

The Noetic Paschal Anthropos: Genesis 1:27 and the Theology of the Divine Image in Early Paschal Literature

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THE NOETIC PASCHAL ANTHROPOS: GENESIS 1:27
AND THE THEOLOGY OF THE DIVINE IMAGE
IN EARLY PASCHAL LITERATURE

by

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Marquette University,
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ABSTRACT
THE NOETIC PASCHAL ANTHROPOS: GENESIS 1:27
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This study examines the theme of the heavenly Anthropos in the earliest extant paschal writings: Melito's *Peri Pascha*, Origen's *Peri Pascha*, and Pseudo-Hippolytus's *In sanctum Pascha*. Instead of analyzing these materials through the prism of such classical images as sacrifice and divine Lamb, the study investigates them through the perspective of the categories of heavenly Man and divine Image. The particular method of the study will be tradition criticism and will envision the paschal tradition of the heavenly luminous Anthropos as a development of the theophanic traditions of the Jewish Second Temple. Echoing such ancient passages as Genesis 1:27, Ezekiel 1:26, and their reception history in Philo of Alexandria and Paul the Apostle, these paschal materials articulate a theology of the heavenly Anthropos that can be typified through the categories of eikonic soteriology and noetic and mystery dimensions.

The examined texts elaborate a narrative where the divine Anthropos pursues a veritable Iliad of salvation, which I call "eikonic soteriology." Resuscitating the ancestral myth of the divine combat, the narrative portrays the divine Anthropos as a heavenly warrior seeing his created image (*eikon*) captured and enslaved by Death. He starts then a military campaign through changing, in a kenotic act, his own glorious divine Form for Adam's image. The victory over Death procures Adam's salvation and, moreover, his transfiguration into a divine image as Christ adorns the protopater with a heavenly radiant garment.

The other two categories also qualify Christ the divine Anthropos. Unlike previous Second Temple depictions of God as a heavenly anthropomorphic figure, the paschal Anthropos is transferred to the noetic and mystery dimensions of reality. While Clement, Tertullian, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Origen did not rebuff the biblical idea that God has a form or image, they struggled with this concept, and the fruit of their intellectual endeavors was surprisingly not rejection but transfer to a noetic level. In addition, paschal liturgy was already conceived in the second century C.E. (see Melito's *Peri Pascha*) as the highest mystery performance. Its goal was to lead the participant to the encounter with the mysterious and glorious divine Image of Christ.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AnBib</i>	<i>Analecta biblica</i>
<i>ANF</i>	<i>Ante-Nicene Fathers</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> . Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. Berlin, 1972–
<i>Aug</i>	<i>Augustinianum</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>CAT</i>	Commentaire de l’Ancien Testament
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CBQMS</i>	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
<i>CCSL</i>	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
<i>CH</i>	<i>Church History</i>
<i>CNT</i>	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
<i>ConBOT</i>	Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series
<i>ConBNT</i>	Coniectanea neotestamentica or Coniectanea biblica: New Testament Series
<i>CRINT</i>	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
<i>CSEL</i>	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
<i>CTU</i>	<i>The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places</i> . Edited by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. Münster, 1995.
<i>CurTM</i>	<i>Currents in Theology and Mission</i>
<i>DB</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de la Bible</i> . Edited by F. Vigouroux. 5 vols. 1895–1912
<i>DBSup</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de la Bible: Supplément</i> . Eds. L. Pirot and A. Robert. Paris, 1928–
<i>DDD</i>	<i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible (DDD)</i> . Eds. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst. Leiden ; New York : Brill, 1995.
<i>DJD</i>	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
<i>DSD</i>	Dead Sea Discoveries
<i>EJL</i>	Early Judaism and its Literature
<i>Eph. Lit.</i>	<i>Ephemerides liturgicae</i>
<i>ErJb</i>	<i>Eranos-Jahrbuch</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
<i>FC</i>	Fathers of the Church
<i>FRLANT</i>	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments

FV	<i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker: griechisch und deutsch.</i> Eds. Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz. Zurich; Berlin: Weidmann, 1964.
GCS	Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
Gn	<i>Gnomon</i>
GNO	<i>Gregorii Nysseni Opera.</i> Edited by Werner Jaeger et al. Leiden: Brill, 1952-.
GOTR	<i>Greek Orthodox Theological Review</i>
HS	<i>Hebrew Studies</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ITQ	<i>Irish Theological Quarterly</i>
Jastrow	Jastrow. M., <i>A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature.</i> New York: Pardes Publishing House, 1950.
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JECS	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JR	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
JRelS	<i>Journal of Religious Studies</i>
JSJ	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSQ	<i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSS	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha. Supplement Series
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament. Supplement Series
JSOTSS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KTU	<i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit.</i> Edited by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. AOAT 24/1. Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1976. 2d enlarged ed. of <i>KTU: The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places.</i> Edited by M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. Münster, 1995 (= CTU)
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LMD	<i>La Maison-Dieu</i>
ModTh	<i>Modern Theology</i>
NovT	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NHS	Nag Hammadi Studies
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies
NPNF 1	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1
NPNF 2	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2

NTF	Neutestamentliche Forschungen
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OCA	Orientalia christiana analecta
OCP	<i>Orientalia christiana periodica</i>
Or	<i>Orientalia</i>
OS	<i>L'Orient Syrien</i>
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
ÖBS	Österreichische biblische Studien
OtSt	Oudtestamentische Studiën
OTP	<i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . 2 vols. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. New York: Doubleday, 1985.
PG	Patrologia graeca [= Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca]. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857–1886.
PO	Patrologia orientalis
ProEccl	<i>Pro ecclesia</i>
PRSt	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
PVTG	Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece
RAM	<i>Revue d'ascétique et de mystique</i>
RSR	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
RevScRel	<i>Revue des sciences religieuses</i>
Rev.Bib	<i>Revue biblique</i>
Rev. Lit.	<i>Revista liturgica</i>
RevQ.	<i>Revue de Qumrân</i>
RHE	<i>Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique</i>
RSLR	<i>Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa</i>
RTAM	<i>Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale</i>
RThom	<i>Revue thomiste</i>
SBA	Stuttgarter biblische Aufsatzbände
SBEC	Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLSS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series
ScEs	<i>Science et esprit</i>
SJ	Studia Judaica
SLJT	<i>St. Luke's Journal of Theology</i>
SJT	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SD	Studies and Documents
StPatr	<i>Studia patristica</i>
SVTQ	<i>Saint Vladimir's Theological Quarterly</i>
SNT	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StudMon	<i>Studia monastica</i>

<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Eds. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Tr. G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964–1976.
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Eds. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green. 15 vols. Grand Rapids, 1974–
<i>ThH</i>	<i>Théologie historique</i>
<i>TP</i>	<i>Theologie und Philosophie</i>
<i>TRev</i>	<i>Theologische Revue</i>
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
<i>TSAJ</i>	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>TWNT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Stuttgart, 1932–1979.
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
<i>VetChr</i>	<i>Vetera Christianorum</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>VTSup</i>	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAC</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZKT</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

1. The Goal of the Dissertation

A. The Statement of the Problem

More ancient than the two millennia of Christian and rabbinic existence, the origins of Pascha remain intertwined with the mysterious origins of Israel. The feasts of Passover and Pascha remain the central ritual festivals of both Judaism and Christianity. Certainly the question regarding the nature of the hypnotic power which paschal ritual gestures and words have been resuscitating within the human being for such a long time comes into view. Venturing an answer, one may suppose that paschal ritual gestures and words possibly suggest, or at least glimpse the fuzzy shape of, a solution to the fundamental human concern, the *Angst* which has mesmerized the most illustrious philosophical and theological minds from Plato to Basil of Cappadocia, to Kierkegaard, to Heidegger, namely the fear of death. Providing a solution which does not advance a theoretical answer, those rituals (an intricate combination of gestures, words, images, music, and theology) rather propose a relationship with the most-glorious-ever image of life and salvation from death, the image of a god of light destroying Hades and evil, the theophany of a victorious Messiah.

Modern scholarship has shown a great interest in Passover and Pascha and has produced an impressive amount of literature from the most various perspectives. Paschal theology, however, has never been investigated from the anthropomorphic perspective of the biblical idea of the divine image and the traditions of the Second Temple about Adam and the divine Anthropos. This situation is due not to scholarly disinterest but most likely

to the fact that the research on the visionary and apocalyptic traditions of the Second Temple has developed in recent decades following the explosion of academic interest in pseudepigraphic texts and such documents as those discovered at Qumran and Nag Hammadi. Given the fact that contemporary scholarship has traced such Second Temple traditions as *kabod*, heavenly liturgies, Adam, Moses, Enoch, Abraham, Jacob, and others, students of paschal theology have the opportunity to apply the new insights to their own field. And there are, undoubtedly, most urgent questions occasioned by the new intellectual setting. For instance, what is the intimate connection between the paschal tradition and the theophanic theology of the Second Temple? Which of the traditions of the Second Temple is most akin to, nurtured and developed by, the paschal tradition? Apparently, from the large variety of the theophanies of the Second Temple, fire for example, then clouds, pillars, angels, or human forms, paschal discourse prefers anthropomorphic and luminous images. Regarding the Second Temple traditions, my study supports the idea that the ancient *kabod* tradition, which embraced such terminologies as Adam, image, likeness, form, was the intellectual matrix of the Pascha. Briefly put, Pascha represents a *kabod* and an Adamic tradition.

I perceive *kabod* and Adamic traditions as distinct, as several scholars have showed that *kabod* terminologies, although connected with anthropomorphic representations of God in certain documents, denote a mere luminous divine presence not necessarily anthropomorphic in others. Moshe Weinfeld, for instance, shows that the word *kabod* ("heaviness") covers a large semantic area of meanings such as gravity, importance, honor, respect, substance, quantity, power, dignity, and glory, and in the last meaning takes the form of a consuming fire surrounded by a cloud (for instance, Exod

16:10; 24:16; 33:11; Num 12:8; 16:42; 17:7; Deut 34:10).¹ Weinfeld similarly mentions that “in the ancient Near East the divine glory was embodied in the crown of the deity or hero”;² in addition to gods, there are various other objects, such as holy thrones, temples, garments, which may be endowed with the *kabod*.³ Walter Eichrodt also distinguishes among five forms of development of the *kabod* tradition from a “striking radiance” which proceeds from Yahweh (for example, Exod 24:16; Deut 15:22), to the “prophetic” version of a divine and transcendent majesty of Yahweh (Exod 33:18; Isa 6:4), and a “priestly” position envisioning the *kabod* as the “form in which God appears for the purpose of revelation (32; 1 Kgs 8:10; 2 Chr 7:1; Ezek 1:28).⁴ Later Judaism also developed either a merging of the priestly position into the prophetic line, with the result of such figures as the Son of Man or the Messiah, or simply developed the priestly version into the theology of the *shekina*.⁵ I also regard Adamic traditions in their most ancient representations, for instance in Gen 1-2, as not associated with the *kabod* tradition. However, many documents of the end of the Second Temple, as further seen in this study, will describe the figure of Adam in exalted titles and depict him in glorious lines similar to a divinity. From that time on, the two traditions become strongly interconnected and almost indistinct.

¹ Cf. M. Weinfeld, “כבוד, *kabod*,” *TDOT* 7:23-38. For a detailed analysis of the *kabod/doxa* tradition from the pre-monarchic settlements to the various forms it takes at the end of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, including Paul, see C. C. Newman, *Paul’s Glory-Christology: Tradition and Rhetoric* (Leiden: Brill, 1992). See also W. Caspari, *Studien zur Lehre von der Herrlichkeit Gottes im AT* (Leipzig: Gressner & Schramm, 1907); Idem, *Die Bedeutung der Wortsippe k-b-d im Hebräischen* (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1908); J. Schneider, *Δόξα: Eine bedeutungsgeschichtliche Studie* (NTF 3; Güterloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1932); B. Stein, *Der Begriff Kebod Jahweh und seine Bedeutung für die alttestamentliche Gotteserkenntnis* (Westphalia: Heinrich and J. Liechte, 1939). For an extensive bibliography on the *kabod* tradition, see Newman, *Paul’s*.

² Weinfeld, “כבוד, *kabod*,” 27.

³ Ibid., 28.

⁴ Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; Philadelphia, Pa.: Westminster, 1975), 2:30-32.

⁵ Ibid., 34.

My thesis, therefore, does not investigate Paschal writings through the traditional image of the lamb, but through the idea of the divine Image, the heavenly Adam / Anthropos, and emphasizes two essential aspects. First, regarding the nature of this figure, it points out its noetic nature. Second, regarding its function, it stresses its soteriological activity, which I entitled “eikonic-soteriology.”

The first point represents a step forward in apocalyptic studies. While the main figure of the apocalyptic literature is the anthropomorphic figure which most frequently the apocalyptic seers wish to contemplate, Hellenistic authors from Philo to Irenaeus, to Clement, to Origen and others transferred it to a noetic level. I would call this phenomenon of late antiquity the “noetic turn,” and my study will show that it involved a momentous shift from the apocalyptic ontology and epistemology. My research of the anthropomorphic figure can be regarded as a study case of the noetic turn, which, of course, involves many other themes.

My study may also sheds a new light into the complicated anthropomorphic controversy. While the anti-anthropomorphic trend generally starts with Xenophanes of Colophon, it is encountered in Jewish Hellenistic milieus at the epochs of Aristobulus and Philo, and in Christian contexts with Clement and especially with Origen. The main Hellenistic Jewish and Christian writers avoid rejecting anthropomorphism through engineering allegorical interpretations which essentially consisted in psychologization and moralization. During the process of allegorization they still preserve an impressive corpus of anthropomorphic imagery and terminology, and essentially the doctrine of a cosmic divine form frequently understood as a human form. The most important early Jewish and Christian Hellenistic authors—Philo, Irenaeus, Clement, or Origen—usually

simply considered “anti-anthropomorphists,” still struggle with the corpse of anthropomorphism. Nevertheless, as I will try to show in the next pages, some of these authors, as well as other Jewish, Christian, or Hellenistic thinkers of Jewish inspiration, did not give up the concept of a form of God or even of the heavenly Anthropos, but slowly transferred it to a deeper level of reality, namely from the visible to the noetic and intelligible dimension of existence. Thus, they elaborated the noetic solution. The divine Anthropos is not an object among the material objects of the universe, but partakes of the noetic and invisible realm. Without being a mere process *within* the mind, or a phantasm of reason, the noetic world represents an invisible but still *real* domain, the hidden side of creation. Likewise, this ontology requires a new epistemology: the vision of God and angels is no longer one perceived with the eye, but with the intellect or mind by a noetic apprehension.

The second aspect of the divine Anthropos figure, the soteriological function, reflects a dynamic dimension and a particular early Christian soteriological doctrine, eikonic soteriology. Discovering its earthly copy enslaved by Death, the divine Image starts a military campaign done with the weapons of humility, passion, and the assumption of death, but which ends with the victory over Death and the liberation of the human being. Adam regains his lost glorious image.

As mystery terminology can already be encountered in Philo and the *Corpus Hermeticum* in connection with the distinction noetic/aesthetic, I would rather see a cardinal shift in the transition from apocalyptic to mystery.⁶ The ancient heavenly

⁶ Of course, while mystery language tends to replace apocalyptic language especially in the writings of the Hellenizing Jewish and Christian authors, apocalyptic tradition continues in rabbinic and Christian mystical and liturgical texts until the middle ages, for instance in Christian monastic materials and rabbinic hekhaloth writings. Moreover, it comes out here and there in so many Christian movements of

ontology became noetic, mysterious, and translated from an aesthetic and visible level to a level of mystery and intellection. Accordingly, another important goal of my study will be to underline this theological turn to mystery and noetic dimensions.

Regarding the Pascha, mystery terminology is everywhere present and aesthetic ontology is translated to the noetic realm in the earliest paschal homilies of the second and third centuries, from Melito, to Origen, to Pseudo-Hippolytus, to other writers of the following centuries. Likewise, the idea of the noetic divine Anthropos, present in several of these homilies, is contemporary with, and part of, this turn from aesthetic to noetic ontology. In Origen's homily, it should be noticed, the anthropomorphic features of the noetic Anthropos tend sensibly to pure metaphor.

B. The Earliest Paschal Documents and Their Context

The three documents investigated in this study, Melito's *Peri Pascha*, Pseudo-Hippolytus's *In sanctum Pascha*, and Origen's *Peri Pascha*, were discovered in the first half of the twentieth century. Most likely they represent the most ancient Christian paschal texts and preserve reach Jewish-Christian traditions unfiltered through the lens of the councils or the Arian, anthropomorphic, and pneumatologic debates.⁷ In 1932, F. G. Kenyon describes a fifth century codex found part in the Chester Beatty collection, part in the library of the University of Michigan.⁸ In 1936, C. Bonner identified Melito's homily in this codex, fact which will help other scholars to identify various Melitonian

the modern period in Europe and the Americas; see, for instance, John J. Collins, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism* (3 vols.; New York: Continuum, 1998).

⁷ See R. Cantalamessa, *I piu antichi testi pasquali della Chiesa. Le omelie di Melitone di Sardi e dell'Anonimo Quartodecimano e altri testi de II secolo. Introduzione, traduzione e commentario* (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 1972). Cf. C. Moreschini and E. Norelli, *Histoire de la littérature chrétienne antique grecque et latine: Vol. I, De Paul à l'ère de Constantin* (Genève: Labor et fides, 2000), 170-176, 319-354.

⁸ Kenyon, "The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri," *Gn* 8 (1932): 46-49.

fragments in Greek, Coptic, Syriac, Latin, and Georgian collections. This series of discoveries allowed a series of improved critical editions produced by Bernhard Lohse (1958), Othmar Perler (1969), and Stuart G. Hall (1979).⁹

Regarding the context of composition, it is difficult to establish a date with great precision. Nevertheless, sometime between 169 and 177 C.E., Melito, bishop of Sardis, was the petitioner of an apology to the emperor Marcus Aurelius on behalf of his fellow Christians. Although the apology has been lost, this event helps modern scholars to locate the activity of the Sardisian bishop in the second part of the second century C.E.¹⁰

Regarding Pseudo-Hippolytus, this is the scholarly label for an anonymous author who most likely lived in the same province—Asia Minor—as Melito and not much later than he. *In sanctum Pascha* has crossed the centuries under the names of two famous Christian theologians: John Chrysostom and Hippolytus of Rome. It is preserved in eight manuscripts found in Greece and ascribed to John Chrysostom. Besides these, the palimpsest from Grottaferrata, the fragments from the Syrian *Florilegium Edessenum Anonymum*, and the *florilegium* added to the Acts of the Council of the Lateran ascribe the homily to Hippolytus of Rome.¹¹ In modern times, scholars became suspicious of these paternities and proposed various substitute hypotheses.¹² One of the most

⁹ *Die Passa-Homilie des Bischofs Meliton von Sardes* (ed. Bernhard Lohse; Leiden: Brill, 1958); Meliton de Sardes, *Sur la Pâque et fragments* (ed. and trans. O. Perler; SC 123; Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1966); Hall, *Melito of Sardis: On Pascha and Fragments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979). I will make use of this last version of the text in my research.

¹⁰ S. G. Hall, "Introduction," xii and xv.

¹¹ Cf. Moreschini and Norelli, *Histoire de la littérature*, 175.

¹² Since the first edition of the Chrysostomian *opera omnia* (H. Savile, V [Eton 1612], 930-940), the homily has been reckoned among John Chrysostom's *spuria*. The next two important editions also classified the text in the same category; cf. ed. Maurini with B. de Montfaucon's corrections (VIII, Paris 1728, 264-275) and ed. Migne (PG 59, 735-746). For the new hypotheses, see C. Martin "Un Περὶ τοῦ Πάσχα de S. Hippolyte retrouvé?" *RSR* 16 (1922): 148-65, where the author hypothesizes that the homily might be the lost Hippolytan *On Pascha*. R. H. Connolly, in "New Attributions to Hippolytus," *JTS* 46 (1945): 192-200, and A. Grillmeier—in "Der Gottessohn im Totenreich. Soteriologische und christologische Motivierung der Descensuslehre in der älteren christlichen Überlieferung," *ZKT* 71 (1949):

significant hypotheses came from Cantalamessa who placed the homily in second-century Asia Minor. He argued for his position especially on internal theological and linguistic grounds (theology and language Melito of Sardis would have shared in his *Peri Pascha*), and also on some of the work's various theological positions typical for the second century.¹³ To the contrary, Gribomont, Stuiber, and Visonà manifested caution in dating the homily, keeping opened Nautin's possibility of the early fourth century.¹⁴ Nonetheless, a large majority of scholars generally agreed with Cantalamessa's dating of the homily. Daniélou, Grillmeier, Botte, Simonetti, Hall, Richardson embraced

1-53; 184-203—doubted that Hippolytus of Rome wrote this text. Taking over this idea, P. Nautin, in his critical edition of the *Homélies Paschales*, viewed the document as a fourth-century text inspired by Hippolytus's treatise *Peri Pascha*. While C. Mohrmann deemed that the homily had been written in the fifth century—see “Note sur l'homélie paschal VI de la collection Pseudo-Chrysostomienne dite « des petites trompettes »,” in *Mélanges en l'honneur de Monseigneur Michel Andrieu* (Strasbourg: Palais Universitaire, 1956), 351-360—M. Richard advanced the idea that it issued from monarchian sources: “Une homélie monarchienne sur la Pâque,” *StPatr* 78 (1961): 284. For the present study I will follow G. Visonà's critical edition from his *Pseudo Ippolito, In sanctum Pascha: Studio, edizione, commento* (Milano: Vita e pensiero, 1988). The usual scholarly abbreviation *IP* for *In sanctum Pascha* will also be followed in my study. For the English translation, I will use A. Hamman, ed., *The Paschal Mystery: Ancient Liturgies and Patristic Texts* (trans. T. Halton; State Island, NY: Alba House, 1969).

13 R. Cantalamessa, *L'Omelia “In S. Pascha” dello Pseudo-Ippolito di Roma. Ricerche sulla teologia dell'Asia Minore nella seconda metà del II secolo* (Milano: Vita e pensiero, 1967), 187-368. C. Bonner, in his *The Homily on the Passion by Melito Bishop of Sardis* (SD 12; Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), was the first to notice certain contact points between the anonymous *In sanctum Pascha* and Melito's *Peri Pascha*.

14 See two reviews of Cantalamessa's position by J. Gribomont, *RSLR* 5 (1969): 158-163 and A. Stuiber, *TRev* 66 (1970): 398, and also Visonà, *Pseudo Ippolito* 35-6. Since the homily seems to have been used as a liturgical text, Visonà argues, historical-critical methods may be applied to the text and one may affirm that the rhetorical embellishments of the text might belong to a later period and come from the hands of a series of editors. In a series of articles—e.g., “Pseudo-Ippolito In s. Pascha: note di storia e di critica del testo,” *Aevum* 59 (1985): 107-123; “Pseudo-Ippolito In s. Pascha 53 e la tradizione dell'enkrateia,” *Cristianesimo nella storia* 6 (1985) 445-488; “L'interpretazione sacramentale di Io. 19,34 nello Pseudo-Ippolito In s. Pascha 53,” *RSLR* 21 (1985)—and also in his monograph *Pseudo Ippolito*, Visonà offers several examples of theological terms and themes Pseudo-Hippolytus shares with a large plethora of theologians from the second to the fifth centuries. The consequence is that dating *In s. Pascha* faces many difficulties. However, a *datazione alta* might be suggested on the basis of certain Pseudo-Hippolytan points of which the last two would have hardly occurred in a paschal homily of post-Origenian era: Melitenean dual structure and method of articulating the discourse, mystery exegesis, anthropomorphic tendency, and tendency to binitarianism. But especially the exegetical method applied to Exodus 12 with a quite careful usage of early Christian imagery cannot be compared with the rhetorically elaborated Cappadocian homilies or the highly metaphorical homilies of the fifth and sixth centuries, which, in view of a parallel with styles in architecture, represent a sort of baroque compared to the Romanesque. See especially Hesychius of Jerusalem, Basil of Seleucia, John of Beryth, Leontius of Byzantium in SC 187. I would place, therefore, Pseudo-Hippolytus in the second or third century C.E.

Cantalamessa's position; Kretschmar, in his turn, assumed that the homily had been written at the beginning of the third century.¹⁵ In addition, Blanchetière, Mara, and Mazza, used the homily as a second-century document in order to prove their theses about Ignatius of Antioch, Melito, the *Gospel of Peter*, or Hippolytus of Rome.¹⁶ Finally, for Gerlach, *In sanctum Pascha* should be associated with the paschal tradition conveyed in the Asia Minor of the third century.¹⁷ Leonhard defends a similar dating.¹⁸ These scholars emphasize various common elements which *In sanctum Pascha* shares with several writings of the first three centuries such as the general mystery and Melitanean language, Christology, and binitarian theology. They also pointed out similarities with the *testimonia* used in scriptural exegesis of the first three centuries and with the liturgical tradition of the time.

The third document, the Origenian paschal treatise, was discovered in 1941 in a monastery at Tura, in Egypt, and Guéraud and Nautin were able, in 1979, to reconstruct the text in an almost integral form.¹⁹ Since then, scholars have identified new fragments of the text and Bernd Witte brought to light a new critical edition in 1993.²⁰

¹⁵ See the following reviews by B. Botte, *RTAM* 33 (1968): 184; J. Daniélou, *RSR* 57 (1969): 79-84; A. Grillmeier, *TP* 44 (1969): 128-130; M. Simonetti, *VetChr* 6 (1969): 218-220; S. G. Hall, *JTS* 20 (1969): 301-304; G. Kretschmar, "Christliches Passa im 2. Jahrhundert und die Ausbildung der christlichen Theologie," *RSR* 60 (1972): 287-323, 306-307; C. C. Richardson, "A New Solution to the Quartodeciman and the Synoptic Chronology," *JTS* 24 (1973): 74-85, 77.

¹⁶ F. Blanchetière, *Le christianisme asiatic aux II^e et III^e siècles* (Lille 1981), 185; M. G. Mara, *Évangile de Pierre* (SC 201; Paris: Cerf, 1973), 215; E. Mazza, "Omellerie pasquali e birkat ha-mazon: fonti dell'anafora di Ippolito?" *Eph. Lit.* 97 (1983): 409-481.

¹⁷ K. Gerlach, *The Antenicene Pascha: A Rhetorical History* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 161, 387, and 403.

¹⁸ Hansjörg auf der Maur et al., *Die Osterfeier in der alten Kirche* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2003).

¹⁹ See O. Guéraud and P. Nautin, *Origène, Sur la Pâque: Traité inédit publié d'après un papyrus de Tura* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1979). For the English translation, see *Origen: Treatise on the Passover and Dialogue of Origen with Heraclides and His Fellow Bishops on the Father, the Son, and the Soul* (ed. and trans. R. J. Daly; New York, 1992).

²⁰ Witte, *Die Schrift des Origenes „Über das Passa“* (Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 1993). I will this critical edition and also the abbreviation *PP* for this document.

C. The Present Status of the Problem

Modern scholars have undertaken vast effort in investigating either the ritual-liturgical aspects of the celebrations of the Jewish Passover and the Christian Pascha, or the rhetorical formulas of the paschal discourses, or the theology encapsulated within both liturgical and theological Passover/Pascha writings. Segal, Haag, Haran, and Leonhard should first be mentioned for their contribution to the history of Passover and Pascha, and Casel, Huber, Strobel, and Auf der Maur for their contribution regarding the early Christian paschal theology and celebration.²¹

Bradshaw, Hoffman, and Johnson have offered detailed observations regarding preparations for the Great Sabbath, Lent, or the Paschal feast.²² At the same time, they pointed out the connections between the Passover and the Shavuot (the Jewish festivals celebrating the liberation from the Egyptian slavery and the day God gave the Torah at Mount Sinai), and in the Christian context between the Pascha and the Pentecost, together with the meaning of their profound symbolisms. Specialists in liturgics, as well, have

²¹ For the Passover, see for example J. B. Segal, *The Hebrew Passover from the Earliest Times to AD 70* (Oxford: University Press, 1963); R. Le Déaut, *La Nuit pascale: Essai sur la signification de la Pâque juive à partir du Targum d'Exode XII 42* (AnBib 22; Rome: Institut biblique pontifical, 1963); Herbert Haag, *Vom alten zum neuen Pascha: Geschichte und Theologie des Osterfestes* (Stuttgart: KBW Verlag, 1971); M. Haran, "The Passover Sacrifice," in *Studies in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (SVT 23; Leiden: Brill, 1972), 86-116; C. Leonhard, *The Jewish Pesach and the Origins of the Christian Easter: Open Questions in Current Research* (SJ 35; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006). For the early Pascha, see also C. Mohrmann, "Pascha, Passio, Transitus," in *Études sur le latin des chrétiens*, 4 vols. (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1961-1977), 1:205-222; O. Casel, *La fête de Pâques dans l'Église des Pères*, tr. J. C. Didier (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1963); B. Botte, "Pascha," *OS* 8 (1963): 213-226; Wolfgang Huber, *Passa und Ostern: Untersuchungen zur Osterfeier d. alten Kirche* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1969); A. Strobel, *Ursprung und Geschichte des frühchristlichen Osterkalenders* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1977); Hansjörg Auf der Maur, *Die Osterfeier in der alten Kirche* (Münster: Lit, 2003).

²² See P. F. Bradshaw and L. A. Hoffman, "Passover and Easter: The Symbolic Shaping of Time and Meaning," in *Passover and Easter: The Symbolic Structuring of Sacred Seasons*, eds. P. F. Bradshaw and L. A. Hoffman (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 1-14; L. A. Hoffman "The Great Sabbath and Lent: Jewish Origins?" in Bradshaw, *Passover and Easter*, 15-35; M. E. Johnson, "Preparation for Pascha? Lent in Christian Antiquity" in Bradshaw, *Passover and Easter*, 36-54; L. A. Hoffman and M. E. Johnson, "Lent in Perspective: A Summary Dialogue," Bradshaw, *Passover and Easter*, 55-70; P. F. Bradshaw, "The Origins of Easter," in *Between Memory and Hope: Readings on the Liturgical Year* (ed. M. E. Johnson; Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 2000), 111-124; P. Regan, "The Three Days and the Forty Days," in Johnson, *Between Memory*, 125-142, 223-246.

offered momentous insights regarding the liturgical meanings of the Jewish and Christian celebrations, also adding important observations regarding the connections between the ideas of exodus, salvation and eschatology encompassed within paschal theology.²³

Other scholars have noticed various links between the Pascha and the Gospels (Swain), as well as the Book of Revelation (Shepherd), *I Peter* (Cross), or the *Epistle of Barnabas* (Bernard).²⁴ Several other scholars have produced comparative analyses of the Passover and the Pascha together with researches regarding typological interpretation, the Quartodeciman debate, and many other topics such as the Christology, Pneumatology, or anthropology encompassed within the early paschal writings.²⁵ Scholars such as Gerlach and Stewart-Sykes deserve attention for their studies in the rhetorical aspects of the paschal writings.²⁶ The last but not the least are those who have written important studies on the early paschal homilies of Melito, Origen, and Pseudo-Hippolytus.²⁷

²³ F. Dell'Oro, "La solenne veglia pasquale," *Rev. Lit.* 40 (1953): 1-93; Bernard Botte, "La question pascale: Pâque du vendredi ou Pâque du dimanche?" *LMD* 41 (1955): 84-95; Pierre Jounel, "La liturgie du Mystère pascal: La nuit pascale," *LMD* 67 (1961): 123-144; idem, "The Easter Cycle," in *The Liturgy and Time* (eds. H. I. Dalmais et al.; trans. M. J. O'Connell (Collegeville, Minn: The Liturgical Press, 1986), 33-76; D. B. Capelle, "La procession du Lumen Christi au samedi soir," in *Travaux liturgiques* 3 (Louvain: Mont César, 1967), 221-235; G. Betonière, *The Historical Development of the Easter Vigil and Related Services in the Greek Church* (OCA 193; Rome: Pontificio Instituto Orientale, 1972); T. J. Talley, "History and Eschatology in the Primitive Pascha," *Worship* 47:4 (1973): 212-221; Idem, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year* (New York: Pueblo Pub. Co., 1986); R. F. Taft, "Holy Week in the Byzantine Tradition," in Johnson, *Between Memory and Hope*, 155-182; K. Richter, *The Meaning of the Sacramental Symbols: Answers to Today's Questions* (trans. L. M. Maloney; Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1990), 109-128.

²⁴ F. L. Cross, *I Peter, A Paschal Liturgy?* (London: Mowbray, 1954); M. H. Shepherd, *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1960); L. W. Barnard, "The Epistle of Barnabas – A Paschal Homily?" *VC* 15 (1961): 8-22; L. Swain, *Reading the Easter Gospels* (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1993).

²⁵ J. Daniélou, "Figure et événement chez Meliton," in *Neotestamentica et patristica: Eine Freundesgabe, Herrn Professor Dr. Oscar Cullmann zu seinem 60. Geburtstag überreicht* (SNT 6; Leiden: Brill, 1962), 282-292; O. Perler, "L'Évangile de Pierre et Méliton de Sardes," *Rev. Bib.* 71 (1964): 584-590; R. P. Merendino, *Paschale sacramentum: Eine Untersuchung über die Osterkatechese des Hl. Athanasius von Alexandrien in ihrer Beziehung zu den frühchristlichen exegetisch-theologischen Überlieferungen* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1965); see also Kretschmar, "Christliches Passa" and Richardson, "A New Solution."

²⁶ Gerlach, *The Antenicene Pascha*; A. Stewart-Sykes, *The Lamb's High Feast: Melito, Peri Pascha, and the Quartodeciman Paschal Liturgy at Sardis* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

²⁷ P. Nautin, « Introduction, » *Homélies pascales I: Une homélie inspirée du Traité sur la Pâque*

Many of these names will come out in the next chapters and my investigation is based on their effort of producing critical editions and commentaries of the paschal texts, contextualizing them, and exploring key themes of these texts. Investigating paschal writings from the perspective of the divine Anthropos and divine Image, however, represents a new approach and new path of exploration. In addition to this, from a methodological perspective, I will analyze the early paschal texts through the lens of the Second Temple traditions, in a way rarely advanced, for instance by Le Déaut or Daniélou.

D. The Statement of Procedure or Methodology

My investigation intends to continue these studies through emphasizing the centrality for paschal theology of portraying Christ as divine Image, Demiurge, and Anthropos figure. My study may also be regarded as an investigation of the reception history of Genesis 1:27 (and of the related Ezek 1:26, Phil 2:6, and 1Cor 15:45-49) in early Christian and Patristic paschal theology. Christ's depiction as a luminous Divine Image will entail a theological perspective which produces a very particular anthropology, soteriology, and vision of divine economy. Accordingly, the human being is defined as a copy of the Divine Image, and soteriology is envisioned as an eschatological demiurgic process where Christ involves Himself in the divine economy ultimately intending to reconstruct the damaged human image. This type of soteriology,

d'Hippolyte (SC 27; Paris: Cerf, 1950); idem, *Le dossier d'Hippolyte et de Méliton dans les florilèges dogmatiques et chez les historiens modernes* (Paris: Cerf, 1953); Cantalamessa, *L'omelia*; S. G. Hall, "Melito in the Light of the Passover Haggadah," *JTS* 22 (1971): 29-46; Mazza, "Omèlie pasquali," Visonà, *Pseudo Ippolito*; L. H. Cohick, *The Peri Pascha Attributed to Melito of Sardis: Setting, Purpose, and Sources* (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2000); H. M. Knapp, "Melito's Use of Scripture in *Peri Pascha*," *VC* 54:4 (2000): 343-374; P. Gavriluk, "Melito's Influence upon the Anaphora of *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.12," *VC* 59, No. 4 (2005): 355-376; H. Buchinger, *Pascha bei Origenes* (2 vols.; Innsbruck, Vienna: Tyrolia Verlag, 2005).

which I call “eikonic soteriology,” is cardinal for paschal theology and harks back to Pauline theology.²⁸ The first two characteristics of this savior God are his luminous image and his endless power as Creator, the power through which he destroys Hades, raises decomposed human bodies, and recreates human beings according to his luminous archetypal form.

I intend as well to make the connection between the paschal theology of early Christian writings and the theophanic traditions of Scripture, more specifically of the Second Temple, and to investigate the elements of commonality and differentiation. Thus, the main methods of my research will be, first, an investigation in the history of ideas and, second, tradition criticism. I will particularly try to situate the paschal theophanic tradition within the context of such trajectories and themes as biblical theophany, divine image, Adam, Divine Anthropos, Son of Man, or Divine Warrior.

The first part of the thesis will offer the background of the ideas of theophany, divine image, Adam, and salvation, and will particularly underline the emergence, most likely in the first century C.E., of three phenomena of essential importance for the understanding of the noetic paschal Anthropos. The three phenomena are, first, the Son of Man character as eschatological anthropomorphic figure and eschatological judge; second, the idea of the archetypal protological Anthropos in Philo and Paul; and, third, the eikonic soteriology in the Pauline writings. In this first part of the dissertation, I will point out that the Anthropos tradition reflects a development of the idea of Divine Image (Gen 1:27) through hypostasization and accretion of divine titles, especially that of

²⁸ I prefer to spell the first term of the title of this type of soteriology as “eikonic,” instead of “iconic,” in order to underline the fact that the whole discussion is different from the discussion about idols, paintings, sculptures, statues, and any sort of representation of the divine, and also the permission and interdiction to make such a representation. To the contrary, the entire discussion will gravitate around the idea of the ontology of the Image (*eikon*) of God as such and its copy, the human being.

Demiurge, as distinct from the tradition of the exaltation of Adam. Eikonic soteriology represents a synthesis of two developments: the hypostatization of the Divine Image and the exaltation of the prelapsarian Adam.

The main focus of the second part will be the idea of noetic Anthropos. While the first part investigated the exaltation of the figure of Adam and the emergence of the idea of Divine Anthropos, the second part will emphasize noetic nature of the Divine Anthropos, a theological position especially developed in the intellectual environments of the Hellenistic theologians educated in philosophy and able to operate with the Platonic distinction between the noetic and the aesthetic. I will first present the shift in the epistemology of the divine from the perception through senses to the noetic perception through the mind, which does not imply that the perceived reality is a creation of the mind. Second, I will specify the presence of the idea of noetic Anthropos and the form of God from the second century B.C.E. to third century C.E. in such materials as Pseudo-Orpheus, the Hermetic Corpus, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus of Rome, Tertullian, and Origen.

