

Monday, 25.04.2022, 4:15 - 6:00 pm CEST

Juan Lewis, The Open University, UK:

**Jesus as slave owner and its implications for the history of Christianity and slavery**

**Abstract:**

In this lecture I will analyse whether Jesus of Nazareth, his family, and close friends and disciples were slave owners. Most scholars now agree that the emergence and expansion of Christianity did not mean a substantial improvement in the condition of slaves, even if the accommodation of the early Christian churches with the institution of slavery itself is often seen as a contradiction, a dilemma, or a paradox. The emphasis in scholarship, however, is always on Jesus' followers, rather than on the man himself. In order to reveal whether Jesus may have owned slaves, I will first try to identify which historical Jesus I am talking about. I will then move to whether we can pin down Jesus' views on slavery from his teachings and parables. Finally, I will discuss Jesus' social and economic standing and his relationship with real slaves and servants.

**Bio:**

I am a Classicist and Ancient Historian with a particular interest in the history of slavery and childhood. I was originally educated in Argentina, where I did my "Licenciatura" (undergraduate degree) in History at the National University of Rosario. I graduated with a thesis on the constitutional reforms of Solon in sixth-century Athens. After some years outside academia, I moved to Britain to pursue my postgraduate studies, where I obtained an MPhil at the University of Birmingham, and a PhD at the University of Edinburgh with a thesis on slave vicarii (i.e. slaves owned by slaves), which I am preparing for publication. During work on my PhD, I spent a year as a guest postgraduate student at the Universität Bielefeld.