

Carmen M. Cusack

# Fish in the Bible

*Psychosocial Analysis of Contemporary Meanings, Values, and Effects of Christian Symbolism*

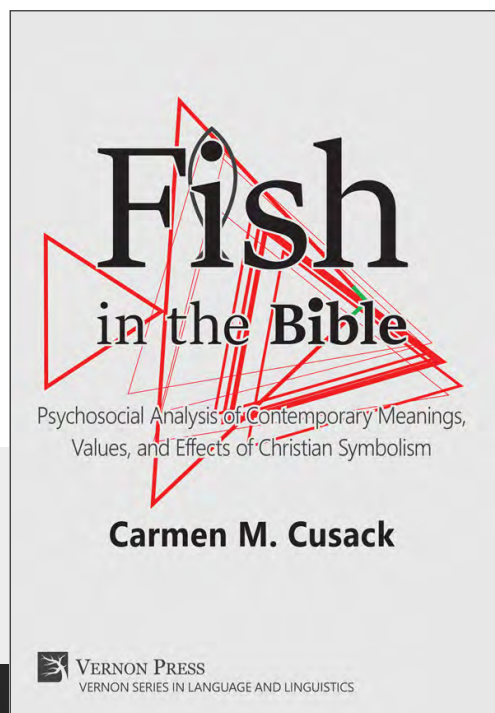
SERIES IN LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

## About the author

**Carmen M. Cusack, J.D., Ph.D.**'s professional record includes hands-on experience, published research and firsthand studies on animals, religion, cultural studies, social science, law, justice and other topics discussed throughout the text. Dr. Cusack has conducted qualitative research and long-term follow-up studies about human-animal relationships in oceanic environments throughout the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and other regions. She is the Editor of *Journal of Law and Social Deviance*. Her articles about animals have deeply analyzed pressing topics, including saving bovines from gender-selective maltreatment and saving the white tiger. Dr. Cusack has published eight books discussing religion, culture, and animals, including *Animals in Criminal Justice* (Transaction Publishers, 2015) and *Animals, Deviance, and Sex* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015). She teaches *Animals and Criminal Justice* at Nova Southeastern University.

## Summary

*Fish in the Bible: Psychosocial Analysis of Contemporary Meanings, Values, and Effects of Christian Symbolism* analyzes why and to what end tales and truths about fish presented in the Bible hold water in Christian societies today. *Fish in the Bible* argues that portraits of fish and fishermen presented in the Bible have been both embraced and rejected by contemporary cultures with primarily Christian constituents (e.g. American culture). This book does not make an ethical argument; rather, it explores manners in which Christians have selectively rejected or accepted depictions and symbols of fish and fishermen. It explores differences between Christian maxims presented in Bible verses and the beliefs and actions of societies operating under Christian moral majorities. *Fish in the Bible* also considers the evolution of symbolism and metaphors in Christian society using parables and tales found in the Bible. *Fish in the Bible* works on several specialized topics to argue that, overall, depictions of fish and fishermen in the Bible significantly and subtly shape Christian cultures even when Christians ignore or dismiss the robust ways in which fish and fishermen are characterized and treated in the Bible. Fish serve as a metaphor for God's power, judgment, sin, and fertility; they are used to instill boundaries and standards in practitioners; and sometimes fish are worshiped, demonized, and subjugated. There is no clear or singular message regarding fish or fishermen; and Christian societies are left to abide by a patchwork of representations to formulate their own opinions and judgments. Social and behavioral science, as well as cultural customs, commerce, and current events demonstrate Christians' navigation and interpretations of what their understandings and treatment of fish and fishermen ought to be. An Introduction and Conclusion summarize and synopsise implications raised by symbolism and literalism in certain contexts, stories, and verses demonstrating potentially pervasive significances of fish in Christian cultures throughout the world. The foundations of this research are law, social and behavioral science, policy and politics, history, cultural studies, religious studies, animal studies, animal welfare, criminal justice, sociology, anthropology, and current events.



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