Christology, Eschatology and the Politics of Time in 1 Peter*

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Abstract
Taking a point of departure from Andrew Chester’s linking of messianism and eschatology, this article explores the Christology of 1 Peter as presented in 1.18-19, 2.21-25 and 3.18-22, linking this with 1 Peter’s eschatology. This is then analysed as a construal of time, a feature of social life to which recent social theory has given new attention. Like other examples in different times and places, the restructuring of the calendar in Asia to begin the new year with Augustus’s birthday is a politically significant act which structures the rhythms of human life according to the cardinal points of Roman imperial domination. The first letter of Peter’s eschatological Christology may thus be seen as a form of significant political challenge which structures its readers’ lives according to a different time. Assessing the significance of the letter’s construction of time offers a new way to consider its political stance vis-à-vis the Roman Empire.

Keywords
Christology, eschatology, time, politics, 1 Peter

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In his major volume *Messiah and Exaltation*, Andrew Chester argues for a definition of messiahship that is neither too restrictive nor too broad, but understands ‘messiah’ as ‘the agent of final divine deliverance’. He immediately adds that ‘the eschatological dimension of this definition should … be seen as an integral aspect of it’ (Chester 2007: 4). Moreover, as is clear from the studies presented in the volume, Chester’s interest in the variegated expressions of Jewish and early Christian messianism is directly connected with the attempt better to understand what is standardly designated ‘New Testament Christology’. In the following study, we seek to pick up these themes – and others in which Andrew Chester has been interested – by examining the Christology of 1 Peter, specifically its connections with eschatology, and then by considering the political significance of the construal of time that this represents.

**The Christology of 1 Peter in 1.18-21, 2.21-25 and 3.18-22**

Three passages in 1 Peter – 1.18-21, 2.21-25 and 3.18-22 – were identified long ago as particularly significant Christological texts, in which credal and liturgical traditions are encapsulated. In his 1911 commentary, Hans Windisch briefly identified them as *Christuslieder* (Windisch 1930: 65, 70); a more extensive form-critical analysis was presented by Rudolf Bultmann in 1947 (see Bultmann 1967). Other studies likewise approached these (and other) passages in 1 Peter as preformed hymnic or liturgical traditions.¹ Bultmann concluded that a single Christological *Bekenntnis* (confession) underlay 1.20 and 3.18-19, 22, while a separate *Lied* was adapted in 2.21-24. Bultmann’s detailed reconstruction is highly speculative, however, and recent commentators have been more inclined to see these passages as the work of the letter’s author, rather than presentations of pre-existing tradition.² There are, though, indications that do suggest the use of preformed material, even if it is impossible for us to reconstruct the earlier forms of that material with any confidence. For example, while sceptics point out that the relative pronoun is used frequently throughout 1 Peter,³ it remains noteworthy that the only occurrences of the nominative ας occur in two of these hymnic passages (2.22-24; 3.22). The passive verbs in 1.20 are also reminiscent of other credal Christological material, notably in 1 Tim. 3.16. Perhaps more significant, though, is the way in which the three passages, connected together,

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2. E.g., on 2.21-25, Michaels 1988: 137; Achtemeier 1993: 179; 1996: 192-93; Feldmeier 2008: 167-68; Elliott 2000: 548-50, who suggests that the ‘extensive use of Isa 52-53 in 1 Pet 2:21-25 makes unnecessary the search for other sources underlying this passage, such as a pre-Petrine hymn or creed’ (548) and explicitly retracts his ‘earlier acceptance of the hymnic theory’ (549, with reasons listed on 549-50).
offer a concise but rich narrative Christology, encapsulating the story of Christ in familiar but also distinctive ways.