The third part will investigate the insertion of the Anthropos theme in paschal theology. It will pay attention to several essential titles of the paschal Christ, especially those denoting his salvific functions and the ontology of the luminous form. The first one is that of glory or *kabod*, in accordance with which the process of salvation comes through the appearance of the divine glory, one of the most ancient expectations of the paschal night. A theological feature already present in the prophetic books, glory soteriology is also catalytic for paschal theology.²⁹ The chapter will continue with an

²⁹ I call “paschal theology” that theology developed in Christian paschal homilies or treatises on resurrection. The category can be, as well, extended to the set of the New Testament images, concepts, and

investigation of the idea of divine Anthropos in several paschal writings, such as Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Origen, and detail the eikonic soteriology present in the first two texts. The significant element is that the eikonic soteriology of Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus represents a narrative of liberation where Christ as a Divine Warrior saves his image damaged and enslaved by Death. The third special paschal soteriological title is that of the Divine Warrior, which goes along with the Pascha being envisioned as Christ's fight with Death, His victory, and His translating humankind to the heavenly Kingdom.

The conclusion I hope to prove is that the first-century development of such doctrines as those regarding the figures of the Son of Man and the divine Anthropos, and the Pauline eikonic soteriology, to which should be added the efflorescence of the Christological idea of noetic Anthropos in the second and third centuries, most likely constituted the intellectual context of the emergence of a paschal theology centered on eikonic soteriology and sometimes conceiving of Christ as noetic Anthropos. For various paschal writings here being analyzed, especially Pseudo-Hippolytus and Origen, Christ is the Divine Warrior who saves humankind from the slavery of death. While for Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus, Christ is a humanlike noetic figure who saves his image from death, for the Cappadocians he is the eschatological Demiurge of the divine image who recreates the human being according to his noetic eikon.

The fourth part of the thesis will investigate a momentous dimension of early paschal theology, namely mystery terminology. Mystery realm actually denotes, through different notions, the same noetic and spiritual domain of reality. I will first unveil certain apocalyptic categories present in the paschal writings, particularly regarding the

ideas connected with the thoughts concerning the resurrection and the Christian Pascha.

mystagogue as revealer, sage, scribe, interpreter of mysteries, and decoder of parables. I will try then to show that paschal exegesis represents a mystery performance of initiation, and also point out the emergence of mystery apocalypse, a new chapter in the history of apocalyptic genre. The heavenly realities to be contemplated, especially in Pseudo-Hippolytus and Origen, are placed within the noetic realm, the preferred method of accessing them is initiation instead of ascension, and the epistemic capacity is noesis or nous instead of direct vision.³⁰

2. Some Introductory Observations on the Methods of The New School of the History of Religions

“History begins at Sumer!” That was a half century ago one of the favored expressions of several classical writers in the history of religions. Samuel N. Kramer’s expression, taken over by Mircea Eliade, expounds at the same time an important methodological principle reflecting the commitment of a few generations of researchers and the lens through which they used to perceive the world. From a different angle, the expression reveals the fascination for the mystery of origins, that fascination which enticed most of the specialists of the history of religions. Of course, these origins, Sumer, are not universal as they cannot have any kind of influence, whether of ideology or of religious praxis, on such religious universes as those of the native populations of the Americas, the Aborigines of New Zealand, or Eskimo communities. A sort of unconscious or unreflected “Eurocentrism” was surely present in that expression. But besides the contemporary discussions on Eurocentrism, for the contemporary world, from

³⁰ While I defend the notion of a turn from apocalypticism to mystery within these Hellenistic texts, one may also envisage this turn as one from ordinary apocalypticism to mystery apocalypticism, as the entire apocalyptic ontology (i.e., glorious image, divine thrones, angels, humans transformed into glorious beings, etc.) is still present in these texts but transferred to the noetic realm.

a sociological point of view, monotheism is an important religious phenomenon and the origins, ramifications, doctrinal similarities and dissimilarities of such religious phenomena as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam still need further investigation.

In the following pages I will present two schools of the history of religions and their distinct presuppositions and methodologies. They reflect two different perspectives particularly on the roots and evolutions of a few main Jewish, Christian, and Islamic images and concepts. While the first one finds the origins of the Hermetic and Gnostic Anthropos myth in Oriental religions, particularly the Iranian culture, the second traces it to the Ezekelian vision from 1:26, Jewish apocalyptic traditions, and the Second Temple tradition of the exalted Adam. While embracing the position of the second school, I will also bring forward some new distinctions and also underline the importance some Greek philosophical features played in the elaboration of the Anthropos figure. In addition, unlike the old school for the history of religions, I would point out the necessity of a new method beyond the positivist presuppositions of the old school, namely a hermeneutical post-positivist method. This proposal comes as well in the context in which the new school has not yet determined its proper methodological way.

A. The School of the History of Religions (religionsgeschichtliche Schule)

The methodology of the old school may be regarded as the fruit of both a dominant ideology of the nineteenth century—positivism—and of the great German school of classical languages. As a matter of fact, the old school of the history of religions emerges in Germany, and its main representatives—Hermann Gunkel (1862-1932), Wilhelm Bousset (1865-1920), Richard Reitzenstein (1861-1931), Ernst Troeltsch

(1865-1923), and Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976)—if not all classicists by profession, as Reitzenstein, have a strong education in classics and philosophy. In their view, science represents the model or the paradigm of human knowledge and research. The truth is one, primarily that of science rather than that of a certain religion, and religious investigation, as far as it hopes to be part of the academia, has to follow scientific standards. These elements make of the school the fruit of a tradition which aims first of all to acquire a “scientific” status. But from a post-colonial and post-modernist perspective, the very idea that religious research should seek for one truth (even scientific) and one true interpretation is highly problematic.

The school is highly indebted to a generation of scholars that preceded it. For example, Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1899) and Albert Eichhorn (1856-1926) were inspired by Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792-1860), and shared the foundational principles of the school Baur founded at Tübingen.³¹ However, beyond the fact that some of Baur’s hypotheses have been criticized by representatives of historical criticism, his idea of making Christianity subject to critical historical examination establishes a line of continuity for the entire historico-criticist tradition. In its essence, this type of examination refers to the method of interpretation of a certain religious document, primarily the Bible, through a historical investigation, and without any metaphysical assumption. Influenced at the beginning of his career by Fichte, Schelling and Schleiermacher—the newest things in the field of philosophy at that time—Baur revisits Hegel and understands the concept of “science” through a Hegelian lens. Later, Albrecht

³¹ Cf. F. C. Baur, *Epochen der kirchlichen Geschichtschreibung* (Tübingen: Ludwig Friedrich Fues, 1852); idem, *Geschichte der christlichen Kirche*, 5 vols. (Tübingen: Ludwig Friedrich Fues, 1953-1963); A. Ritschl, *Die Christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung* (3 vols.; Bonn: Adolph Marcus, 1970-1974); A. Eichhorn, *Das Abendmahl im Neuen Testament* (Leipzig: Mohr Siebeck, 1898).

Ritschl, one of Baur's most famous disciples, gets inspired by Kant when he proposes to eliminate any sort of subjectivism, mysticism, and pietism—therefore, any kind of metaphysics—in the domain of religion. Research that has as its object the religious domain can have a sense based only on the objective ground of the religious experience of the Christian community. The faith of the community represents the positive religious datum and the foundation on which theology constructs its *Weltanschauung*. Defining God as love manifested in the Christian community, he states the purpose of this love likewise in Kantian notes as the moral organization of humanity in the Kingdom of God.

Regarding the particular theme of the divine Anthropos, Gunkel thought that the elevated figure of Jesus is indebted to Oriental saviour myths.³² Similarly, Bousset advanced the idea that Judaism of the first century C.E. was highly influenced by Oriental religion, particularly Persian lore, and Christian preoccupation with the heavenly and pre-existent Messiah was also inspired by Persian myths.³³ He also deemed that the Oriental myth of a primordial man sacrificed *ab initio*, and whose parts constituted the world, should be taken as the origin of the anthropomorphic narratives in *Poimandres* 12-15 and several Christian Gnostic writings.³⁴ Reitzenstein elaborated as well a theory of the “Iranian redemption mystery” having as savior figure Gayomart, a humanlike heavenly character which he saw at the roots of the New Testament Son of Man or Heavenly Man and the Gnostic Anthropos.³⁵

³² H. Gunkel, *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des Neuen Testament* (FRLANT 1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1903).

³³ W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* (Berlin: Reuther, 1903), 448-493. Cf. C. H. Kraeling, *Anthropos and the Son of Man* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1927).

³⁴ W. Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1907), 160-223.

³⁵ R. Reitzenstein, *Das iranische Erlösungsmysterium: Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Bonn: Marcus & Weber, 1921). Cf. G. Wiedengren, *The Great Vohu Manah and the Apostle of God: Studies in Iranian and Manichaean Religion* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1945).

B. The New School of the History of Religions

I would like to introduce to my reader a second school of the history of religions, its representatives, and its project of research. The postwar era occasioned an efflorescence in the field of Second Temple studies, especially thanks to an unprecedented invigoration of the research of pseudepigraphic materials and to such revolutionary discoveries as the Dead Sea scrolls and the Nag Hammadi codices. Several scholars, Gilles Quispel, for example, proposed the conjecture of Jewish, non-Iranian origin of certain Christian themes such as the Demiurge, Anthropos, Savior, etc. The way certain passages of the New Testament portray Jesus Christ is very close to the representation of the heavenly character of luminous materiality depicted in the prophetic and pseudepigraphic writings as seated on a throne of glory and surrounded by cherubim and seraphim. Especially after publication of the studies made by Colpe and Schenke, the Iranian redemptive mystery proved to be an academic ghost.³⁶ Ideas very close to Quispel's hypothesis and Gershom Sholem's conjecture regarding the connection between Jewish apocalypticism and *merkabah* mysticism are further advanced by Christopher Rowland, Jarl Fossum, Alan Segal, Larry Hurtado, April De Conick, Crispin Fletcher-Louis, Christopher R. A. Morray-Jones, Carry Newman, Alexander Golitzin, and Andrei Orlov. As Fossum observes, it is highly plausible that there existed a completely different way of circulation of the themes and motifs than the one proposed by the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*. Recalling, for example, the debate between Bultmann and Dodd over the influence of Gnostic documents on the Gospel of John or vice versa,

³⁶ C. Colpe, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule: Darstellung und Kritik ihres Bildes vom gnostischen Erlösmythus* (FRLANT 87; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961), 140-170; Idem, „ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,“ *TWNT* 8 (1969), 403-481, esp. 411; H.-M. Schenke, *Der Gott "Mensch" in der Gnosis: Ein religionsgeschichtlicher Beitrag zur Diskussion über die paulinische Anschauung von der Kirche als Leib Christi* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 69-114.

Fossum advances a third way. Both Gnostic writings and the Gospel of John underwent influences from more ancient religious traditions originated in ancient Israel, mostly from the traditions pertaining to the Second Temple.³⁷

Modern researchers into Gnosticism are still far from the complete elucidation of the origins and significations of Gnostic writings. As Fossum puts it, expressing the perspective of the new school, Gnosticism cannot be regarded as the religious phenomenon at the basis of Christian origins, but one of the branches of an older common trunk out of which Christianity, Rabbinism, and Gnosticism emerged.³⁸ This common trunk is that of the Jewish traditions which emerged and received their elaboration during the time of the Second Temple in Jerusalem (596 B.C.E.-70 C.E.). In addition, various Islamic texts preserve important Second Temple Jewish traditions.

The majority of researchers agree that there was not a unique Jewish tradition, a unique Judaism, but a plurality of traditions delineated through their own sets of writings and paradigmatic figures to whom these traditions paid a special devotion. While Moses, for example, is the central figure of the Pentateuch and the Zadokite community, Enoch is the favorite figure of those communities which produced the Enochic corpora. Gnosticism, again as far as one may speak of one Gnosticism rather than Gnosticisms and Gnostic traditions and communities, witnesses to various Jewish traditions, such as those gravitating around the figures of Adam, Enoch, Seth, Melchizedek, Sophia, Shem, etc.³⁹

³⁷ See J. Fossum, "The New *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*: The Quest for Jewish Christology," *SBL Seminar Papers* (Atlanta, Ga: Scholars Press, 1991): 638-646.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 646. See some of these ideas already prefigured in G. Quispel, "Het Johannesevangelie en de Gnosis," *NedTTs* 11 (1956): 173-203.

³⁹ See B. A. Pearson, "Jewish Sources in Gnostic Literature," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, ed. Michael Stone (CRINT II/2; Philadelphia: Fortress Press; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1984), 443-482; *idem*, *Gnosticism, Judaism, and Egyptian Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990).

Nevertheless, as previous scholars have already noticed and I will point out in my investigation, the etiology of the heavenly Anthropos has to be complemented with the Greek philosophical and religious dimensions. Various Platonic ontological and epistemological features, sometimes at the level of a popular interpretation, are present in those materials speculating on the Anthropos.

C. The Theophaneia School at Marquette University

Within the context of research pursued by the new school, the direction of the Marquette group led by Alexander Golitzin may be regarded as a branch of the new school of the history of religions which tries to identify and determine first the characteristics of certain Jewish traditions in their Second Temple intellectual environment, and second the way Christian communities re-fashioned these traditions in order to express their own message.⁴⁰ Some of the most emblematic trajectories investigated at Marquette are *kabod* and *merkabah* (Alexander Golitzin), Pneumatological traditions (Michel R. Barnes), Enoch and Abraham (Andrei A. Orlov), Adam (Silviu G. Bunta), angelomorphic Pneumatology (Bogdan G. Bucur), or divine Anthropos (Dragoş A. Giulea). My work may be understood within the frame of the new school as an investigation of the divine Image—Adam—Anthropos traditions in early Christian and patristic milieus in order to unveil the deep connections between the biblical universe, on the one hand, and the early Christian and patristic writings, on the other. Contrary to Harnack's view according to which Greco-Roman, therefore

⁴⁰ The "Theophaneia" School is a group of faculty and graduate students started in 2002 at Marquette University under Alexander Golitzin's guidance. The first volume of the group came out under the title *The Theophaneia School: Jewish Roots of Eastern Christian Mysticism*, eds. B. Lourie and A. A. Orlov (Scriinium III; St. Petersburg: Byzantinorossica, 2007; 2nd ed. Gorgias Press, 2009).

Hellenistic, and patristic Christianity produced a serious separation from the original message of Scripture, my perspective is that patristic writings preserve with great accuracy, even dressed in the garb of Greek rhetoric, the key motifs and ideas of the Scriptures connected with *kabod* and Lord of Glory traditions. Yahweh and *kabod*, for example, receive new significations once they are identified either with Jesus Christ or with the Holy Spirit.

D. The Sociological Perspective of the Old School

I would emphasize two aspects—sociological and epistemological—of the old school in order to point out in the following subchapters, with more clarity, my methodological presuppositions. The old school for the history of religions particularly investigated the sociological dimension of religion in the context of the significant growth of the interest in sociology and social theories which characterized the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Religion amounted, in this view, to a socio-cultural phenomenon.

As the idea of progress, most likely under the influence of Hegelian philosophy, becomes essential for studies concerning human society, the school of the history of religions divides the evolution of human society into stages of development from simple to complex, from polytheism to monotheism, from arbitrarily and improvised to organized and planned, etc. In a manner very similar to that of Comte, who viewed human progress as following three stages of evolution—from the theological to the metaphysical and eventually to the positivist—the members of the old school conceive of humanity as evolving from the tribal stage and animist religion to that of tribal unions

and polytheism. The emergence of agriculture gives birth to the deities of fertility and civilizing heroes. The last stage would be that of the emergence of city-states, all-powerful leaders, kingdoms and empires, elements which will facilitate the rise of monotheism.

As one may notice, religion is conceived of as evolving under social factors and being inspired by social contexts. The Christian religion is regarded as the product of the Jewish social context under Iranian influences, especially those elements regarding the savior god. The Jewish context appears to give occasion for an ideological syncretism in which the imperial cult, mystery religions, and oriental—especially Iranian—religions play the central roles. Another element worth noting is Gnosticism, which, according to Bultmann, at least in the Mandaean version, exerted influence on the Gospel of John.⁴¹ The *Weltanschauung* of the school has met criticisms and reformulations. Charles Harold Dodd, for example, after comparing the Mandaean passages with the Johanannine ones, reaches the opposite conclusion, namely that the Christian text influenced the Mandaean one.⁴²

E. The Epistemological Presuppositions of the Old School

From a methodological point of view, the concept of scientific theory adopted by the older school of the history of religions is the positivist one, according to which human knowledge is gradually acquired on the basis of experiential data. Human knowledge, in general, consists of a unitary system in evolution. The meaningful propositions of the

⁴¹ R. Bultmann, „Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen madäischen und manichäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums,“ *ZNW* 24 (1925): 100-46; cf. idem, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1941).

⁴² C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 123.

system are those able to be deduced from tautologies and primary sentences, namely those grounded on experience. Metaphysical sentences, as Carnap affirms, cannot be qualified as true or false, but are without meaning. However, later epistemologists rejected the positivist criterion of meaning. In addition to this, they criticized the positivist concept of science as a unique corpus of human knowledge on the basis of the observation that contemporary science works on a variety of competing programs of research. In physics, for example, the program of research based on Einstein's theories coexists with the one based on Niels Bohr's theories.

F. The German Hermeneutical Tradition

I would, however, bring to attention a different philosophical tradition with which I think my methodology is more congruent. The cultural geography of the Germany of the last two centuries has proposed as well other perspectives on the nature and evolution of human knowledge, different than, and in opposition to, that of the first *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*. Perhaps the most significant is usually called the hermeneutical school and its main representatives are Schleiermacher (1768 – 1834), Dilthey (1833 – 1911), and Gadamer (1900 – 2002). They primarily argued that certain areas of human knowledge—such as history, philosophy, law, religious studies, arts, areas which they called human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*)—cannot be investigated through scientific methodologies, which are not applicable to these areas. The appropriate method to investigate these fields should instead be the *Verstehen* (understanding, interpretation, comprehension), a sort of first-person participation in, or empathy with, the examined artefact or social context, whether a Babylonian or Egyptian temple or

manuscript, a Greek amphora, a Roman weapon, or the social contexts which produced those artefacts. This tradition is aware of the plurality of interpretations and of the necessity of a deep immersion within the intellectual atmosphere of a certain historical environment, as much as the historian can perform this immersion in a culture different than his own and interpret that culture without recourse to the paradigmatic categories of his own culture.

G. A Heterogeneous Hellenism

The distinction between Jerusalem and Athens, which traces its origins back to Tertullian and its scholarly elaboration to Harnack, is an intellectual, artificial, and even inappropriate description of that cultural reality.⁴³ Almost everywhere in the Roman Empire, there were Hellenistic cultural elements or reactions against them.⁴⁴ I would introduce in this discussion the concept of cultural homogeneity. Hellenism was indeed extended to the confines of the Roman Empire, and perhaps even beyond, but this Hellenistic presence had different degrees and modalities.⁴⁵

I think, on the one hand, that we still can talk about a Greek culture with several centers such as Athens and Sparta and a Jewish culture with its particular centers in Jerusalem, etc. But to find the definite borders of these cultures represents an almost

⁴³ See Tertullian's famous *Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis? quid academiae et ecclesiae?* in *De praescriptione haereticorum* 7.9. I am indebted to Fr. Joseph Mueller, SJ, for having drawn my attention to Tertullian and this passage.

⁴⁴ For the idea of an extended Hellenism, see M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (trans. J. Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974); L. I. Levine, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998); J. Neusner, *Jerusalem and Athens: The Congruity of Talmudic and Classical Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 1997); G. E. Sterling, ed., *The Ancestral Philosophy: Hellenistic Philosophy in Second Temple Judaism; Essays of David Winston* (Providence, R.I.: Brown Judaic Studies, 2001).

⁴⁵ For the limits of Hellenization in ancient Palestine, see, for example, J. J. Collins and G. E. Sterling, eds., *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame, 2001) or L. H. Feldman, *Judaism and Hellenism Reconsidered* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

impossible enterprise. It is because of this reason, on the other hand, that the most appropriate investigation of the Hellenistic phenomenon should probably start from the fundamental elements of culture, from the particular symbols and terms and those individual persons or groups that assumed them. From this perspective, Hellenism was not distributed all over the Mediterranean world in a homogeneous way, but heterogeneously. Some symbols and terminologies circulated, others not, some were rejected, others completely assumed, some individual persons assumed and used certain Greek symbols and terminologies, others not. Thus, the modern reader discovers Aristobulus, Philo, and Josephus speaking Greek and assuming the whole Greek culture except its deities, but also encounters the author of Ben Sirah rebuffing the same Greek culture. The modern reader discovers Athenagoras, Clement, Origen, and the Cappadocians as part of the Greek culture and portraying their God with the linguistic and symbolic tools provided by Hellenistic philosophy and literature, though rejecting the polytheism of their neighbors, but also encounters Ephrem and Shenouda vitriolating the poison of Greek philosophy and culture.

In addition, it is often difficult to identify, afterwards, the origins of a certain term or symbol in order to affirm with certainty that it was Greek, Babylonian, Egyptian, or Jewish. There are, however, sometimes exceptions. It is probably the case of artificial languages, such as philosophical and scientific, where modern student can identify definite origins, since it is not difficult to realize that Aristotle's *to ti en einai*, *genos*, *ousia prota* and *ousia deutra* have no other than Greek origins.

H. Back to the Text and Context

Another significant distinction between the old and new history of religions schools is that the new school disclaimed the method of demythologization in textual exegesis and became more and more hermeneutical. Research becomes in this case an immersion within the world of motifs and symbols of the text as far as the interpreter is able to unbind himself from his own culture, historical context, or the way in which he views the world from the perspective of his intellectual and mental formation within that context. The role of the academic community, I believe, should be that of a strong arc of control of any exegetical derailment by pointing out both subjectivities and those objective cultural categories pertaining to the interpreter's culture and formation.

The new school of religions applies a historico-critical analysis without the commitment to Bultmann's principle of demythologization. Instead of that, the interpreter, according to the new school, has to make an effort to understand the mentality and hermeneutical principles of the social context in which the text was produced. His effort should constantly tend to a true *hermeneutical epoché* (similar to Husserl's phenomenological one), and consists in identifying and becoming aware of, and eliminating as much as possible those contemporary socio-cultural categories which might play a role in the exegetical process. In a way similar to the phenomenological motto *Back to things themselves*, I would propose a motto which may characterize the hermeneutical approach of the new school of the history of religions, namely *Back to the text and its context*. The interpreter should let the text and its context manifest and reveal themselves, and the interpreter should discover the hermeneutical principles of those times. In essence, this approach represents a cathartic process operated in the historico-

critical method and perhaps a restoration of this method, since I perceive the program of demythologization as a deviation from the authentic historico-critical method. Again, my approach will be a historico-critical one, where the idea of demythologization was purged from the list of methodological principles.

While the new school makes use of all genres of historical-critical analyses, the favorite type of investigation, especially of the Theophaneia school, is tradition-criticism. The first step towards an old text, I would say, cannot be that of finding out whether the content of the text is true or false. This process actually pertains to a second step, which is historical and doctrinal in its nature, and beyond my methodological intentions. To the contrary, the first step is that of understanding the text as much as possible within the categories of the context within which the text has been produced. The task of the hermeneut begins and ends here. Such questions as those raised by Reimarus (see his analysis on the historicity of the event of Transfiguration), Bultmann, Borg, or the members of Jesus Seminar are historical, not only hermeneutical in their nature.

My effort, therefore, will not be primarily a historico-scientific one, an investigation of the reality of the events described within the texts I will investigate, but a recovery and reconstruction of the network of meanings and symbols of those texts in their socio-cultural contexts. Of course, my research will be based on the invaluable efforts of the historians and archeologists who have recovered artifacts and of those who have offered the most plausible dating of the texts. Through its methods, the new school neither demythologizes nor mythologizes, but reconstructs mentalities and traditions of mentalities. Historical truth, although at first sight apparently disregarded and left in a second role, is still part of the greater intention of finding the truth. Historical data

function as marks in delineating the temporal and spatial contexts of the circulation of motifs and symbols. The search for truth still remains a thorough and rigorous investigation and a construction the limits of which the interpreter has to, or at least has to try to, be aware. The community of scholars—through their endorsements or rejections—gradually refines and improves the content of any theory advanced and, in this way, prevents hermeneutical reconstructions from becoming phantasmagorical and pure fancies. The hermeneutical effort becomes a theorizing enterprise in which the truth is mediated through a continuous approximation.

I. Not a Generic Definition of the Divine Anthropos

The last desideratum of this study will be to avoid uncritical generalizations and generic definitions. One of the most recent methodological discussions on the theme of defining apocalypticism represents a wonderful illustration of the method to be followed. In a schematic phrase, John J. Collins for instance, tried to encompass some emblematic features of every apocalypse:

[A] genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.⁴⁶

At the same time, we have to keep in mind Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar's statements: "[a] definition is not a prerequisite for historical studies, and might even prove to be an impediment," and "apocalyptic, too, is resistant to definition."⁴⁷ Collins' perspective is

46 Collins, "Introduction: Toward the Morphology of a Genre," in *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (ed. J. J. Collins; *Semeia* 14 [1979]: 1-19), 9; cf. *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (BRS; Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1998), 5. Cf. J. Carmignac, "Qu'est-ce que l'Apocalyptique: son emploi à Qumran," *RevQ.* 10:1 (1979): 3-33.

47 See E. J. C. Tigchelaar, "More on Apocalyptic and Apocalypses," *JSJ* 18:2 (1987): 137-144.

usually called the “generic” approach to apocalypses, and F. García-Martínez affirms that sometimes this approach manifests the weakness of being too general and ahistorical.⁴⁸

Punctual analyses should, therefore, replace generalizations. Accordingly, we may have a second methodological principle: *avoid uncritical generalization*.

There are two frequently used paradigms of generalization in the field of the history of religions, a realistic one, elaborated by Mircea Eliade, and a psychological one, advanced by Carl Gustav Jung. Both of them considered that similar religious events and symbols reflect deeper universal structures called archetypes. The difference between

See the Uppsala colloquium’s *religionsgeschichtlich* perspective on apocalypticism: D. Hellholm, ed., *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala, August 12-17, 1979* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1983).

48 See F. García-Martínez, “Encore l’Apocalyptique,” *JSJ* 17 (1986): 224-232. For supplementary bibliography, see W. Davies, ed., *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964); L. Rost, *Einleitung in der alttestamentlichen Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen einschliesslich der grossen Qumran-Handschriften* (Heidelberg: Quelle u. Meyer, 1971); K. Koch, *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic* (SBT 22; Naperville: Allenson, 1972); P. D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979); I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1980); T. F. Classon, “What is Apocalyptic?” *NTS* 27 (1981): 98-105; G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: An Historical and Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981); Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1982); J. J. Collins, “The Genre Apocalypse in Hellenistic Judaism,” in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (ed. D. Hellholm; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), 531-548; D. Hellholm, “The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre and the Apocalypse of John,” in Hellholm, *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean*, 13-64; M. McNamara, *Intertestamental Literature* (Wilmington, Del.: M. Glazier, 1983); M. Stone, “Apocalyptic Literature,” in Stone, *Jewish Writings*, 383-441; D. Aune, “The Apocalypse of John and Ancient Revelatory Literature,” in *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment* (ed. W. A. Meeks (LEC 8; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 226-252; H. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic: The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and of the Son of Man* (Neukirchen Vluyn: Neuchirchener Verlag, 1988); G. Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways Between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1998); J. J. Collins, “Genre, Ideology and Social Movements in Jewish Apocalypticism,” in *Mysteries and Revelations: Apocalyptic Studies since the Uppsala Colloquium* (eds. J. J. Collins and J. H. Charlesworth; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1991), 11-32; K. Müller, *Studien zur frühjüdischen Apokalyphtik* (SBA 11; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1991); D. Dimant, “Apocalyptic Texts at Qumran,” in *Community of the Renewed Covenant, the Notre Dame Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. E. Ulrich and J. VanderKam (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame, 1994), 175-91; S. Cook, *Prophecy and Apocalypticism: The Postexilic Social Settings* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995); F. Murphy, “Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (ed. L. E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 1-16; Paolo Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and Its History* (JSPSS 20; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); E. C. Tigchelaar, *Prophets of Old and the Day of the End: Zechariah, the Book of Watchers, and Apocalyptic* (OtSt 35; Leiden: Brill, 1996); C. Evans and P. Flint, eds. *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1997); S. Cook, *The Apocalyptic Literature* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2003).

Eliade and Jung is that between the realms in which they placed these archetypes. For Eliade, on the one hand, archetypes populate the mysterious realm of the sacred, in contradistinction to the realm of the profane, the everyday world as it is.⁴⁹ On the other hand, Jung situated the archetypes on the level of the collective unconscious.⁵⁰

A religious form of existence, however, may be better viewed as a matrix where a certain community develops various linguistic and symbolic games (in Wittgenstein's sense). From the perspective of a member of that particular community, religion is a framework of signs, words, and rules of their usage known by the members of that community. From his/her cultural perspective, the meanings of the symbols and words his/her community use cannot be perfectly translated. The word "sun", for instance, was present everywhere in Babylon, Egypt, ancient Greece, Hebrew Bible, and early Christianity. Nevertheless, beyond several semantic similarities, the meaning of the word "sun" and all the solar imageries developed in these cultures were far from being the same. Their meanings have to be found in the way Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Jews, and Christians used those words and images in their particular contexts of usage. It is most likely impossible to give a definition of the word "sun" acceptable in all these cultures.

A similar argument can be advanced even for Second Temple Judaism, early Christianity, and rabbinism. All three represent distinct religious forms of life and matrices of peculiar linguistic and symbolic games. Due to the diversity of manuscript

49 See, for instance, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (trans. W. R. Trask; New York, Harcourt, Brace: Jovanovich, 1959); *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (trans. W. R. Trask; New York: Pantheon Books, 1954).

50 See, for example, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (trans. R. F. C. Hull (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul; Princeton, NJ: University Press, 1959); *Four Archetypes: Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster* (trans. R. F. C. Hull; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969).

traditions, we cannot even say that they share the same sacred text. All these manuscript traditions were forged within different linguistic matrices and reflecting different rules of usage guided by distinct exegetical presuppositions and hermeneutical principles. Such central words as “image” (*tselem, eikon*), “glory” (*kabod, doxa*), and many others have different meanings when they take part in different linguistic games. For this reason, I would see even such traditions as *kabod*, Adam, and divine Anthropos not as chains of unchanged identical symbols and meanings, since early Christians re-shaped and re-semanticized the ancient Jewish images and terminologies in order to construe a message with new theological presuppositions. The sharp social scissions among the Christian and non-Christian Jewish communities, as well as those between later Christian and Jewish communities prove the radical semantic differences involved in the way these communities used these same words.⁵¹ In conclusion, the theme of the divine Anthropos cannot be investigated in the hope of reaching a final universal definition. To the contrary, the student of this expression should rather seek to discern its meanings in the various textual instances where this expression occurs and to examine the relationships among those instances.

⁵¹ New Testament writings and rabbinic texts alike testify to this reality. See, for example, D. Jaffé, *Le judaïsme et l'avènement du christianisme: Orthodoxie et hétérodoxie dans la littérature talmudique, Ier-IIe siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 2005); idem, *Le Talmud et les origines juives du christianisme* (Paris: Cerf, 2007). See also O. Limor and G. Stroumsa, eds., *Contra Iudaeos: Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996) and others.

PART ONE

THREE FIRST-CENTURY C.E. PHENOMENA: THE SON OF MAN, THE ARCHETYPAL ANTHROPOS, AND EIKONIC SOTERIOLOGY

As we will see in parts three to five of the present study, paschal Christology encompasses divine titles previously ascribed to the God of the Hebrew Bible and more generally to the divine characters distinguished in the Second Temple. Christ is the Yahweh Sabaoth, the King of the heavenly hosts, and the Lord of Glory. He is also the Son of Man, the Image of God, the Logos, and the Demiurge. Therefore, the first part of my research will highlight three fundamental religious phenomena in connection with the idea of the divine human-like figure, three phenomena which most likely emerged in the first century C.E. As early Christian paschal writings witness, these three phenomena had a substantial influence on the idea of the paschal Anthropos in the next century. The three phenomena are the emergence of the idea of the Son of Man as a divine soteriological and eschatological figure, the emergence of the archetypal Anthropos figure, and Paul's invention of eikonic soteriology.

I. THE FIRST-CENTURY BIRTH OF THE SON OF MAN

1. A Widespread Anthropomorphism in Ancient Israel and the Near East

Although anthropomorphism is not a universal feature of the Hebrew Bible, this ancestral religious view represents a frequent mark of the Holy Writ.¹ Encountered from

¹ For scholarship on anthropomorphism, see for example J. Hempel, "Die Grenzen des

the Indus Valley to the Italian Peninsula, from the Greek islands to the cultures of the Nile, anthropomorphism was also a momentous religious mode of thought for the ancient Near Eastern cultures, including Israel.²

2. Yahweh as King of Glory and Divine Warrior

As Carey C. Newman affirms, the idea of הוֹדִי *ot neve kcab krah ot sraeppa* כבוד pre-monarchic times, since the *Kabod* represents an instrumental sign of the divine presence not only in the Temple of Jerusalem, but also in various other instances related to the Exodus-Sinai-Wilderness experiences of ancient Israel:

- (1) God's הוֹדִי is instrumental in securing the release of the ancient Israelites from the Egyptians.
 (2) הוֹדִי, as a signifier of divine presence, is linked with Sinai. ... (3) In the Wilderness the

Anthropomorphismus Jahwes im Alten Testament," ZAW 57 (1939): 75-85; F. Michaeli, *Dieu à l'image de l'homme: Étude de la notion anthropomorphique de Dieu dans l'Ancient Testament* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux, 1950); E. Jacob, *Théologie de l'Ancien Testament* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux, 1955); J. Barr, "Theophany and Anthropomorphism in the Old Testament," *VTSup.* 7 (1960): 31-38; Joachim Oelsner, *Benennung und Funktion der Körperteile im hebräischen Alten Testament* (diss., Leipzig, 1960); M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press, 1972), 191-209; T. N. D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies* (ConBOT 18; Lund: Wallin & Dalholm, 1982); M. C. A. Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine* (Münster: UGARIT-Verlag, 1990), 87-590; H. Niehr, "In Search of YHWH's Cult Statue in the First Temple," in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. K. van der Toorn; Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 73-96.

² There are also many scholars who defend an opposite theory, namely that of an ancestral aniconism in Israel, having its roots in the ancient Near East, e.g., H. G. Kippenberg et al., eds., *Approaches to Iconology* (Leiden: Brill, 1985-1986); W. Dietrich and M. A. Klopfenstein, eds., *Ein Gott allein? JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht; Fribourg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, 1994); S. W. Holloway and L. K. Handy, eds., *The Pitcher Is Broken: Memorial Essays for Gösta W. Ahlström* (Sheffield, UK: Academic Press, 1995); T. N. D. Mettinger, *No Graven Image: Israelite Aniconism in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context* (ConBOT 42; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1995); Idem, "The Roots of Aniconism: An Israelite Phenomenon in Comparative Perspective," in *Congress Volume: Cambridge 1995* (ed. J. A. Emerton (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 219-234; Karel van der Toorn, ed., *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Louvain: Peeters, 1997); T. N. D. Mettinger, "JHWH-Statue oder Anikonismus im ersten Tempel? Gespräch mit meinen Gegnern," ZAW 117, no 4 (2005): 485-508; Y. Amit et al., eds., *Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context: A Tribute to Nadav Na'aman* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006). Mettinger, for instance, thinks that the Deuteronomistic school and Josianic reforms should be considered a "programmatic aniconism," and it should be distinguished from the "de facto aniconism," more tolerant, which characterized Israel's pre-exilic religious life.

appearance of יהוה כבוד signals judgment. (4) דובכ, both in and outside of “P,” is intimately connected with wilderness forms of worship (Tent, Ark, Tabernacle).³

Nevertheless, as several other scholars have noted, *kabod* theology represents the cardinal element of the Priestly tradition and the Jerusalem Temple cult.⁴ It is a commonplace that the feature of a luminous God will remain a central element in Jewish literature from the apocalyptic writings to Qumran literature, to rabbinic mysticism. Likewise, we will see in the present study that the expectation of the divine light, especially of the eschatological Savior, represents a central feature of both Jewish Passover and Christian paschal theologies. One may consequently affirm that paschal theology is essentially a *kabod* theology.

At the same time, as scholars have already observed, the Hebrew Bible represents Yahweh as a Divine Warrior fighting the Sea or Israel’s enemies. In the fourth chapter I will consider this subject at length and its deep connections with the paschal Christ who fights and defeats death.

³ Newman, *Paul’s Glory-Christology*, 38-39. The origins of this expression remain obscure since, as Newman also observes, “In Ras Shamra texts, laaB htiw detacolloc reven si כבוד-Hadad, never appears in theophanic context, and has no semantic overlaps with יהוה דובכ.” Ibid., 38. However, the idea of divine luminosity is almost everywhere present in the ancient Near East and even beyond the boundaries of the ancient Near East, in the ancient Hindu, Greek, Germanic, and many other cultures. See, for instance, M. Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (trans. R. Sheed; London: Sheed and Ward, 1971), 124-153; or Idem, “Experiences of the Mystic Light,” in his *Mephistopheles and the Androgyne: Studies in Religious Myth and Symbol* (trans. J. M. Cohen; New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965), 19-77.

⁴ E.g., G. von Rad, “Deuteronomy’s ‘Name’ Theology and the Priestly Document’s ‘Kabod’ Theology,” *Studies in Deuteronomy* (SBT 9; Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953), 37-44; R. Rendtorff, “The Concept of Revelation in Ancient Israel,” in *Revelation as History* (eds. W. Pannenberg et al.; New York: MacMillan, 1968), 25-53; J. G. McConville, “God’s ‘Name’ and God’s ‘Glory,’” *TynBul* 30 (1979): 149-63; T. N.D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies* (Lund: CWK. Gleerup, 1982). See also Newman, *Paul’s Glory-Christology*, for further bibliography.

3. The Ancient of Days, the Son of Man, and Their Human Likeness

The 7:9 מַלְאֲכֵי (”syad ni decnavda eno” .til “,syad fo tneicnA eht”) naD fo יְמִי The is a unique expression of the Hebrew Bible and denotes the highest heavenly figure “enthroned in the assembly of the angels, analogous to an ancient king who is surrounded by his retinue.”⁵ Portrayed in lines reminiscent of Ezekiel 1 and 10, as a figure of resplendent brilliance endowed with a wheeled throne generating a stream of flames and presiding over the judgment, the character no doubt reflects the God of Israel. With the exceptions of Jepheth ibn Ali, who identified this figure with an angel, and Ibn Ezra, who equated it with Michael, the other commentators have generally identified it with Yahweh.⁶ The significant aspect for our discussion, however, is reflected in the depiction of its anthropomorphic appearance:

I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him; thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; the court sat, and the books were opened.⁷

Nevertheless, the Danielic narrative continues with a new element which makes it remarkable among the texts of the Hebrew Bible, namely the appearance of a second humanlike figure, called the “one like the son of man.” The case of this second figure is no doubt more difficult than the previous one since there is no scholarly agreement about what concerns either the origin or the meaning of this enigmatic character. Regarding its origin, scholars have proposed roots varying from Babylonian, to Egyptian, to Iranian, to

⁵ Cf. A. J. Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel Seven* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrew University Press, 1979), 150.

