

The Politics of Race and Ethnicity in Matthew's Passion Narrative

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People have been responding to the existence of racism for 300 years, attacking its every overt daily expression. Yet after 300 years, it remains, changing form over time, in response to political conditions, while producing more damage. Whenever we have gotten strong enough to interfere with its operations (as the civil rights movement did), it comes back wearing different language, speaking an up-to-date lingo, while creating more of the “same old” effects... These effects, the racial hierarchies and segregations that get taken for granted, are too dire for us to simply watch them occur again and again, responding after the damage is done. Their resurgence, their recurrence, their longevity in the face of centuries of opposition suggest that their source lies deeper in this culture than we had imagined. Something keeps rebuilding that machine, renovating it, something beyond the nefarious individual prejudices and tainted desires by which racism manifests itself.

—Steve Martinot, *The Machinery of Whiteness*

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CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
2	Identifying the Dominant Narrative: Non-ethnoracial Readings of Matthew 26–27	15
3	Situating the Dominant Narrative: Deracialized Readers and Reading Locations	47
4	Constructing a Minoritized Approach: Racialized Readers and Reading Locations	89
5	Proposing an Alternative Narrative: An Ethnoracial Reading of Matthew 26–27	107
6	Conclusion	149
	Index	157

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 3.1	<i>Head of Christ</i> © 1941, 1968 Warner Press, Inc., Anderson, Indiana. (Used with permission)	66
Fig. 3.2	A wooden African statue of Jesus Christ on the cross with a crown of thorns on his head, in a Roman Catholic chapel in Namibia. (Credit: Friedrich Stark/Alamy Stock Photo)	67
Fig. 3.3	The Madonna and Child of Soweto, mostly referred to as “The Black Madonna,” depicting a black Virgin Mary holding the Child Jesus (also black), Regina Mundi Church (is the largest Roman Catholic church in South Africa), Soweto (South Western townships), Johannesburg, South Africa. (Credit: Blaine Harrington III/Alamy Stock Photo)	68
Fig. 3.4	Ethiopian Orthodox Church fresco painting with black Jesus Christ crucified. (Credit: Maciej Wojtkowiak/Alamy Stock Photo)	69
Fig. 3.5	Jesus Christ in the slums in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, in South India, South Asia. (Credit: Shaun Higson/India-Chennai/Alamy Stock Photo)	69
Fig. 3.6	Jesus image on a garage door in Makati City in Manila, Philippines. (Credit: NiceProspects-LM/Alamy Stock Photo)	70
Fig. 3.7	A typical catholic image of Jesus Christ from Slovakia by the painter Zabateri. (Credit: Jozef Sedmak/Alamy Stock Photo)	71
Fig. 3.8	Hamra, Beirut, Lebanon: Greek Orthodox Church Jesus. (Credit: Art Directors & TRIP/Alamy Stock Photo)	72
Fig. 3.9	An image of Jesus. (Contributor: Godong/Alamy Stock Photo)	73