In 1.19-20, after depicting Christ as the spotless and flawless lamb, through whose blood redemption has been achieved, the author – or the tradition he here adapts – presents two participial phrases that express key elements of this story:

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\begin{align*}
\text{προεγνωμένου μὲν πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου}, \\
\text{φανερωθέντος δὲ ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν χρόνων}
\end{align*}
\]

While the former phrase (not least when linked with 1.11, to which we shall return) might well imply a sense of Christ’s pre-existence (so Windisch),\(^4\) this is not the direct focus; rather, as Earl Richard notes, the terminology ‘underscores prior knowledge, plan, or choice rather than prior existence’ (Richard 1986: 130). The second phrase uses the same verb as 1 Tim. 3.16 to denote Christ’s appearance in the flesh, what we have come to call his incarnation (cf. also 2 Tim. 1.10; Titus 1.3). A distinction of usage between φανερῶ for Christ’s first, fleshly appearance and ἀποκαλύπτω for his final, triumphant return is not a consistent one, even in 1 Peter, let alone the NT as a whole (cf. 1 Pet. 5.4), but the contrast between his being made manifest and his final eschatological ἀποκάλυψις is nonetheless noteworthy (1 Pet. 1.7, 13; 4.13). This passage concludes with another credal reference to God’s action in raising and glorifying Christ (1.21).

The second key Christological passage focuses exclusively on Christ’s suffering and death, drawing extensively on Isa. 53 to do so. As Bultmann recognized, the material in this passage is of a somewhat different character from the participial phrases and concise credal formulations in 1.20 and 3.18-22, though it may also be partly traditional in character. Here – a point argued in detail elsewhere (see Horrell 2014) – we find not only scriptural phrases and motifs drawn from Isaiah, but also significant aspects of the story of Jesus’ suffering, trial and execution: Jesus was blameless, refused to respond in kind to verbal abuse, refused to use violence, was whipped and executed on a cross. Memories and traditions about these events – and of Jesus’ character during them – have shaped the appropriation of Isa. 53. In other words, this is not – to use John Dominic Crossan’s term – scripture historicized (see Crossan 1995: 1-13), as if the scriptural material eo ipso has generated this quasi-midrashic reflection, but rather history, memory and tradition\(^5\) scripturalized, that is, expressed in the language and phrasing of scripture.\(^6\)

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4. Windisch comments (1930: 57): ‘Natürlich ist Christus auch persönlich präexistent gedacht (φανερωθέντος)’. This thought is not as self-evident in the passage as Windisch’s comment implies, however.

5. We make no attempt to distinguish these three here, though such differentiation is of course a key concern in any quest for the historical Jesus.

6. For the term ‘scripturalization’, see Goodacre 2006.
The third Christological passage (3.18-22) contains some of the most famously difficult and enigmatic verses in the letter (3.19-21), but it also contains concise and traditional Christological material. It opens with a form of perhaps the earliest Christological creed, that ‘Christ died for our sins’ (1 Cor. 15.3), though using the author’s preferred verb πάσχω and the adverb ἀπαξ. As in 1.20, here too aorist participles, again in a balanced couplet with μέν/δέ, encapsulate concisely the key moments in the story of Christ:

θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκὶ
ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεῦματι

This latter phrase leads into the (to us) rather opaque description of Christ’s journey (πορευθεὶς) – more likely an ascent than a descent, as William Dalton (1989) has shown – to proclaim to the spirits in prison, who were disobedient in the time of Noah. This is followed by the also enigmatic but theologically important depiction of baptism as a kind of parallel to the rescue of Noah and his family through the waters of the flood. The more credal material recommences in v. 22, with the relative δέ. Here the final stage of Christ’s journey from appearance through suffering and death to resurrection and glorification is depicted. The backbone of the declaration is again constituted by an aorist participle, which has already appeared in v. 19: πορευθεὶς. Also depicted here in a genitive absolute phrase, with another aorist participle, is the subjection to Christ of all hostile powers, in a form strongly reminiscent of the Pauline tradition, particularly of Eph. 1.20-22 (cf. also Rom. 8.38; 1 Cor. 15.24; Eph. 1.20-22; Phil. 2.9-11; Col. 1.16). In 1 Peter, as in Ephesians, this subjection is depicted as something already realized (contrast 1 Cor. 15.24-28).