⁶ A. Lacocque, *Le Livre de Daniel* (CAT 15b; Neuchatel and Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1976), 104.

⁷ Dan 7:9-10.

Hellenistic, to Gnostic, to Ugaritic, to Hebrew internal developments.⁸ Likewise, its meaning also remains a matter of debate. The Danielic portrait follows in this way:

I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man (שֶׁנֶאֱמַר בְּנֵי אָדָם; ὁ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου) was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.⁹

As Sabino Chialà observes, the expression *ben 'adam* (“son of man”) seems to have three distinct meanings in the various Hebrew writings. In Jeremiah, Isaiah, Psalms, Numbers, Job, Qumran Community Rule, and some other instances, its meaning is simply that of “man,” “human being,” the expression representing a narrative device of embellishing and accentuating someone’s human nature and its fragile status before God.¹⁰ In some other texts, especially in Ezekiel, almost a hundred times, then in *1 Enoch* 60:10, and *Apocalypse of Elijah* 1:1, the expression denotes a special designation, a sort of sacral title which God applies only to a particular person, his prophet.¹¹ However, the most interesting case is Daniel 7 and 10, where the expression “one like the son of man” refers to a heavenly character who steps in front of the heavenly throne.¹² By using the particle “like” (כִּי-וְכֵן), the author intends to emphasize at the same time the similarity and dissimilarity of this figure with that of a human being.

⁸ Ferch, *The Son of Man*, 105-106. For a detailed discussion, see Ferch’s whole chapter 2 of his *The Son of Man*, 40-107.

⁹ Dan 7:13-14.

¹⁰ Chialà, “The Son of Man: The Evolution of an Expression,” in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of God: Revisiting the Book of Parables* (ed. G. Boccaccini; Grand Rapids, Mich; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2007), 153-178, esp. 155. See Jer. 49:18, 33; 50:40; 51:43; Isa. 51:12; 56:2; Pss. 8:5; 80:18; 146:3; (cf. Ps 144:3); Num. 23:19; Job 16:21; 25:6; 35:8; 1QS 11:20-21.

¹¹ Ibid, 155-156.

¹² As Ferch shows, the expression שֶׁנֶאֱמַר בְּנֵי אָדָם “one like a man,” “one like a human being,” “one who resembles a human being,” or “one in human likeness”; see Ferch, *The Son of Man*, 183.

Three elements are essential for our investigation. First, the “one like the son of man” has a human-like figure, but he is not yet the Son of Man. Second, as certain divine attributes are predicated of this figure, one may suppose that it represents a second divine figure or power in heaven.¹³ Third, there are also elements which unveil similarities with the famous scenario of the combat myth, and therefore the character may well be seen as a divine warrior figure.¹⁴ While Arthur J. Ferch’s book demonstrates in fact the first two points, Angels argues for the third one.

The Danielic “one like the son of man” takes on important functions. In particular, he receives dominion, glory, and kingship, most likely derived from his Divine Warrior status. In addition, as Divine Warrior he is expected to save his people.¹⁵ These functions along with the ontological status of a second glorious divinity will constitute

¹³ There are some attributes also recalling the Ezekielean features of the enthroned glorious figure from Ezek 1:26-28, including the same language of imprecision in Ezek 1:26: “a figure like that of a man” (דמות כמראה אדם; ὁμοίωμα ὡς εἶδος ἀνθρώπου). Ferch sees it as a celestial being higher than an angel and lower than the Ancient of Days (cf. Ferch, *The Son of Man*, 174). Andrew Angels argues that it is not an angel and “it is hard to conceive of what other sort of celestial being he might be;” cf. A. R. Angels, *Chaos and the Son of Man: The Hebrew Chaotkampf Tradition in the Period 515 BCE to 200 CE* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 106. Angels explains on the same page that the Son of Man cannot be an angelic figure as several scholars proposed—e.g., Nathaniel Schmidt, “‘The Son of Man’ in the Book of Daniel,” *JBL* 19 (1900): 22-28; J. A. Emerton, “The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery,” *JTS* 9 (1958): 225-242; esp. 238-242; J. Day, *God’s Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1985), 167-177—since the rider of the clouds represents an ancient Near Eastern divine title. Cf. Ferch, *The Son of Man*, 171, for the image of the theophanic cloud, and also 174: “Indeed, the manlike being is depicted with divine attributes, while at the same time accepting a subordinate role in the presence of the Ancient of Days.” Cf. M. Casey, *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (London : SPCK, 1979); idem, *The Solution to the ‘Son of Man’ Problem* (London ; New York : T & T Clark, c2007).

¹⁴ See for instance Angels, *Chaos*, 99-114.

¹⁵ Nevertheless, in Dan 7:26—the verse which describes the destruction of the last king who suppressed the saints of the Most High (possibly the one like the son of man, as Dan 7:22 seems to distinguish the Ancient of Days from the Most High)—is not clear enough which of the two divine characters is the author of this destruction: “But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever.” According to the internal logic of the combat myth, however, it is expected that the Divine Warrior figure (therefore the one like the son of man) would fight, destroy the evil enemy, and save his divine people or human subjects. See R. J. Clifford, “Cosmogonies in the Ugaritic Texts and in the Bible,” *Or.* 53/2 (1984): 183–201; idem, *Creation Accounts in the Ancient Near East and in the Bible* (Washington DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 1994), 82–93.

constant features of the future Son of Man figures. However, it is not yet the figure of an eschatological judge.¹⁶

According to Sabino Chialà, we should distinguish between the Danielic vague designation “one like the son of man” and the clear title “Son of Man,” which appears for the first time in the Enochic *Book of Parables* (*1 En* 46-48), a text most likely produced in the first century C.E. and highly indebted to Daniel 7 and 10. This distinction would reflect an essential evolution from a fuzzy heavenly figure to a well-contoured second divine character:¹⁷

There I saw one who had a head of days, and his head was like white wool. And with him was another, whose face was like the appearance of a man; and his face was full of graciousness like one of the holy angels. And I asked the angel of peace, who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, about that son of man (*walda sab*’)—who he was and whence he was (and) why he went with the Head of Days. And he answered me and said to me, “This is the son of man (*walda sab*’) who has righteousness ...”¹⁸

The following verses depict the Son of Man fighting evil and unjust people like a real Divine Warrior—in fact taking over this function from the Yahweh of the prophets—and saving his people.¹⁹ Moreover, it is also in the *Book of Parables* that, for the first time in Jewish literature, God transfers his function of judge to a different character, a fact that strongly underlines the importance of the newly emerged figure of the Son of Man. This transfer is never done in the Hebrew Bible.²⁰ In addition to this, Chialà makes the observation that the first-century C.E. witnesses not only the emergence of the figure

¹⁶ Ferch, *The Son of Man*, 177: “The Danielic figure is never described as judge or one who is judged.”

¹⁷ Angels, *Chaos*, 159-163. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam date the *Book of Parables* “sometime around the turn of the era;” cf. George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch: A New Translation based on the Hermeneia Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 6.

¹⁸ *1 En* 46:1-3. Trans. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 59-60.

¹⁹ E.g., *1 En* 48:7: “For in his name they are saved, and he is the vindicator of their lives.” Trans. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 62.

²⁰ Chialà, “The Son of Man,” 161. Cf. J. J. Collins, “The Son of Man in First-Century Judaism,” *NTS* 36 (1992): 448-66.

of the Son of Man in *1 Enoch*, but also the emergence of this character, first of all in the Gospels, in Acts, Revelation 1 and 14, then in 2 (Syriac) *Baruch*, and 4 *Ezra* 13.²¹

Frequently in these texts, the fundamental attributes of the Son of Man are his glorious human likeness and his functions of Savior, Judge, and Divine Warrior. These theological features will constitute a preeminent mark for the later Christian documents spanning from Paul to the paschal writings from Melito to Origen.

II. REVISITING THE MYTH OF THE HEAVENLY ANTHROPOS: THE FIRST-CENTURY BIRTH OF ARCHETYPAL ANTHROPOS SPECULATIONS

We are engaging now one of the most intriguing themes of Late Antiquity, usually called the divine Anthropos or the heavenly Anthropos. Many scholars have previously analyzed this theme. The result has been a variety of theories regarding the origin of the idea of a heavenly Anthropos present in the Hermetic and Gnostic documents. On the one hand, modern scholarship, especially the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, flourishing at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, considered that the origin of the idea of divine Anthropos (which represents the Greek word for “man”) should be traced back to Iranian mythology, the mythic figure Gayomart among the first being mentioned.²² On the other hand, modern scholarship has undertaken a revision of

²¹ For a detailed discussion of the Danielic influence in early Jewish and Christian literature, see B. E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

²² E.g., R. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres: Studien zur griechisch-ägyptischen und frühchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1904); W. Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* (1907; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1973); Reitzenstein, *Das iranische Erlösungsmysterium*; J. Jeremias, „Adam,“ *TWNT* 1 (1933); Widengren, *The Great Vohu Manah*; H. Schlier, *Die Zeit der Kirche: Exegetische Aufsätze und Vorträge* (Freiburg: Herder, 1956); R. Bultmann, “Adam und Christus nach Römer 5,“ *ZNW* 50 (1959): 145-165.

this position, and ascribed the origins of the idea to Jewish biblical and extra-biblical traditions.²³ The second position comes from the new school of the history of religions.

In my opinion, however, the position maintained by the new school, too, needs some further revision. First, there is not a unique figure and concept of heavenly Man, and one cannot place the Son of Man passages from *1 Enoch* 48 and 62, the multifaceted types of anthropomorphic characters in *2 Enoch* 30, Philo, *Testament of Abraham* 11-13, *Pesikta Rabbati* 48, *Shi'ur Qomah*, or materials from the Kabbala under the same umbrella with the Hermetic and Gnostic Anthropos figures.²⁴ Although all these documents describe an anthropomorphic character, or sometimes merely an anthropomorphic form, all these denoted objects differ much from each other in nature, ontological status, and the functions ascribed to each of them. If some texts describe the Son of Man, other materials portray a primordial luminous or angelic Adam, and others simply an abstract noetic human form. They are consequently different either in terms of ontological status—varying from divine or angelic figures to noetic paradigms—or in

²³ Colpe, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Schule*; Idem, “ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,”; Schenke, *Der Gott "Mensch"*; idem, “Die neutestamentische Christologie und der gnostische Erlöser,” in *Gnosis und Neues Testament*, ed. Karl-Wolfgang Tröger (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1973), 205-29; G. Quispel, “Der gnostische Anthropos und die jüdische Tradition,” *ErJb* 22 (1953): 195-234; B. A. Pearson, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians* (SBLDS 12; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1973); M. Tardieu, *Trois mythes gnostiques: Adam, Éros et les animaux d'Égypte dans un écrit de Nag Hammadi (II,5)* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1974), 86-139; A. F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1977); K. M. Fischer, “Adam und Christus: Überlegungen zu einem religionsgeschichtlichen Problem,” in *Altes Testament, Frühjudentum, Gnosis: Neue Studien zu "Gnosis und Bibel"* (ed. K.-W. Tröger; Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 1980), 283-98; C. K. Barrett, “The Significance of the Adam-Christ Typology for the Resurrection of the Dead,” in *Résurrection du Christ et des chrétiens (I Co 15)* (ed. L. De Lorenzi; Rome: Abbaye de S. Paul, 1985), 99-122; J. E. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1985); idem, *The Image of the Invisible God: Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christology* (Freiburg, Schweiz : Universitätsverlag; Göttingen : Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995).

²⁴ This methodology was uncritically used not only by the representatives of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, but also by some key representatives of the new school, e.g., G. Quispel, “Ezekiel 1:26 in Jewish Mysticism and Gnosis,” *VC* 34 (1980): 1-13; G. G. Stroumsa, “Form(s) of God: Some Notes on Metatron and Christ,” *HTR* 76:3 (1983): 269-288; J. Fossum, “The Heavenly Man,” in his *The Name of God*, 266-291.

terms of the functions and roles they play in creation or the history of salvation. A more appropriate perspective should distinguish therefore among the varieties of anthropomorphic figures and, whenever possible, among their historical evolutions and the theological and philosophical rationales which made a certain author adopt one particular position and conception.

Finally, what remains of the myth of the heavenly Man? The common feature is the archetypal Anthropos, the paradigm according to which humanity was created, although this archetypal Anthropos may be conceived as Philo's Logos or the concept of noetic anthropos, the Pauline heavenly Anthropos, the Hermetic Anthropos, or the Gnostic Adam/Adamas. In all these instances we discover variations on the theme of divine Image and a diversity of hermeneutical perspectives on Genesis 1:27. There are most likely two distinct lines of this *Wirkungsgeschichte*, one exalting the prelapsarian Adam to the condition of a luminous being (from Ezek 28 to DSS, *T.Abr.*, and many mystical Christian and rabbinic texts of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, such as the hekhaloth literature, etc.), the other hypostasizing and ascribing a demiurgic function and sometimes even a soteriological function to the Divine Image (from Philo to Paul, to the Hermetic Corpus, to Gnosticism, to such paschal texts as those ascribed to Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, the Cappadocians, and others). The two lines are already synthesized in Pauline, Hermetic, and Gnostic materials, and paschal writings will continue this synthesized formula, as we see in the following pages.²⁵

²⁵ This synthesis also comes out in various documents which preserve the Jewish tradition according to which the angels of heaven were commanded at the beginning of time to worship Adam, the image of God; e.g., 2 *En* 22; *Vita* 15-16; Heb 1:6; *Gospel of Bartholomew* 4:52-60; *SibOr* 8:442-445; *Gen. Rab.* 8:10; *Eccl. Rab.* 6:9:1; *Bereshith Rabbati* 24f.; *Pirke de R. Eliezer* 11-12; *ApSedr* 5:1-2; 3 *Slav Bar*; *Conflict of Adam and Eve* 7.

1. The Luminous Adam of Second Temple Literature

I would start my investigation of the first tradition with Ezekiel 28:12-17, a text which alludes by way of analogy and metaphor to an Adam curiously portrayed along glorious lines:

Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "You had the seal of perfection (תִּינַכְתָּ מְחֻוָּה), full of wisdom and perfect in beauty (יָפִי לִילְכוֹ). You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you. By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty (יָפִיכָה); you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor (דָּתַעְפִּי).'²⁶

Most likely, the text represents one of the most (if not *the* most) ancient evidences for the tradition which exalts the prelapsarian Adam. Although the account starts with a description of the king of Tyre, the narrative register changes to a context in which it is almost impossible to place this character, namely Eden. To the contrary, it would be more logical to associate the garden of Eden with Adam. The text, however, continues with a portrait of a highly exalted figure, which God placed on his holy mountain and arrayed with beauty, splendor, and precious stones.

Various Dead Sea manuscripts testify to the circulation of the idea that Adam's original condition was glorious and angelic/divine already in the second century BC, if one takes into account the text of the *Words of the Heavenly Lights* (4QDibHam (4Q504,

²⁶ See also D. E. Callender, "The Primal Man in Ezekiel and the Image of God," *SBLSP* (1998): 606-625, who argues that the MT term *hôtēm toknît* from verse 12 should be emended to *hôtām tabnît* (seal of likeness, seal of resemblance), an expression which is equivalent to the *selem* and *demut* of Gen 1:26.

506).²⁷ Fragment 8, recto of 4Q504, for example reads: “[...Adam,] our [fat]her, you fashioned in the image of [your] glory ([...כבוד בדמות יצרתה...] [... the breath of life] you [b]lew into his nostril, and intelligence and knowledge.”²⁸ It should be noticed that the two anthropologies of Genesis 1:26 and 2:7 are already synthesized at this time. The image of the glorious Adam is also present in the *Community Rule*, usually dated around 100 B.C.: “For those God has chosen for an everlasting covenant and to them shall belong all the glory of Adam (וכל כבוד אדם).”²⁹ An almost similar expression comes out in the *Damascus Document*, a text emerging most likely in the same period: “Those who remained steadfast in it will acquire eternal life, and all the glory of Adam (וכל כבוד אדם) is for them.”³⁰ These texts inspired Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis’s monograph *All the Glory of Adam*, which argues, in its general lines, for the thesis of a glorious prelapsarian Adam at Qumran.³¹

Two other texts significant for our discussion are the *Life of Adam and Eve* and its Greek version entitled the *Apocalypse of Moses*. Especially the passage *ApMos* 20-21 reflects the aforementioned tradition:

And I [Eve] wept saying, “Why have you done this to me, that I have been estranged from my glory (ἀπηλλοτριώθην ἐκ τῆς δόξης μου) with which I was clothed (ἤμην ἐνδεδυμένη)? ... And when your father came, I [Eve] spoke to him unlawful words of transgression such as brought us down from great glory (κατήγαγον ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ μεγάλης δόξης). ... “Come, my lord Adam, listen to me and eat of the fruit of the tree of which God told us not to eat from it, and you shall be as

²⁷ The earliest copy is paleographically dated around 150 B.C. (DJD 7:137). Cf. E. G. Chazon, “Is *Divrei Ha-me’orot* a Sectarian Prayer?” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research* (eds. D. Dimant and U. Rappaport; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 1-17; D. K. Falk, “Qumran Prayer Texts and the Temple,” in *Sapiential, Liturgical and Poetical Texts from Qumran* (eds. D. K. Falk et al.; STDJ 35; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 106-126.

²⁸ 4Q504 i 4-5, in F. Garcia Martinez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Leiden-Boston-Cologne: Brill, 1998), 1008-1009.

²⁹ Ibid., 1QS iv 22-23, 78-79.

³⁰ Ibid., CD iii (= 4Q269 2) 20, 554-555.

³¹ See C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 42; Leiden: Brill, 2002), esp. 88-135.

God (ὡς θεός; cf. LXX).” ... [Adam to Eve:] “You have estranged me from the glory of God (ἀπηλλοτριώσας με ἐκ τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ χριστοῦ).”³²

The text portrays Adam as a quasi-angelic being endowed from the first moment of his creation with a special status, namely that of bearing the image of God.³³

The *Testament of Abraham*, a Jewish text of the first or second century C.E., recalls a similar tradition of the primordial luminous Adam. The shorter version of the testament presents the following vision of Isaac, where an enigmatic figure appears:

And Isaac answered his father, “I saw the sun and the moon in my dream. And there was a crown upon my head, and there was an enormous man (ἄνῆρ παμμεγέθης), shining exceedingly from heaven (λίαν λάμπων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ), as (the) light which is called father of light (ὡς φῶς, καλούμενος πατήρ τοῦ φωτός). ... And that radiant man (ὁ φωτεινὸς ἄνῆρ) When the radiant man (ὁ φωτεινὸς ἄνθρωπος)”³⁴

32 *ApMos* 20-21; in J. Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve in Greek: A Critical Edition* (PVTG 6; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 144-146. Trans. M. D. Johnson *OTP* 2: 281. De Jonge and Tromp consider the Greek life as the earliest version of all the five versions: Marinus de Jonge and Johhanes Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 11. The idea that the fall actually represented the loss of glorious garments recurs only in the Armenian version, [44](20)1: “At that hour I learned with my eyes that I was naked of the glory with which I had been clothed.” See G. A. Anderson and M. E. Stone, *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve* (SBLEJL 5; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 46-47. For literature on the *Life of Adam and Eve* (LAE), see e.g. M. Stone, *Armenian Apocrypha Relating to Adam and Eve* (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1996); G. Anderson, M. Stone, and J. Tromp, *Literature on Adam and Eve: Collected Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 2000); John R. Levison, *Texts in Transition: The Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (Atlanta, Ga: SBL, 2000).

33 See *Vita* 14-15. For the idea that Adam functioned as Yahweh’s statue or icon for the angels, see e.g. G. Anderson, “The Exaltation of Adam and the Fall of Satan,” in *Literature on Adam and Eve: Collected Essays* (ed. G. Anderson et al.; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000), 83–110; P. Schäfer, *Rivalität zwischen Engeln und Menschen: Untersuchungen zur Rabbinischen Engelvorstellung* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975); J. P. Schultz, “Angelic Opposition to the Ascension of Moses and the Revelation of the Law,” *JQR* 61 (1970/1971) 282–307; A. Marmorstein, “Controversies Between the Angels and the Creator,” *Melilah* 3–4 (1950) 93–102 (in Hebrew); S. Bunta, “The Mēsu-Tree and the Animal Inside: Theomorphism and Theriomorphism in Daniel 4,” in Lourie and Orlov, *The Theophania School*, 364-384. While in the *Vita* 15-16 and *ApSedr* 5 angels of heaven are commanded to worship the image of God in Adam, *3 Bar Gr* 4:16 mentions Adam’s garments of glory, while *ApSedr* 7:7 affirms that Adam had the luminosity of the sun.

³⁴ *TAbr* [B] 7:5-14 (F. Schmidt, *Le Testament grec d’Abraham* [TSAJ 11; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1986], 60-62). Trans. E. P. Sanders, in *OTP* 1:898. Cf. D. Allison, Jr., *The Testament of Abraham* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003). The same idea can be seen in the Slavonic text (*TAbr* 7:5-14), as one can see in D. S. Cooper’s and H. B. Weber’s translation, “The Church Slavonic Testament of Abraham,” in *Studies on the Testament of Abraham* (ed. G. W. E. Nickelsburg; Missoula, Minn: Scholars Press, 1976), 310-326, esp. 316-318. Likewise, the Coptic text (*TAbr* 8), in G. MacRae’s translation, “The Coptic Testament of Abraham,” in *Studies on the Testament of Abraham*, 327-338, esp. 335. For the Romanian text, see N. Roddy, *The Romanian Version of the Testament of Abraham: Text, Translation, and Cultural Context* (EJL 19; Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2001). For the Bohairic, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions translated into French, see M. Delcor, *Le Testament d’Abraham* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 216 (*TAbr* 5; Ethiopic). Cf. M. Stone, *The Testament of Abraham: The Greek Recensions* (New York: SBL, 1972).

The text, therefore, clearly talks about a heavenly luminous Anthropos of enormous dimensions and called the “father of light.” As we will further see, Michael will take Abraham, let him contemplate the Man from heaven, and call him the first-formed Adam.

The longer version offers a few more details about this enigmatic figure:

And while I was thus watching and exulting at these things, I saw heaven opened, and I saw a light-bearing man (ἄνδρα φωτοφόρον) coming down out of heaven (ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατελθόντα), flashing (beams of light) more than seven suns. And the sunlike man (ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἡλιόμορφος) And the light-bearing man who came down from heaven, this is the one sent from God, who is about to take your righteous soul from you.³⁵

Unlike Isaac, who has the vision of the heavenly Man in an oneiric condition and the glorious Adam descends to him, Abraham ascends to heaven and sees the protopater on his throne. It is there, in front of the throne, that Michael discloses Adam’s identity to Abraham:

And between the two gates there sat a man (ἄνθρωπος) upon a throne of great glory (ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης μεγάλης). And a multitude of angels encircled him. ... These are the (gates) which lead to life and to destruction, and this man (ἄνθρωπος) who is sitting between them, this is Adam, the first man whom God formed (ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος ὃν ἐπλασεν ὁ θεός).³⁶

Likewise, 2 (*Slavonic*) *Enoch* depicts Adam as an angelic glorious being of gigantic size:

³⁵ *TAbr* [A] 7:3-8 (TSAJ 11:114-116). Trans. E. P. Sanders, in *OTP* 1:885.

³⁶ *TAbr* [B] 8:5-12 (TSAJ 11:64-66). Trans. E. P. Sanders, in *OTP* 1:899. Cf. *TAbr* [A] 11:4-9 (TSAJ 11:128-130): “And the appearance of that man was terrifying (ἰδέα τοῦ ἀνδρός ἐκείνου φοβερά), like the Master’s (ὁμοία τοῦ δεσπότου). ... Then Abraham asked the Commander-in-chief (ἀρχιστράτηγον), ‘My lord Commander-in-chief, who is this most wonderful man (ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ πανθαύμαστος), who is adorned in such glory (ὁ ἐν τοιαύτῃ δόξῃ κοσμούμενος), and sometimes he cries and wails while other times he rejoices and exults?’ The incorporeal one (ἄσώματος ἢ ἀρχιστράτηγος) said, ‘This is the first-formed Adam (ὁ πρωτόπλαστος Ἀδάμ) who is in such glory (κάθεται ὡς ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ δόξῃ), and he looks at the world, since everyone has come from him.’” Trans. E. P. Sanders, in *OTP* 1:888. It should be mentioned that two manuscripts (I-Ankara and G-Istanbul) have ἰδέα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου instead of ἰδέα τοῦ ἀνδρός (TSAJ 11:129). The fact is highly remarkable as it recalls even more powerfully the Ezekielian model of the text, namely LXX Ezek 1:26: ὁμοίωμα ὡς εἶδος ἀνθρώπου. All versions include, as well, a second luminous character, to whom God entrusted the final judgement. While this character is Abel in Greek, Slavonic, and Romanian versions, the Coptic, Ethiopic, and Arabic have Enoch as the emblem of divine justice.

And on the earth I assigned him to be a second angel (αγγελος ἑτερος), honored and great and glorious (εὐδοκῆς). And I assigned him to be a king (βασιλεως), to reign on the earth, and to have my wisdom. And there was nothing comparable to him on the earth, even among my creatures that exist. And I assigned to him a name from the four components: from East – (Α), from West – (Δ), from North – (Α), from South – (Μ).³⁷

As scholars have already noticed, the four cardinal points refer to Adam's gigantic dimensions.³⁸ The author intends thus to ascribe a divine stature to the protopater. It is also fascinating to observe that certain traits of the luminous Anthropos theme are already present in the third book of the *Sibylline Oracles*, in a fragment that might date from the second century B.C.E.: "Indeed it is God himself who fashioned Adam, of four letters, the first-formed man, fulfilling by his name east and west and south and north."³⁹

2. Philo and the Invention of the Two Adams

The second tradition of the heavenly Anthropos has a different development since it is not the product of exaltation, but of a process of hypostasizing the Genesis 1:27 concept of the Divine Image. Philo sometimes identifies God's Divine Image with the Divine Logos and entitles it a few times "Anthropos." In fact, I have found two instances in which Philo defines the Logos as Anthropos. It is worth mentioning that, in both cases, the Logos is defined as Anthropos in connection with his Father and there is no connection with Adam:

³⁷ 2 En [J] 30:11-13 (Sokolov 11:60-64, p. 30; in M. I. Sokolov, « Materialy i zametki po starinnoi slavyanskoi literature, » Vyp. 3, VII : *Slavyanskaya kniga Enokha: Tekst' s' latinskim' perevodom*, in *Chtenia v' obshchestve istorii i drevnostei Rossiiskikh [COIDR]* 4 [1899], 1-80). Trans. F. I. Andersen, *OTP* 1:152.

³⁸ See, for instance, A. A. Orlov, "'Without Measure and without Analogy:' Shiur Qomah Traditions in 2 (Slavonic) Enoch," *JJS* 56 (2005): 224-244, esp. 231.

³⁹ *SibOr* 3:24-26. Trans. J. J. Collins, *OTP* 1:362. Collins avers that verses 1-45 of the third book might be produced in the Egyptian Jewish context of the second century B.C.E. (*ibid.*, 1:360).

How should you not hate war and love peace—you who have enrolled yourselves as children of one and the same Father, who is not mortal but immortal—God’s man (ἄνθρωπον θεοῦ), who, being the Word of the Eternal (τοῦ αἰδίου λόγος) must needs himself be imperishable?⁴⁰

In a different passage from the same book, Philo describes the Logos through a new series of attributes, God’s Image and Anthropos being among them: “And many names are his, for he is called ‘the Beginning’ (ἀρχή), and the Name of God (ὄνομα θεοῦ), and His Word, and Man after His Image (ὁ κατ’ εἰκόνα ἄνθρωπος), and he that sees (ὁ ὁρῶν), that is, Israel.”⁴¹

This idea is also not far from the Logos’ title of πῦρ τεχνικόν, Demiurgic Fire, and its pneumatic nature. As John Dillon specifies, these titles should not only be taken as mere metaphors, although they sometimes are, but keep in mind that Philo conceives of the Logos not much differently than the Stoics do, namely, as a demiurgic, substantial, and active fire present everywhere in the universe, and not as a pure abstraction.⁴² As Dillon concludes:

In conclusion, it is my contention that, for Philo, as part of his heritage of Antiochian Platonism, the substance of not only the immanent Logos and the individual intellect, which are not perceptible to our senses, but also the heavenly bodies, which are, superficially at least, accessible to our vision, can be properly described as ‘incorporeal’, by contrast with the corporeality of

⁴⁰ *Conf.* 41 (LCL Philo 4:32). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 33.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 146 (LCL Philo 4:144-146): Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 145-147. I am also inclined to see a discourse about the Logos in the following ambiguous passage, which might be either about the Logos or about Adam, namely *Conf.* 62-63 (LCL Philo 4:44): “I have heard also an oracle from the lips of one of the disciples of Moses, which runs thus: ‘Behold a man (ἄνθρωπος) whose name is the rising (ἀνατολή)’ (Zech 6:12), strangest of titles, surely, if you suppose that a being composed of soul and body is here described. But if you suppose that it is that Incorporeal one (τὸν ἀσώματον), who differs not a whit from the divine image (θείας εἰκόνης), you will agree that the name of ‘rising (ἀνατολῆς)’ assigned to him quite truly describes him. For that man (τοῦτον) is the eldest son (πρεσβύτατον υἱόν), whom the Father of all raised up, and elsewhere calls him His first-born, and indeed the Son thus begotten followed (μιμούμενος) the ways of his Father, and shaped the different kinds (εὐμόρφου τὰ εἶδη), looking to the archetypal patterns (παραδείγματα ἀρχέτυπα) which the Father supplied.” Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 45. The text seems to ascribe to the Logos the capacity of fashioning the ideas according to the paradigms the Father previously created. These εἶδη may primarily refer to the noetic world which is located within the Logos, but one may also presume that they refer to the species of the things belonging to the visible universe. Likewise, such titles as the “son of God” and the “first-born of God” may constitute into a supplementary argument for the idea that the whole passage is one about the Logos and not about Adam.

⁴² Dillon, “*Asōmatos*: Nuances of Incorporeality in Philo,” in *Philon d’Alexandrie et le langage de la philosophie*, (eds. C. Lévy and B. Besnier; Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 1998), 99-110.

sublunar beings, while also being composed of pure fire or *pneuma*. This can be seen as a piece of muddle-headedness, and as a compromise with Stoic materialism, but it can also—more profitably in my view—be seen as an indication that the boundary between the corporeal and the incorporeal was not drawn by many ancient thinkers where we might think it should be drawn.⁴³

This type of refined thought about the various degrees of materiality and immateriality will be also present, as we will see in the next part of this study, in Irenaeus, Clement, Tertullian, and Origen. Regarding the sources of the Philonian Anthropos, one may see that these passages recall those lines of the Hebrew Bible which ascribe the title “Anthropos” to a divine figure, namely Ezek 1:26: “a figure like that of a man” (אָהָרָם דָּמוּת; ὡς εἶδος ἀνθρώπου) and Dan 7:13: “one like a Son of Man” (שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר; ὅς ἐστις ἀνθρώπου). A very complex notion, Philo’s concept of Logos may also be connected with Ezekiel and Daniel in terms of ontological condition, as all of them represent a second power in heaven. But Philo’s definitions of the Logos are also suffused with both Greek philosophical terminologies and biblical titles. As the second principle after God, the Logos is the first-born Son of God (*Som.* 1.215), the Image of God par excellence, a second God (*Quaest. in Gen.* 2.62), and the “firstborn Word, the eldest of his angels, as the great archangel of many names” (*Conf.* 146). His nature, therefore, is one at the confines between divinity and angelic condition, or between God’s uncreated essence and creation (*Quis Her.* 205-206).

Because the figure of the “one like the son of man” in Daniel 7:13 is defined through divine titles, the condition of monotheism becomes at least ambiguous, if not directly challenged. The same ambiguity and challenge appears in Philo’s very descriptions of the Logos and the titles he ascribes to the Logos, a heavenly figure on the border between divine and angelic status. As a divine/angelic mediator, however, the

⁴³ Ibid., 109-110.

Logos is also endowed with an important role in the creation process. These particular aspects—namely, divine/angelic mediatorial status of a second power in heaven and the involvement in the process of creation —bring Philo’s conception about the divine Logos closer to one of the main Hermetic and Gnostic Anthropos figures.⁴⁴

The first Anthropos trend, namely the exaltation tradition which represents the prelapsarian Adam as a glorious or luminous constitution, concentrates the whole narrative around one single character, the glorious Adam who lost his luminous status. To the contrary, Hermetic and Gnostic writings, generally considered a product of the larger Alexandrian intellectual context, mention two Adams, and usually the first are the model of the second. But the first author to introduce a discourse about two Adams is Philo, on the basis of a Platonic perspective. While embracing the Platonic notion of the noetic or intelligible paradigms according to which the Demiurge created the sensible objects which populate the visible universe, Philo conceives of a first noetic world created in the mind of God as an a-historical project of the future world.⁴⁵ Of course, one of the paradigms is that of the future human being, the future real and historical Adam, now created as a project in God’s mind, the Logos:

Just such must be our thoughts about God. We must suppose that, when He was minded (διανοηθείς) to found the one great city, He conceived (ἐνενόησε) beforehand the models (τύπους) of its parts, and that out of these He constituted (συστησάμενος) and brought to completion a world discernable only by the mind (κόσμον νοητόν), and then, with that for a pattern (παραδείγματι), the world which our senses can perceive (τὸν αἰσθητόν).⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ibid., 268-269. This idea goes back to G. R. S. Mead, who understood Philo’s Logos as an example of the Hermetic myth of the Heavenly Man in his *Thrice-Greatest Hermes: Studies in Hellenistic Theosophy and Gnosis; Translation of the Extant Sermons and Fragments of the Trismegistic Literature, with Prolegomena, Commentaries, and Notes*, 3 vols. (London: J. M. Watkins, 1949, first published 1906), 1:226-231.

⁴⁵ E.g., *Opif.* 26-36. For Philo’s use of Plato’s *Timaeus* in connection with the creation of the human being, see also D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 131-176.

⁴⁶ See *Opif.* 19 (LCL Philo 1:16). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 17. Cf. *Opif.* 24 and 36. For the double creation theory with respect to the human being, and therefore the two Adams, see *Opif.* 134,

This first creation is then followed by a second one, the creation of the sensible universe which logically includes the creation of the historical and empirical Adam. Likewise, Philonian anthropogony presents two stages, one in which God creates the noetic paradigm of man, described in Genesis 1:26, and one in which he creates the historical Adam, described in Gen 2:7. It is very plausible that Philo noticed the incongruity of the two Genesis accounts of Adam's creation and tried to offer a consistent hermeneutical solution through appropriating the Platonic scheme.

Philo employs the expression the "heavenly man" (οὐράνιος ἄνθρωπος) for the noetic paradigm of Adam (*Leg. All.* 1.31), also labeled as "incorporeal" (*Quest. Gen.* 2.56), and he generally describes it as an incorruptible conception in God's mind: "he that was after the (Divine) image was an idea (ιδέα) or type (γένος) or seal (σφραγίς), an object of thought only (νοητός), incorporeal (ἄσώματος), neither male nor female, by nature incorruptible (ἄφθαρτος φύσει)."⁴⁷ Consequently, it is methodologically inappropriate to associate the noetic idea of the human being with one of the Gnostic mythological figures of the Anthropos.⁴⁸ Thus, the Hermetic and Gnostic two realistic Adams may be understood on the level of the commonplaces of the ancient Alexandrian culture, where the Platonic distinction between noetic and aesthetic (sensible, visible, empirical) Adam was distorted and vague, if not even lost, and the first paradigmatic and eidetic Adam becomes a real, empirical figure. In this way, the Hermetic and Gnostic narratives face the situation of having two real Adams, where the first is the glorious Adam of the exalted tradition of Adam, and also the archetype of the second.

Leg. All. 1.31, *Quis. Her.* 231; *Quest. Gen.* 1.4; 2.56.

⁴⁷ *Opif.* 134 (LCL Philo 1:106). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 107.

⁴⁸ See Fossum, *The Name of God*, 268.

It is worth mentioning that Philo portrays in positive terms the historical and empirical Adam, who appears to be “most excellent” (ἄριστος), “beautiful and good” (καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός; *Op.* 136). He is a “wise” figure, God’s “viceroys and lords of all others” (*Op.* 148).⁴⁹ However, those delineations of light and glory particular to the exalted Adam do not appear in Philo’s portrait of the forefather.

Nevertheless, the whole discussion about the diverse anthrōpoi in Philo gravitates around the idea of the Image of God, which is the Logos (for example, *Op.* 31), and the various ways this image is reflected in the universe, as long as the Demiurge creates everything as a reflection of this primordial archetype. It is quite clear that the Demiurge, in Philo’s view, is God the Father.⁵⁰ Some passages even specify that, in the process of creation, God remained uninvolved in the universe and produced everything through his incorporeal powers. Most of the time, these are two in number and are symbolized through the two cherubim of the Ark.⁵¹

Although Philo’s Logos is not the Demiurge, it is still involved in the process of creation as a divine Mind which contains the entire noetic world and in fact consists of the noetic world. The Logos *is* the project of the world. Philo also affirms that the Logos is the “seal (σφραγίς) by which each thing that exists has received its shape (μεμόρφωται).”⁵² But *De confusione linguarum* 63 seems quite clearly to ascribe to the Logos the role that Plato’s Demiurge plays. However, as in the case of the divine/angelic status of the Logos, the idea of a form of God, or at least of his Logos, still remains ambiguous in Philo, somewhere between rejection and acceptance.

⁴⁹ Cf. LCL Philo 1:108;116. Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 109;117. For the idea that Adam was created to have dominion over all creatures and to rule the world, see Wis 9:2-3 and Gen 1.

⁵⁰ E.g., *Opif.* 21 and 77; *Conf.* 144; *Mos.* 2.49; *Decal.* 105; *Spec. Leg.* 3.189; *Aet.* 15.

⁵¹ Cf. *Cher.* 27; *Mos.* 2.95-100; *Spec. Leg.* 1.39-49; 1.329; *Abr.* 121.

