Editorial

In this issue of the *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* we are excited to present the initial outcomes of an initiative that my co-editor Sarah E. Rollens and I announced in our inaugural editorial last year (21:3). Our aim was to slightly broaden the scope of the journal's discussion on the historical Jesus by incorporating critical reflections on pedagogy, alongside its regular articles. Recognizing that many researchers in our field and readers of the journal also teach the subject at university level, we thought it would be beneficial to offer a platform for critical reflection on the distinctive challenges and opportunities inherent in teaching historical Jesus studies to students.¹

This issue includes the first of two such articles. First, Joan E. Taylor, in her article ‘Teaching the Historical Jesus over Three Decades, from Waikato to London’, offers a critical reflection on her extensive experience teaching historical Jesus studies in diverse institutional and cultural contexts. Her insights into the challenges and strategies of teaching, especially as the assumed basic literacy of our primary sources (the Gospels) becomes increasingly uncertain among newer student cohorts, provide valuable guidance. Second, Daniel Ullucci’s article, ‘Thoughts on Teaching Critical History Using the Historical Jesus’, echoes some of Taylor’s reflections while also presenting unique perspectives. Over the years, Ullucci like Taylor has utilized both standard and innovative methods to introduce students to the complex world of historical Jesus studies in an engaging manner. Ullucci sees great value in teaching historical Jesus studies as a gateway to critical thinking and to meeting the broader objectives of a Liberal Arts education.

¹ It is important to note here a significant collection of essays which previously tackled this topic, namely, Zev Garber (ed.), *Teaching the Historical Jesus: Issues and Exegesis*, Routledge Studies in Religion (New York and London: Routledge, 2015).
We plan to continue this conversation on pedagogy in future issues of the journal. As modelled aptly by Taylor and Ullucci, future submissions should identify common challenges faced by teachers and their students, the strategies and solutions implemented to address them, and an evaluation of their effectiveness. Submissions should also consider whether any traditional approaches in the teaching of historical Jesus studies need to be fundamentally disrupted. An understanding of the educational context of your class, including the type of institution and the demographics of your students, will be useful for comparative analysis.

In addition to these two articles on the historical Jesus and pedagogy, this issue includes two further articles that contribute to important ongoing discussions in our field. Fernando Bermejo-Rubio, in his article ‘On the Self-Styled “Refutation” of the “Seditious Jesus Hypothesis” (Or Jesse Nickel’s – and Others’ – Wishful Thinking),’ addresses common misconceptions and misrepresentations of the ‘seditious Jesus hypothesis’ in historical Jesus research. His passionate defence of a carefully nuanced and methodologically rigorous position regarding the early Jesus movement’s association with anti-Roman activities, aligns with the self-reflexiveness and meta-critique noted elsewhere as characteristic of the current state of the field.² It seems to us that the apparently loaded question of Jesus’ possible association with seditious activity in addition to his attitude towards violence or non-violence remains an active one. Accordingly, we are planning to offer a full critical treatment of Bermejo-Rubio’s recent monograph, _They Suffered under Pontius Pilate: Jewish Anti-Roman Resistance and the Crosses at Golgotha_³ in a future issue of _JSHJ_.

The final article in this issue, ‘Why Name Popularity is a Good Test of Historicity: A Goodness-of-fit Test Analysis on Names in the Gospels and Acts’, co-authored by Luuk Van de Weghe and Jason Wilson, responds to an article published by Kamil Gregor and Brian Blais in _JSHJ_ last year⁴ concerning Richard Bauckham’s work on detecting correspondences between the distribution of names in the Gospels and the book of Acts with the lexicon

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of Palestinian Jewish names between 330 BCE to 200 CE compiled by Tal Ilan. This article, along with the one it critiques, will hopefully advance the conversation about Bauckham’s onomastic research and its implications for his theories about eyewitness testimony underlying the Gospels.

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