In terms of the narrative structure of early Christology, it is striking how much is encapsulated in the key participles (and their brief, associated phrases):

προεγνωσμένου μὲν πρὸ καταβολῆς κάσμου,
φανερωθέντος δὲ ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν χρόνων
θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκὶ (more fully narrated in 2.21-24)
ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεῦματι (expanded in 3.19; cf. also 1.21)
πορευθεὶς εἰς οὐρανὸν (cf. also 1.21)
ὑποταγέντων αὐτῷ …

Eschatology and Christology in 1 Peter

It is also clear, particularly from the first two phrases found in 1.20, that this Christological material is intrinsically eschatological, or, put more broadly, that it correlates Christology and time. Christ’s appearance on earth is specifically placed at the end of the ages, though this moment has been foreseen since the foundation of the world – effectively the beginning of historical time. The focus
of the divine purpose and foreknowledge, from the beginning, has been upon this eschatological time of Christ’s appearance. This temporal and eschatological focus is also clear in the remarkable passage in 1.10-12, where the author sees the focus of ancient Jewish prophecy — the prophets of the scriptures — as precisely the ‘sufferings and glories destined for Christ’ (1.11). Indeed, this knowledge was made available to the prophets by the spirit of Christ in them (ἐν αὐτοῖς) — a Christological re-reading of the scriptural past not unlike Paul’s re-reading of the wilderness tradition in 1 Cor. 10.1-11 (cf. esp. 1 Cor. 10.4). Just as for Paul, the true purpose of these events in Israel’s past was to instruct the earliest believers in Christ, ‘upon whom the ends of the ages has come’ (1 Cor. 10.11), so for the author of 1 Peter, the prophets’ ministry was not for their own benefit, nor that of their contemporaries, but ‘for you’ — who stand at the eschatological ‘now’ when the good news has been proclaimed (1.12; cf. 3.21 [ὑνί]).

The inextricable connection between 1 Peter’s Christology and eschatology is also clear in the opening blessing (1.3-9): the anticipated salvation, kept in heaven, is ready to be revealed (ἀποκαλυφθῆναι) ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ (1.5). Yet the promised reward is also connected, again using apocalyptic terminology, to the ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1.7). As the opening of the letter-body in 1.13 makes clear, these anticipated events — the apocalypse of Christ and the final day of salvation — are effectively one and the same: the readers’ hope is to be fixed on the χάρις that will be brought to them ἐν ἀποκάλυψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Although the author of 1 Peter gives no explicit indication as to how near or distant he considers this final day to be, there are at least hints that it is close at hand: the appearance of Christ already shows that these are the last days (1.20); the final judgment is already beginning (4.17; cf. 4.5 [ἔτοιμως]); and the joyous salvation of the future seems already to be seeping into the experience of the present (1.6-9).

The author’s Christology and eschatology, then — or perhaps better put, his eschatological Christology — are the fundamental axis around which his sense of time and history turns. The Christ-event is the crucial pivot, the focus of all that went before, from the beginning of the world, and the basis for the good news of salvation, announced in the eschatological now and soon to be consummated.

7. On this passage as both a hermeneutical key for the author’s use of scripture, and an indication of the extent to which he sees scripture as focused on the church, see Schutter 1989: 100-109; Achtemeier 1999: 144-47; Sargent 2015: 18-49.

8. There is some uncertainty here as to whether the force is future or present, but a future reference seems likely, notwithstanding the sense that this future grace is already, in part, a matter of present experience (cf. 1.8-9, where the ‘already/not-yet’ tension is well spelt out). See further Martin 1992. Elsewhere in the letter it is clear that χάρις can stand metalexically for the whole gospel message (1.10; 5.12).
This narrative of time, centred on the story of Christ, is not only a construal of what we might call world history, but also a framework for making sense of the readers’ lives. As Eugene Boring comments, ‘Regarded diachronically, the readers [sic] lives lie within the “AD” νόη epoch, but their pre-conversion life is described as belonging to the “BC” ποτέ of the world. The Christ-event bifurcates not only world history but [sic] the readers’ own story’ (Boring 2007: 31). The time past, as 4.2-4 makes clear, was more than enough to spend following τὸ βουλημα τῶν ἐθνῶν (4.3), the futile way of life inherited from their ancestors (1.18). Now, by contrast, they have literally begun a new life, marked by a new birth from imperishable seed (1.23; cf. 1.14; 2.1-3). Keeping in step with such a shift requires that they ‘know the time’, as it were. The author calls for nothing short of a cognitive revolution: they must gird up the loins of their minds and remain sober and vigilant (1.13, 4.7, 5.8a) lest they lapse into the kind of Gentile achronia that characterized their former lives of ignorance (1.14).

The Politics of Time: Calendars and Power

Might this construction of time be not only of theological interest but also of social and political significance? To begin to address that question requires a brief turn to the field of social theory, and then to some examples from other historical periods, before we return to the first century and to 1 Peter.