⁵² *Fug.* 12 (LCL Philo 5:16). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 17.

The Alexandria criticizes that position which ascribes a human form to God and talks about the Logos as the archetype of both the universe and the human mind, though his substance cannot be comprehended:

Let no one represent the likeness [i.e., of God in the human being] as one to a bodily form (χαρακτήρι); for neither is God in human form (οὔτε γὰρ ἀνθρωπόμορφος ὁ θεός), nor is the human body God-like (οὔτε θεοειδὲς τὸ ἀνθρώπειον σῶμα). No, it is in respect of the Mind, the sovereign element of the soul (κατὰ τὸν τῆς ψυχῆς ἡγεμόνα νοῦν), that the word “image (εἰκὼν)” is used; for after the pattern of a single Mind, even the Mind of the Universe as an archetype (ἕνα τὸν τῶν ὅλων ἐκείνον ὡς ἂν ἀρχέτυπον), the mind in each of those who successively came into being was moulded (ἀπεικονίσθη). It is in a fashion a god to him who carries and enshrines it as an object of reverence (ἀγαλματοφοροῦντος); for the human mind evidently occupies a position in men precisely answering to that which the great Ruler as Logos occupies in all the world (ὃν γὰρ ἔχει λόγον ὁ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν ᾧ παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ). It is invisible (ἀόρατος) while itself seeing all things, and while comprehending the substances of others, it is as to its own substance unperceived (ἄδηλον ἔχει τὴν οὐσίαν).⁵³

Nevertheless, the text does not actually reject every type of divine form, but only the human shape, therefore only the anthropomorphic position. Philo talks here about the capacity of having the form of God (θεοειδής) and about the Logos which is the Nous, the Governor (ἡγεμὼν), and the Archetype (ἀρχέτυπος) of both the universe and the human mind. More than that, as observable in the next passage from *De somniis*, we are told that the universe in itself bears the image of God:

For this king [i.e., God] gives the soul a seal (σφραγίδα), a gift all-beauteous, by which he teaches it that when the substance of the universe (τῶν πάντων οὐσίαν) was without shape (ἀσχημάτιστον) and figure (ἀτύπων) God gave it these (ἐσχημάτισε ... ἐτύπωσε); when it had no definite character (ἄποιον) God moulded it into definiteness (ἐμόρφωσε), and, when He perfected it, stamped the entire universe with His image and an ideal form (ἐσφράγισε κόσμον εἰκόνι καὶ ἰδέῃ), even His own Word (τῷ ἑαυτοῦ λόγῳ).⁵⁴

The idea that the cosmos is the first image of God and the human being a second copy appears in a clearer form in *De opificio* 25 and again, as in *De opificio* 69, the context is that of interpreting Genesis 1:26-27:

Witness his express acknowledgement in the sequel, when setting on record the creation of man, that he was moulded after the image of God (Gen. i. 27). Now if the part is an image of an image (τὸ μέρος εἰκὼν εἰκόνοϛ), it is manifest that the whole is too, and if the whole creation, this entire

⁵³ *Opif.* 69 (LCL Philo 1:54). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 55.

⁵⁴ *Som.* 2.45 (LCL Philo 5:462). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 463. See also *Opif.* 16.

world perceived by our senses (ὁ αἰσθητὸς κόσμος) (seeing that it is greater than any human image) is a copy of the Divine image (μίμημα θείας εἰκόνος), it is manifest that the archetypal seal (ἡ ἀρχέτυπος σφραγίς) also, which we aver to be the world described by the mind (νοητὸν εἶναι κόσμον), would be [the model, archetype (παράδειγμα, ἀρχέτυπος), the idea of ideas (ἰδέα τῶν ἰδεῶν)], the very Word of God (ὁ θεοῦ λόγος).⁵⁵

The Image is therefore impressed in the entire creation and, in this way, although being one, it is multiple in creation. Philo thinks that the Logos is separated from the universe and, at the same time, divides it into the seven spheres of the planets. Similarly, the mind (ὁ νοῦς), called as well the rational part (τὸ λογικόν), is indivisible and divides the soul into seven faculties, namely the five senses, plus the voice and the reproductive faculty. We have to recall the aforementioned *De opificio* 69, where the Logos is the mind of the world and present in the world as the mind in the human being. Furthermore, akin to heaven, which is a unique sphere both comprehending the universe and also present in the universe, the soul is both one and present within the whole human being.⁵⁶ Although Philo does not affirm it, one can see that the logical chain of his argument leads to the conclusion that divinity in itself, the archetype image of the spherical world, should be a sphere.⁵⁷ And this conclusion is actually proved by a Philonian passage which clearly states ?? *Quis Her.*229.

However, while commenting in more detail on the nature of God and of his Image, Philo makes a clear distinction between the concepts of image and form,

⁵⁵ *Opif.* 25 (LCL Philo 1:20). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 21.

⁵⁶ *Quis Her.* 231-235, *Decal.* 103, *Cher.* 23. Cf. Plato, *Tim.* 36d. See also the idea that the sphere of heaven is separated in two hemispheres either by the earth (*Mos.* 2.98 and *Spec. Leg.* 1.86) or by the Dioscuri (*Decal.* 56-57). For the fact that the world is circumscribed within the outermost sphere of the fixed stars, see *Spec. Leg.* 3.189. For the comparison between soul and cosmos, see also D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato* (PA 44: Leiden: Brill, 1986), 211.

⁵⁷ The idea was in fact a deep belief of some of the most important and influential Greek philosophers, including Xenophanes himself, the father of anti-anthropomorphism, and also Plato; see the Orphic hymn 4.2; Xenophanes, *Fr.* 23 (Simplicius, *Phys.* 23.18, Diogenes Laertius, *Vit.* 9.19); Parmenides, *Phys.* 8; Plato, *Tim* 37c.

affirming that God does not have a form since his image is invisible, most likely for the mortal eye or mind:

Let not us then, the pupils of Moses, be any longer at a loss as to how man came to have a conception (ἐννοίαν) of the invisible [literally, without form] God (θεοῦ τοῦ ἀειδοῦς) ... But the Archetype (τὸ δ' ἀρχέτυπον) is, of course, so devoid of visible form (ἀειδές) that even His image (ἡ εἰκὼν) could not be seen (οὐχ ὁρατή). Having been struck in accord with the Pattern (τυπωθεῖσα μέντοι κατὰ τὸ παράδειγμα), it entertained ideas not now mortal but immortal (ἀθανάτους ἐννοίας ἐδέχετο).⁵⁸

The text is more difficult and fascinating since it affirms, at the same time, the existence of God's archetypal pattern (ἀρχέτυπος), which is devoid of form (εἶδος), and the existence of God's image (εἰκὼν), which is invisible. This paradox can be solved only if we consider God as truly having an image (εἰκὼν) which is invisible to human epistemic capacities. This lack of epistemic access to the divine image is also understood as absence of form (ἀειδές).⁵⁹

In conclusion, the Alexandrian theologian conceives of three *anthrōpoi*, the earthly one (Adam), the heavenly one (Adam's noetic paradigm), and the Anthropos of God (which is the Logos which is the Image of God endowed not with anthropomorphic features, but with immortal delineations). While Fossum places the last two of them, the Son of Man tradition, and the tradition of the luminous prelapsarian Adam under the same umbrella of the "heavenly Man," each of these figures covers a different ontological

⁵⁸ *Det.* 86-87 (LCL Philo 2:260). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 2:261.

⁵⁹ *De somniis* 1.232 also affirms that the divine archetypal *eidos* is inaccessible, but God manifests various forms (*morphai*) and images (*eikona*) in creation. *Eidos* and *eikon*, therefore, exchanged their roles, one playing the role of the manifested form, the other of the unmanifested. A similar rejection of describing God's *eidos* is present in *De specialibus legibus*, where, however, Philo agrees that human being can see God's divine glory: "I bow before Thy admonitions, that I never could have received the vision of Thee clearly manifested (τὸ τῆς σῆς φαντασίας ἐναργὲς εἶδος), but I beseech Thee that I may at least see the glory that surrounds Thee (περὶ σὲ δόξαν θεάσασθαι), and by Thy glory I understand the powers that keep guard around Thee (τὰς περὶ σὲ δορυφορούσας δυνάμεις), of whom I would fain gain apprehension (κατάληψις), for though hitherto that escaped me up, the thought of it creates in me a mighty longing to have knowledge of them (πόθον τῆς διαγνώσεως)." *Spec. Leg.* 1.45 (LCL Philo 7:124). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 125.

reality with its own particular functions. Although significant roots of the Anthropos tradition can be already found in the Son of Man tradition, the latter cannot be categorized as Anthropos tradition, since, along with a vague and problematic anthropomorphism, the Son of Man remains an eschatological (even Divine Warrior) figure. To the contrary, the divine Anthropos is a protological figure and, in the more elaborated accounts, a Demiurge figure highly involved in the process of creation. In fact, as long as Philo conceives of the Logos as god or angel, he makes the first step in the process of hypostasizing the concept of Divine Image of Gen 1:27, or at least witnesses to this Hellenizing Jewish Alexandrian tradition. While Ezek 1:26 already attests the early existence of this hypostasization (and even for the synthesis between Gen 1:27 and the *kabod* tradition), Philo continues the tradition of hypostasization re-expressing it through Greek philosophical terms. For this reason, Philo, and later Irenaeus or Origen, in spite of their strong anti-anthropomorphism, do not think of themselves as separated from the biblical tradition, but as explaining it on better rational grounds. While the Father remains unmanifested, it is his Son who bears the Divine Image. Finally, it is interesting to notice that the Christian divine Anthropos, from Paul to the early paschal writings, combines the two figures, the Son of Man and the divine Demiurge-Anthropos, into a unique character, at the same time protological Demiurge and eschatological Judge. But everything about this in the next section.

3. Paul and the Synthesis between the Son of Man and the Hypostasized

Divine Image

Paul in turn is a representative of the Jewish tradition which hypostasized the Divine Image of Genesis 1:27. He explicitly identifies Christ with the image of God: “the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”⁶⁰ In Colossians 1:13-15, while talking about the kingdom of the Son of God where humans will live in light, Paul (or a writer of Pauline tradition) expresses the same idea:

He [the Father] has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation (ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἁοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως).

The text, therefore, talks about a second divine figure, the Son of the Father, most likely an eschatological savior and king, attributes which send directly to the tradition of the second power in heaven, namely to the Son of Man tradition from Daniel to *1 Enoch* to all the other Jewish intertestamental documents. In addition, there are several other divine titles ascribed to the Son. He is identified with the Divine Image, preceeds the existence of every creature and, moreover, as the next two verses clearly describe, the Son and Image of God is endowed with demiurgic functions:

for in him (ἐν αὐτῷ) all things in heaven and on earth were created (ἐκτίσθη), things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him (τὰ πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτόν ἐκτίσται). He himself is before all things (ἐστιν πρὸ πάντων), and in him all things hold together (τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν).⁶¹

While the Son of Man tradition is markedly present in the Gospels, as seen above, the word “image” does not function as Christological, or even a more general divine, title

⁶⁰ 2 Cor 4:4.

⁶¹ Col 1:16-17. As one can see in the second and forth chapters, the verb συνίστημι or συνιστάνω (which means “set together, combine, associate, unite, sustain, make firm”) represents a Christological verb which will play a catalytic role in the visions of the cosmic Christ who sustains the universe.

in the Gospels, where εἰκών appears only in the synoptic texts and only in the episode about the payment of taxes to Caesar and Caesar's image on the coin.⁶² The Gospels, therefore, do not identify the divine Image with the Son of God. The Son of Man figure, however, implies Jesus' luminous and divine status in the glory of the Father, his eschatological function as a judge, but also the power to work miracles, to re-create, and to forgive sins.⁶³ Adding a new divine title, John 1:34 equates the Son of God—a synonymous term for the Son of Man in the Johannine text—with the Logos.

I suppose, however, that it is from the figure of the Son of Man that the Pauline tradition develops the theology of the Image of God through identifying the Image of God from Genesis 1:27 with the Son of Man. Paul actually uses the phrase Son of God instead of the Son of Man and clearly talks about the *eikon* of the Son of God in Romans 8:29. Whether Pauline or of Pauline tradition, the Epistle to the Colossians directly urges the reader to contemplate the heavenly rather than the earthly things. It is at this point that the author advises the audience to look for the vision of the glorious Christ and clearly depicts him in the lines of the Son of Man who will come in glory at the eschaton:

⁶² I.e., Mark 12:16; Luke 20:24; Mt 22:20.

⁶³ For the glorious status of the Son of Man, his status of eschatological judge, or his glorious eschatological coming, see e.g.: Mark 8:38; 13:26-27; 14:62; Luke 9:26; 17:24-37; 21:27; 22:69; Matt 13:41; 16:27-28; 19:28; 24:27-51; 26:64; John 5:22-30; 12:23; 13:31. For Son of Man scholarship, see for instance J. J. Collins, "Heavenly Representative: The 'Son of Man' in the Similitudes of Enoch," in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism* (eds. G. W. E. Nickelsburg and J. J. Collins; SCS 12; Chico, CA: Scholars, 1980), 122-24; Collins, "The Son of Man," Colpe, "Ho huio tou anthropou," J. A. Emerton, "The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery," *JTS* 9 (1958): 225-42; C. Fletcher-Louis, "The Revelation of the Sacral Son of Man: The Genre, History of Religions Context and the Meaning of the Transfiguration," in *Auferstehung Resurrection*, eds. F. Avemarie and H. Lichtenberger (Tübingen: Mohr, 2001), 247-298; W. Herrmann, "Baal," in *DDD*, 132-139; G.W.E. Nickelsburg, "The Son of Man," in *DDD* 800-804; H. E. Todd, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965); C. Tuckett, "The Lukan Son of Man," in *Luke's Literary Achievement* (ed. C. M. Tuckett; JSNTSup 116; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995); J. VanderKam, "Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 37-71," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity: The First Princeton Symposium on Judaism and Christian Origins* (eds. J. H. Charlesworth et al.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 182-3; M. Knibb, "Messianism in the Pseudepigrapha in the Light of the Scrolls," *DSD* 2 (1995): 177-80; Fossum, *The Image of the Invisible God*, 144-5; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (WUNT Reihe 2:94; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God (ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ καθήμενος). Set your minds on things that are above (τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε), not on things that are on earth. For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.⁶⁴

In the same line of thought, in 2 Corinthians 4, where Paul identifies Christ with the Image (2 Cor 4:4), he also talks about the divine light in the human hearts in 4:6: “For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”⁶⁵

Paul uses as well a different terminology for expressing almost the same idea that Christ is the Divine Image, namely the “form,” and again associates it with the pre-incarnational Christ, as Carey Newman showed extensively.⁶⁶ Philippians 2:6 is the famous example, which, I would like to point out, is elaborated in a discourse similar to that of the tradition of the Son of Man seen in glory:

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ), did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave (μορφὴν δούλου), being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and

⁶⁴ Col 3:1-4.

⁶⁵ This ascetico-mystical exercise of setting the mind (φρονεῖν from φρονέω) on the heavenly things and expecting the vision of Christ-God enthroned in heavenly glory should be associated with Alan Segal’s study on Paul, where Paul is described as a Second Temple mystic who saw actually Christ as the Son of Man. See A. F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). In addition to this, 2 Cor 3:18 seems to suggest that the contemplation of the glory of Christ involves as well a transformation of the visionary into glory and divine image, a theological feature also part of the Second Temple mystical theology: “And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.” For transformational mysticism, see M. Himmelfarb, “Revelation and Rapture: The Transformation of the Visionary in the Ascent Apocalypses,” in *Mysteries and Revelations: Apocalyptic Studies since the Uppsala Colloquium* (eds. J. J. Collins and J. H. Charlesworth; JSPSup 9; Sheffield: University Press: 1991), 79-90; C. R.A. Morray-Jones, “Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition,” *JJS* 43:1 (1992): 1-31.

⁶⁶ See Newman, *Paul's Glory-Christology*.

every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς).⁶⁷

Although synonymous, the terms “image” and “form” have slightly different meanings. While “image” presupposes a paradigm, and probably a secondary status as long as the image represents a copy of an archetype, the “form” denotes something rather identical shared by the Father and the Son, in the way the conciliar theology will talk a few centuries later about the nature or essence of God.

On the ground of this ontological condition of the Son, Paul will logically conceive of the Incarnation as a metamorphosis, a process of exchanging forms from that of the divine glory to the form of the corruptible man as seen above in Philippians 2:7: “but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.”

4. Paul and the Demiurge-Heavenly Anthropos

Christ, the Son of God, was therefore both a protological figure “in the form of God,” also possessing demiurgic functions, and an eschatological one, the King of heaven and the Son of Man who will come in glory. But Pauline writings ascribe to Christ another important title; he is also the heavenly Anthropos.⁶⁸ In a passage where Paul generally describes Christ’s victory over death and his resurrection, he first starts making the following parallel between Adam and Christ, as two opposite *anthrōpoi*:

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being (δι’ ἀνθρώπου), the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being (δι’ ἀνθρώπου); for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

⁶⁷ Phil 2:5-11.

⁶⁸ For the key texts of this tradition, see J. Jervell, *Imago Dei: Gen. 1,26 im Spätjudentum, in der Gnosis und bei Paulus* (FRLANT 76; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960).

Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.⁶⁹

Nonetheless, after making the distinction between the natural body (the psychic: σῶμα ψυχικόν) which dies and rises as a spiritual body (the pneumatic: σῶμα πνευματικόν) (1 Cor 15:44), Paul talks about the paradigms which the two sorts of bodies imitate, namely Adam and Christ. But when the image of the first Adam refers to the earthly and even sinful human condition, the image of the heavenly Adam refers to the condition of the resurrected Christ:

So also it is written, ‘The first man (ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος), Adam, became (ἐγένετο) a living soul (εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν).’ The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit (εἰς πνεῦμα ζωοποιόν). However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man (ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος) was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven (ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ). As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven (ὁ ἐπουράνιος), so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven (φορέσομεν καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου).⁷⁰

In addition to this, the Pauline tradition extends the demiurgic attributes of the Son of God from the primordial times also to the eschaton, when the Son will play his judge role and, surprisingly, will re-create the human being (Col 3:10; Rom 8:29). As one may further see in the next chapter, the Son, according to Pauline theology, is also deeply involved in the process of salvation which is conceived as a re-creation. As the human being is re-created according to the Image of God, I have called this soteriology eikonic

⁶⁹ 1 Cor 15:20-26.

⁷⁰ 1 Cor 15:45-49. The distinction becomes here that between the Christ’s (resurrected) body and that of Adam as a human being. It is quite implausible to continue with the distinction natural body-resurrected body since the Greek makes the distinction between a being which lives in a soul and one which gives life, a title appropriate only for God, who is the life, and not for a creature. The expression “a living soul” (εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν) comes directly from Gen 2:7. Likewise, it is obvious from the instances of the New Testament where the verb ζωοποιέω comes out (John 5:21; 6:63; 1 Cor 15:22; 36; 45; 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Pet 3:18; Rom 4:17) and the subject associated to them that all refer to a divine agent: John 5:21 (the Father); 6:63 (the Spirit); 1 Cor 15:22 (Christ); 2 Cor 3:6 (the Spirit), and Rom 4:17 (God).

soteriology.⁷¹ This concept would have not been possible without the Pauline extension and translation of the demiurgic function of the Son of God from creation to the eschaton.

The aforementioned passages about the two Adams illustrate that, unlike the heavenly Adam, the ontological condition of the historico-empirical Adam is reduced to the ground and possesses a weakness that eventually had negative consequences. Far from having the Philonic status of the beautiful viceroy of creation, Paul's Adam is the gate through which sin and eventually death entered the world. It is worth noting that, while Philo and Paul emphasize the ideas of image and glory primarily in connection with the Son of God, the empirical Adam is not endowed with the heavenly glory, and they describe him especially as the image of God (e.g., 1 Cor 11:7). One may explain this position on the basis of various possible reasons, for example, to emphasize the high status of the Son of God. At the same time, a clear anti-Adamic position is present in the Pauline discourse, and the positioning of Christ as the real Adam is no doubt part of this polemical attitude.⁷²

Paul's Anthropos has one of the highest ontological conditions compared to all the other archetypal *anthropoi* from Philo to Gnosticism, for Paul is much more certain than Philo about the divine status of his Anthropos. All creatures venerate Him and all creatures were created through Him and for Him. While the Alexandrian was balancing

⁷¹ I think there are two important versions of eikonic soteriology. The first type, investigated in the next pages of this study, is present in Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus, and here Christ becomes incarnate in order to save the fallen image or eikon. The second type, present in the Cappadocian fathers, is very similar to the Pauline one, since Christ is essentially an eschatological demiurge who re-creates or re-shapes the impaired human image; see D. A. Giulea, "The Cappadocian Paschal Christology: Gregory Nazianzen and Gregory of Nyssa on the Divine Paschal Image of Christ," ZAC 12 (2008): 475-501.

⁷² See also Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam* (e.g. 379), for the fascinating idea that the tradition of the glorious primordial Adam/Israel produced various polemics, or at least a sort of contest, regarding who is the true Adam, of course understood as a copy of the primordial Adam. The High Priest of the Temple in Jerusalem, the Teacher of Qumran, and various others figures competed for this position.

between a divine and angelic status, the Hermetic and Gnostic *Anthropoi* will contain several times clear divine complexions.⁷³

5. The Demiurge-Adam of *Poimandres*

The tractates of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, according to Peter Kingsley, emerged around two thousand years ago as a part of a larger sapiential tradition, usually called hermetic, which may have some roots in Pythagoreanism.⁷⁴ Regarding its *Sitz im Leben*, Kingsley finds “its apparent origin in the Egyptian temple practice of consulting dream oracles.”⁷⁵ The opening tractate of the corpus, entitled *Poimandres*, is the only one speculating on the divine Anthropos. Kingsley explains the etymology of the term “Poimandres” strengthening Llewellyn Griffith’s thesis according to which the roots should be found in the Coptic *P-eime-nt-rē* (the knowledge of Re).⁷⁶ In fact, the first sentence of the tractate—“I am Poimandres, the knowledge of the supreme authority (ὁ τῆς αἰθεντίας νοῦς)” —expresses the same idea twice, both in Coptic and Greek, since

⁷³ See further that the Ophite position which Irenaeus describes in his *Haer.* 1.29-30 (where the divine Father, Son, and Christ receive the title of Divine Anthropos) and the *Apocryphon of John* (where the Thought or Ennoia which proceeds from the Father is called the First Anthropos) place the Anthropos figure on a high divine position.

⁷⁴ P. Kingsley, “An Introduction to the Hermetica: Approaching Ancient Esoteric Tradition,” in *From Poimandres to Jacob Böhme* (eds. R. van der Broek and C. van Heertum; Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan 2000), 19: “Around two thousand years ago the teachings ascribed to the divine prophet Hermes Trismegistus were written down and preserved, in Egypt, by Greek-speaking people.” For the connections between Hermetism and Pythagoreanism, see P. Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy, Mystery and Magic* (Oxford: University Press, 1995), esp. 333-347. See also idem, “Poimandres: The Etymology of the Name and the Origins of the Hermetica,” in *From Poimandres*, eds. van der Broek et al., 41-76. For an extended bibliography, see A. D. DeConick, *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 10.

⁷⁵ Kingsley, “Poimandres,” 56.

⁷⁶ L. Griffith, in W. Scott, *Hermetica* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924-1936), vol. 2:16-17. Kingsley also shows that the expression *P-eime-nt-re* was taken over into Greek and re-etymologized into a traditional Greek divine title: the shephard of people, present already in Homer, *Iliad.*, 2.243 etc., Aeschylus, *Persians*, 241 (*poimanor*); Plato, *Statesman* 274e (*poimen andron*). B. A. Pearson accepts this etymology in *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* (Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress Press, 2007), 277.

Re usually receives the title αἰθέντης, the one who has the supreme authority or power.⁷⁷ Kingsley observes that Poimandres implies a function and ontological status similar to those of the knowledge or the *nous* of certain Gnostic writings: “this same word αἰθεντία was often used in Gnostic sources as a term of reference for the supreme authority which is located in, and emanates from, the celestial realm of light.”⁷⁸ Poimandres is therefore the divine Nous which consists of, or comes from, the luminous highest power, the heart (*ib*) or intelligence (*sia*) of Re, and represents Re’s active and creative power in the universe.⁷⁹ Hermes Trismegistus, in his turn, plays the role of the inspired recipient of the divine revelation and the translator or interpreter (ἐρμηνεύς) of this revelation from Egyptian religious categories into Greek vocabulary.⁸⁰ Regarding the time this translation took place, Garth Fowden affirms that the Hermetic papyri of Vienna prove that “there were specimens in circulation (and even in collected form) by the end of the second century.”⁸¹

I would regard the Hermetic Anthropos as representing the tradition of hypostasization of the divine image concept of Genesis 1:27, also present in Ezekiel 1:26 and Daniel 7:13. It is worth mentioning that my hypothesis concords with modern scholarship which considers that the origin of the Anthropos myth should be traced back to Genesis 1:26 and Ezekiel 1:26, the latter a verse which describes the Glory of God as

⁷⁷ Kingsley, “Poimandres,” 48-50. For the original texts, see A. D. Nock and A.-J. Festugière, *Corpus Hermeticum* (4 vols.; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1954-60), 1:7.

⁷⁸ Kingsley, “Poimandres,” 50.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 52. Kingsley also identifies Poimandres with the god Thoth, “he who knows” or “he who reads people’s hearts (*ip ib*).” Ibid. 55.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 54.

⁸¹ G. Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 10. Kingsley also talks about “the first few centuries AD,” cf. “Poimandres,” 63.

taking the form of a man, the *demuth kemarēh adam* or *eidos anthrōpou*.⁸² Van der Broek, while commenting on the Hermetic tractate *Poimandres* and the Gnostic *Apocryphon of John*, affirms the following:

Both texts know the important notion of a heavenly Man—a notion that has to be explained through its Jewish background. ... I only call to mind that the prophet Ezekiel (1:26) saw the Glory of God in the shape of a man: the first manifestation of the transcendent God appears in human form. This and a specific interpretation of the creation of man in Genesis eventually led to the myth of the heavenly Man.⁸³

In a similar way, Birger A. Pearson deems that the origins of the Hermetic and Gnostic myth of the divine Anthropos represent a synthesis of Platonism and Gen. 1:26 and 2:7: “And, like that of the *Apocryphon of John*, the Hermetic myth is indebted to the two great creation texts of the Greco-Roman world, Plato’s *Timaeus* and the two creation stories in the book of Genesis.”⁸⁴ Pearson also affirms that one may find in the tractate *Poimandres* a “profound influence of Alexandrian Judaism,” for example, from 2 *Enoch*, a first-century Alexandrian Jewish apocalypse.⁸⁵ While also stressing the Hellenistic and Hermetic aspects of the document, Pearson concludes:

It is, of course, important finally to acknowledge that we are not, after all, dealing with a Jewish text, but with a “Hermetic” one. For all the obvious Jewish elements in the *Poimandres*, it is not a Jewish document. ... And when all is said and done, the Hermetic “creed” differs radically from the Jewish. This “creed” is best summarized in those places in the text in which are found examples of a Hellenistic, gnosticizing reinterpretation of the ancient Delphic maxim, γνῶθι σαυτόν.⁸⁶

⁸² G. Quispel, “Ezekiel 1,26”; Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic*, 128; Fossum, *The Name*; Gilles Quispel, “Hermes Trismegistus and Tertullian,” *VC* 43 (1989): 188-190; A. F. Segal, *Paul the Convert* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990); G. Quispel, “Hermes Trismegistus and the Origins of Gnosticism,” in *From Poimandres*, eds. van den Broek *et al.*, 145-166, esp. 146; R. van den Broek, “Gnosticism and Hermetism in Antiquity: Two Roads to Salvation,” in *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times* (eds. R. van der Broek and W. J. Hanegraaf; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 1-20, 15.

⁸³ Van den Broek, “Gnosticism and Hermetism,” 15.

⁸⁴ Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 280.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* See also Pearson’s “Jewish Elements in *Corpus Hermeticum* I (*Poimandres*),” in his *Gnosticism, Judaism, and Egyptian Christianity* (Minneapolis, Minn: Fortress Press, 1990), 136-147.

⁸⁶ Pearson, *Gnosticism, Judaism*, 146. See also H.-D. Betz, “The Delphic Maxim ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΑΥΤΟΝ in Hermetic Interpretation,” *HTR* 63 (1970), 465-84. Pearson argues here against H. Ludin Jansen’s hypothesis of a Jewish author of the tractate; see H. Ludin Jansen, “Die Frage nach Tendenz und

The corpus ascribes to Poimandres or to his Son, the Logos, such titles as Nous, Father, Life, and Light (*Poim.* 1.5 and 8), a terminology present as well in the Jewish sapiential tradition from Wisdom to Philo. *Poim.* 1.8 also portrays Poimandres as the “archetypal form” (τὸ ἀρχέτυπον εἶδος).⁸⁷ *Poimandres*, however, presents a theological and philosophical vision slightly different from that of the rest of the 17 tractates. In *Poimandres* the first principle is God the Father-Nous, and the Logos-Son who comes from the Father plays the role of the second principle (*Poim.* 1.5). The general vision of the tractates and *Asclepius*, however, seems to describe God the Father primarily as the Good and the Whole and even rejects the idea that the Father might be the Nous (*Tract.* 2.14 [CH 1:37]).⁸⁸ To the contrary, the Nous of the tractates and *Asclepius* takes the place of the divine Logos as the second principle of the universe.⁸⁹ Moreover, *Asclepius* brings forward a third divine figure, called a “second God,” “the sensible” (*aisthetos*; *Ascl.* 8 and 16). Guided by the supreme God, the second divinity is present everywhere in the universe, encircling the universe, and governing it.⁹⁰

Unlike Philo, the whole *Corpus Hermeticum* conceives of the second principle—called Logos, Nous, or Pneuma—with more demiurgic functions. In fact, they might be compared with Philo’s powers which create and govern the world guided by the Father. The creation narrative of *Poimandres*, for instance, specifies that the Father gave birth to

Verfasserschaft im Poimandres,” in *Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Gnosticism, Stockholm, August 20-25, 1973* (eds. G. Widengren and D. Hellholm; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1977), 157-63.

⁸⁷ *Poim.* 1.8 (CH 1:9). Philo also defines the Logos, not the Father, as ἀρχέτυπος, ἰδέα τῶν ἰδεῶν (*Op.* 25).

⁸⁸ For God as the Good see *Tract.* 2.16; 6.3; 14.9; *Ascl.* 8; 34. For God as the Whole, see *Ascl.* 34.

⁸⁹ E.g., 5.2; 10.18;23; *Ascl.* 32.

⁹⁰ *Ascl.* 16-17. The Tractates also conceive of the world as a god (*Tract.* 8.5; 9.5). Similarly, *Asclepius* declares the heavens a god (*Ascl.* 3) and matter an ungenerated principle as in Plato and Aristotle (*Ascl.* 15).

a second Nous, the Demiurge-Nous, the god of fire and spirit, which created (ἐδημιούργησε) the seven governors (διοικηταί) of the universe. Their function is to encompass the sensible cosmos in circles, an idea recalling Philo's seven spheres and planets of the universe.⁹¹ Furthermore, the Logos and the Demiurge-Nous make these circles move and this movement produces all the creatures of the universe.⁹²

It is, however, the Father himself who gave birth (ὑπεκύησεν) to a third principle of creation, the Anthropos.⁹³ The ontological condition of this character seems to be divine (although of secondary degree) since we are informed that the Anthropos is a brother of the Nous-Demiurge.⁹⁴ This thought is illustrated by the fact that the Father produced the Demiurge-Nous through the same process of giving birth as that by which he produced the Anthropos.⁹⁵ Accordingly, the author describes the generation of the Anthropos and makes his portrait in the following lines:

Mind (Νοῦς), the father of all, who is life and light (ζωή και φῶς), gave birth to a man like himself (ὑπεκύησεν Ἄνθρωπον αὐτῷ ἴσον) whom he loved as his own child. The man was most fair: he had the father's image (τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς εἰκόνα); and god, who was really in love with his own form (τῆς ἰδίας μορφῆς), bestowed on him all his craftworks (δεμιουργήματα).⁹⁶

We are informed, therefore, that unlike the Logos and the Demiurge-Nous, with whom he shares the ontological condition of a secondary divinity, the Anthropos bears God's form or image. At the same time, *Poimandres* calls the Father "unspeakable and unsayable

⁹¹ *Poim.* 9 (CH 1:9).

⁹² *Poim.* 11 (CH 1:10). In *Poim.* 31 (CH 1:18) we are also told that the Father constituted everything that exists through his Logos.

⁹³ *Poim.* 12 (CH 1:10).

⁹⁴ *Poim.* 13 (CH 1:11).

⁹⁵ *Poim.* 9 (CH 1:9): ὑπεκύησε λόγῳ ἕτερον Νοῦν δημιουργόν.

⁹⁶ *Poim.* 12 (CH 1:10). Trans. Brian P. Copenhaver, *Hermetica: The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a New English Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 3.

(ἀνεκκάλητε, ἄρρητε).”⁹⁷ The text also seems to imply that the Father shares with his third son the attributes of life and light.⁹⁸

In terms of the functions the divine Anthropos exercises, the author describes him as receiving from the Father all authority in the demiurgic sphere (ἐν τῇ δημιουργικῇ σφαίρᾳ ἔξων τὴν πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν).⁹⁹ In addition to this, the seven governors who love him, most likely because of his form, as also Nature (*Physis*) does, share with him part of their order (μετεδίδου τῆς ἰδίας τάξεως).¹⁰⁰ It is in this capacity that the Anthropos operates in creation through reflecting the divine form in each of his creatures. The result of his creation in fact consists of seven proto-humans and only after that of the human being. As a consequence of a sort of hierogamy recalling that of Uranus and Gaia, *Physis* receives in herself the form of the Anthropos and gives birth to seven androgynous and exalted human beings (ἀπεκύησεν ἑπτὰ ἀνθρώπους).¹⁰¹ Nonetheless, as all the creatures of the universe were androgynous at that stage, the work of creation is finished at the moment when God pronounces the words: “Increase in increasing and multiply in multitude.”¹⁰²

While *Poimandres* elaborates a doctrine about more than one anthropomorphic figure, therefore echoing Philo, the Hermetic writing does not envisage a Platonic-ideatic Anthropos, but an ontological ladder with an anthropomorphic form reflected on various layers of reality: First is the Anthropos, the form of God and paradigm for Nature and

⁹⁷ *Poim.* 31 (CH 1:18). Kingsley also points out the Greek-Egyptian tradition about the changing forms of Poimandres-Thoth and that no one knows his “true form” (Kingsley, “Poimandres,” 75-76). However, this form or image is everywhere present in nature (*Poim.* 31 [CH 1:18]).

⁹⁸ Cf. *Poim.* 21 (CH 1:14): “the father of all things was constituted of light and life (ἐκ φωτός καὶ ζωῆς συνέστηκεν ὁ πατήρ), and from him the man came to be.” Trans. Copenhaver, 5. These two attributes echo Philo’s Logos which is sometimes defined in connection with light and life terminology.

⁹⁹ *Poim.* 13 (CH 1:10-11).

¹⁰⁰ *Poim.* 13 (CH 1:11).

¹⁰¹ *Poim.* 16 (CH 1:12).

¹⁰² *Poim.* 18 (CH 1:13).

empirical man, second is Nature who takes the form of the Anthropos, third are the first seven *anthropoi* (an element which does not seem to have a Philonian parallel), and fourth the empirical human being, man and woman.¹⁰³ In addition, while in Philo the noetic anthropos and nature are copies of the Image of God, which is the Logos, in *Poimandres* it is the Anthropos who plays the role of model for both Nature and the human being.

6. The Archetypal Anthropos of Gnosticism

As in the larger case of the myth of Anthropos, the student analyzing the Gnostic documents about the divine Anthropos faces a real temptation to reach for a unifying theory about the Gnostic Anthropos. However, in this case also one should carefully distinguish between the various concepts of Adam and Anthropos. In this case as well I would like to continue to refine the deep methodological insights brought forth by previous scholars. On the one hand, the scholars of the new school of religions advanced the idea that the origins of the Gnostic Anthropos myth should rather be searched for in the Jewish Second Temple tradition of the glorious Adam.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, they have sometimes pointed out the fact that Gnostic materials comprehend a large variety of Egyptian, Greek, and Christian themes, symbols, and concepts.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Philo sometimes points out that it is not the body, but the mind (*nous*) which is created according to the Image of God, which is the divine Nous or Logos, as in *Opif.* 69; cf. *Opif.* 31.

¹⁰⁴ Several scholars made the connection between the Jewish tradition of the glorious Adam and the Gnostic Anthropos, e.g., C. H. Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1935), 147; G. Quispel, "Der gnostische Anthropos und die jüdische Tradition," *ErJb.* 22 (1953): 195-234; idem, "Ezekiel 1:26"; J. Fossum, "The Heavenly Man," in his *The Name of God*, 266-291; Pearson, *Gnosticism, Judaism*.

¹⁰⁵ E.g., G. Quispel, "The Demiurge in the Apocryphon of John," in *Nag Hammadi and Gnosis: Papers Read at the First International Congress of Coptology (Cairo, December 1976)* (ed. R. McL. Wilson; NHS 14; Leiden: Brill, 1978), 1-33; Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 280.

On the other hand, I would further observe that, while Jewish traditions talk about a single Adam who undergoes several transformations through different ontological stages (glorious garments—human form—again angelic garments), several Gnostic currents talk about two, three, or even more *anthropoi*, either primordial, or psychic, etc. One of them, at the bottom of this anthropological ladder, is the empirical Adam. On this basis, it is plausible to advance the thesis that Gnostic trends shared with Hermetism and Philo the tradition of the ontological ladder where a primordial anthropomorphic shape was reflected on various layers of reality. The Gnostic Anthropos, therefore, is more than Jewish tradition.

