This is the third of a three volume series of studies by members of the Society of Biblical Literature’s Consultation (1995-1997), then Seminar (1998-2003), on Ancient Myths and Modern Theories of Christian Origins, both concerned with redescribing the beginnings of Christianity as religion using theories and methods developed in the social sciences and related areas, not just the specific literature, beliefs, and practices of early Christians. Essays examine the Gospel of Mark as an author’s writing in a book culture, a writing that responded to situations arising out of the first Roman-Judean war after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE. A concluding retrospective follows the work of the Seminar, its developing discourse and debates, and the continuing work of successor groups in the field.

Features:

• A thorough examination of the relation between structure and event in social and anthropological theory that provides conceptual tools for representing the project of the author of Mark
• An exploration of the southern Levant as a plausible provenance of the Gospel, a permanent site of successive imperial regimes and culturally related peoples
• A detailed analysis of the construction of Mark as a narrative composed without access to prior narrative sources about Jesus

Barry S. Crawford is Professor, Emeritus, Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. He was a member of the SBL Ancient Myths and Modern Theories of Christian Origins Consultation and Seminar (1995-2003) and a contributor to Redescribing Christian Origins, the first volume of the Seminar’s publications. He was also co-chair of the first of the Seminar’s successor groups, Redescribing Early Christianity (2007-2012).

Merrill P. Miller is Professor of Religion, Emeritus, University of North Carolina at Pembroke. He was co-chair of the SBL Ancient Myths and Modern Theories of Christian Origins Consultation and Seminar (1995-2003) and is the co-editor and a contributor to the previous Seminar publications, Redescribing Christian Origins (2004) and Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians (2011).