In social theory and related fields in recent decades there has been a fresh consideration of the significance of both time and space. There has been talk of both a spatial turn and a temporal turn. At first glance that might seem odd, given that geographers have always been concerned with space just as historians have with time. But the key point expressed in these ‘turns’ is that, contrary to our common sense intuitions, neither time nor space is as straightforward as we commonly assume; neither is simply there, objective, given, like a kind of moving container within which human interaction takes place. Rather, as Anthony Giddens stresses in his structuration theory, far from being merely the unalterable parameters within which human sociality takes place, time and space are bound up in the processes of social interaction. They cannot, Giddens insists, be left, as it were, to the historians and the geographers respectively, but must be made central to the theorizing of social life.9 What this also means, furthermore, is that time – and specifically the construction and structuring of time – is socially and politically significant, and an arena of contest and power.

Historian William Gallois opens his book on Time, Religion and History with the following claim:

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[T]ime is the great unsaid in western historical thought precisely because it is more complicated than we might at first think; time is plural in the sense that we experience it in different ways and in the manner that we know that others live in temporal cultures which are not predicated on our basic assumptions about time. The very act of thinking hard about time becomes a form of liberation in which we disabuse ourselves of the idea that our picture of the world is a natural one which is shared by all others (Gallois 2007: 1).

Thus, Gallois’s programmatic insight that ‘we live in different times’ (2007: 1) leads him to explore in the book what he calls the ‘temporal cultures’ of different religious traditions. (Incidentally, such an awareness might lead us to query whether the use of BCE and CE rather than BC and AD is really such an act of tolerant and inclusive adjustment as its proponents intend. For the structuring of time thus indicated remains, of course, a Christian reckoning of time, which bifurcates history with the incarnation of Christ, but now conceals its specifically Christian point of reference and universalizes it as what is simply ‘common’ [see Wan forthcoming a]). An awareness of these diverse temporal cultures also helps us to understand how and why time might prove to be a locus of power-struggle in social and political life. Elsewhere, for example, Gallois mentions European imperialism and colonialism in terms of ‘the determination of Europeans to seize power in the form of political and cultural control of places which had previously enjoyed their own ecologies of space and time’. He continues: ‘In such situations, time often became a key battleground between the two cultures, for it was as obvious a locus of resistance as it was a focus of imperial pressure. The conquest of time, and the others’ experience of time, was well understood to be synonymous with absolute domination’ (Gallois 2013: 252). The particular example that Gallois explores is what he calls ‘the war for time’ in early colonial Algeria, where the extant records allow us to glimpse resistance from those whose temporal culture was that of classical Islam to the European time imported and imposed by the French as part of what they depicted as their civilizing programme.

Another French example, often noted, concerns the short-lived efforts to restructure time in the wake of the revolution. In September 1793, some four years after the onset of the Revolution, the new Republic’s Committee on Public Instruction proposed a new calendar that would reflect the liberation of the French people from the dual tyrannies of monarch and church; 22 September 1792, the day on which the new Republic was officially proclaimed, was

10. More broadly, on the ‘practically impossible mental exercise’ for contemporary readers of imagining ‘maneuvering themselves around historical time without the universalising, supranational and cross-cultural numerical axis of the dates in B.C. and A.D., or B.C.E. and C.E.’, see Feeney 2007: 7-16 (quotation from p. 7), who shows how relatively recent (seventeenth century) is the use of this scheme as a universalizing timeline.
retroactively declared the beginning of Year 1, thus displacing both the Gregorian calendar’s New Year’s Day (1 January) as well as the older Christian practice of counting time from the birth of Christ. The biblical week of seven days was replaced with a new ‘week’ made up of ten days, each in turn made up of ten ‘hours’. These corresponded to the more ‘natural’ decimal system: humans, after all, counted with their ten fingers. Thus, the new socio-political order signalled with this new way of counting and moving in time not only its arrival and its decisive break with the past, but also its orientation to Reason and Nature rather than Catholic superstition.\textsuperscript{11}