In addition to this, Gnostic Anthropoi seem to evolve from various interpretations of Genesis 1:27 influenced by Ezekiel 1:26 and Daniel 7:13. Several Gnostic texts reflect the tradition of the exalted Adam as they talk about the primordial Adam of the first day of creation (for instance, *On the Origin of the World*, the *Apocryphon of John*, the *Gospel of the Egyptians*). Other texts follow the tradition of the hypostasization of the Divine Image of Genesis 1:27 as they sometimes envision the Anthropos as the likeness of the Father (*Eugnostos the Blessed*, the *Sophia of Jesus Christ*) or represent a development of the Pauline Philippians 2:6 (the *Gospel of Philip*).¹⁰⁶ The two trajectories in Gnostic

¹⁰⁶ Because both the process of hypostasization of the Divine Image and the exaltation of Adam implied the accretion of new titles and attributes more or less divine, especially demiurgic ones, the Gnostic Adamas/Anthropos cannot be simply regarded as Ezekiel's *Kabod*, as Gilles Quispel, for instance, sustained in his "Hermes Trismegistus," 146: "The *Anthropos* of so many Gnostic writings from Nag Hammadi is none other than Ezekiel's *Kabod*." cf. idem., "Ezekiel 1,26." Irenaeus attests to the doctrine of certain Valentinians who conceived of the Anthropos as the eleventh aeon in a list of many others such as Profundity, Life, Word, Idea, Intellect, etc.; see *AH* 1.1.1. With Ecclesia, however, he produced twelve other aeons (cf. *AH* 1.1.2). The figure of Adamas in *Pistis Sophia* might be as well a speculative development on the theme of the exalted luminous Adam, e.g. *Pist. Soph.* 1.15;27 [Schmidt 24;37]. In 2.66, Adamas is a Tyrant (ΠΑΔΑΜΑΣ ΠΤΥΡΑΝΟΣ), possibly an angelic leader of luminous nature fighting the light of Jesus or Pistis Sophia (cf. Carl Schmidt, ed., *Pistis Sophia* [trans. V. MacDermot; Leiden: Brill, 1978], 138; cf. *Pist. Soph.* 2.67 [Schmidt 143;145]). In 2.66 he is also portrayed as possessing a "demonic power," (ΝΤΣΟΜ ΝΔΔΙ ΜΟΝΙΟΝ) [Schmidt 140], in 2.67 a "demonic emanation," (ΝΤΠΡΟΒΟΛΗ ΝΔΔΙ ΜΟΝΙΟΝ ΝΤΕ ΠΑΔΑΜΑΣ ΠΤΥΡΑΝΟΣ) [Schmidt 146], and in 2.77 is called directly "enemy" (ΠΧΛΧΕ ΠΑΔΑΜΑΣ ΕΧΕΠΩΤ)

writings occasionally intermingle since the exalted Adam becomes a special heavenly being generated on the first day of creation and endowed with demiurgic powers (an angel in the *Origin of the World*), while the Divine Image is several times understood to be manifested on the first day of creation. Without being completely overlapped, the figures of the two traditions can no longer be distinguished on the basis of their ontological status or their function in the narrative. They are angels, aeons, or divine characters who sometimes have demiurgic functions and sometimes are completely deprived of such capacities.

On the Origin of the World, for example, a Gnostic writing of uncertain affiliation, talks about three Adams, where Adam of Light, the first of them, appeared on the first day of creation:

Now the first Adam (ΠΩΟΡΠ ΣΕ ΝΑΔΔΑΜ), (Adam) of Light (ΝΤΕ ΠΟΥΟΕΙΝ), is spirit-endowed (ΟΥΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΣ) and appeared on the first day. The second Adam (ΠΜΑΖΟΝΔΥ ΝΑΔΔΑΜ) is soul-endowed (ΟΥΨΥΧΙΚΟΣ) and appeared on the sixth day, which is called Aphrodite. The third Adam (ΠΜΑΖΟΥΟΜΤ ΝΑΔΔΑΜ) is a creature of the earth (ΟΥΧΟΙΚΟΣ), that is, the man of the law, and he appeared on the eighth day¹⁰⁷

The document uses the Pauline distinction between the pneumatic (or heavenly) and psychic (or earthly) *anthropoi* (1 Cor 15:45-47), but changes their order and importance (following those of Philo) and further distinguishes between the psychic and the earthly man. Louis Painchaud finds that the Gnostic material actually follows the Philonian distinctions between the primordial archetype of the anthropos (i.e., the Logos),

[Schmidt 173]. The character, therefore, does not have much in common with the heavenly Anthropos involved in creation, although he is able to create “two dark emanations and the dark place” (2.79 [Schmidt 176]).

¹⁰⁷ *Orig. World II* 117:28-36 (J. M. Robinson and H. J. Klimkeit, *The Coptic Gnostic Library: A Complete Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices* [vol. 2; NHM 33; Leiden: Brill, 2000], 70). Trans. H.-G. Bethge and O. S. Wintermute, 71. Cf. L. Painchaud, *L'Écrit sans titre: Traité sur l'origine du monde (NH II,5 et XIII,2 et Brit. Lib. Or. 4926[1])* [Québec, Canada: Les Presses de l'Université Laval; Louvain-Paris: Peeters, 1995], 192). For other details about this writing, see also Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 221-224.

the noetic anthropos, and finally the sensible and material anthropos.¹⁰⁸ The Anthropos of the first Day, however, manifests himself when the prime parent Adam does not believe that “an immortal man of light (ΟΥΡΩΜΕ ΝΑΤΜΟΥ ΠΡΜΟΥΟΕΙΝ) had been existing before him.”¹⁰⁹ The first Adam has also important demiurgic functions.¹¹⁰ While not being able to return to the ogdoad, the eighth heaven, he creates another heavenly eternal dominion for himself in the realm between the eighth heaven and chaos:

Now when Adam of Light (ΑΔΑΜ ΔΕ ΟΥΟΕΙΝ) conceived the wish to enter his light - i.e., the eighth heaven - he was unable to do so because of the poverty that had mingled with his light. Then he created for himself a vast eternal realm (ΑΥΤΑΜΕΙΟ ΝΑΥ ΝΟΥΝΟΣ ΝΑΙΩΝ). And within that eternal realm he created six eternal realms (ΑΥΤΑΜΙΟ ΝΚΟΟΥ ΝΑΙΩΝ) and their adornments, six in number, that were seven times better than the heavens of chaos and their adornments.¹¹¹

Not a much different demiurgic power has the Anthropos of Marcus, one of the Valentinian Gnostics who conceived of the heavenly Man as the body of Truth (*Aletheia*) (cf. *AH* 1.14.4), a heavenly element (part of the second Tetrad) (*AH* 1.15.1), formed after the image of the power above (*AH* 1.15.2), most likely of the Father. There is a direct link between the figure of the Anthropos and that of the Logos, the latter being described as the Form of the invisible Father.¹¹² The connection between the Anthropos and the power

¹⁰⁸ L. Painchaud, “Le sommaire anthropogonique de l’*Écrit sans titre* (NH II, 117:27-118:2) à la lumière de 1 Co 15:45-47,” *VC* 44 (1990): 382-393. Cf. Philo, *QE* 1.4. Painchaud also mentions that a similar speculation with Pauline terminologies reshaped within the Philonian framework appears in the Valentinian doctrine of Mark the Gnostic, as Irenaeus testifies in *Haer.* 1.18.2 (Painchaud, *L’Écrit sans titre*, 430).

¹⁰⁹ *Orig. World* II 107.26-27 (NHMS 33:50). Trans. Bethge and Wintermute, 51. For the whole episode of theophany see II 107:18-109:1.

¹¹⁰ The figure is called “angel” (ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ) two times in II 108.15 and 108.20. For the tradition of creator-angels, see the seven governors of *Poimandres*, Basilides (Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 1.24.3), Saturninus (*Adv. Haer.* 1.24.1), or *Hypostasis of the Archons* 87.20-35. Cf. B. A. Pearson, “Basilides the Gnostic,” in *A Companion to Second-Century Christian ‘Heretics’* (eds. A. Marjanen and P. Luomanen; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 1-31, esp. 14.

¹¹¹ *Orig. World* II 112.10-17 (NHMS 33:58). Trans. Bethge and Wintermute, 59.

¹¹² E.g. *AH* 1.14.1 (SC 264:207-208): “When first the unoriginated (<οὐ Πατὴρ> οὐδεὶς), inconceivable (ἀνεγνώητος) Father, who is without material substance (ἀνούσιος), and is neither male nor female, willed to bring forth that which is ineffable (τὸ ἄρρητον ῥητὸν γενέσθαι) to Him, and to endow with form that which is invisible (τὸ ἄορατον μορφωθῆναι), He opened His mouth, and sent forth the Word similar to Himself (προήκατο Λόγον ὅμοιον αὐτῷ), who, standing near, showed Him what He Himself

of God should also be pointed out, because the text depicts the Power of the Highest taking the place of the Anthropos at the moment of Annunciation (AH 1.15.3). Moreover, Jesus was formed then according to the likeness and form of this Anthropos, who eventually descended upon Jesus (AH 1.15.3). The whole elaboration proves to be a speculation on Gen 1:26, Phil. 2:6, Col 1:15 (“He is the Image of the invisible God”), and 1 Cor 15:47 (“the second [man, i.e., Jesus] was from heaven”).

A similar discussion appears in the Nag Hammadi text entitled the *Gospel of the Egyptians*, where Adamas is a light radiating from the light, or the “eye of the light,” and has a particular connection with the Self-generated (*Autogenes*) Logos:

For it is [this one], Adamas (ΑΔΑΜΑΣ), the shining light (ΠΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΕΤΡΟΥΟ), who is from the Man (ΠΡΩΜΕ), the first Man, he through whom and to whom everything became, (and) without whom nothing became. The unknowable, incomprehensible Father came forth. He came down from above for the annulment of the deficiency. Then the great Logos, the divine Autogenes (ΝΑΛΟΓΟΣ ΠΑΥΤΟΓΕΝΗΣ), and the incorruptible man Adamas (ΠΑΦΘΑΡΤΟΣ ΝΡΩΜΕ ΑΔΑΜΑΣ) mingled with each other.¹¹³

The second sentence (“For this is the first man, he through whom and to whom everything came into being, (and) without whom nothing came into being”)—a formula recalling the Christological titles of Romans 11:36 and John 1:3—refers in this case to Adamas, then the author endows the Anthropos with real demiurgic functions.

was (ἐπέδειξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἦν), inasmuch as He had been manifested in the form of that which was invisible (αὐτὸς τοῦ ἁοράτου μορφῇ φανείς).” Trans. ANF 1:336.

¹¹³ *Gos. Eg.* III 49.8-19. Trans. A. Böhlig, F. Wisse, and P. Labib, *Nag Hammadi Codices III,2 and IV,2: The Gospel of the Egyptians (The Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit)* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 92. Cf. *Gos. Eg.* IV 61.8-11: “For this one, Ad[amas,] is [a light] (ΟΥΟΥΘΕΙΝ) which radiated [from the light; he is] the eye of the [light.] For this is the first man, because of whom all things [are, to] whom all things [are, and without whom there is nothing,] the [Father] who [came forth,] who is inaccessible [and unknowable,] and who came [down from above] for the annulment [of the] deficiency. Then the [great,] self-begotten, divine [Word] (ΠΙΝ[ΟΣ ΝΩΔΧ] Ε ΝΑΥΤΟΓΕΝΗΣ ΝΝΟ[ΥΤΕ]) [and the] incorruptible man A[damas] ([ΠΙ Δ] ΤΧΩΖΜ ΝΡΩΜΕ Δ[ΑΔΜΑΣ]) became] a mixture [which is man] ([ΠΡΩ] ΜΕ).” (ibid., 93).

The tractate *Eugnostos the Blessed*, “a product of early Jewish Gnosticism,” describes a sequence of two anthropomorphic aeons generated from the Father.¹¹⁴ On the one hand, the Father receives a quite rigorous apophatic description:

He Who Is is ineffable (ΟΥΔΤΩΔΧΕ). No principle knew him, no authority, no subjection, nor any creature from the foundation of the world, except he alone. For he is immortal and eternal, having no birth; for everyone who has birth will perish. He is unbegotten, having no beginning; for everyone who has a beginning has an end. No one rules over him. He has no name; for whoever has a name is the creation of another. He is unnameable. He has no human form (ΜΟΡΦΗ ΝΡΩΜΕ); for whoever has human form is the creation of another. He has his own semblance (ΝΝΟΥΥΖΙ)—not like the semblance we have received and seen, but a strange semblance (ΟΥΖΙΔΕΔ ΝΩΜΜΩ) that surpasses all things and is better than the totalities. It looks to every side and sees itself from itself. He is infinite; he is incomprehensible (ΟΥΔΤΤΑΖΟΨ). He is ever imperishable (and) has no likeness (ΠΕΨΕΙΝΕ) (to anything). He is unchanging good. He is faultless. He is everlasting. He is blessed. He is unknowable, while he (nonetheless) knows himself. He is immeasurable. He is untraceable. He is perfect, having no defect. He is imperishably blessed. He is called “Father of the Universe.”¹¹⁵

Even in the context of this apophatic discourse, however, the author inserts the idea that the Ineffable God has a proper semblance, a strange one (ΟΥΖΙΔΕΔ ΝΩΜΜΩ), because it is different from everything else.¹¹⁶ Then, the Father generates the primordial light as an androgynous Anthropos:

In the beginning, he decided to have his likeness (ΕΙΝΕ) become a great power. Immediately, the principle (or beginning) of that light appeared as Immortal Androgynous Man (ΝΟΥΡΩΜΕ ΝΑΘΑΝΑΤΟC ΝΖΟΟΥΤCΖΙΜΕ). His male name is “[Begotten,] Perfect [Mind (ΠΝΟΥC)].” And his female name (is) “All-wise Begettress Sophia.”¹¹⁷

Through Immortal Man appeared the first designation, namely, divinity and kingdom, for the Father, who is called “Self-Father Man,” revealed this. He created a great aeon for his own

¹¹⁴ Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 211.

¹¹⁵ *Eugnostos* III 71.13-73.3. Trans. D. M. Parrott, *Nag Hammadi Codices III,3-4 and V,1 with Papyrus Berolinensis 8502,3 and Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 1081: Eugnostos and the Sophia of Jesus Christ* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 50-56.

¹¹⁶ The same expression appears in the *Sophia of Jesus Christ*, NHC III 94.24-95.5, in Parrott, 55. In addition to this, the version of the same *Soph. Jes. Chr.* preserved in Papyrus Berolinensis 8502,3 expresses the same idea of resemblance through the noun ΟΥΕΙΝΕ (“likeness”) instead of ΟΥΖΙ (“semblance,” in Parrott’s translation, 55). The *Eugnostos* version preserved in NHC V also unveils a noticeable conception: the Father is without likeness (ΕΙΝΕ) and form (ΜΟΡΦΗ), but “only he [has a resemblance (ΝΟΥCΜΟΤ)] [that] is greater than [everything and better] than everything.” Parrott, 54.

¹¹⁷ *Eugnostos* III 76.19-77.4. Translation Parrott, 82-84.

majesty. He gave him great authority, and he ruled over all creations. He created gods and archangels and angels, myriads without number for retinue.¹¹⁸

The concept of likeness (ΕΙΝΕ), frequently denoting the Father's inaccessible form, is now equated with a luminous, immortal, and androgynous Anthropos whom the text the *Sophia of Jesus Christ* identifies with Jesus Christ.¹¹⁹ While the Immortal Man is described as "full of every imperishable glory and ineffable joy," he also generates a second aeon, the First Begetter, which is the Son of Man, and also called "Adam of Light."¹²⁰ Interestingly enough, the First Begotten Son of God has the power to create a diversity of heavenly beings: "First-begotten, since he has [his] authority from his [father], created a great [aeon] for his own majesty, [creating] numberless myriads of angels for retinue. The whole multitude of angels, who are called "Assembly of the Holy Ones," are the lights and shadowless ones."¹²¹ The text can be seen as a case of the tradition which hypostasizes the Divine Image.

Nevertheless, one of the Valentinian documents, the *Gospel of Philip*, identifies the heavenly Anthropos with Christ and the Son of Man, as in Pauline theology. While

¹¹⁸ *Eugnostos* III 77.9-22. Translation Parrot, 88-90.

¹¹⁹ E.g., *Soph. Jes. Chr.* 100.16-102.19: "Matthew said to him: 'Lord, Savior, how was Man (ΠΡΩΜΕ) revealed?' The perfect Savior said: 'I want you to know that he who appeared before the universe in infinity, Self-grown, Self-constructed Father, being full of shining light and ineffable, in the beginning, when he decided to have his likeness (ΕΙΝΕ) become a great power, immediately the principle (or beginning) of that light appeared as Immortal Androgynous Man, that through that Immortal Androgynous Man they might attain their salvation and awake from forgetfulness through the interpreter who was sent, who is with you until the end of the poverty of the robbers. And his consort is the Great Sophia, who from the first was destined in him for union by the Self-begotten Father, from Immortal Man, who appeared as First and divinity and kingdom, for the Father, who is called 'Man, Self-Father,' revealed this. And he created a great aeon, whose name is Ogdoad, for his own majesty. He was given great authority, and he ruled over the creation of poverty. He created gods and angels <and> archangels, myriads without number for retinue from that Light and the tri-male Spirit, which is that of Sophia, his consort. For from this, God originated divinity and kingdom. Therefore he was called 'God of gods' and 'King of kings.'" Translation Parrot, 81-93. The soteriological function of the divine Anthropos is also remarkable in this passage. As one can see in Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 1081 line 45, the word "likeness" (ΕΙΝΕ) most likely translated the Greek τὸ ὁμοίωμα (see Parrott, 214).

¹²⁰ *Eugnostos* V 8.18-21 (Parrott, 102) for the glorious attributes of the Immortal Man and III 81.10-12 for the Adam of Light (Parrot, 110).

¹²¹ *Eugnostos* V 9.7-16 (Parrott, 106-108); cf. III 81.1-6. The same demiurgic capacities are given from the Father to Christ, the First-begotten, in *Soph. Jes. Chr.* 104.22-105.2.

Gos. Phil. 55:12, 58.20, and 60.24 call Christ the “perfect anthropos (ΠΤΕΛΙΟΣ ΠΡΩΜΕ),”

Gos. Phil. 58.17 calls him directly “heavenly Anthropos (ΠΡΩΜΠΕ)”:

The heavenly man (ΠΡΩΜΠΕ) has many more sons than the earthly man. If the sons of Adam are many, although they die, how much more the sons of the perfect man (ΠΤΕΛΙΟΣ ΠΡΩΜΕ), they who do not die but are always begotten.¹²²

Chapter 12 uses one of the main titles of Christ when it affirms: “The Son of Man (ΠΩΗΡΕ ΜΠΡΩΜΕ) received from God the capacity to create (ΕΤΡΕΦΩΝΤ). He also has the ability to beget (ΕΤΡΕΦΧΠΟ).”¹²³ As in Gospels and Paul, the text ascribes demiurgic powers to the Son of Man.

Roelof van den Broek suggests that the four versions of the Sethian *Apocryphon of John* and the Ophite position Irenaeus attests in *Haer.* 1.29-30 represent various developments of a doctrine which probably started as a theory about an androgynous divine Mother-Father (μητροπάτηρ). The final products of this development illustrate a doctrine that could be described as “an elaborate myth of the heavenly Anthropos pressed into a trinitarian scheme”: the Father of All (the First Man and the First Light), his Son (Second Man and the Son of Man), and the Spirit as the First Woman. All three produced the perfect Man, Christ.¹²⁴

¹²² *Gos. Phil.* 58.17-22, in Hans-Martin Schenke, *Das Philippus-Evangelium (Nag Hammadi Codex II,3)* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997), 26. Trans. W. W. Isenberg, in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (ed. J. M. Robinson; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 145. See also the same translation in *Nag Hammadi Codex II,2-7 together with XIII,2, Brit.Lib.Or. 4926(1), and P.Oxy. 1, 654, 655*, 2 vols., ed. Bentley Layton (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 1:142-215.

¹²³ *Gos. Phil.* 81.19-21 (Schenke, 70). Trans. Isenberg, 157. Schenke considers that the two original Greek words standing for the demiurgic capacities of the Son of Man were κτίζειν and γεννᾶν (Schenke, *Das Philippus*, 495).

¹²⁴ R. van den Broek, “Autogenes and Adamas: The Mythological Structure of the Apocryphon of John” in *Gnosis and Gnosticism: Papers Read at the Eighth International Conference on Patristic Studies (Oxford, September 3rd-8th 1979)* (ed. M. Krause; Leiden: Brill, 1981), 16-25. Cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.30.1; 2; 6; 13 (SC 264:364; 366; 370).

Of the four versions of the *Apocryphon of John*, only BG 48.1-3 defines the Father of All as the First Man (ΠΕΥΟΥΕΙΤ ΝΠΡΩΜΕ).¹²⁵ This fact makes this Berlin Codex contradict itself, since the *Apocryphon* develops a different logic of the divine Anthropos. The *Apocryphon* describes the Father of All, the highest entity, in various negative attributes. As two of the manuscripts affirm at the end of a long list of negative descriptions, “no one of us knows the attributes of the immeasurable One except for him who dwelt in him.”¹²⁶ He is the unmanifested in itself. To the contrary, his Thought (Ennoia), called also the Eikon of the Father and Barbelo—therefore the manifested dimension of the Father—is primarily defined as the First Anthropos.¹²⁷ While the Father generates as well Autogenes (called as well Monogenes, Christos, and Light, but the attribute “Man” is not associated with him), who also is endowed with demiurgic capacities, it is all of them who produce the perfect Anthropos, Adamas:

And (δέ) from the Foreknowledge (πρόγνωσις) of the perfect Mind (τέλειος Νοῦς), through the revelation of the will of the invisible Spirit and the will of the Self-Generated (αὐτογενήης), <the> perfect Man (ΝΠΡΩΜΕ ΝΤΕΛΕΙΟC) (came forth), the first revelation, and truth. It is he whom the virginal Spirit called Piger-Adam(s) (ΠΙΓΕΡΑ ΑΔΑΜΑΝ).¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Cf. M. Waldstein and F. Wisse, eds., *The Apocryphon of John: Synopsis of Nag Hammadi Codices II,1; III,1; and IV,1 with BG 8502,2* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 84.

¹²⁶ *Ap. John* III 6.24-7.1 and BG 26.12-14 (Waldstein and Wisse, 28-30).

¹²⁷ ΝΟΥΥΟΥΕΙΤ ΝΠΡΩΜΕ in III 7.23-24 and BG 27.19-10 (Waldstein and Wisse, 34) or ΠΟΥΟΡΠ ΝΠΡΩΜΕ in II 5.7 and IV 7.21 (Waldstein and Wisse, 35).

¹²⁸ *Ap. John* II 8.29-34 (Waldstein and Wisse, 53). The passage appears in a similar form in the two short versions. “From the Foreknowledge with perfect Mind, through the gift and good will of the great invisible Spirit, in the presence of the Self-Generated, the perfect, true, holy man (came forth), the first one to come forth. He was named Adamas.” (*Ap. John* III 12.24-13.4, Waldstein and Wisse, 52). “And from Foreknowledge with perfect mind, through God, through the good will of the great invisible Spirit and the good will of the Self-Generated, the perfect, true Man (came forth), the first one to come forth. He named him Adam.” (*Ap. John* BG 34.19-35.5, Waldstein and Wisse, 52). The tractate *Zostrianos* 6.22 mentions a very similar character, “the forefather Geradama (the Old Adam).” (J. Sieber, ed., *Nag Hammadi Codex VIII* [Leiden: Brill, 1991], 42. Trans. Sieber, 43). While *Zostrianos* 13.3-6 informs us about “the great male Protophanes, the perfect [child] who is higher than god, and his eye, Pigeradama” (*NHC VIII*:54; trans. Sieber, 55), 30.4-7 talks directly about Adam, a “perfect man” (ΠΙΤΕΛΙΟC ΝΡΩΜΕ), an “an eye of Autogenes,” whose knowledge (γνώσις) comprehends that of Autogenes (*NHC VIII*:84; trans. Sieber, 85). To be noted is his connection with Autogenes, usually called Monogenes and Christ, which is defined as Image or Anthropos depending on how formless or with form the author intended him to be.

The text further describes the creation of the material Adam in a second anthropogonic stage in which the seven powers or authorities led by the chief archon Yaltabaoth offer the seven psychic elements to their leader in order to create Adam. As in the Jewish Second Temple traditions, the forefather has a luminous body.¹²⁹ The seven authorities create Adam according to the image of the primordial Anthropos (either the Father or his Ennoia-Eikon) reflected in waters.¹³⁰ This multifaceted system is finally remarkable because the concept of Anthropos actually functions as an ontological feature, an anthropomorphic form present everywhere in the world, from the highest divinity or simply his manifested Thought to the material Adam.

Finally, according to the *Untitled Text* from the Bruce Codex, in a long song of praise the entire heavenly realm sung to the highest reality, the One Alone, there is a passage which describes the generation of a cosmic Anthropos clothed in creation as in a garment. We will see that these cosmic features reflect similarities with the cosmic Christ in Irenaeus or Pseudo-Hippolytus:

And thou hast created them [the hidden worlds], for thou hast begotten Man (ΝΤΑΚΧΠΕ ΠΡΩΜΕ) in thy self-originated mind, and in the thought and the perfect idea. This is Man begotten of mind (ΠΡΩΜΕ ΝΧΠΟ ΝΝΟΥC), to whom thought gave form (ΔΙΔΝΟΙΔΑ ΤΜΟΡΦΗ). It is thou who hast given

¹²⁹ *Ap. John* II 15-18. For the luminous body (ΠCΘΜΑ ..ΟΥΘΕΙΝ) of the material Adam, see *Ap. John* II 19.33 and IV 30.18 (Waldstein and Wisse, 115). Irenaeus testifies, as well, to the Ophite doctrine about the light, luminous, and spiritual bodies of the prelapsarian Adam and Eve (*leuia et clara et uelut spiritualia corpora*); see *Haer.* 1.30.9 (SC 264:374). It is worth mentioning that *Adversus omnes haereses* 1, a spurious document ascribed to Tertullian, gives an account about Saturninus' anthropogony which is very close to that from *Ap. John*: "Afterwards, again, followed Saturninus: he, too, affirming that the innascible Virtue, that is God, abides in the highest regions, and that those regions are infinite, and in the regions immediately above us; but that angels far removed from Him made the lower world; and that, because light from above had flashed refulgently in the lower regions, the angels had carefully tried to form man after the similitude of that light (*ad similitudinem illius luminis angelos hominem instituere curasse*); that man lay crawling on the surface of the earth; that this light and this higher virtue was, thanks to mercy, the salvable spark in man, while all the rest of him perishes." (Tertullian, *Against All Heresies* 1 [CCSL 2:1401-1402]. Trans ANF 3:649).

¹³⁰ The reflection of the primordial Anthropos in waters above matter, which in fact represents his revelation in the world under the ogdoad, represents a common mythological feature in *Poimandres* 14, *Ap. John* (II 14, III 22, IV 23, BG 48), and *Hyp. Arch.* 87.30-35.

all things to Man. And he has worn them like garments, and he has put them on like clothing, and he has wrapped himself in the creation like a mantle. This is Man whom the All prays to know. Thou alone hast commanded Man that he be revealed, so that they know thee through him, that thou hast begotten him. And thou wast revealed according to thy will. Thou art he to whom I pray, O Father of all fatherhoods, and God of gods, and Lord of all lords.¹³¹

7. Conclusion

All the texts analyzed in this chapter offer an interpretation of Genesis 1:27. By doing so in various intellectual contexts, sometimes because their authors tried to solve hermeneutical problems, sometimes for polemical reasons, these texts most likely represent a synthesis of the traditions which hypostasized the divine image of Gen 1:27 and exalted the protopater to a glorious being. I also presume that a definition in general lines of the Anthropos cannot start from the Hermetico-Gnostic “Anthropos” because there is not a unitary conception of this term. All the Hermetic and Gnostic Anthropos figures are different in terms of ontological status and functions.

Already representing a tradition which depicts the prelapsarian Adam as perfect in beauty and covered in splendor, Ezekiel 28 opens the way for an extremely popular tradition in ancient and medieval Jewish and Christian mysticism. The image of the glorious prelapsarian Adam will be present in various Dead Sea documents, in the Nag Hammadi library, in the mystical writings of the rabbis and the desert fathers.

A different development occurs with Philo’s interpretation of the two different narratives of Gen 1:27 and 2:7 through use of the Platonic distinction between the noetic paradigm (also called the heavenly anthropos) and the sensible and empirical Adam. Likewise, we can find in Philo the roots of the tradition which prefers to hypostasize the concept of the Divine Image of Genesis 1:27. Since Philo’s Logos is defined as god,

¹³¹ *Untitled Text* 17.5-19, in C. Schmidt, ed., *The Book of Jeu and the Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex* (trans. and notes V. MacDermot; Leiden: Brill, 1978), 259.

angel, and anthropos. Philo is also the first to ascribe to the Divine Image a special role in the creation of the universe.

In a Christian context, Paul works in the same synthesis of traditions. He engaged in anti-Adamic polemic with the linguistic instruments of the Adamic tradition. While the first Adam is not adorned with any glory, the whole glory belongs to the second Adam, to Christ, the Son of Man, the Heavenly Anthropos who preceded and created the first Adam. Paul was among the first to ascribe a clear demiurgic function to the heavenly Anthropos and probably the first to characterize this figure as truly divine.

The Hermetic and Gnostic documents do not share a common doctrine about the heavenly Anthropos. There are various positions which go from seeing the Anthropos as a secondary divine figure who exhibits demiurgic functions to seeing the Anthropos as aeon and angel. In general terms, the concept of a heavenly Anthropos as a secondary divine demiurgic figure may encompass such figures as Philo's Logos, Paul's Heavenly Anthropos, the Anthropos of the *Gospel of Philip*, *Apocryphon of John*, the Anthropos figures of the Ophite system Irenaeus presents in *Haer* 1.29-30, the Anthropos of the *Untitled Text*, and the Anthropos of *Poimandres*. The concept does not seem to be, therefore, a Hermetic or Gnostic concept, being primarily forged in Philo and Paul and conceived as a secondary divine demiurgic figure already in the writings of these two authors of the first century. More than once, the Gnostic Anthropos has a lower ontological condition than that which the figure of the heavenly Man has in Philo and Paul.

We have now the background for a discussion of the idea of heavenly Anthropos in early Christian documents and especially paschal writings. We have a clear view of the

Hellenized contexts which developed the idea of heavenly Anthropos and all the possible meanings of this figure in order to understand the sense and significance of the paschal Anthropos. As we will see in the next parts of this study, paschal theology will take over from Paul the synthesis of the two traditions of Adam's exaltation and the hypostasization of the divine Image. Christ will be the Image of God and the Demiurge who created at the beginning of time the glorious being of Adam. As Adam lost his image and glory, Christ's economy of Incarnation is conceived as an act of salvation which will end up with Christ operating again demiurgically as the eschatological divine fashioner of the human being. As this synthesis has its own form of soteriological doctrine, I call it eikonic soteriology.

III. PAUL'S INVENTION OF EIKONIC SOTERIOLOGY

The entire speculation on the Divine Image and its demiurgic powers reflects an increased interest regarding the nature of the human being, its final destiny or final condition, and the way to reach this condition, therefore a soteriology. Now, every soteriological doctrine encompasses its own presuppositions regarding the essence or definition of the perfect human being to be fulfilled. It proposes in this way a model of the perfect human being, therefore an anthropology. Anthropology and soteriology, consequently, are deeply interconnected. Anthropology offers the model of perfect being according to which the present condition of the human being is measured as precarious or fallen, and thus in need of growing toward the perfection of the human being. This path to perfection is the soteriological process in which the ordinary human being evolves in

various ways from its precarious condition towards its own perfection. In the case of paschal soteriology, the anthropological model is Christ, the heavenly Anthropos dressed in garments of light. The soteriological process consists in the passage from the imperfect to the perfect being, from the fallen Adam to the heavenly Adam.

1.Eikonic Anthropology:

Adam as Image of God or the Royal Adam of the Priestly Source

The narrative of Adam's "fall" present in Genesis 2 and 3 portrays the father of humankind as a composition of dust and spirit, and shows Yahweh reducing Adam to dust and expelling him from Paradise. Whether one accepts or not the theory of the two sources P (Gen 1-2:4a, 5) and J (Gen 2:4b-4:26), there are two anthropological theorizations. The first grounds its framework on the central categories of "image" and "likeness" (Gen 1:26-30), the second on the central categories of "dust of the earth," "breath of life," and "living being" (Gen 2:7). The first anthropological perspective portrays Adam as an image of the divine being, most likely one with characteristics like those of the members of the divine council.¹³² This first species of anthropology, as scholars have observed, was a common feature of the ancient Near Eastern cultures. The ruling monarchs in Mesopotamia and Egypt, for instance, were portrayed as the "image" and "likeness" of God.¹³³ In Mesopotamia, for instance, one may find such salutations as "The father of my lord the king is the very image of Bel (*šalam bel*) and the king, my lord, is the very image of Bel"; "The king, lord of the lands, is the image of Shamash";

¹³² See, for instance, N. M. Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis* (Philadelphia; New York; Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 12; W. Randall Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 117-178, for a form-critical analysis of the terms *צֶלֶם* and *דְּמוּת*.

¹³³ Sarna, *Genesis*, 12.

“O king of the inhabited world, you are the image of Marduk.”¹³⁴ Likewise, in Egypt the name of Tutankhamen (*Tut-ankh-amun*) means the “living image of (the god) Amun,” while the designation of Thutmose IV was the “likeness of Re.”¹³⁵ More than that, observing that Adam is portrayed as a king of creation and the image of God on earth, Sarna affirms that “without a doubt, the terminology employed in Gen 1:26-27 is derived from regal vocabulary.”¹³⁶ The idea is further supported by the verb to “rule” (רדה)—recurring also in 1:28—which designates the royal task Yahweh ascribed to Adam in creation: to rule over the fish, birds, cattle, the whole earth, and all the creeping things.¹³⁷

The ideas of fall, of evil in the world, or of any sort of precarity are not part of this anthropological scenario. This first anthropological perspective ends in Gen 1:31 with the clear statement that: “God saw all that He had made, and it was very good (טוב מאד).” Humanity, as part of creation, was consequently without a trace of evil. It is also noteworthy that, at this stage of the narrative, the Garden of Eden is not yet mentioned. Instead, the whole creation is good, and the human being is the king of the creatures of the earth. Likewise, the priestly list of patriarchs in Gen 5:1 is again focused on the idea of divine image. We are informed in 5:1 that Adam was created in the likeness (תומד) of God (Elohim) and he had a son (Seth) according to his image and likeness, a new copy of the divine image. The P document does not portray Adam in negative colors and does not appear to speak of Adam's fault.

134 Ibid.

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid. For a scholarly history of interpretation of Gen 1:26-27, see, for instance, C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11. A Continental Commentary* (tr. J. J. Scullion; Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1994), 146-60.

137 See Sarna, *The JPS Torah*, 12-13. Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 158-9. See also B. F. Batto, “The Divine Sovereign: The Image of God in the Priestly Creation Account,” in *David and Zion: Biblical Studies in Honor of J. J. M. Roberts* (eds. B. F. Batto and K. L. Roberts; Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2004).

2. Pnoetico-Psychic Anthropology: The Adam of Mud and Spirit¹³⁸

It is the source J, in fact, which narrates how Yahweh created Adam and the Garden of Eden where he placed the forefather and from which he later expelled him. Here we have an entirely different scenario, situated in a new anthropological framework. Adam is now more related to the dust of the earth than the heavenly image of God. Here Yahweh formed (רָצִי) Adam from the dust of the earth (עֹפֶר מִי־הָאֲדָמָה), breathed (יָפַח) into his nostrils the breath of life (נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים) in order to make him a living being (נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה), and placed his creature in the Garden. But Adam transgresses the rule regarding the tree of knowledge and Yahweh sends him back to the dust from which he was made (Gen 2:19):

Gen 2: 7 Then the Lord God formed (רָצִי) man from the dust of the ground (עֹפֶר מִי־הָאֲדָמָה), and breathed (יָפַח) into his nostrils the breath of life (נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים); and the man became a living being (נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה). 8 And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ... 15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 17 “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it’, cursed is the ground (אֲדָמָה) because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; 18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground (אֲדָמָה), for out of it you were taken; you are dust (עֹפֶר), and to dust you shall return.”

Most likely, according to this second anthropology, the garments of skin (Gen 3:21) reflect the teriomorphic (animal form) rather than the divine ontological constitution of the human being, and, through this, the suggestion of decadence.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ The term “pnoetic” comes from the Greek πνοή (“breath”, “wind”), translating the Hebrew נִשְׁמַת from Gen 2:7.

¹³⁹ See, for example, for the idea that human transformation into animals represents a process of degradation, P. W. Coxon, “Another Look at Nebuchadnezzar’s Madness,” in *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings* (ed. A. S. van der Woude; Louvain: Peeters, 1993), 211–222; G. Mobley, “The Wild Man in the Bible and the Ancient Near East,” *JBL* 116 (1997): 217–233; M. Henze, *Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar: The Ancient Near Eastern Origins and Early History of Interpretation of Daniel 4* (JSJSup, 61; Leiden: Brill, 1999); S. M. Paul, “The Mesopotamian Babylonian Background of Daniel 1–6,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, eds. J. J. Collins and P. W. Flint (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001), 1:55–68; S. Bunta, “The Mesu-Tree and the Animal Inside: Theomorphism and Teriomorphism in Daniel 4,” in *The Theophaneia School: Jewish Roots of Eastern Christian Mysticism* (eds. B. Lourié and A. Orlov; Sankt Petersburg, Byzantinorossika, 2007), 364–84.

3. Second Temple and Post-Temple Ideas of Eschatological “New Creation”

It is particularly the first type of anthropology, the eikonic one, which will be later developed into the Second Temple and early Christian conceptions about the glorious Adam, the luminous image of God. In turn, this glorious figure will be translated from the *illo tempore* of origins to the eschaton and there envisioned as a new creation. The following chapters will explain this particular development. The idea of “new creation” seems to go back to the post-exilic times and have a strong connection with the reconstruction of the Temple, as Pilchan Lee shows in his monograph on the New Jerusalem.¹⁴⁰ As the Trito-Isaian book shows, especially Isaiah 65:16-25, the idea of a new creation has prophetic roots:

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, my servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but you shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but you shall be put to shame; behold, my servants shall sing for gladness of heart, but you shall cry out for pain of heart, and shall wail for anguish of spirit. You shall leave your name to my chosen for a curse, and the Lord GOD will slay you; but his servants he will call by a different name. So that he who blesses himself in the land shall bless himself by the God of truth, and he who takes an oath in the land shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten and are hid from my eyes. "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth (בְּיוֹרָא שָׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁי וָאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה); and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. But be glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.¹⁴¹

The doctrine of the new creation also appears in the most ancient Enochic document, the *Book of the Luminaries*, possibly composed in the third century B.C.E.:

The book about the motion of the heavenly luminaries, all as they are in their kinds, their jurisdiction, their time, their name, their origins, and their months which Uriel, the holy angel who was with me (and) who is their leader, showed me. The entire book about them, as it is, he showed

¹⁴⁰ P. Lee, *The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation: A Study of Revelation 21-22 in the Light of Its Background in Jewish Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 18-24. He also comments: "Therefore, it is possible to say that the New Jerusalem [in Isa 65:16-25] is the center of the New Creation. In the New Creation, the New Jerusalem is the place which reveals God's sovereignty more gloriously than any place else, though the New Creation itself also reveals it. Therefore, without the New Jerusalem, the New Creation is meaningless. Accordingly, the restoration of Jerusalem results in the restoration of God's sovereignty, and the restoration of God's sovereignty in the restoration of creation (ibid., 21)."

