Caesar. The authorities' view of the people, as instructed by centuries of failed insurrections, is that the crowd is capable of generating only mob rule devoid of stable leadership, agency, or structural power. That is why, in spite of their recognition of Jesus' popularity, the leaders insist on asking for the source of his power. In their construction, the people do not constitute a legitimate font of authority. Theirs is the view of a top-down hierarchy that assigns absolute power to the colonizers while denuding the people of theirs. In their debate with Jesus over taxation they just assume that if Jesus were to side with the people in counseling them to refuse to pay taxes to Rome, his base would crumble with a simple threat of Rome's military might. It never occurs to them that the people might have power, that the subaltern in fact have a voice. If that is the

case, it is highly significant that Jesus replaces the binarism of colonizer *versus* colonized with the binarism of Caesar *versus* God. The new binary yields the inescapable conclusion that God stands on the side of the people, and the people together stand as one opposing colonial power. In contradistinction to the Judean *maibans*'s conception that denies the people their agency, Jesus grants the people God's support and ownership.

In the three pericopes I have analyzed, Jesus raises three questions for his detractors – local elites who are installed by the colonial power to govern their own people. He challenges them to take stock of their own sociopolitical location, their ethnic identity, and their responsibility towards their own people. The three questions are at heart just one, but they are posed in three different forms that crescendo towards an ultimatum. First, he challenges the elites' definition of power and authority, which is not ultimately guaranteed by the colonial condition and imperial power. Using John the Baptist as a point of departure, he proposes that true authority belong to God, thereby restructuring the operating political binarism into a binary between divine and human – which is to say *colonial* – authority. Second, in the Parable of the Vineyard, he insists on asking the question, Who is the real owner of the vineyard and, concomitantly, what does the vineyard represent? If the elites answer, as they must, that God is the true owner of Israel, that sets up the ultimate question issued as a challenge in our third pericope, “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's” (12:17). This question can yield only one logical answer – return Judea and Israel to their true owner, the God of your

forebears. What concrete evidence do we have for the presence of God? God stands on the side of the people.

Conclusion: Methodological Observations

It has been common practice to interpret Jesus' saying concerning Caesar *versus* God in Mark 12 as a separation between religion and politics. Two arguments militate against it. First, secularism is a Western construct tied intimately to the unique history of Medieval and modern European politics. Whether secularism can be adopted into another cultural and political milieu such as that of China is open to debate. Indeed, the prior question, whether the term "secularism" is even applicable to modern China, should be raised. Second, to read this modernist notion of secularism back into Mark's narrative is anachronistic and, worse, colonial. It makes the facile, therefore inaccurate, assumption that Euro-american readings can be adopted unproblematically. This essay shows that a postcolonial reading of the same pericope that takes seriously the complicated web of personal and power dynamics in first-century Palestine yields a far different picture. It shows a Markan Jesus actively taking part in the injustice and oppression his people experienced under the yoke of Roman imperial and colonial policies. Jesus' solution, however, is not to take up arms in revolt against the overlord, but to appeal to the moral and theological conscience of the local elites put in charge of their own people, Rome's middlemen who do their bidding, the Judean *maibans* who are more concerned with their personal interests

than with the good of their own kinsfolk. Mark's Jesus challenges these collaborators to side with the people, with whom God, the true master of the land, the final source of authority, the real owner of the vineyard, ultimately sides.

To the extent Confucian Classics were produced under imperial supervision for the expressed purpose of instructing and propagating an official ideology, and to the extent that postcolonial criticism has to do with literary production in service of imperial causes, it seems natural, maybe even necessary, to pose the question of power and control on the Confucian Classics. In that case, the aim of postcolonial criticism might have to be reversed. If the aim of postcolonial criticism as it is commonly practiced is to uncover hitherto hidden political and ideological forces that, wittingly or otherwise, conspire to create a colonial and imperial discursive space, the overtly ideological texts such as the Confucian Classics would require perhaps an opposite kind of excavation: What political factors might have been responsible for co-opting non-ideological texts into ideological Classics? Perhaps – and here I can no more than make a mere educated guess – a sort of reversed postcolonial criticism is necessary to recover personal or ontological aspects of classical texts. Here I am of course reminded of the so-called metaphysical wing of *Zhongyong* and *Mengzi*, through the Song-Ming Lixue and Xinxue, up till the modern school of Tang Junyi, Mou Zongsan, and Tu Weiming.

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摘 要

人们通常将耶稣在《马可福音》12章13至17节中关于“凯撒的归凯撒，上帝的归上帝”的经文解释为政治与宗教之间的分离。本论文将表明，通过一种后殖民的阅读，严肃地来看待公元一世纪巴勒斯坦的人群及权力之间的复杂体系，可以发现一个马可式的耶稣，他积极地置身于在罗马帝国殖民政策的重负之下、遭受不公与压迫的人民之中。耶稣对罗马问题的解决，不是举起武器造反，而是诉诸于那些管理自己人民的地方精英、投机的罗马中间阶层、那些关心个人甚于同胞利益的犹太买办的道德和神学良知。马可所刻画的耶稣要求这些人与人民站在一起，因为上帝作为这块土地上的真正主宰、最终的权威、葡萄园的真正主人，最终将与人民站在一起。

关键词：耶稣、马可、法利赛人、希律党人、后殖民研究、罗马帝国、权力