A well-known example from the time of Christian origins invites reflection on similar lines. Around 9 BC (\textit{sic}) a winner was apparently recognized – by the provincial council of Asia – of a competition earlier established to propose the best way to honour Augustus.\textsuperscript{12} The winner, it turned out, was the Roman proconsul of the province, Paullus Fabius Maximus. Fortunately, we have a relatively extensive record of the proconsul’s proposal and the reasons for it, as well as the response of the council of Asia. The proposal, in a nutshell, was – quoting Steven Friesen’s translation (2001: 33-34) – ‘that the birthday of the most divine Caesar be the one, uniform New Year’s day for all the polities. On that day all will take up their local offices, that is, on the ninth day before the Kalends of October, in order that he might be honored far beyond any ceremonies performed for him’. The reason given for this proposal is that ‘the birthday of the most divine Caesar … [may be considered] equal to the beginning of all things. He restored the form of all things to usefulness … gave a new appearance to the whole world, which would gladly have accepted its own destruction had Caesar not been born for the common good fortune of all. Thus a person could justly consider this to be the beginning of life and of existence, and the end of regrets about having been born.’

Thus, as Friesen remarks, the proposal was effectively ‘to reorganize time around the birthday of Augustus. September 23 would be the beginning of every new year as well as the date when new municipal officeholders would begin to serve’ (Friesen 2001: 33). The ‘rationale for reorienting time was based on the accomplishments of Augustus’ and the commencement of each local official’s rule on Augustus’s birthday ‘affirmed the legitimacy of Roman imperialism’, promoting ‘a new vision of history based on the rule of Rome’. Moreover, unlike imperial cult festivals, ‘the calendar reform … would involve everyone every

\textsuperscript{11} On the ideals and implementation of this calendar, see Ozouf 1989: 538-47.
\textsuperscript{12} For the inscription, see \textit{OGIS} 458, also reproduced in Ehrenberg and Jones 1976: 81-83 (§98) and the more detailed comparison and discussion of the various extant copies in Sherk 1969: 328-37 (§65). For what follows, see esp. Friesen 2001: 32-36. On the uncertainties of the connections between the apparently much earlier announcement of the competition and this award, see Sherk 1969: 334-35 n. 1.
day. It represented the transformation of all life’ (Friesen 2001: 33-34). It is interesting, and significant, that the chosen point in time is not Augustus’s accession to rule, but his birth itself.

The decree of the council of Asia – published, along with the proconsul’s letter, ‘in numerous cities of Asia’ (Sherk 1969: 328) – affirms the proposal and its rationale: ‘the birthday of the god [Caesar Augustus] was the beginning of good tidings to the world through him’. Thus, in concrete calendrical terms, the council decreed that ‘the new year will begin in all the cities on the ninth day before the Kalends of October, which is the birthday of Augustus. In order that the day be always aligned in every city, the Roman date will be used along with the Greek date. The first month will be observed as Kaisar(eios), as decreed earlier, beginning from the ninth day before the Kalends of October … The rescript of the proconsul and the decree of Asia will be inscribed on a marble stele, which will be set up in the temenos of Rome and Augustus.’

Although the calendrical reform did not erase the Asian system of months, it did regularize it and coordinate it with the Roman calendar, ‘ensuring that every month would begin on the 23rd of the Roman month’ (Friesen 2001: 35). As Friesen remarks, ‘the calendar reform was not an attempt to replace the calendars of the cities with the Roman calendar. Rather, a uniform system for reckoning time was added to older ones and all appear to have coexisted … the new calendar added an important dimension to the old framework’, reflecting ‘the importance of Augustus in the understanding of time’.  

The Politics of Time in 1 Peter

This example, from one of the provinces to which 1 Peter was addressed (see 1 Pet. 1.1), should already make clear why the eschatological Christology of 1 Peter is also of socio-political significance. As we have seen, the letter structures time around the story of Christ, reaching back to his being foreknown before the foundation of the world and looking forward to his imminent apocalypse. Moreover, the crucial dividing line, the marker which determines before and after, is his appearance, the manifestation that the prophets foresaw and that now means good news ‘for you’, the recipients of the letter. Unlike the kind of Roman eschatology glimpsed in the Asian decree, the appearance of Christ is not

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13. Friesen 2001: 35-36. For wider studies of the various Roman calendrical reforms, and their significance for the structuring of time, see Feeney 2007; Rüpke 2011.