¹⁴¹ Isa 65:13-18.

me and how every year of the world will be forever, until a new creation lasting forever is made.¹⁴²

The Epistle of Enoch, another document pertaining to the same first Enochic corpus, represents the eschatological reconstruction of creation following the purification of every evil in the world and the enthronement of the Great King in his heavenly glory:

After this there will arise an eighth week of righteousness, in which a sword will be given to all the righteous, to execute righteous judgment on all the wicked, and they will be delivered into their hands. And at its conclusion, they will acquire possessions in righteousness, and the temple of the kingdom of the Great One will be built in the greatness of its glory for all the generations of eternity. After this there will arise a ninth week, in which righteous law will be revealed to all the sons of the whole earth, and all the deeds of wickedness will vanish from the whole earth and descend to the everlasting pit, and all humankind will look to the path of everlasting righteousness. After this, in the tenth week, the seventh part, (will be) the everlasting judgment, and it will be executed on the watchers of the eternal heaven, <and a fixed time of the great judgment will be rendered among the holy ones>. And the first heaven will pass away in it, and a new heaven will appear, and all the powers of the heavens will shine forever with sevenfold (brightness). After this there will be many weeks without number forever, in which they will do piety and righteousness, and from then on sin will never again be mentioned.¹⁴³

A similar doctrine appears in the *Book of Jubilees*:

And the angel of the presence who went before the camp of Israel took the tables of the divisions of the years -from the time of the creation- of the law and of the testimony of the weeks of the jubilees, according to the individual years, according to all the number of the jubilees [according, to the individual years], from the day of the [new] creation when the heavens and the earth shall be renewed and all their creation according to the powers of the heaven, and according to all the creation of the earth, until the sanctuary of the Lord shall be made in Jerusalem on Mount Zion, and all the luminaries be renewed for healing and for peace and for blessing for all the elect of Israel, and that thus it may be from that day and unto all the days of the earth.¹⁴⁴

The same *Book of Jubilees* talks about an eschatological recreation and sanctification of the world:

For the Lord has four places on the earth, the Garden of Eden, and the Mount of the East, and this mountain on which thou art this day, Mount Sinai, and Mount Zion (which) will be sanctified in

¹⁴² *IEn.* 72:1. Trans. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 96. The *Book of Luminaries*, also called the *Astronomical Book* seems to be composed in the third century B.C.E. (Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *I Enoch*, 6). Scholars also mention the presence of the New Creation motif in 10:16b-22 and 45-57 (e.g. Lee, *The New Jerusalem*, 55-57 and 63-65).

¹⁴³ *IEn* 91:12-17. Trans. Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 142-143. Part of the *Epistle of Enoch*, the passage is dated to the second century B.C.E. (Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *I Enoch*, 12).

¹⁴⁴ *Jub.* 1:29. Trans. Wintermute, *OTP* 2:54-55. The idea of renewed luminaries also occurs in *Jub* 19:25: "And these will serve to establish heaven, and to strengthen the earth and to renew all of the lights which are above the firmament." Trans. Wintermute, *OTP* 2:63.

the new creation for a sanctification of the earth; through it will the earth be sanctified from all (its) guilt and its uncleanness throughout the generations of the world.¹⁴⁵

Some texts coming from the period that followed the destruction of the Second Temple mention a new creation. The *Apocalypse of Abraham*, especially 21:1-4, 21:6, and 22:4-5, describes a new heavenly world with tones echoing the aforementioned description of Trito-Isaiah:

And he said to me, "Look now beneath your feet at the firmament and understand the creation that was depicted of old on this expanse, (and) the creatures which are in it and the age prepared after it." And (I saw) there the earth and its fruit, and its moving things and its things that had souls, and its host of men and the impiety of their souls and their justification, and their pursuit of their works and the abyss and its torments, and its lower depths and (the) perdition in it. And I saw there the sea and its islands, and its cattle and its fish, and Leviathan and his realm and his bed and his lairs, and the world which lay upon him, and his motions and the destruction he caused the world. I saw there the rivers and their upper (reaches) and their circles. And I saw there the garden of Eden and its fruits, and the source and the river flowing from it, and its trees and their flowering, making fruits, and I saw men doing justice in it, their food and their rest. And I saw there a great crowd of men and women and children, half of them on the right side of the portrayal, and half of them on the left side of the portrayal.¹⁴⁶

A particular line from Pseudo-Philo should be mentioned in this discussion, namely *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 3.10: *Et erit terra alia et celum aliud, habitaculum sempiternum*.¹⁴⁷ While the Song of Deborah in the same document 32.17 uses the expression: *Hymnizabo enim ei in innovatione creature*, the *Fourth/Second Book of Ezra* also comprehends a doctrine of a final renewal of the world, where creation will be re-molded in its original state.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ *Jub.* 4:26. Trans. Wintermute, *OTP* 2:63. Cf. 8:19: "And he knew that the Garden of Eden is the holy of holies, and the dwelling of the Lord, and Mount Sinai the centre of the desert, and Mount Zion - the centre of the navel of the earth: these three were created as holy places facing each other." Trans. Wintermute, *OTP* 2:73.

¹⁴⁶ *ApAbr* 21. Cf. Lee, *The New Jerusalem*, 169-79. For the text, translation, and dating, see G. H. Box, *The Apocalypse of Abraham* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1918), xv; cf. R. Rubinkiewicz, "The Apocalypse of Abraham: A New Translation and Introduction," in *OTP* 1:681-705, esp. 699.

¹⁴⁷ H. Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum: With Latin Text and English Translation* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 1:4; i.e., "There will be another earth and another heaven, an everlasting dwelling place" (*ibid.*, 1:93). For the post-70 C.E. dating of the text, see *ibid.*, 1:199-210.

¹⁴⁸ *LAB* 32.17 (Jacobson, 1:52).

For my son the Messiah shall be revealed with those who are with him, and he shall make rejoice those who remain for four hundred years, and after these years my son (or: servant) the Messiah shall die, and all who draw human breath. And the world shall be turned back to primeval silence for seven days, as it was at the first beginnings; so that no one shall be left. And after seven days the world, which is not yet awake, shall be roused, and that which is corruptible shall perish. And the earth shall give back those who are asleep in it, and the dust those who rest in it; and the treasures shall give up the souls which have been committed to them. And the Most High shall be revealed upon the seat of judgment, and compassion shall pass away, mercy shall be made distant, and patience shall be withdrawn; but only judgment shall remain, truth shall stand, and faithfulness shall grow strong.¹⁴⁹

A few verses further, the same thought recurs in the following form:

I answered and said, "If I have found favor in thy sight, O Lord, show this also to thy servant: Whether after death, as soon as every one of us yields up his soul, we shall be kept in rest until those times come when thou wilt renew the creation, or whether we shall be tormented at once?"¹⁵⁰

Likewise, the idea comes out in *Second (Syriac) Book of Baruch*:

You, however, if you prepare your minds to sow into them the fruits of the law, he shall protect you in the time in which the Mighty One shall shake the entire creation. For after a short time, the building of Zion will be shaken in order that it will be rebuilt. That building will not remain; but it will again be uprooted after some time and will remain desolate for a time. And after that it is necessary that it will be renewed in glory and that it will be perfected into eternity. We should not, therefore, be so sad regarding the evil which has come now, but much more (distressed) regarding that which is in the future. For greater than the two evils will be the trial when the Mighty One will renew His creation.¹⁵¹

As Michael Stone observes, *4 Ezra* 7:30 can be compared with *2 Apocalypse of Baruch*

3:7, 44:9, and the *Epistle of Barnabas* 15:8:¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ *4/2 Ezra* 7:28-34. Trans. B. M. Metzger in *OTP* 1:525-559 with small revisions by Michael Stone in his Hermeneia commentary: *Forth Ezra: A Commentary on the Book of Fourth Ezra* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 202-203. According to Stone, the book was "composed in the time of Domitian (81-96 C.E.)" (*ibid.*, 10). This description of the "day of Judgment" also includes the idea that this day will no longer have light from the sun, moon, or stars, but "only the splendor of the glory of the Most High, by which all shall see what has been determined for them" (*4/2 Ezra* 7:39-44; trans. Stone, 203), an idea that can also be found in *Rev* 21:23; 22:5 and *Tg. Exod.* 12:42.

¹⁵⁰ *4/2 Ezra* 7:75. Trans. Stone, 235.

¹⁵¹ *2 Bar* 32:1-6. Trans. A. F. J. Klijn, in *OTP* 1:631. For the Syriac text, see S. Dederling, *Apocalypse of Baruch* (Peshitta Institute, The Old Testament in Syriac, Part IV, Fasc. 3; Leiden: Brill, 1973).

¹⁵² Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 217. For the texts, see *4/2 Ezra* 7:30: "And the world shall be turned back to primeval silence for seven days, as it was at the first beginnings; so that no one shall be left." (Metzger, *OTP* 1:537); *2 Bar* 3:7: "Or will the universe return to its nature and the world go back to its original silence?" (Klijn, *OTP* 1:621); *2 Bar* 44:9: "For everything will pass away which is corruptible, and everything that dies will go away, and all present time will be forgotten, and there will be no remembrance of the present time which is polluted by evils." (Klijn, *OTP* 1:634).

It is not the present sabbaths that are acceptable to me, but the one that I have made; on that sabbath, after I have set everything at rest, I will create the beginning of an eighth day (ἀρχὴν ἡμέρας ὀγδόης ποιήσω), which is the beginning of another world (ἄλλου κόσμου ἀρχήν).¹⁵³

But before Pseudo-Barnabas, the books of the New Testament took over the new creation idea and reworked it in Christian milieu. In Galatians 6:15, for example, one can find the expression “new creation” most likely in connection with the human being, a subject which sends us to the matter discussed in the next sub-chapter: “For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation (καινὴ κτίσις).” Likewise, the famous and influential Revelation 21:1-8 speaks in terms very similar to the texts cited in the lines above:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.” And he who sat upon the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.”¹⁵⁴

Some Isaianic resonances appear as well:

And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it.¹⁵⁵

A rabbinic document, the *Tractate Sanhedrin* of the *Babylonian Talmud*, also preserves the tradition of the eschatological creation:

R. Hanan b. Tahlipha sent a message to R. Joseph: I met a man who possessed scrolls written in Assyrian characters and in the holy language. And to my question from where he got it, he answered: I hired myself to the Persian army, and among the treasures of Persia I found it. And it

¹⁵³ *Ep. Barn.* 15:8, in M. W. Holmes, ed. and tr., *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 428-429.

¹⁵⁴ Rev 21:1-5.

¹⁵⁵ Rev 21:22-24. Cf. Isa 60: 1-3: “Arise, shine, Jerusalem, for your light has come; and over you the glory of the LORD has dawned. Though darkness covers the earth and dark night the nations, on you the LORD shines and over you his glory will appear; nations will journey towards your light and kings to your radiance.”

was written therein that after two thousand, two hundred and ninety-one years of the creation, the world will remain an orphan, many years will be the war of whales, and many more years will be the war of Gog and Magog, and the remainder will be the days of the Messiah. But the Holy One, blessed be He, will not renew the world before seven thousand have elapsed. And R. Aha b. R. Rabha said: After five thousand years from to-day.¹⁵⁶

4. The Recreated Eschatological Human Being in Second Temple Literature

It was in the context of a growing interest in the eschatological new creation that the idea of a renewed human being appeared. The aforementioned Trito-Isaianic passage regarding the New Creation/Jerusalem also describes in paradisiacal tones the conditions the inhabitants of the new world will enjoy, for example, just reward for work, perfect communication with God, restoration of peace, etc.¹⁵⁷ Lee also connects Isaiah 65:16-25 with Isaiah 66:1-24, a passage which introduces another aspect of the eschatological new world, namely the glory of God.¹⁵⁸ It is especially Isaiah 60:1-3 and 19-20 that clearly specifies the eschatological human existence in the glory of God:¹⁵⁹

Arise, shine (יִרְאֵה), for your light (רוֹאֵה) has come, and the glory of the Lord (הוֹדֵי דֹבֵב) rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light (דְּרוֹאֵה), and kings to the brightness (הִגֵּב) of your dawn. ... The sun will no more be your light (רוֹאֵה) by day, nor will the brightness (הִגֵּב) of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light (רוֹאֵל הוֹדֵי עוֹלָם), ruoy dna ,niaga tes reven lliw nus ruoY (אלהיך לתפארתך). yrolg ruoy eb lliw doG ruoy dna moon will wane no more; the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end.

The saved people in Isaiah do not seem to be transformed into light, but rather to live happily in Yahweh's light.

¹⁵⁶ *Sanh* 11(97b). cf. "The school of R. Ismael taught: One may learn it from glass-wares, which are made by human beings, and if they break there is a remedy for them, as they can be renewed: human beings, who are created by the spirit of the Lord, so much the more shall they be renewed (restored)." Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Isa 65:12-25. See also Lee, *New Jerusalem*, 18-24.

¹⁵⁸ Lee, *New Jerusalem*, 24-26.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Ibid., 34-36.

Another ancient biblical passage— Daniel 12:1-3, perhaps among the first materials to illustrate human transformation into glory—depicts the luminous constitution of the resurrected in the following tones:

Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven (עיקרה רהוב ורהוי מילכשמה), and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars (מיבכוכב) forever and ever.

Similarly, speaking about the souls of the righteous the Book of Wisdom 3:7 affirms that “In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble.”

The *Book of Jubilees* shows some traces of this notion of eschatological human recreation in the following lines:

And Moses fell on his face and prayed and said, “O Lord my God, do not forsake Thy people and Thy inheritance, so that they should wander in the error of their hearts, and do not deliver them into the hands of their enemies, the Gentiles, lest they should rule over them and cause them to sin against Thee. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be lifted up upon Thy people, and create in them an upright spirit, and let not the spirit of Beliar rule over them to accuse them before Thee, and to ensnare them from all the paths of righteousness, so that they may perish from before Thy face. But they are Thy people and Thy inheritance, which thou hast delivered with thy great power from the hands of the Egyptians: create in them a clean heart and a holy spirit, and let them not be ensnared in their sins from henceforth until eternity.” And the Lord said unto Moses: “I know their contrariness and their thoughts and their stiffneckedness, and they will not be obedient till they confess their own sin and the sin of their fathers. And after this they will turn to Me in all uprightness and with all (their) heart and with all (their) soul, and I will circumcise the foreskin of their heart and the foreskin of the heart of their seed, and I will create in them a holy spirit, and I will cleanse them so that they shall not turn away from Me from that day unto eternity.”¹⁶⁰

The particularity of this passage consists in introducing a special agent which performs the new creation. It is the regenerating or creator Spirit, an idea present in the Bible from

¹⁶⁰ *Jub 1:18-25, in OTP 2:53-54, trans. O. S. Wintermute. See also The Book of Jubilees: A Critical Text, ed. and trans. J. C. Vanderkam (Louvain: Peeters, 1989). VanderKam considers that the book was written between ca 165-100 B.C.E. (cf. J. C. VanderKam, The Book of Jubilees [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001], 21).*

Genesis 1:1 to the Ezekielean episode of resurrection (Ezek 37:1-10), and Psalms 104:30.

A psalm of Solomon, perhaps a first-century B.C.E. text, makes the same connection

between the eschatological human state and its renewal through the activity of the Spirit:

And (relying) upon his God, throughout his days he will not stumble; for God will make him mighty by means of (His) holy spirit, and wise by means of the spirit of understanding, with strength and righteousness. And the blessing of the Lord (will be) with him: he will be strong and stumble not; His hope (will be) in the Lord: who then can prevail against him? (He will be) mighty in his works, and strong in the fear of God, (He will be) shepherding the flock of the Lord faithfully and righteously, and will suffer none among them to stumble in their pasture. He will lead them all aright, and there will be no pride among them that any among them should be oppressed. This (will be) the majesty of the king of Israel whom God knoweth; He will raise him up over the house of Israel to correct him. His words (shall be) more refined than costly gold, the choicest; In the assemblies he will judge the peoples, the tribes of the sanctified. His words (shall be) like the words of the holy ones in the midst of sanctified peoples. Blessed be they that shall be in those days, In that they shall see the good fortune of Israel which God shall bring to pass in the gathering together of the tribes.¹⁶¹

The *First Book of Enoch* 50 (part the *Book of Parables*, a text produced at the turn of the era) mentions, as well, the glorious status of eschatological human beings: “In those days a change will occur for the holy and chosen, and the light of days will dwell upon them, and glory and honor will return to the holy.”¹⁶² The glorious final destiny of the righteous finds a clearer expression in *I Enoch* 58: “Blessed are you, righteous and chosen, for glorious (will be) your lot. The righteous will be in the light of the sun, and the chosen in the light of everlasting life.”¹⁶³ Likewise, *I Enoch* 62: “And the righteous

¹⁶¹ *PsSol* 17:42-50, in *OTP* 2:668, trans. R. B. Wright. See also *PsSol* 18:6-9, *OTP* 2:669: “May God cleanse Israel against the day of mercy and blessing, against the day of choice when He bringeth back His anointed. Blessed shall they be that shall be in those days, in that they shall see the goodness of the Lord which He shall perform for the generation that is to come, under the rod of chastening of the Lord’s anointed in the fear of his God, in the spirit of wisdom and righteousness and strength; that he may direct (every) man in the works of righteousness by the fear of God, that he may establish them all before the Lord.” For the dating of this text, see Wright, *OPT* 2:640,

¹⁶² *I En.* 50:1. Trans. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, 64. However, the idea is already present in the *Dream Visions* (*I En.* 89:40), which describes the righteous as sheep entering a glorious land, a book which comes from the time of Judas Macabeus (164-160 B.C.E.); cf. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, *I Enoch*, 9.

¹⁶³ *I En* 58:2-3. Trans. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, 71.

and the chosen will have arisen from the earth, and have ceased to cast down their faces, and have put on them the garment of glory.”¹⁶⁴

5. The Adam of Glory and the Glory of the Eschatological Human Being

A late Second Temple tradition inserted the figure of Adam in this discourse about the end of the world and accepted simultaneously the thought that Adam’s prelapsarian ontological status was that of a glorious being, insofar as he was God’s image.¹⁶⁵ As we have already seen, several Dead Sea manuscripts testify for the circulation of the idea that Adam’s original status was luminous and divine or angelic. The Essenes, however, equally deemed that human beings would be restored to the prelapsarian status. As Fletcher-Louis has stated, “[t]his community believed that in its original, true and redeemed state humanity is divine (and/or angelic).”¹⁶⁶ In the famous *Community Rule*, a document scholars date to around 100 B.C.E., there is a passage which synthesizes in a wonderful way the eschatological recreation of the human being, its purification from every unclean spirit, and its refashioning in the primordial glory of Adam:

God, in the mysteries of his knowledge and in the wisdom of his glory, has determined an end to the existence of injustice and on the appointed time of the visitation he will obliterate it for ever. Then truth shall rise up forever (in) the world, for it has been defiled in paths of wickedness during the dominion of injustice until the time appointed for judgment decided. Then God will refine, with his truth, all man’s deeds, and will purify for himself the structure of man (יִבְנֵם שִׂיא), ripping out all spirit of injustice from the innermost part of his flesh, and cleansing him with the spirit of holiness (חֹרֶב שְׂדִיק) from every wicked deeds. He will sprinkle over him the spirit of truth like lustral water (in order to cleanse him) from all the abhorrences of deceit and (from) the defilement of the unclean spirit, in order to instruct the upright ones with knowledge of the Most High, and to make understand the wisdom of the sons of heaven to those of perfect behavior. For those God has

¹⁶⁴ *1 En* 62:15, Trans. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, 81. Cf. *1 En* 62:3; *2 Bar.* 4:16; *2 Bar.* 54:13-16; *1QH* xvii 1.

¹⁶⁵ One may conjecture that the origins of this conception about the prelapsarian Adam was Ezekiel (see Silviu Bunta’s forthcoming monograph).

¹⁶⁶ Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory*, 476.

chosen for an everlasting covenant and to them shall belong all the glory of Adam (דובכ מדא
יכל)¹⁶⁷.

The *Damascus Document*, a text emerging most likely at the same period, makes the following affirmation about the restored people of Israel:

But God, in his wonderful mysteries, atoned for their iniquity and pardoned their sin. And he built for them a safe house in Israel, such as there has not been since ancient times, not even till now. Those who remained steadfast in it will acquire eternal life, and all the glory of Adam (דובכ מדא
meht rof si יכל)¹⁶⁸.

Two other important texts for our discussion are the *Life of Adam and Eve* and one of its versions, the *Apocalypse of Moses*. We saw in the previous chapter that these two documents conceive of the primordial Adam as a luminous being. In addition, *Vita* 13-16 describes the fall of Satan who declines the divine commandment to worship Adam, the image of God: “And Michael went out and called all the angels, saying, ‘Worship the image of the Lord God, as the Lord God has instructed.’”¹⁶⁹ The text, therefore, associates the ideas of divine glory and image of God with the primordial Adam.

Adam’s story continues with his repentance and the way God restores the original condition of the forefather after his death. The *Apocalypse* narrates how the angels come, take Adam’s dead body to Paradise (*ApMos* 39:1), and wash his soul three times in the presence of God. The Lord God commands then the angels to cover Adam’s body with cloths of linen brought from Paradise:

[O]ne of the six-winged seraphim came and carried Adam off to the Lake of Acheron and washed him three times in the presence of God. He lay three hours, and so the Lord of all, sitting on his holy throne, stretched out his hands and took Adam and handed him over to the archangel

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 1QS iv 18-23, 78-79.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., CD iii (= 4Q269 2)18-20, 554-555.

¹⁶⁹ *Vita* 14:1. Trans. Johnson, *OTP* 2:262. Cf. *SybOr.* 8.442-445; *GenrR.* 8-10; *BB* 58a; *ApSedr.* 5-7. See also D. Steenburg, “The Worship of Adam and Christ as the Image of God,” *JSNT* 39 (1990):95-109.

Michael, saying to him, “Take him up into Paradise, to the third heaven, and leave (him) there until that great and fearful day which I am about to establish for the world.”¹⁷⁰

Then he [God] spoke to the archangel Michael, “Go into Paradise in the third heaven and bring me three cloths of linen and silk (τρεις σινδόνας βυσσίνας καὶ σηρικάς).” And God said to Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael, “Cover Adam’s body with the cloths and bring oil from the oil of fragrance and pour it on him (ἐλαιον ἐκ τοῦ ἐλαίου τῆς εὐωδίας ἐκχέετε ἐπ’ αὐτόν).”¹⁷¹

The gesture of covering Adam with white clothes and oil echoes the Enochic passage where God commands his angels to cover in garments of glory and anoint the inspired scribe.¹⁷² The *Vita* relates in the same fashion how angels take Adam’s soul and clothe him with three linen garments: “Again the Lord said to the angels Michael and Uriel: ‘Bring me three linen shrouds (*sindones bissinas*) and stretch them over (*expandite super*) Adam.’”¹⁷³

Nonetheless, before the *Vita* 12-14, Paul links the protological glory of Adam with the image of God. It was in his theology that eikonic anthropology became connected with the idea of eschatological reconstruction of the human being, a reconstruction which will take place according to the primeval model of the Divine Image, now conceived as Christ.

¹⁷⁰ *ApMos.* 37:3-5. Trans. Johnson, *OTP* 2:289-291.

¹⁷¹ *ApMos.* 40 :1-2 (Tromp, 170). Trans. Johnson, *OTP* 2 :291. The story appears in similar forms in all the five extant versions; cf. Anderson and Stone, *A Synopsis*, 68-71.

¹⁷² See 2 *En* 22:8-10 [A] (A. Vaillant, *Le livre des secrets d’Hénoch: Texte slave et traduction française* [Paris: Institut d’Études Slaves, 1952], 24-26): “The Lord said to Michael, ‘Take Enoch, and extract (him) from the earthly clothing (земныхъ ризъ). And anoint him with the delightful oil (еелемъ благовонъ), and put (him) into the clothes of glory (ризъ славы).’ And Michael extracted me from my clothes. He anointed me with the delightful oil; and the appearance of that oil is greater than the greatest light (видѣние масла пауче свѣта великаго), its ointment is like sweet dew, and its fragrance like myrrh; and its shining is like the sun. And I gazed at all of myself, and I had become like one of the glorious ones (яко единъ шѣтъ славы), and there was no observable difference.” Trans. Andersen, *OTP* 1:139 (J version is very similar). In 1 *En* 71:11 we see Enoch’s spirit transformed in front of the heavenly throne and immediately after that performing the angelic function of blessing, glorifying, and extolling with a great voice and by the spirit of the power.

¹⁷³ *Vita* 48:1. Trans. Tromp.

6. Pauline Eikonic Soteriology

As we saw in the chapter devoted to the emergence of Anthropos speculations, Paul was a defender of the idea that Christ was the Image and the Form of God. In 1 Corinthians 2:8 Christ is also called the “Lord of glory,” therefore the ancient title “Yahweh Sabaoth.” According to Pauline anthropology, the human being should become a copy of Christ’s divine countenance. Paul associates Christ’s kenotic incarnation (therefore his transformation from the form of glory into the form of the servant) with human transformation into his glorious image. Accordingly, the transformation and the descent of the heavenly Anthropos eventually induce the ascension and exaltation of the fallen Adam. Pauline anthropological and soteriological discourses articulate, therefore, a synthesis of the two Anthropos trends, since the fallen Adam is exalted through the divine descent of the heavenly Image. Human salvation, consequently, can be envisioned as an eikonic soteriology.

With no doubt, 1 Corinthians 11:7 shows that Paul conceives of the human being as the image of God: “A man (ἄνθρωπος) must not cover his head, because man is the image (εἰκὼν) of God and the mirror of his glory (δόξα).” It should be noticed that Paul does not talk about the renewal of the glory of Adam, possibly destroyed or deteriorated through Adam’s fall, as in Qumran scrolls, but in Christ’s image. Colossians 3:9-10 seems to depict the renewal process as the whole intention of Christ’s economy:

you have discarded the old human nature (τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον) and the conduct (ταῖς πράξεσιν) that goes with it, and have put on the new nature (τὸν νέον) which is constantly being renewed (τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον) in the image of its Creator (κατ’ εἰκόνα) and brought to know God.

The destiny of human beings is, therefore, according to this anthropology, to become icons of the heavenly Anthropos, as Paul affirms in 1 Corinthians 15:45-49 while speculating at the same time on both Genesis 2:7 and Genesis 1:27:

It is in this sense that scripture says, “The first man (ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος), Adam, became a living creature (ψυχὴν ζῶσαν),” whereas the last Adam (ὁ ἔσχατος Ἀδάμ) has become a life-giving spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιόν). ... The first man is from earth, made of dust; the second man (ὁ δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος) is from heaven. The man made of dust is the pattern of all who are made of dust, and the heavenly man is the pattern of all the heavenly. As we have worn the likeness of the man made of dust (τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ), so we shall wear the likeness of the heavenly man (τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου).¹⁷⁴

There are, consequently, two anthropomorphic forms, each provided with its own copy or likeness. As patterns we have the heavenly Anthropos and the earthly man (also called the first man, Adam). As copies or likenesses we have the old human nature (also a likeness of Adam, the man of dust) and the new nature, which is the likeness of the image of its Creator and the likeness of the heavenly Anthropos. The transformation consists, therefore, of the change from one likeness to the other. In 2 Corinthians 3:18 Paul testifies to the same idea of human transformation:

And because for us there is no veil over the face, we all see as in a mirror the glory of the Lord (τὴν δόξαν κυρίου), and we are being transformed (μεταμορφούμεθα) into his likeness (τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα) with ever-increasing glory (ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν), through the power of the Lord who is the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:22-24 emphasizes both the ethical and ontological facets of this process of human transformation from the old to the new man:

Renouncing your former way of life, you must lay aside the old human nature (τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον) which, deluded by its desires, is in the process of decay: you must be renewed in mind and spirit (ἀνανεοῦσθαι δὲ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ νοῦς ὑμῶν), and put on the new nature (ἐνδύσασθαι τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον) created in God’s likeness (τὸν κατὰ θεὸν κτισθέντα), which shows itself in the upright and devout life called for by the truth.

¹⁷⁴ For the two Adams in Paul, see, for example, Charles K. Barrett, *From First Adam to Last: A Study in Pauline Theology* (New York: Scribner, 1962) and Robin Scroggs, *The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966).

Eikonic soteriology, therefore, represents in its first form the transformation from one likeness into the other. Again, the human being is not transformed into Adam's prelapsarian image, as in Qumran theology, but into the glorious image of Christ, the heavenly Anthropos and the second Adam.

Paul appears to conceive of both the Father and the Son as deeply involved in this process of eikonic salvation. On the one hand, the apostle describes the Father in these colors: "For those whom God knew before ever they were, he also ordained to share the likeness of his Son (συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ), so that he might be the eldest (τὸν πρωτότοκον) among a large family of brothers" (Rom 8:29). On the other hand, Paul envisions the economy and the Incarnation itself in eikonic terms insofar as it is described as metamorphosis, as the process of exchanging forms from the divine glory to the form of the corruptible man. Thus Phil 2:6-7:

He was in the form of God (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ); yet he laid no claim to equality with God, but made himself nothing (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν), assuming the form of a slave (μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν). Bearing the human likeness (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων), sharing the human lot, he humbled himself, and was obedient, even to the point of death, death on a cross.

Carry Newman, in his seminal study on Paul's Glory Christology, describes Pauline soteriology in eikonic terms. First of all, the human being fell from the original glory of God, not of Adam. While commenting on Romans 3:23 ("all have sinned and are falling short of the glory of God"), Newman affirms: "Normally interpreted as a reference to the lost glory that Adam (supposedly) possessed at creation, this verse, however, refers to the relationship between God and humanity."¹⁷⁵ In his footnote to this commentary, Newman also affirms:

¹⁷⁵ Newman, *Paul's Glory Christology*, 225.

In early Jewish materials there is indeed a tradition which speaks of a restoration of (prelapsarian?) Glory to Adam; see Bar. 4:16; 2 Bar. 54:13-16; CD iii 20; 1QS iv 23; 1QH xvii 15; 4Q504 fr. 8 recto; T. Abr. 11:8-9; Life of Adam and Eve 12:1; Apoc. Mos. 21:2, 6; 39:2; cf. 4QpPs^a 1-10 iii 2 (=4Q171); 1 Enoch 89:44-45. Rom. 3:23.¹⁷⁶

Newman describes in more detail the eschatological destiny of the human being.¹⁷⁷ It is certainly in the heavenly glory of Christ, not that of the prelapsarian Adam. Newman also describes this process as an *imitatio Christi*, a repetition of the death-resurrection event.

Paul's autobiographical narrative presupposes that he has experienced the end, death/resurrection, and that in the "middle" of his narration, i.e., the time between Christophany and parousia, Paul seeks a mastery of death through a re-enactment of Christophany—dying that he might rise. Paul patterns his Christian narration after his own story: in the Christophany Paul died and was reborn. Though Paul acknowledges a threat of unnatural death, or end, he describes the eschatological goal of transformation as conformity to Jesus' resurrection body of glory.¹⁷⁸

In addition to this vision of an eschatological ontological status similar to Jesus' body of glory (τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης; Phil 3:21), Newman also expressly associates glory and eikon while commenting 2 Corinthians 3:18:

Εἰκόν and δόξα partake of the same paradigmatic field: by beholding the resurrected Glory of God in Christ (in the preaching of the gospel), one is transformed into the image of Christ. That is, the revelation of Christ as Glory (ὑπὸ δόξης) inaugurates a process of transformation which ultimately resolves into a final transformation in the Glory of Christ (εἰς δόξαν).¹⁷⁹

Summary

This first part of the present study has investigated three theological concepts which most likely emerged in the first century, all of them playing a decisive role in paschal theology. The first was the emergence of idea of Son of Man as a divine soteriological and eschatological figure, the second regarded the archetypal Anthropos figure, while the third was eikonic soteriology as a synthesis of the two main Anthropos traditions of exaltation and hypostasization. While it is highly significant for the study of

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., n. 30.

¹⁷⁷ E.g., Ibid., 209-211, 224-228.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 210.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 227.

the New Testament that the synthesis of all these three ideas appeared already in Paul, paschal documents will be a preeminent place for the elaboration of this synthesis. Christ is the Son of Man, the Image of God, and the Demiurge of the primordial human being, the luminous Adam. While Adam's fall is conceived as the loss of the image or likeness of God, it is Christ's Incarnation—understood as an exchange of the divine luminous form for the human humble one—that opens the process of recreation at the end of which the human being will be reconstructed in the form of glory.

PART TWO

NOETIC PERCEPTION AND NOETIC ANTHROPOS

PROLEGOMENA: POLEMICAL ATTITUDES AGAINST ANTHROPOMORPHIC TRADITIONS

The *kabod* tradition and its Adamic version faced a series of polemical attitudes either radically critical or merely providing adjustments within its own semantic borders, namely within the concepts, images, and symbols of this tradition. I would see, for instance, Paul's theology of the two Adams as a species of polemics within the semantic borders of Adamic and *kabod* traditions at the age of their synthesis.¹ While Paul envisions Christ as the true Adam and portrays the protopater through negative lineaments as the one through whom sin came into the world, the apostle uses the main categories of the Adamic and *kabod* traditions (glory, form, eikon, etc.), as we have seen that Newman demonstrated.

To the contrary, as several scholars have observed, other theological traditions proposed categories of discourse of radical novelty. They have theorized that the tradition of *Shem*, the divine Name, for example, evolved in opposition to the *kabod* tradition on the background of a theological debate between two distinct schools, the Priestly and the Deuteronomistic.² On the one hand, the Priestly school emphasized the idea of divine glory, and, in addition to that, not rarely, divine anthropomorphism.³ To the contrary, the *Shem* tradition rejects the idea that God might be manifested in light, and it advances the

¹ As I already mentioned in the Introduction (note 1), I perceive the two traditions as distinct in their origins, and I see Pauline theology—from the perspective from which Fossum and Newman analyze it by understanding the concepts of *eikon*, *morphe*, and *doxa* as synonymous—as an important synthesis which has its roots in such theophanic narratives of the Hebrew Bible as Ezek 1:26.

² G. von Rad, "Deuteronomy's 'Name'" and Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth*. For extensive bibliographies, see M. Weinfeld, "Kabod," *TDOT* 7 (1995), 22-38; H. J. Zobel, "Sabaoth," *TDOT* 12 (2003), 215-232.

³ E.g., M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 191-199; Ludwig Köhler, "Die Grundstelle der Imago-Dei Lehre, Genesis i, 26," *TZ* 4 (1948): 16-17.

thesis according to which Yahweh's favorite way of manifestation, particularly in the Temple, is his Name.⁴

Stressing a different anti-Adamic tendency, various scholars have already pointed out the "long-lasting competition between Adamic and Enochic traditions," raging from the first books of the Ethiopic Enoch (for example, *Animal Apocalypse*) to the Slavonic Enoch.⁵ Michael Stone even includes Noachic traditions among Adamic opponents of Adamic traditions and makes the following challenging observation about the Qumranite documents: "Enochic explanation of the origin of evil contrasts with that which relates it to Adam's sin. Adam apocrypha and legendary developments of the Adam stories are strikingly absent from Qumran, while there are many works associated with the axis from Enoch to Noah."⁶ While investigating the intricate polemical attitudes between the Enochic groups and such other theological poles of the Second Temple as those which primarily emphasized the Adamic, Mosaic, or Noahic traditions, Andrei A. Orlov underlines the competition between the heavenly corporealities of the exalted Adam and Enoch.⁷

In a similar way, Orlov points out a later development of the debate between *kabod* and *shem* theologies, a later form which emphasized the opposition between *kabod*

⁴ In addition to the above authors, see also G. H. van Kooten, *The Revelation of the Name YHWH to Moses: Perspectives from Judaism, the Pagan Graeco-Roman World, and Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); S. Richter, *The Deuteronomistic History and the Name Theology: "Lesakken semo san" in the Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002).

⁵ A. A. Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2005), 212; G. Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways Between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 73; M. Stone, "The Axis of History at Qumran," in *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives: The Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. E. Chazon and M. E. Stone; STDJ 31; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 133–49.

⁶ Stone, "The Axis of History," 133

⁷ See Orlov, *Enoch*.

traditions and that position which replaces divine manifestation in glory with more subtle forms of manifestation, such as the divine Name or the divine Voice.⁸

Most likely the last polemical attitude against the *kabod* and the anthropomorphic tradition was that of the philosophically educated Jewish and Christian theologians of Late Antiquity. This anti-anthropomorphic position originated in ancient Greek philosophy with Xenophanes of Colophon. While in the following centuries the paradigm knew such prominent Jewish Alexandrian representatives as Aristobulus and Philo, several emblematic Hellenistic Christian and non-Christian thinkers of the second and third centuries also embraced anti-anthropomorphic stances.⁹ The anthropomorphic attitude continued to be very appealing to many theologians and had its followers until very late in the middle ages.¹⁰ Unlike the aforementioned polemical traditions where the

⁸ A. A. Orlov, "Praxis of the Voice: The Divine Name Traditions in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*," *JBL* 127:1 (2008): 53–70; idem, "'The Gods of My Father Terah': Abraham the Iconoclast and the Polemics with the Divine Body Traditions in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*," *JSP* 18:1 (2008): 33–53; idem, "The Fallen Trees: Arboreal Metaphors and Polemics with the Divine Body Traditions in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*," *HTR* 102 (2009): 439–451.