14. The places named in the address of 1 Peter – Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia – are widely taken to refer to Roman provinces (so, e.g., Elliott 2000: 84-89, 316-17; Michaels 1988: 9), though recently the argument has been made that they are better understood as referring to specific areas or districts within the Roman provinces (see Guttenberger 2010: 72-77; Doering 2013: 85-87). This would not affect the argument made here.
yet seen to have brought about an age of peace and flourishing; rather it remains a matter of hope, eagerly anticipated amidst the sufferings of the present but not yet attained. Yet what is clear is that the fundamental temporal orientation of the letter – its basic framework for configuring time and its significance – is very different. Not Caesar’s birth and imperial achievements, but Christ’s appearance and the living hope he represents are the key; and the orientation of the readers’ lives is not to the temples of Rome and Augustus but to the living temple which they themselves constitute, and of which Christ is the cornerstone (2.4-8).15

This kind of perspective calls for a different appraisal of 1 Peter’s stance towards the Roman Empire from that which is established in recent scholarship.16 For example, Steven Bechtler comments on 2.13-17 that ‘[h]ere the letter enjoins fear of God and honor of the emperor in a single breath and commands subjection to the emperor as ἀπερέχων. Nor does 1 Peter elsewhere exhibit the kind of hostility to, or at least wariness of, Rome to be expected in a document dealing with imperial persecution’ (Bechtler 1998: 50). Similarly, Elliott insists that ‘1 Peter engages in no negative critique of Rome and nowhere associates Roman officials with harassment of the believers’ (Elliott 2000: 132). Warren Carter (2004) argues that the author of 1 Peter urges his readers to ‘go all the way’ in accommodating to the demands of the Roman imperial cult, keeping their allegiance to Christ a matter of private, inward conviction (cf. 3.15). 1 Peter is thus frequently seen as one of those later NT texts that accepts and even legitimates the structures of imperial rule, as well as the hierarchical and patriarchal order of the ancient household. Bearing in mind John Barclay’s incisive critique of the recent attempts to read Paul as engaging in coded but deliberate opposition to Rome’s empire (Barclay 2011), we should certainly be wary of assuming a deliberate attempt on the part of the author of 1 Peter to challenge or reject the rule of Rome, as if the references to Christ’s appearance were a conscious and polemical parallel to acclamations of the appearance of Caesar, such as we find in the Asian inscription. The acceptance of Roman authority and governance in 2.13-17 – like the infamous Rom. 13 – should caution against any assumption of outright opposition. However, just as Barclay sees in Paul something that is, in a sense, deeply politically subversive – a narration of history that simply does not see Rome or its emperors as significant actors17 – so we may discern in 1 Peter’s eschatological Christology an equally subversive insistence that the

15. On this spatial reconfiguration of the readers’ existence, which combines with their temporal reorientation, see Wan forthcoming b.
17. Barclay 2011: 386-87: ‘From Paul’s perspective, the Roman empire never was and never would be a significant actor in the drama of history … At the deepest level Paul undermines Augustus and his successors not by confronting them on their own terms, but by reducing them to bit-part players in a drama scripted by the cross and resurrection of Jesus … Paul’s theology is political precisely in rendering the Roman empire theologically insignificant.’
true understanding of time – the whole sweep of time from the beginning to its imminent end – is found in Christ, whose authority is above all others, since ‘angels, authorities, and powers’ have all been subjected to him (3.22).

There is in a sense a contest of power going on here. The power to regulate time strives to conform subject bodies not only to a particular rhythm of movement, but also to the cosmology that undergirds it – a cosmology by which that same power is legitimated. Thus, in terms of what we may call its alternative temporal imagination, 1 Peter represents a kind of resistance to the empire and to the power of the associated configuring of time. In its author’s mind the Christian bodies that inhabited Anatolia were to configure and conform their lives, not to the time of Caesar – whether that of Augustus or his successors – but rather to the new moment opened up by the God of Israel, who had intervened decisively in history through Jesus. This intervention has brought the world into ‘the last of the ages’, an eschatological present that demanded from them a particular way of life, a wholly new way of moving in time. In 1 Peter’s intrinsically eschatological Christology we may therefore see not only features of doctrinal interest, nor only a basis for hope in divine deliverance, but also a politically significant configuring of time, a Christological narration of the meaning of the cosmos, that calls its readers to orientate their lives by those particular points on the clock, to live, as it were, in a different time.

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