⁹ For Xenophanes of Colophon (c. 570–480 BC), see *Fragmenta* 11–16;23 (FV 1:132–135) as well as *Testimonia* 28.1;9 (FV 1:116–117), or 31.3–5 (FV 1:121–122). For Aristobulus, see Eusebius, *Pr. Ev.* 8.10.1–2 (GCS 43/1:451); for Philo, see e.g. *Op.* 69 (LCL Philo 1:54) or *Mut.* 54 (LCL Philo 5:168); for Celsus, see *Cels.* 7.27;34 (SC 150:74;90). See also Clement of Alexandria's rejection of anthropomorphism in *Str.* V.11 (GCS 52[15]:370–377) as a "Hebrew" doctrine: *Str.* V.11.68.3 (GCS 52[15]:371). Unlike Paulsen, I would ascribe Origen's anti-anthropomorphism mostly to his accepting this long philosophical tradition and to the very harsh criticisms from such philosophers as Celsus, rather than to Neoplatonism, a philosophical trend which chronologically succeeded Origen; see D. L. Paulsen, "Early Christian Belief in a Corporeal Deity: Origen and Augustine as Reluctant Witnesses," *HTR* 83:2 (1990): 105–16, esp. 106–7. A constant subject of debate among Greek philosophers (see Harold W. Attridge, "The Philosophical Critique of Religion under the Early Empire," *ANRW* II/16:45–78), anthropomorphism was also important for such philosophers as Apuleius, Celsus, and Numenius, who, taking an anti-anthropomorphic stance, articulated an apophatic discourse about God (see Stroumsa, "The Incorporeality," 345); cf. K. J. Torjesen, "The Enscripturation of Philosophy: The Incorporeality of God in Origen's Exegesis," in *Biblical Interpretation: History, Context, and Reality* (eds. C. Helmer and T. G. Petrey; Atlanta: SBL, 2005), 73–84. For the list of Platonist, Pythagorean, and Stoic philosophers with whom Origen was acquainted—a list we have from his enemy Porphyry—see G. Watson, "Souls and Bodies in Origen's *Peri Archon*," *ITQ* 55:3 (1989): 173–93; 174.

¹⁰ For rabbinic anthropomorphisms, one may consult A. Marmorstein, *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God: Essays in Anthropomorphism* (New York: KTAV, 1937); G. Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 251–73; D. Stern, "Imitatio Hominis: Anthropomorphism and the Character(s) of God in Rabbinic Literature," *Prooftexts* 12:2 (1992): 151–174; A. G. Gottstein, "The Body as Image of God in Rabbinic Literature," *HTR* 87 (1994): 171–196; M.

authors were veiling their identity under the names of ancient patriarchs and prophets, the names of the Hellenizing theologians are well known, as is the time when they lived. Starting with the second century B.C.E. and going to the third century C.E., for instance, one may count Aristobulus, Philo, Irenaeus, Clement, and Origen, to name just the most famous and the most influential.

I would not regard these authors as part of a tradition distinct from the antique *kabod* trend, but as representatives of the very *kabod* tradition trying to amend and correct a particular aspect of it, namely anthropomorphism. I would argue that they are representatives of the *kabod* tradition. First, they still belong to the *kabod* tradition because they define God essentially as light and glory and see his manifestation essentially as light and glory. Second, because they still make use of the terms “form” and “image” in connection with God and describe God as having a form and image. They transfer, however, this form to a more subtle level of reality, the noetic world, and frequently disavow its anthropomorphic design. It is this enigmatic figure, sometimes anthropomorphic in a noetic way, sometimes beyond any form and metaphorically

Fishbane, “The ‘Measures’ of God’s Glory in the Ancient Midrash,” in *Messiah and Christos: Studies in the Jewish Origins of Christianity Presented to David Flusser on the Occasion of His Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (eds. I. Gruenwald et al.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 53-74. For Christian anthropomorphisms, see G. Florovsky, “The Anthropomorphites in the Egyptian Desert” and “Theophilus of Alexandria and Apa Aphou of Pemdje,” in *Aspects of Church History* (Belmont, MA: Norland, 1975) 89–129; G. Quispel, “The Discussion of Judaic Christianity,” in his *Gnostic Studies II* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut, 1975), 146-158; idem, “Ezekiel 1:26,” Jarl Fossum, “Jewish-Christian Christology and Jewish Mysticism,” *VC* 37 (1983): 260-287; G. M. Jantzen, *God’s World, God’s Body* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1984); E. A. Clark, “New Perspectives on the Origenist Controversy: Human Embodiment and Ascetic Strategies,” *CH* 59 (1990): 145-62; Paulsen, “Early Christian Belief,” G. E. Gould, “The Image of God and the Anthropomorphite Controversy in Fourth-Century Monasticism,” in *Origeniana Quinta* (ed. R. J. Daly; Leuven: University Press, 1992), 549-57; E. A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); C. W. Griffin and D. L. Paulsen, “Augustine and the Corporeality of God,” *HTR* 95 (2002): 97-118; A. A. Golitzin, “‘The Demons Suggest an Illusion of God’s Glory in a Form’: Controversy Over the Divine Body and Vision of Glory in Some Late Fourth, Early Fifth Century Monastic Literature,” *StudMon* 44 (2002): 13-42; idem, “The Vision of God in the Form of Glory: More Reflections on the Anthropomorphite Controversy of AD 399,” in *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West* (eds. J. Behr and Andrew Louth; Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2003), 273-198.

described as a human body, that I call the *noetic anthropos*. The evolution of this idea represents the main goal of my present investigation. My leading thought is that the ancient biblical and pseudepigraphic “form” theology did not disappear with Hellenistic authors—with Philo, Irenaeus, Clement, or Origen—as usually considered. To the contrary, I think that these authors transferred it to the noetic and invisible realm. Regarding the temporal borders of this intellectual phenomenon, the period spans from Philo to the anthropomorphic controversy.

The intention of this second part of my study is to demonstrate that there is a perceptible development of the idea of a cosmic noetic God fulfilling the whole universe. Because it is not part of everyday perceptual experience, the vision of the cosmic God necessitates an extraordinary cognitive capacity. This is the noetic perception. Certainly the whole idea traces its roots back to biblical anthropomorphism and the later speculations around the idea of the heavenly Anthropos, as seen in the first part of my thesis, but now we witness a peculiar change in epistemology, especially based on two connected Platonic features. The first is the ontological distinction between the visible and invisible worlds and the distinct genre of realities that populate the two worlds: eternal, unchanging, and invisible realities, on the one hand, and temporal, changing, and visible realities on the other. Second, there is a distinct epistemic capacity proper to the perception of each of the two genres of reality: while visible realities are perceived through the senses, the invisible ones can be discerned solely through the capacity of *noesis* or *nous*, a term usually rendered in English as “intellect” or “understanding.”

IV. FROM OPEN HEAVEN TO NOETIC PERCEPTION: NEW ONTOLOGIES OF THE DIVINE, NEW METHODS AND EPISTEMOLOGIES OF ACCESSING THE GLORY

1. The Image of the Open Heaven in Scripture and Apocalyptic Materials

According to one of Martha Himmelfarb's observations, the category of ascension involves an emblematic turn from prophetic to apocalyptic narrative. Unlike the prophets, who receive the divine vision within a terrestrial environment, apocalyptic seers ascend to the heavenly temple: "Ezekiel is the only one of all the classical prophets to record the experience of being physically transported by the spirit of God, but even Ezekiel does not ascend to heaven."¹¹ Modern scholars have also investigated the ontologies and epistemologies present in the apocalyptic literature and emphasized the heavenly temple as a central category of this literature.¹²

¹¹ M. Himmelfarb, "From Prophecy to Apocalypse: The Book of the Watchers and Tours of Heaven," in *Jewish Spirituality: From the Bible through the Middle Ages* (ed. A. Green; New York: Crossroad, 1986), 145-170, esp. 150. Isaiah, for instance (see Isa 6:1-3), receives the divine revelation within the earthly temple of Jerusalem. Cf. J. J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 130.

¹² E.g., E. S. Fiorenza, "Cultic Language in Qumran and the New Testament," *CBQ* 18 (1976): 159-177; C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1982); M. Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983); J. D. Levenson, "The Temple and the World," *JR* 64 (1984): 275-298; idem, "The Jerusalem Temple in Devotional and Visionary Experience," in Green, *Jewish Spirituality*, 32-61; J. Dan, "The Religious Experience of the Merkavah," in Green, *Jewish Spirituality*, 289-307; M. Himmelfarb, "Apocalyptic Ascent and the Heavenly Temple," *SBLSP* 26 (1987): 210-217; A. J. McNicol, "The Heavenly Sanctuary in Judaism: A Model for Tracing the Origin of the Apocalypse," *JRelS* 13:2 (1987): 66-94; C. R. Koester, *The Dwelling of God: The Tabernacle in the Old Testament, Intertestamental Jewish Literature and the New Testament* (CBQMS 22; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1989); R. J. Tournay, *Seeing and Hearing God with the Psalms: The Prophetic Liturgy of the Second Temple in Jerusalem* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991); M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); E. R. Wolfson, "Yeridah la-Merkavah: Typology of Ecstasy and Enthronement in Ancient Jewish Mysticism," in *Mystics of the Book: Themes, Topics, and Typologies* (ed. R. A. Herrera; New York: Lang, 1993), 13-44; Simone Rosenkranz, "Vom Paradies zum Tempel," in *Tempelkult und Tempelzerstörung (70 n. Chr.)* (eds. S. Lauer and H. Ernst; Frankfurt/M.: F.S. Cl. Thoma, 1995), 27-131, esp. 29-35 and 49-56; R. Elior, "From Earthly Temple to Heavenly Shrines: Prayer and Sacred Song in the Hekhalot Literature and its Relation to Temple Traditions," *JSQ* 4 (1997): 217-267; C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "The Temple Within: The Embodied Divine Image and its Worship in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Jewish and Christian Sources," *SBLSS* 37 (1998): 400-31; R. Elior, *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford; Portland, Ore.: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization: 2004); T. Desmond Alexander and Simon Gathercole, eds.,

As Mircea Eliade and other specialists in the semantics of religious symbolisms show, religion is always interested in reaching the core of existence, the place where God lives, the center of everything or the center as such. Seen from this perspective, religion becomes a search for the center of existence—a sacred itinerary, a pilgrimage (whether metaphorically or simply literally understood).¹³ As mentioned above, Himmelfarb shows that the prophetic method of accessing the divine—the vision on earth, particularly in the Temple—changes to the method of ascension in apocalyptic literature. Confirming Eliade’s logic, Christopher Rowland indicates that the change of the divine indwelling from the earthly sanctuary to heaven entails the change of the method of accessing God’s glory from terrestrial vision to ascension and *visio Dei* in the celestial realm.¹⁴

As Rowland also observes, the ancient biblical expression “open heaven” was frequently employed as an emblematic indicator of divine theophanies in apocalypticism or the New Testament.¹⁵ The following examples will illustrate this thesis:

Heaven on Earth: The Temple in Biblical Theology (Carlisle: Paternoster: 2004); A. Y. Reed, “Heavenly Ascent, Angelic Descent, and the Transmission of Knowledge in 1 Enoch 6-16,” in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions* (eds. R. S. Boustani and A. Y. Reed; Cambridge: University Press, 2004); F. Flannery-Dailey, *Dreamers, Scribes, and Priests: Jewish Dreams in the Hellenistic and Roman Eras* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); A. Y. Reed, “Beyond Revealed Wisdom and Apocalyptic Epistemology: The Redeployment of Enochic Traditions about Knowledge in Early Christianity,” in *Early Christian Literature and Intertextuality* (eds. C. A. Evans and H. D. Zacharias; London: T&T Clark), 138-164; Philip Alexander, *Mystical Texts: Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice and Related Manuscripts* (London-New York: T&T Clark, 2006).

¹³ M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (trans. W. R. Trask; New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1959); idem, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (trans. R. Sheed; New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958), ch.10, “Sacred Places: Temple, Palace ‘Center of the World,’” 367-387.

¹⁴ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 80. After making the observation that the usual apocalyptic cosmology presupposes the throne of glory placed in heaven, Rowland affirms: “The cosmological beliefs were such that it often became necessary for anyone who would enter the immediate presence of God to embark on a journey through the heavenly world, in order to reach God himself.”

¹⁵ Ibid., 78: “One of the most distinctive features of the apocalyptic literature is the conviction that the seer could pierce the vault of heaven and look upon the glorious world of God and his angels. Frequently this is expressed by the conventional expression the heavens opened (*T. Levi* 2:6 Greek; Acts 7:56) or the belief that a door opened in heaven (*1 En.* 14:15; Rev 4:1) to enable the seer to look and indeed at times to enter the realm above to gaze on its secrets.”

Bring the whole tithe into the treasury; let there be food in my house. Put me to the proof, says the Lord of Hosts, and see if I do not open windows in the sky and pour a blessing on you as long as there is need (Mal 3:10).

Then he gave orders to the skies above and threw open heaven's doors; he rained down manna for them to eat and gave them the grain of heaven (Ps 78:23-24).

On the fifth day of the fourth month in the thirtieth year, while I was among the exiles by the river Kebar, the heavens were opened and I saw visions from God (Ezek 1:1).

Take courage, then; for formerly you were worn out by evils and tribulations, but now you will shine like the luminaries of heaven; you will shine and appear, and the portals of heaven will be opened for you (*1 En.* 104:2).¹⁶

And I created for him [i.e., Adam] an open heaven, so that he might look upon the angels singing the triumphal song ... (*2 En.* [J] 31:2; *OTP* 1:152-154).¹⁷

And while he was still speaking, behold, the expanses under me, the heavens, opened and I saw on the seventh firmament upon which I stood a fire spread out and a light and dew and a multitude of angels and a host of the invisible glory, and up above the living creatures I had seen (*Apoc. Ab.* 19:4; *OTP* 1: 698).

And while I [Isaac] was thus watching and exulting at these things, I saw heaven opened, and I saw a light-bearing man coming down out of heaven, flashing (beams of light) more than seven suns (*T. Ab.* 7:3; *OPT* 1:885).

And afterward it happened that, behold, the heaven was opened, and I saw, and strength was given to me, and a voice was heard from on high ... (*2 Bar.* 22:1; *OTP* 1:629)

She said to him [i.e., Eve to Seth], "Look up with your eyes and see the seven heavens opened, and see with your eyes how the body of your father lies on its face, and all the holy angels are with him, praying for him and saying, 'Forgive him, O Father of all, for he is your image'" (*Apoc. Mos.* 35:2; *OPT* 2:289).

And behold there came suddenly a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love and in whom I have pleasure, and my commandments. ... And there came a great and exceeding white cloud over our heads and bore away our Lord and Moses and Elias. And I trembled and was afraid, and we looked up and the heavens opened and we saw men in the flesh, and they came and greeted our Lord and Moses and Elias, and went into the second heaven (*Apoc. Pet. [Eth.]* 17; *NTA* 2:635).¹⁸

As he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens break open and the Spirit descend on him, like a dove (Mark 1:10).¹⁹

¹⁶ Cf. G. W. E. Nickelsburg and J. C. VanderKam, eds., trans., *1 Enoch: A New Translation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 161.

¹⁷ *OTP* denotes the *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. H. Charlesworth; 2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1983).

¹⁸ *NTA* denotes the *New Testament Apocrypha* (ed. W. Schneemelcher; trans. R. McL. Wilson; 2 vols.; Cambridge: James Clarke, 1991; repr., Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 2003).

¹⁹ Cf. "During a general baptism of the people, when Jesus too had been baptized and was praying, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove ..." (Luke 3:21-22); "No sooner had Jesus been baptized and come up out of the water than the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove to alight on him" (Matt 3:16).

Then he added, “In very truth I tell you all: you will see heaven wide open and God’s angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” (John 1:51).

“Look!” he said. “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:56).

He [i.e., Peter] saw heaven opened, and something coming down that looked like a great sheet of sailcloth (Acts 10:11).

After this I had a vision: a door stood opened in heaven, and the voice that I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place hereafter” (Rev 4:1).

I saw heaven wide opened, and a white horse appeared; its rider’s name was Faithful and True, for he is just in judgment and just in war (Rev 19:11).

Employing the Platonic distinction between the noetic and the aesthetic, I would regard the expression the “open heaven” as aesthetic or literal, in order to distinguish it from the noetic discourse. In this aesthetic way, the expression the “open heaven” presupposes a firmament similar to that of the Genesis narrative (Gen 1), as a curtain separating heaven and earth, and also presupposing the possibility for this firmament to be open as a curtain.²⁰ Unlike the aesthetic perspective present in the Bible and apocalyptic writings, Philo advances the Platonic distinction between the sense-perceptible and the noetic. This distinction does not presuppose a heavenly firmament to be open and crossed, but requires the acquisition of a special epistemic capacity, the noetic perception, the only one able to undertake the passage from the sensible to the noetic realm.

²⁰ Heavens are also open to let the rain come from the heavenly stores, as one can see in Gen 7:11, Deut 28:12, or 2 Bar. 10:11. In *1 En.* 33-36, the stars, winds, dew, rain, and cold come forth through the gates of heaven. Likewise, *1 En.* 72-76 informs about the gates of the stars, sun, moon, winds, cold, draught, frost, locusts, and desolation. Cf. *2 En.* 6:1; 13:3; 14:2.

2. The Eye of the Spirit: An Intermediary Stage between Biblical and Noetic Epistemologies?

While the author of *I Enoch* already talks about the opening of the eyes as an epistemic condition for the vision of God (for instance, *I En.* 1:2 and 89-91, an expression which also occurs in *Ascen. Isa.* 6:6), certain other texts make use of a phrase which changes the whole instrument of perception from ordinary sight to something more spiritual: the “eye of spirit.” This appears for instance in: “And I saw the Great Glory while the eyes of my spirit were open, but I could not thereafter see, nor the angel who (was) with me, nor any of the angels whom I had seen worship my Lord.”²¹

The dream represents another visionary epistemic capacity distinct from sensible sight, a way of perceiving the heavenly realities. It is already present in such theophanies as those of Genesis 20:6-7, 1 Kings 3:4-15, 1 Samuel 3 and *I Enoch* 13:8: “And look, dreams came upon me, and visions fell upon me. And I saw visions of wrath, and there came a voice, saying, ‘Speak to the sons of heaven to reprimand them.’”²² Chapters 83-90 of the first Enochic corpus, also called *Enoch’s Dream Visions*, relate a large variety of visionary experiences which the apocalyptic hero receives in the oneiric condition.

²¹ *Ascen. Isa.* 9:37 (trans. M. A. Knibb, *OTP* 2:172). For the critical text, see P. Bettolo et al., eds., *Ascensio Isaiae: Textus* (CC; Series apocryphorum 7; Turnhout: Brepols, 1995). *Ascen. Isa.* 6:6 and 9:37 come from the section of the text called “the Vision,” which was probably produced in the second century C.E., according to Knibb (*OTP* 2:150). The expression is further remarkable since Philo himself offers a definition of the *nous* as the “eye of the soul” (*Opif.* 53). The Enochic book of *Dream Visions* (*I En* 83-89) and its later additions (*I En.* 91:1-11, 18, 19 ; 92 ; 94-104) appears to constitute a corpus of second century B.C.E. materials (164-160 B.C.E., according to Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *I Enoch*, 9).

²² *I En.* 13:8 (Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 33). For a scholarly analysis of the idea of dream theophany, see, for example, R. Gnuse, *The Dream Theophany of Samuel* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1984), 140; R. Fidler, “The Dream Theophany in the Bible” (in Hebrew; Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 1996); J.-M. Husser, *Dreams and Dream Narratives in the Biblical World* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield University Press, 1999); Flannery-Dailey, *Dreamers, Scribes*; idem, “Lessons on Early Jewish Apocalypticism and Mysticism from Dream Literature,” in *Paradise Now: Essays on Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism* (ed. A. DeConick; SBLSS 11; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 231-247. For the Near Eastern background of this visionary tradition, see A. Leo Oppenheim, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East, with a Translation of an Assyrian Dream* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1956).

In contradistinction to the traditional ways of envisioning the epistemic access to divine realities (the open heaven, direct vision, dream vision, vision through the eye of the spirit etc.), Philo will propose the noetic or intellectual perception, the *noesis*.

3. Noetic Perception and Noetic Epistemology:

Alexandrian Jewish Diaspora and the Hermetic Corpus

While Himmelfarb was pointing out the passage from prophetic to apocalyptic discourse, I would like to propose a theory which may be the next important turn in Jewish religious thought, a theory regarding a conceptual and linguistic phenomenon which I call the “noetic turn.” Arguably one of the most important paradigm shifts of late antiquity, if not the most important in terms of theological vocabulary and conceptual instrumentarium, the noetic turn denotes the translation of the ontological and epistemological categories of the apocalyptic discourse into noetic categories.²³

The noetic turn has to be primarily understood against the Platonic distinction between the noetic (intellectual, invisible) and the aesthetic (sensible, sense-perceptible, visible).²⁴ For Plato, intellectual perception already represented a particular epistemic

²³ One may argue that the turn is actually from both the biblical and apocalyptic ontology and epistemology to the noetic perspective. Keeping in mind Himmelfarb’s distinction between the prophetic and apocalyptic ontologies and the fact that Philo also places the divine temple in heavens and invests ascension as the main method of accessing the divine, it seems, consequently, more accurate to affirm that the noetic turn represents a transformation of the apocalyptic mindset (in both biblical and extra-biblical texts).

²⁴ While Aristotle is generally correct when he affirms that the pre-Socratics did not make the distinction between *noesis* and *aisthesis* (see *De an.* III. 427a; *Metaph.* 1009b)—because they had not connected yet the *noesis* with an object of thought more subtle than matter—it is also true that Heraclitus and particularly Parmenides expressed serious reserves regarding sense-perception and proposed *nous* or *noesis* as a higher epistemic capacity, more appropriate in the search of the truth; cf. F. F. Peters, “*Nóēsis* (Intuition),” “*Noētón* (Object of the intellect),” “*Nous* (Intellect, Mind),” in his *Greek Philosophical Terms: A Historical Lexicon* (New York: NYU Press, 1970), 121-139. It is Plato, however, who associates *episteme* (the true knowledge) with *noesis* and noetic and invisible ideas, in opposition with *doxa* (the opinion), *aisthesis* (sense-perception) and sensible things; e.g., *Phaed.* 79d; *Rep.* 478a-480a; 508a-511d; *Tim.* 27. The distinction will remain essential for middle Platonists, Hellenizing Jewish and Christian

capacity associated exclusively with the noetic or invisible realities.²⁵ *Noesis*, therefore, should not be understood as a mere process within the mind. Such a understanding would be entirely *à rebours* with respect to the manner in which the Greek philosophers, and later the Hellenistic thinkers from Philo to many Christian authors, conceived of this capacity. Not only a pure event of the mind, *noesis* was, especially in religious discourses, the particular epistemic capacity able to perceive such divine and impalpable realities as God, angels, souls, or the heavenly glory. Those realities apprehended through *noesis* were, therefore, noetic, extrinsic to, and independent from, the human mind.

In what concerns the ontological aspect of the noetic turn, the identification of God with the *Nous* represents a definite paradigm already encountered in Xenophanes (fr. A 1), Pythagoras (fr. B 15), Anaxagoras (fr. A 48), Archelaos (fr. A 12), or Democritus (fr. A 74).²⁶ In *Philebus*, Plato ascribes to the cause (τὸ αἴτιον) which brings everything into being such a diversity of titles as productive agent (τὸ ποιῶν; 26e7), demiurgic agent (τὸ δημιουργῶν; 27b1) and *Nous* (28d8). The *Nous* governs the universe (30c,

thinkers such as Philo, Clement or Origen, and later Neo-Platonists. Aristotle, in spite of placing the Platonic forms within things, still conceives of the *nous* as the faculty of true knowledge (*episteme*) which holds intelligible things (*ta noeta*) and forms (*ta eide*) as the objects of investigation. In contradistinction, as he shows in *De an.* 431b17-432a14, sense-perception (*aisthesis*) remains the faculty proper to sensible things (*ta aistheta*).

²⁵ See, for instance, Plato, *Rep.* 476a-480a; 508a-511d. E.g. *Rep.* 508b-c (trans. C. D. C. Reeve; Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 2004), 204: “What the latter [i.e., the good] is in the intelligible realm (ἐν τῷ νοητῷ τόπῳ) in relation to understanding (πρὸς τε νοῦν) and intelligible things (τὰ νοούμενα), the former [i.e., the sun] is in the visible realm (ἐν τῷ ὁρατῷ) in relation to sight (πρὸς τε ὄψιν) and visible things (τὰ ὀρώμενα).” For the Greek text, see S. R. Slings, *Platonis Rempublicam* (Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press, 2003), 253. A similar idea occurs in *Rep.* 534a (Reeve, 229; Slings, 286): “Belief (δόξαν) is concerned with becoming (γένεσιν); understanding (νοήσιν [i.e., intuition, the activity of the νοῦς]) with being (οὐσίαν). And as being is to becoming, so understanding is to belief; and as understanding is to belief, so knowledge (ἐπιστήμην) is to belief and thought to imagination (διάνοιαν πρὸς εἰκασίαν).”

²⁶ See H. Diels and W. Kranz, eds., *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (3 vols.; Zürich; Berlin: Weidmann, 1964), 1:113 for Xenophanes, 1:454 for Pythagoras, 2:19 for Anaxagoras, 2:47 for Archelaos, 2:102 for Democritus.

30d8) and actually represents Zeus' intellect (30d).²⁷ Aristotle will further define God in noetic terms, since the first mover (πρῶτον κινῶν) will be characterized as a god and divine intellect, and its main activity (ἐνέργεια) as νόησις (*Metaph.* 1072b).²⁸ God will, moreover, be defined as νόησις νοήσεως (*Metaph.* 1074b; *Eth. nic.* 10.1177b-1178b).²⁹ The middle Platonists and Philo will continue to develop this noetic language in connection with divine realities and divine knowledge.³⁰ This language can also be encountered in other religious materials of late antiquity, such as the Hermetic Corpus and the Chaldean Oracles.

With Philo, the Platonic distinction between the noetic and the aesthetic makes its way into Jewish thought. He translates the ancient biblical and apocalyptic languages through these new categories. With this turn, the religious ontology of ancient Judaism—a God dwelling in heaven on a glorious throne surrounded by glory and myriads of angels, etc.—is transferred to the noetic realm. Once accepted in the theological discourse, the ontological distinction between the noetic and aesthetic worlds involves the

²⁷ For the Greek text, see *Platonis Opera* (ed. I. Burnet; 5 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964). *Timaeus* reflects a similar perspective, since in this dialogue the maker (ὁ ποιῶν; 31b2) of the universe also receives the titles of god (30a2; d3), Father (37c7) and again *Nous* (47e4).

²⁸ See W. Jaeger, *Aristotelis Metaphysica* (3rd ed; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 253. In *Eth. Nic.* 1178b21-22, Aristotle defines God's activity (ἐνέργεια) essentially as contemplative (θεωρητική) and, consequently, the highest human activity should also have the same nature; see *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea* (ed. I. Bywater; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 216.

²⁹ It is not aleatory, then, that the highest science or knowledge (*episteme*) which human should search is the science of the divine, e.g., *Metaph.* A.983a5-7 (Jaeger, 6-7): ἡ γὰρ θειοτάτη καὶ τιμιωτάτη; τοιαύτη δὲ διχῶς ἂν εἴη μόνη; ἦν τε γὰρ μάλιστ' ἂν ὁ θεὸς ἔχοι, θεία τῶν ἐπιστημῶν ἐστὶ, κἂν εἰ τις τῶν θείων εἴη. Cf. Aristotle, *Eth. eud.* 1249b20: τὸν θεὸν θεραπεύειν καὶ θεωρεῖν in *Aristotelis Ethica Eudemia* (eds. R. R. Walzer and J. M. Mingway; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 125.

³⁰ Cf. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms*, 121-139; J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists: A Study of Platonism, 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* (London: Duckworth, 1977). For a detailed investigation of the ways the Platonic *Timaeus* inspired Philo, see D. T. Runia's *Philo of Alexandria and the "Timaeus" of Plato* (Leiden: Brill, 1986).

epistemological distinction between the noetic and aesthetic perceptions, between *noesis* and *aisthesis*.³¹

A. Philo

A. 1. Philo and the Emergence of the Noetic Turn in Jewish Thought

While Aristobulus reckoned that God is everywhere present in the universe and his power is manifested through all things (μόνος ὁ θεός ἐστι καὶ διὰ πάντων ἡ δύναμις αὐτοῦ φανερὰ γίνεται),³² the concepts of noetic world and noetic perception do not appear in the extant fragments attributed to him. The noetic turn was simply not part of his mindset. When Aristobulus illustrates the human encounter with God and a *visio Dei*, he does not mention the noetic perception, but rather describes the event as a luminous descent. Thus, he represents the paradigmatic Sinai theophany as a divine descent (κατάβασις θεία) and a fiery occurrence, gigantic and everywhere present (διὰ πάντων μεγαλειότητα), without combusting the burning bush, nor anything on earth.³³ From an epistemological perspective, there is no indication that the spectators of this luminous theophany made use of other epistemic capacities than their ordinary sight.

³¹ For a scholarly investigation of the idea of divine sense (*nous/noesis*) in Christian authors, see A. N. Williams, *The Divine Sense: The Intellect in Patristic Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Christian Hellenistic authors will take over the Platonic distinction between the noetic and the aesthetic and sometimes further develop it in such new theories as the famous Origenian doctrine of the five noetic senses. With no doubt, Christian patristic authors read Philo and it is very plausible that the Alexandrian was one of the most (if not the most) important sources of inspiration regarding the application of the Greek philosophical language to theology. See, for instance, D. T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Van Gorcum: Assen; Fortress: Minneapolis, 1993); idem, *Philo and the Church Fathers: A Collection of Papers* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

³² Aristobulus in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.9.5 (GCS 43/1:444). He most likely took the idea of a governing power from the *Orphic Sacred Discourse*, as one can see in *Praep. ev.* 13.12.4-5 (GCS 43/2:191-193). Regarding the date of composition, A. Yarbro Collins suggests that “the later part of the reign of Philometor (155-145 B.C.E.) thus seems to be the most likely date for the work of Aristobulus” (*OTP* 2:833). For an English translation, see A. Y. Collins, *OTP* 2:837-842.

³³ Ibid 8.10.17 (GCS 43/1:453-454). This descent does not have a particular location because God is everywhere (ὥστε τὴν κατάβασιν μὴ τοπικὴν εἶναι, πάντα γὰρ ὁ θεός ἐστιν; ibid. 8.10.12-14 [GCS 43/1:453]).

Aristobulus informs us that not only Moses, but the whole Hebrew people contemplated this energy of God (πάντες θεωρήσωσι τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ θεοῦ),³⁴ and he emphasizes that all were witnesses of the great theophany (τὸ τοὺς συνορῶντας ἐμφαντικῶς ἕκαστα καταλαμβάνειν).³⁵

It is, however, in Philo of Alexandria in the first century C.E. that we find for the first time a coherently developed noetic ontology and a noetic epistemology. Philo gives us the following definition of the intellect: “for what the intellect (νοῦς) is in the soul, this is what the eye is in the body; for each of them sees (βλέπει), in the one case the objects of thought (τὰ νοητά), in the other the objects of perception (τὰ αἰσθητά).”³⁶ The intellect (also called reason, λόγος, in *Det.* 83 and *Post.* 53) is further described as a special gift (ἐξαίρετον γέρας) from God (*Deus* 45; cf. 47), a fragment of the Deity (*Somn.* 1.34), a ruler of the soul and a sort of god of the body (*Opif.* 69; *Agr.* 57). It is the image of the divine and invisible being (i.e., God; *Plant.* 18) and the only faculty through which we can comprehend God (*Ebr.* 108). Its essence, however, remains unintelligible and unknown to us (*Mut.* 10). Operating with ontological and epistemological categories that come from Plato’s *Timaeus* 27, Philo articulates a doctrine of the intellect as the power of the soul able to perceive, beyond the sensible universe, something of the noetic world. While deploring the impious doctrine of an unproductive God (a vast inactivity [πολλὴ ἀπραξία]) and defending the theory of a divine active cause (δραστήριον αἷτιον)—the Mind of the universe (ὁ τῶν ὅλων νοῦς)—Philo employs the following distinctions:

³⁴ Ibid 8.10.12 (GCS 43/1:453).

³⁵ Ibid 8.10.17 (GCS 43/1:454).

³⁶ Philo, *Opif.* 53 (Runia, 59). Philo also compares the *nous* with “the sight of the soul (ψυχῆς γὰρ ὄψις), illuminated by rays peculiar to itself” (*Deus* 46 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 3:32-33]).

But the great Moses considered that what is ungenerated (τὸ ἀγέννητον) was of a totally different order from that which was visible (ἄλλοτριώτατον τοῦ ὁρατοῦ), for the entire sense-perceptible realm (τὸ αἰσθητόν) is in a process of becoming and change (ἐν γενέσει καὶ μεταβολαῖς) and never remains in the same state. So to what is invisible and intelligible (τῷ ἀοράτῳ καὶ νοητῷ) he assigned eternity (ἀιδιότητα) as being akin and related to it, whereas on what is sense-perceptible he ascribed the appropriate name becoming.³⁷

The text shows, therefore, that, according to Philo and in a similar way with Plato, there are two worlds (the noetic and the sensible) and two corresponding epistemic capacities (the intellect [νοῦς] and the sense-perception [αἴσθησις]):

For God, because he is God, understood in advance that a beautiful copy (μίμημα) would not come into existence apart from a beautiful model (παραδείγματος), and that none of the objects of sense-perception (τι τῶν αἰσθητῶν) would be without fault, unless it was modeled (ἀπεικονίσθη) on the archetypal (ἀρχέτυπον) and intelligible idea (νοητὴν ἰδέαν). Therefore, when he had decided to construct this visible cosmos (τὸν ὁρατὸν κόσμον), he first marked out the intelligible cosmos (τὸν νοητόν), so that he could use it as an incorporeal and most god-like (ἄσωμάτῳ καὶ θεοειδεστάτῳ) paradigm (παραδείγματι) and so produce the corporeal cosmos (τὸν σωματικόν), a younger likeness (ἀπεικόνισμα) of an older model, which would contain as many sense-perceptible kinds (αἰσθητά) as there were intelligible kinds (νοητά) in that other one. ... Then, taking up the imprints of each object in his own soul like in wax, he [i.e., the architect] carries around the intelligible city (νοητὴν πόλιν) as an image in his head. Summoning up the representations by means of his innate power of memory and engraving their features (τοὺς χαρακτῆρας) even more distinctly (on his mind), he begins, as a good builder, to construct the city out of stones and timber, looking at the model (τὸ παράδειγμα) and ensuring that the corporeal objects correspond to each of the incorporeal ideas (τῶν ἄσωμάτων ἰδεῶν). The conception we have concerning God must be similar to this, namely that when he had decided to found the great cosmic city, he first conceived its outlines (τύπους). Out of these he composed the intelligible cosmos (κόσμον νοητόν), which served him as a model (παραδείγματι) when he completed the sense-perceptible cosmos (τὸν αἰσθητόν) as well.³⁸

The noetic nature of the two agents of this double creation—God and his Logos—is also an incumbent part of this theological scheme.³⁹ While God the Father is the real Demiurge (ποιητής; *Opif.* 21), his Logos plays the role of the instrument by which God

³⁷ Philo, *Opif.* 12 (Runia, 49).

³⁸ Ibid., 16-19 (Runia, 50). The same distinction is operative as well in other passages, for example *Leg.* 1.1 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 1:146-147): “For using symbolical language he [i.e., Moses] calls the mind (νοῦν) heaven, since heaven is the abode of natures discerned only by mind (αἱ νοηταὶ φύσεις), but sense-perception (αἴσθησιν) he calls earth, because sense-perception possesses a composition of a more earthly and body-like (σωματοειδῆ καὶ γεωδυστέραν) sort.”

³⁹ God himself is called the mind of the world (τοῦ τῶν ὅλων νοῦ) in several places, e.g. *Leg.* 3.29 (LCL Philo 1:320); *Abr.* 4 and 192 (LCL Philo 4:134, 244). Most likely, the idea appears for the first time in Thales, fr. A 23: νοῦν τοῦ κόσμου τὸν θεόν (*Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 1:78).

creates the world (*Cher.* 127; *Abr.* 6) and also of the noetic “place,” in fact the very noetic cosmos where God draws the intelligible or eidetic project of creation:

Just as the city that was marked out beforehand in the architect had no location (χώραν) outside, but had been engraved in the soul of the craftsman, in the same way the cosmos composed of the ideas (ὁ ἐκ τῶν ἰδεῶν κόσμος) would have no other place (τόπον) than the divine Logos (τὸν θεῖον λόγον) who gives these (ideas) their ordered disposition.⁴⁰ ... If you would wish to use a formulation that has been stripped down to essentials, you might say that the intelligible cosmos (νοητὸν κόσμον) is nothing else than the Logos of God as he is actually engaged in making the cosmos (θεοῦ λόγος ἥδη κοσμοποιῶντος).⁴¹

The double creation theory and the conception according to which the noetic paradigms are placed within the Logos recur in *De opificio* in a passage where the noetic world is called, in addition, incorporeal:

Now that the incorporeal cosmos (ἄσώματος κόσμος) had been completed and established in the divine Logos (ἐν τῷ θεῷ λόγῳ), the sense-perceptible cosmos (ὁ αἰσθητός) began to be formed as a perfect offspring, with the incorporeal serving as model (πρὸς παράδειγμα τούτου).⁴²

The passage confirms that the term “incorporeal” (ἄσώματος) does not refer to entities completely deprived of real existence—pure abstractions—but for so many times it actually denotes a noetic sort of existence, more subtle than aesthetic realities, however not completely immaterial.

According to the Alexandrian, the entire existence is actually constituted of various degrees of materiality and noetic levels. God is the mind of the universe and dwells in his Logos. The divine Logos itself, as an intelligible reality per se, is

⁴⁰ *Opif.* 20 (Runia, 50-51).

⁴¹ *Opif.* 24 (Runia, 51).

⁴² *Opif.* 36 (Runia, 54). The term “incorporeal” is also used as synonymous with noetic in various other passages where Philo employs the term “invisible” as synonymous with noetic; e.g. *Opif.* 29 (Runia, 53): “First, therefore, the maker made an incorporeal (ἄσώματος) heaven and an invisible (ἀόρατον) earth and a form of air and of the void (ἄερος ἰδέαν καὶ κενόῦ). To the former he assigned the name darkness, since the air is black by nature, to the latter the name abyss, because the void is indeed full of depths and gaping. He then made the incorporeal being (ἄσώματος οὐσίαν) of water and of spirit, and as seventh and last of all of light, which once again was incorporeal and was also the intelligible model (ἄσώματος ἦν καὶ νοητὸν ... παράδειγμα) of the sun and all the other light-bearing stars which were to be established in heaven.”

everywhere present in the visible universe through his two powers, which Philo calls either “goodness” and “authority” (*Cher.* 28), or “God” and “Lord” (*Mos.* 2.99). He also talks about a heavenly intelligible light, kindled before the sun and the source of light for all sensible luminaries: sun, moon, stars, planets, etc. (*Opif.* 33). Unlike the luminaries, the heavenly light remains perceptible only through the intellect. Nevertheless, this light does not seem to be a simple eidetic paradigm of every possible luminary, a mere abstract idea, since it is a real substance which procures the visible light of all the luminaries.

Philo thus conceives of certain mediatorial elements between the intelligible and sensible universes. These elements can trespass from one world into the other, especially from the immaterial into the material. In a certain way, they represent a revelation of the upper world. Morning and evening, for instance, although they cross the Limit or Boundary (*Horos*) of heaven and enter the sensible world, are described as incorporeal and noetic entities, since only the intellect can perceive them (*Opif.* 34). Likewise, intelligible air, which is the breath of God, and the aforementioned intelligible light, may change their subtle constitutions into heavier materialities and provide the air (that is, life) and light of the visible world:

Both spirit (πνεῦμα) and light were considered deserving of a special privilege. The former he named of God, because spirit is highly important for life (ζωτικώτατον) and God is the cause of life. Light he describes as exceedingly beautiful, for the intelligible (τὸ νοητόν) surpasses the visible (τοῦ ὁρατοῦ) in brilliance and brightness just as much, I believe, as sun surpasses darkness, day surpasses night, and intellect (νοῦς), which gives leadership to the entire soul, surpasses its sensible sources of information, the eyes of the body. That invisible and intelligible light (τὸ δὲ ἄορατον καὶ νοητὸν φῶς) has come into being as image (εἰκὼν) of the divine Logos which communicated its genesis. It is a star that transcends the heavenly realm (ὑπερουράνιος ἀστήρ), source of the visible stars (πηγὴ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἀστέρων), and you would not be off the mark to call it “allbrightness” (παναύγειαν). From it (ἀφ’ ἧς) the sun and moon and other planets and fixed stars draw (ἀρύτονται) the illumination (φέγγη) that is fitting for them in accordance with the capacity they each have. But the unmixed and pure gleam has its brightness (αὐγῆς) dimmed when it begins to undergo (τρέπεσθαι) a change from the intelligible to the sense-perceptible (κατὰ τὴν

ἐκ νοητοῦ πρὸς αἰσθητὸν μεταβολήν), for none of the objects in the sense-perceptible realm is absolutely pure.⁴³

A few epistemological remarks should be added to our discussion. As in certain biblical passages and the apocalyptic literature, Philo still maintains heaven as the preeminent geography of divine indwelling. The human being who intends to reach that realm has to ascend to those heights.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, in what concerns access to that realm and access to God, Philo advances a clearly innovative method: noetic perception, *noesis*. While still conceiving of ascension as the favored method of accessing God, Philo alters the nature of this ascension. Instead of transportation to heaven, direct vision, dream vision or other methods, he makes the intellect to perform the ascent.

According to the Philonian pedagogical curriculum, the exercise in arts and sciences (τέχναι καὶ ἐπιστήμαι) should be followed by the itinerary of the human mind within the noetic world:⁴⁵

And when the intellect has observed in that realm the models and forms of the sense-perceptible things (αἰσθητῶν ... τὰ παραδείγματα καὶ τὰς ἰδέας) which it had seen here, objects of overwhelming beauty, it then, possessed by a sober drunkenness, becomes enthused like the Corybants. Filled with another longing and a higher form of desire, which has propelled it to the

⁴³ *Opif.* 30-31 (Runia, 53). One should also keep in mind that stars were also heavenly beings, according to Philo, who criticized Anaxagoras' theory that stars simply consist of fiery metal (*Somn.* 1.22; *Aet.* 47). They are living beings possessing minds (*Gig.* 60; *Plant.* 12; *Opif.* 73) and, more than that, divine souls (*Gig.* 8), divine natures (*Opif.* 144; *Prov.* 2.50; *QG* 4.188) and a host of visible gods (*Aet.* 46). For further discussions, see A. Scott, *Origen and the Life of the Stars: A History of an Idea* (Oxford: University Press, 2001), 63-75.

⁴⁴ In *Leg.* 1.1 Philo even affirms that the noetic natures are located in heaven, while the aesthetic ones are on earth. One of the conditions of possibility for the ascension to heaven is given by the Philonian assumption that the universe is arrayed as a ladder of elements, which is in fact a Stoic doctrine about the arrangement of the universe. As Allan Scott shows, Philo admits the Stoic doctrine about the array of the cosmic elements according to their weight: earth at the bottom, water above the earth, air above the water and fire on the highest level. Fire, not ether, is the true substance of heaven. (See Scott, *Origen*, 66. Cf. *Aet.* 33; 115). The doctrine presents some contradictory points since Philo also accepts the Peripatetic view—opposed to the Stoic one—according to which the ether is actually the substance of heaven (see *Her.* 87, 238; 240; 283; *Deus* 78; *Mut.* 179; *Somn.* 1.139; 145; *QG* 3.6). For the idea of mystical ascent in Philo, see for example P. Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria, An Exegete for His Time* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 194-205 (ch. 11: "Illegitimate and Legitimate Ascents").

⁴⁵ E.g., *Congr.* 11-25. As the curriculum actually has to lead to the acquisition of philosophical knowledge, philosophy has to lead to wisdom, which is the science of divine and human things (ἐπιστήμη θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων; *Congr.* 79 [LCL Philo 4: 496]).

utmost vault of the intelligibles (τῶν νοητῶν), it thinks it is heading towards the Great King himself. But as it strains to see (ἰδεῖν), pure and unmixed beams (ἄκρατοι καὶ ἄμιγρῆς αὐγαί) of concentrated light (ἁθροῦς φωτός) pour forth like a torrent, so that the eye of the mind (τὸ τῆς διανοίας ὄμμα), overwhelmed by the brightness (μαρμαρυγαῖς), suffers from vertigo.⁴⁶

The intellect is also involved in the ascetic preparation for the vision, an ancient idea that Philo re-exploits through the Stoic language of the fight between the *nous* and the passions.⁴⁷ The *visio Dei* supervenes as the consequence of the victory which the intellect wins over passions and pleasure:

And their warfare (πόλεμος) is patent. When mind (τοῦ νοῦ) is victorious, devoting itself to immaterial things (τοῖς νοητοῖς καὶ ἀσωματοῖς) its proper object, passion (τὸ πάθος) quits the scene: and on the other hand, when passion has won an evil victory, mind gives in, being prevented from giving heed to itself and to all its own occupations. Moses elsewhere says, “Whenever Moses lifted up his hands, Israel prevailed, but when he dropped them, Amalek prevailed” [Exod. 17:11], showing that when the mind lifts itself up away from mortal things (ἄπο τῶν θνητῶν) and is borne aloft, that which sees God (τὸ ὁρῶν τὸν θεόν), which is Israel, gains strength...⁴⁸

According to Philo, the priests and the prophets, more than scientists and ordinary people, reach the highest level of humanity and become “born of God,” which means that they

have risen wholly above the sphere of sense-perception (τὸ δὲ αἰσθητὸν πᾶν ὑπερκύψαντες) and have been translated into the world of the intelligible (εἰς τὸν νοητὸν κόσμον μετανέστησαν) and dwell there registered as freemen of the commonwealth of Ideas, which are imperishable and incorporeal (ἄφθάρτων καὶ ἀσωμάτων ἰδεῶν πολιτεία).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Opif.* 70-71 (Runia, 64). Cf. *Leg.* 1.38. Beyond these passages where Philo ascribe the ascension to the mind (considered the most important part of the soul; *Opif.* 69), there are also passages where he talks about the ascent of the soul beyond heavens to God, e.g., *QE* 2.40, 47.

⁴⁷ See for instance the whole second book of the *Legum allegoriae*. The idea, however, has its Platonic formulations (for instance in *Cher.* 31), when the separation of the *nous* from the body is supposed to lead to the encounter with the divine.

⁴⁸ *Leg.* 3.186 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 1:426-429).

⁴⁹ *Gig.* 61 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 2:474-475).

A. 2. *Philo and the Intellect as Mystery Operator*

Previous scholars have observed that the revelation of heavenly mysteries represents an essential feature of Jewish apocalyptic literature.⁵⁰ Benjamin Gladd even argues that this paradigm of thought starts with Daniel. He further notices that mystery language in apocalyptic literature is frequently connected with three epistemic capacities specialized in perceiving the heavenly and eschatological mysteries of God, namely the true eye, ear and heart, in opposition to the ordinary eye, ear and heart.⁵¹ Philo preserves the tradition of understanding mysteries as heavenly secrets and translates it into philosophical language, operating once again a noetic turn from the biblical language. Now, the epistemic capacity which Philo deems appropriate to explore the divine mysteries is the *nous*, the noetic perception.

Nevertheless, the Alexandrian is among the few Jewish authors to make use in a more extensive way of mystery terminology.⁵² On the one hand, there are passages where he talks about the mystery religions and rejects them entirely:

⁵⁰ See G. Bornkamm, “Μυστήριον κτλ,” *TWNT* 4 (1942): 809-834, esp. 821; Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 14; Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mysteries*, 31-32; B. Gladd, *Revealing the Mysterion: The Use of Mystery in Daniel and Second Temple Judaism with Is Bearing on First Corinthians* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008). They make extensive investigations on the concepts of *raz*, *sar*, and *mysterion* in Daniel, sapiential literature, apocalyptic and Qumran texts, Aristobulus, Artapanus, the *Orphica*, Pseudo-Phocylides, Philo, Josephus, and early rabbinic literature. While the origins of these terms are Babylonian and Greek, they denote – in almost all these Jewish sources – a divine or heavenly secret revealed to human knowledge. Bockmuehl, for instance, defines “mystery” in the following terms: “By ‘Mystery’ is meant any reality of divine or heavenly origin specifically characterized as hidden, secret, or otherwise inaccessible to human knowledge.” (*Revelation and Mystery*, 2).

⁵¹ Gladd, *Revealing the Mysterion*, 274-277. There are also some biblical references where this type of epistemic sensory language is also used in connection with the knowledge of God, e.g., Deut 29:4; 28:45; Isa 6:9-10; Jer 5:21; Ezek 12:2 (ibid.). They are directly connected with the idea of mystery of the kingdom, for instance in Matt 13:9-13.

⁵² The story of *Joseph and Aseneth* should also be mentioned due to the presence of various mystery terminologies which echo the mysteries of Isis. For a thorough contemporary analysis, see, for instance, R. D. Chesnutt, *From Death to Life: Conversion in Joseph and Aseneth* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 218-253. For a more comprehensive perspective on the discussion of Jewish mysteries, see, e.g., R. E. Brown, “Pre-Christian Semitic Concept of Mystery,” *CBQ* 20 (1958): 417-433; E. R. Goodenough, *By Light, Light: The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1969); A. D. Nock, “The Question of Jewish Mysteries,” in *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World I*

Furthermore, he banishes from the sacred legislation (ἐκ τῆς ἱερᾶς ἀναιρεῖ νομοθεσίας) the lore of occult rites and mysteries (τὰ περὶ τελετᾶς καὶ μυστήρια) and all such imposture and buffoonery. He would not have those who were bred in such a commonwealth as ours take part in mummeries and clinging on to mystic fables (μυστικῶν πλασμάτων ἐκκρεμαμένους ὀλιγορεῖν ἀληθείας) despise the truth and pursue things which have taken night and darkness for their province, discarding what is fit to bear the light of day. Let none, therefore, of the followers and disciples of Moses either confer or receive initiation to such rites (μῆτε τελεῖτω μῆτε τελεῖσθω). For both in teacher and taught such action is gross sacrilege (καὶ τὸ διδάσκειν καὶ τὸ μανθάνειν τελετὰς οὐ μικρὸν ἀνοσιούργημα).⁵³

There are, nonetheless, many other pages where the Alexandrian applies Greek mystery terminology directly to the Jewish liturgical or mystical practices. In *De specialibus legibus* 3.40, for example, he calls Jewish rituals τὰ ἱερὰ (the sacred rites) or τελεταί (initiations).⁵⁴ In *De sacrificiis* 60-63 he also shows that the lesser mysteries are a metaphor for the passage (“Passover”) from obedience under passions to contemplation and from the perishable and created being to God. Greater mysteries, as reflected in *Legum allegoriae* 3.100 or *De cherubim* 49, refer to the knowledge of God’s secrets. It is in this second sense that Philo frequently employs mystery terminology and particularly the word μυστήριον.⁵⁵ The secret dimension may also refer to the fact that the person who enjoyed a certain religious experience keeps that for himself or herself (*Sacr.* 60).

(eds. A. D. Nock and Z. Stewart; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 459-68; A. E. Harvey, “The Use of Mystery Language in the Bible,” *JTS* 31 (1980): 320-336; Jeffrey Niehaus, “Raz-pesar in Isaiah 24,” *VT* 31 (1981): 376-378; K. G. Friebel, “Biblical Interpretation in the Pesharim of the Qumran Community,” *HS* 22 (1981): 13-24; G. Couturier, “La vision du conseil divin: Étude d'une forme commune au prophétisme et à l'apocalyptique,” *ScEs* 36 (1984): 5-43; M. N. A. Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* (WUNT 2/36; Tübingen: Mohr, 1990); D. J. Harrington, “The Raz nihyeh in a Qumran Wisdom Text (1Q26, 4Q415-418, 423),” *RevQ* 17(1996): 549-553; Torleif Elgvin, “The Mystery to Come: Early Essene Theology of Revelation,” *Qumran between the Old and New Testaments* (eds. F. H. Cryer and T. L. Thompson; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1998), 113-150; H. Najman and J. H. Newman, eds., *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel* (Leiden 2004), esp. E. R. Wolfson’s “Seven Mysteries of Knowledge: Qumran E/Sotericism Recovered,” 177-214; Gladd, *Revealing the Mysterion*, 274-77; S. I. Thomas, *The “Mysteries” of Qumran: Mystery, Secrecy, and Esotericism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

⁵³ *Spec.* 1.319 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 7:284-285). Cf. *Cher.* 94-95; *Spec.* 3.40.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Leg.* 1.104; *Contempl.* 25.

⁵⁵ Cf. *Leg.* 3.3; 27; 71; 219; *Cher.* 42-49; *Sacr.* 60; *Gig.* 54; *Deus.* 61; *Somn.* 1.164; *Mos.* 2.71; *QG* 2.17.

Likewise, hierophants are not only Abraham and Moses (for example, *Post.* 173; *Cher.* 49; *Mos.* 2.71), but also Philo himself and his initiated audience.⁵⁶

Nonetheless, those were not mysteries in the proper sense of the word. Arthur Nock already observed that Jewish rites cannot be rigorously described as mystery rites, since they were bereft of several essential mystery elements, such as the rites of initiation and the secret meals, and even Philo deplored the fact that they were sometimes unveiled.⁵⁷ The unconcealed nature of the Jewish rites was already noticed in the Jewish milieu of antiquity, as long as Josephus himself took pride in the fact that Jewish religious rites and precepts were not secret but public.⁵⁸ Should mystery terminology in Philo be taken as pure metaphor or a mere *façon de parler*?⁵⁹ I would rather see Philo's

⁵⁶ Philo describes himself as "initiated (μυηθείς) under Moses the God-beloved into his greater mysteries (τὰ μεγάλα μυστήρια)" (*Cher.* 49 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 2:36-37]). His audience was also one of initiated people, e.g., *Leg.* 3.219 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 1:450-451): "Therefore, O ye initiate (μύσται), open your ears wide and take in holiest teachings (τελετὰς ἱερωτάτας)." Cf. *Fug.* 85, *Cher.* 48; *Spec.* 1.320. Philo also portrays the therapeutae as "initiated into the mysteries of the sanctified life (τὰ τοῦ σεμνοῦ βίου μυστήρια τελοῦνται)" (*Contempl.* 25 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 9:126-127]), and compares them with the ecstatic members of mystery religions in their attempt to see God (*Contempl.* 11-12 [LCL Philo 9:118]). The initiation into the highest mysteries (τῶν τελείων) is also connected with the vision of God in *Sacr.* 60 (LCL Philo 2:138).

⁵⁷ Cf. A. D. Nock, "The Question of Jewish Mysteries," *Gn* 13 (1937): 156-165, esp. 161-163; repr. in *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (ed. Z. Stewart; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 459-468; idem, "Hellenistic Mysteries and Christian Sacraments," *Mnemosyne: A Journal of Classical Studies* 5:3 (1952): 177-213. Cf. Morton Smith, "Goodenough's *Jewish Symbols* in Retrospect," *JBL* 86 (1967): 53-68; V. Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire de l'Écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie: Son caractère et sa portée: Observations philologiques* (ALGHJ 11; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 14-21; G. Lease, "Jewish Mystery Cults since Goodenough," *ANRW* 2.20.2 (1987): 858-861; Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria*, 1-5. These authors develop their positions against the thesis regarding the existence of Jewish mysteries particularly defended by E. Goodenough in *By Light Light*, 6-10 and *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (10 vols.; New York: Pantheon Books, 1953-68); but also by other previous authors, e.g., H. Leisegang, *Pneuma Hagion: Der Ursprung d. Geistbegriffs der synoptischen Evangelien aus der griechischen Mystik* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922).

⁵⁸ See especially *C. Ap.* 2.107 (*neque mysteriorum aliquorum ineffabilem agitur*), in *Flavius Josèphe: Contre Apion* (ed. T. Reinach; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1930), 76. See also *A.J.* 16.43 (LCL Josephus 8:224) for the secretless nature of the Jewish precepts and *A.J.* 1.11 for the idea that Jewish tradition does not keep secret any of the good things (μηδὲν ἔχειν τῶν καλῶν ἀπόρρητον; *Flavius Josèphe: Les Antiquités Juives, Livres I à III*, 2 vols. [ed. É. Nodet; Paris: Cerf, 1990], 1:4). For a more detailed discussion, see Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery*, 89-92.

⁵⁹ See, for instance, Nock, "Question," 163-164 and Gary Lease, "Jewish Mystery Cults since Goodenough," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* (eds. Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1987), Band II.20.2:858-80.

mystery terminology within the boundaries of his fundamental distinction between the visible and the invisible, between the aesthetic and the noetic. Mystery refers to the hidden and invisible realm into which participants have to cross; therefore referring to the noetic universe of God, of his angels, and glorious light. The great mysteries of God which Philo mentions as having Abraham and Moses as initiates actually reflect a mystical method of accessing the noetic domain. Accordingly, the noetic perception, the *nous*, represents the capacity to perceive realities from that hidden realm. For Philo, the intellect is highly involved in the process of initiation and embodies, in fact, the key faculty of initiation: “[T]he mind (νοῦς) soars aloft and is being initiated in the mysteries (τὰ τοῦ κυρίου μυστήρια μύηται) of the Lord.”⁶⁰ Once consecrated, the mind becomes a minister and servant (ἱερωμένην διάνοιαν λειτουργὸν καὶ θεραπευτρίδα) of God, doing everything that delights the master.⁶¹ Long time before Philo, Plato was the first to compare the ascent of the mind and the noetic vision of the Ideas with the luminous experience that the initiates in mysteries gain at the culminating point of their initiation.⁶² In a similar fashion, according to Philo, the itinerary of the human intellect into the invisible and noetic realm is compared with an initiation into the divine mysteries.

The idea that the mind is the key mystery operator also appears in a different context in Philo. While explaining the Biblical passage about those who mysteriously sacrificed the Passover, Philo avers that the passage actually denotes those who overcome the realm of passions and can further have a comprehension of God through his works in

⁶⁰ *Leg.* 3.71 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 1:346-347).

⁶¹ *Post.* 184 (LCL Philo 2:436-438).

⁶² See Diotima's discourse in *Symposium* 210a-e. Cf. H. Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy: Mysticism, Magic and Platonism in the later Roman Empire* (2nd ed. M. Tardieu; Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1978), 176.

creation (*Leg.* 3.94-99).⁶³ In addition, there is an even more advanced stage of initiation, namely that of the direct vision of God through the *nous*:

There is a mind (νοῦς) more perfect and more thoroughly cleansed, which has undergone initiation into the great mysteries (τὰ μέγαρα μυστήρια μυθεῖς), a mind which gains its knowledge of the First Cause (τὸ αἷτιον γνωρίζει) not from created things (οὐκ ἀπὸ τῶν γεγονότων), as one may learn the substance from the shadow (ἀπὸ σκιᾶς), but lifting its eyes above and beyond creation (ὑπερκύψας τὸ γενητόν) obtains a clear vision of the uncreated One (ἐμφασιν ἐναργῆ τοῦ ἀγενήτου), so as from Him to apprehend both Himself and His shadow (ἀπ' αὐτοῦ αὐτὸν καταλαμβάνειν καὶ τὴν σκιάν αὐτοῦ). To apprehend that was, we saw, to apprehend both the Word and this world. The mind of which I speak is Moses who says, “Manifest (Ἐμφάνισόν) Thyself to me, let me see Thee that I may know Thee” [Exod. 33:13]; ‘for I would not that Thou shouldst be manifested (ἐμφανισθείης) to me by means of heaven or earth or water or air or any created thing at all (τινος ἀπλῶς τῶν ἐν γενέσει), nor would I find the reflection of Thy being (τὴν σὴν ἰδέαν) in aught else than in Thee Who art God, for the reflections in created things are dissolved (αἱ γὰρ ἐν γενητοῖς ἐμφάσεις διαλύονται), but those in the Uncreate (αἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ ἀγενήτῳ) will continue abiding and sure and eternal.’⁶⁴

Similarly, in *De gigantibus*, Philo describes in mystery terms the paradigmatic theophany of the Bible, namely Moses’ vision on Sinai. The entire process described through these terms, however, does not involve rites, but Moses’ mystical experience explained as a passage from bodily and sensible world – including sensible thought, the judgment (γνώμη) – to the invisible:

So too Moses pitched his own tent outside the camp [Exod. 33:7] and the whole array of bodily things, that is, he set his judgement (γνώμην) where it should be removed. Then only does he begin to worship God and entering the darkness, the invisible region (τὸν γνόφον, τὸν ἀειδῆ χώρον), abides there while he learns the secrets of the most holy mysteries (τελούμενος τὰς ἱερωτάτας τελετάς). There he becomes not only one of the congregation of the initiated (μύστης), but the hierophant and teacher of divine rites (ιεροφάντης ὁργίων καὶ διδάσκαλος θείων), which he will impart to those whose ears are purified (κεκαθαυμένοις).⁶⁵

⁶³ See also *Sacr.* 63 for the definition of the Passover as the passage from passions to the practice of virtue (τὴν ἐκ παθῶν εἰς ἄσκησιν ἀρετῆς διάβασιν [LCL Philo 2:140]) and *Sacr.* 62 for the idea that this passage represents the “lesser mysteries” (τὰ μικρὰ μυστήρια [LCL Philo 2:140]).

⁶⁴ *Leg.* 3.100-101 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 1:368-369).

⁶⁵ *Gig.* 54 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 2:472-473).

While describing the spiritual experiences of the therapeutae through mystery vocabulary, Philo obviously echoes the Platonic distinction between the sensible sun of the sky and the sun of the noetic world, which is the Good or Being:⁶⁶

But it is well that the Therapeutae, a people always taught from the first to use their sight (βλέπειν), should desire the vision of the Existent (τῆς τοῦ ὄντος θεας) and soar above the sun or our senses (τὸν αἰσθητὸν ἥλιον) and never leave their place in this company which carries them on to perfect happiness (εὐδαιμονίαν). And those who set themselves to this service, not just following custom nor the advice and admonition of others but carried away by a heaven-sent passion of love (ὑπ' ἔρωτος ἄρπασθέντες οὐρανόυ), remain rapt and possessed (ἐνθουσιάζουσι) like bacchanals or corybants until they see the object of their yearning (τὸ ποθοῦμενον ἰδῶσιν).⁶⁷

Mystery terminology in Philo, therefore, does not seem to constitute merely a metaphor, but to refer to the mystic, interior, and noetic passage from the visible to the invisible, from the aesthetic to the noetic. In Philo's mystico-philosophical theorization, mystery initiation is not a mystery rite per se, but another name for the contemplative or mystical method of transcending the sensible realm to the intelligible. Philo's use of mystery language might be regarded, therefore, as an ascetico-mystical procedure of accessing something hidden, *mystikos*, pertaining to the noetic invisible realm.

B. Mystery Epistemology in the Tractates of the Hermetic Corpus

While the intellect will also play a main role in the paschal mystery, early paschal writings will display another epistemological feature developed in religious Hellenistic contexts. The insertion of mystery language into religious discourse occasions one of the most important methodological shifts concerning the access to the

⁶⁶ Cf. Plato, *Rep.* 507b-509c; see also 514a-520a for the famous allegory of the cave. Unlike Plato, who defines the Good as beyond being (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας; *Rep.* 509 b), Philo embraces the Middle Platonist equation of the Good and Being.

⁶⁷ Philo, *Contempl.* 11-12 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL Philo 9:118-119).

visio Dei. It is mystery initiation, which slowly will replace ascension. As we will further see, the idea of ascension is almost absent in the paschal writings.

The Hermetic corpus represents one of the earliest illustrations of noetic epistemology. While recalling the difference between the ontology of *Poimandres* and the rest of the Hermetic corpus, I would like to point out a distinction between their epistemologies and methods of reaching the vision of God. While in *Poimandres* the method is the traditional ascension, in the rest of the Corpus it is initiation. To a certain extent, the narrative of *Poimandres* logically leads the solution of ascension since the general story concerning the divine Anthropos follows the Enochic narrative of the fallen watchers. Willing to know more about creation, the Anthropos looks from heaven through the firmament, sees Nature and his own form reflected in her. Further, in a sort of cosmic narcissistic process, he falls in love with his form, the beautiful shape of God, reflected in the waters of Nature.⁶⁸ He descends afterward and, together with Nature, produces the seven androgynous *anthropoi*. Caught in the structure of Nature, the Anthropos “became a slave within it,” although preserving his immortal condition.⁶⁹ The narrative structure follows in general lines the myth of the fall of the Watchers enamored of the daughters of men and imprisoned in the realm under the sky. For this myth, the narrative solution is ascension, the return of the lost sons, a feature *Poimandres* follows, although using a different language. Now Poimandres teaches Hermes to separate himself from passion and bodily senses and to rise up through the cosmic framework which the Anthropos had crossed (“Thence the human being rushes up through the cosmic framework [ὑμνοῖα]”). Hermes should continue his ascension

⁶⁸ *Poim.* 14 (CH 1:11).

⁶⁹ *Poim.* 15 (CH 1:11).

and cross the seven zones of the heavens to enter the ogdoad.⁷⁰ It is there that he will join the powers which hymn God and, as in the apocalyptic narrative structure, he will undertake transformation. We are thus told that human beings who reach that heavenly liturgy become one with the powers (δυνάμεις γενόμενοι), enter God, and finally receive knowledge and become God (θεωθῆναι).⁷¹ The narrative structure is undoubtedly apocalyptic.

The epistemology of *Poimandres*, however, is more complex since it involves the Delphic-Socratic *gnothi seauton*, an element also present in the rest of the tractates. Only the saint, the good, the pure, the charitable, and the pious receive the visitation of the Nous and the gift of intellect.⁷² And only those who have intellect become intellectual anthropos (ἔννοους ἄνθρωπος) and know themselves as life and light, which are God's presence in them.⁷³ In this way they know God, who is life and light, and can start the aforementioned ascension.

The rest of the corpus seems to elaborate a different epistemology. While *Tractate* 10 equates God with the Father and the Good (10.2;3;9;14), it also describes the vision of the Good as a perception of a noetic light with the eye of the intellect:

“You have filled us with a vision (θέασις), father, which is good and very beautiful, and my mind's eye (ὁ τοῦ νοῦ ὀφθαλμός) is almost {blinded} in such a vision (θέασις).” “Yes, but the vision of the good (ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ θέασις) is not like the ray of the sun which, because it is fiery, dazzles the eyes with light and makes them shut. On the contrary, it illuminates (ἐκλάμπει) to the extent that one capable of receiving the influence of intellectual splendor (ἐπεισορῶν τῆς νοητῆς λαμπηδόνης) can receive it. ... But we are still too weak now for this sight (δῶν); we are not yet strong enough to open our mind's eyes (τοὺς τοῦ νοῦ ὀφθαλμούς) and look (θεάσασθαι) on the incorruptible, incomprehensible beauty of that good (τὸ κάλλος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἐκείνου τὸ ἀφθαρτον, τὸ ἀληπτον). In the moment when you have nothing to say about it, you will see (δῶν) it, for the

⁷⁰ *Poim.* 24-26 (CH 1:15-16). Trans. Copenhaver, 6.

⁷¹ *Poim.* 26 (CH 1:16).

⁷² *Poim.* 22 (CH 1:14).

⁷³ *Poim.* 21 (CH 1:14): ὁ ἔννοους ἄνθρωπος ἀναγνωρίσῃ αὐτόν. The text allows us also know that this knowledge has a noetic nature; e.g., *Poim* 21 (CH 1:14): “The one who perceives himself noetically advances towards himself.” ὁ νοήσας αὐτόν εἰς αὐτόν χωρεῖ. My translation.

knowledge (γνώσις) of it is divine silence (θεία σιωπή) and suppression of all the senses (καταργία πασῶν τῶν αἰσθήσεων).⁷⁴

Vision requires therefore surmounting all ordinary capacities of perception and acquiring a new epistemic ability, noetic perception. Light and life are two essential attributes of the Good and Father and they can be seen only through the *nous*.⁷⁵ *Tractate 5* makes the distinction between that which is eternal and non-manifested (τὸ ἄφανές) and the things of ordinary knowledge. Ordinary knowledge functions on the basis of images or representations (φαντασίαι) of manifested things (τὰ φαινόμενα) which belong to the realm of becoming and temporality. Accordingly, representation regards only those things belonging to the domain of becoming (ἡ γὰρ φαντασία μόνων τῶν γεννητῶν ἐστίν) and becoming is nothing else but representation (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐστὶν ἢ φαντασία ἢ γένεσις).⁷⁶

Moreover, as the mind produces the representations of ordinary knowledge while remaining unseen and not manifested, God brings all the forms of the universe into being while remaining unbegotten, non represented, and non manifested (ἀγέννητος, ἀφαντασίαστος, ἀφανής).⁷⁷ There is, however, a domain of knowledge beyond representation and becoming. It is the knowledge of God. The only capacity appropriate for this type of knowledge is the intellect, because it is akin to God:

[A]sk him the grace to enable you to understand (νοῆσαι) so great a god, to permit even one ray of his to illuminate your thinking (τῇ σῇ διανοίᾳ ἐκλάμψαι). Only understanding (νόησις), because

⁷⁴ *Tract.* 10.4-5 (CH 1:114-115). Trans. Copenhaver, 31. The term ἐπεισορή here translated through “influence” can equally be rendered through effluence, influx. The idea of a luminous procession harks back to Plato (*Republica* VI.508b-e; VII.517 a-c) and the Book of Wisdom 7:25. Cf. *Tract.* 7.2; 10.5 (CH 1:81;115). Νόησις is also described through the metaphor of the “eyes of the heart” (τοῖς τῆς καρδίας ὀφθαλμοῖς) in *Tract.* 4.11 (CH 1:53).

⁷⁵ E.g., *Asclepius* 41 (CH 2:355): “We have known you, the vast light perceived only by reason (*lumen maximum solo intellectu sensibile*).” Trans. Copenhaver, 92.

⁷⁶ *Tract.* 5.1 (CH 1:60).

⁷⁷ *Tract.* 5.2 (CH 1:60).

it, too, is invisible (non manifested, ἀφανὴς οὐσα), sees the invisible (non manifested, τὸ ἀφανές), and if you have the strength, Tat, your mind's eye (τοῖς τοῦ νοῦ ὀφθαλμοῖς) will see it (φανήσεται).⁷⁸

According to the tractates, God is everywhere in the universe: “god surrounds everything and permeates everything (ὁ μὲν θεὸς περὶ πάντα καὶ διὰ πάντων).”⁷⁹ And the access to the ultimate object of contemplation is no longer ascension, but the Hermetic corpus brings two new strategies of access: first, noetic vision, an epistemic capacity penetrating beyond the veil of materiality and able to perceive realities from a realm of a more refined substance, and, second, mystery initiation. This present investigation will underline both of them since I believe that they represent a cardinal shift in Late Antiquity and two essential features of the early paschal writings, which represent a *kabod* theology where ascension is replaced by initiation and the passage into the noetic realm. Since God is conceived as everywhere in the universe, ascension does not make sense anymore. Instead, the Hellenistic mindset proposes two languages, one taking its sources from the Greek philosophical tradition, namely noetic perception, the other from Greek and generally Hellenistic religiosity, namely the idea of initiation into mystery. These two languages will be essential for early Christian authors and will survive through the Middle Ages.

Nonetheless, if they come together in the same text, they actually denote the same thing, or, more precisely, two different aspects of the same thing: the epistemic and the initiatic. *Tractate* 13, for instance, calls initiation by the traditional term “regeneration” (παλιγγενεσία).⁸⁰ The Hermetic Corpus envisions, therefore, a doctrine of regeneration

⁷⁸ *Tract.* 5.2 (CH 1:61). Trans. Copenhaver, 18.

⁷⁹ *Tract.* 12.14 (CH 1:179). Trans. Copenhaver, 46. Cf. 12.20 (CH 1:182): “god, who is energy and power, surrounds everything and permeates everything.”

⁸⁰ *Tract.* 13.1;3;7;10;16;22 (CH 2:200;201;203;204;207;209).

and a modality of its conveyance which Hermes Trismegistus follows when he conveys it to Tat.⁸¹ *Tractate* 13 is equally called a λόγος ἀπόκρυφος, an expression echoing the famous ἱεροὶ λόγοι of the mystery cults with their double function of transmission and explanation of the mystery. The tractate ends with the hymn of regeneration, which also consists of a secret hymnody (ὕμνωδία κρυπτή).⁸²

As in mystery religions, the sacred logos is also accompanied by a first stage of purification and a second stage of perfection, where the neophyte sees the divine light and undergoes transformation. The master instructs his disciple first to leave behind senses and things regarding matter, in order to perceive that domain which is more subtle than sensible objects:

“If something is not hard, not moist, not volatile, how can you understand (νοήσεις) it through senses (αἰσθητῶς) – something understood only through its power and energy (τὸ μόνον δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ νοούμενον) yet requiring one empowered to understand the birth in god (τὴν ἐν θεῷ γένεσιν).” “Am I without the power (ἄδύνατος), then, father?” “May it not be so, my child. Draw it to you, and it will come. Wish it, and it happens. Leave the senses of the body (κατάργησον τοῦ σώματος τὰς αἰσθήσεις) idle, and the birth of divinity (γένεσις τῆς θεότητος) will begin. Cleanse yourself (κάθαραι σεαυτὸν) of the irrational torments of matter (ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλόγων τῆς ὕλης τιμωριῶν).”⁸³

⁸¹ See the doctrine of regeneration (τὸν τῆς παλιγγενεσίας λόγον) in *Tract.* 13.1 (CH 2:200); the mode of regeneration (τῆς παλιγγενεσίας τὴν τρόπον) in *Tract.* 13.3 (CH 2:201); the transmission of regeneration (τῆς παλιγγενεσίας τὴν παράδοσιν) in *Tract.* 13.22 (CH 2:209).

⁸² *Tract.* 13.17-22 (CH 2:207-209). *Tractate* 14 also displays mystery terminologies and the mystery mindset of the Hermetic intellectual context. While Tat is portrayed as a neophyte, Asclepius is considered more advanced and suited to receive the same ideas in “a more mystical interpretation (μυστικώτερον αὐτὰ ἐρμηνεύσας), suitable to someone of your greater age and learning in the nature of things (ἐπιστήμονι τῆς φύσεως).” *Tract.* 14.1 (CH 2:223). The fifth discourse of the corpus directly affirms that Tat has to become an initiate (μὴ ἀμύητος ᾖς); *Tract.* 5.1 (CH 1:50).

⁸³ *Tract.* 13.6-7 (CH 2:202). Trans. Copenhaver, 50. The concepts of power (δύναμις) and energy (ἐνέργεια) play the role of divine titles in *Tractate* 13, together with the Good, the Truth, the One, and the Whole; cf. *Tract.* 12.20 (CH 1:182) and 13.18 (CH 2:208).

Hermes further counts the twelve “irrational torments of matter” in the human being: ignorance, grief, incontinence, lust, injustice, greed, deceit, envy, treachery, anger, recklessness, and malice.⁸⁴

Perfection, as the second stage of the spiritual progression, actually consists of regeneration. As in the first stage, the process is described through epistemological terminology. The neophyte goes out of himself and enters the Nous:⁸⁵

Seeing (ὁρῶν) { } within me an unfabricated vision (ἄπλασματον θέαν) that came from the mercy of god, I went out of myself (ἐμαντὸν ἐξελήλυθα) into an immortal body, and now I am not what I was before. I have been born in mind (ἐγεννήθην ἐν νῶ).⁸⁶

The process is also described as the descent of God accompanied by ten divine powers (the decade), and followed by the process of divinization:

“My child, you have come to know the means of rebirth. The arrival of the decad sets in order a birth of mind (νοητὰ γένεσις) that expels the twelve; we have been divinized (ἐθεώθημεν) by this birth. Therefore, whoever through mercy has attained this godly birth and has forsaken bodily sensation (τὴν σωματικὴν αἴσθησιν) recognizes himself as constituted of the intelligibles [i.e. the powers] and rejoices.” “Since god has made me tranquil, father, I no longer picture things with the sight of my eyes (οὐχ ὁράσει ὀφθαλμῶν) but with the mental energy that comes through the powers (τῇ διὰ δυνάμεων νοητικῇ ἐνεργείᾳ).”⁸⁷

The Hermetic corpus conceives of this transformation as an ontological change from the sensible body to the essential one endowed with noetic powers:

“Tell me, father, does this body constituted of powers (τὸ σῶμα τοῦτο τὸ ἐκ δυνάμεων συνεστὸς) ever succumb to dissolution.” “Hold your tongue; do not give voice to the impossible! Else you will do wrong, and your mind’s eye (ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς τοῦ νοῦ) will be profaned. The sensible body of nature (τὸ αἰσθητὸν τῆς φύσεως σῶμα) is far removed from essential generation (τῆς οὐσιωδοῦς γενέσεως).”⁸⁸

⁸⁴ *Tract.* 13.7 (CH 2:203). Trans. Copenhaver, 50-51.

⁸⁵ This realm is also called by the traditional Platonic term “noetic world” (κόσμος νοητός), as in *Tract.* 13.21 (CH 2:209). The goal of this process is also called the “knowledge of God” (γνώσις θεοῦ) in *Tract.* 13.8 (CH 2:204).

⁸⁶ *Tract.* 13.3 (CH 2:201). Trans. Copenhaver, 50.

⁸⁷ *Tract.* 13.10-11 (CH 2:204-205). Trans. Copenhaver, 51. For the decad of noetic powers, see *Tract.* 13.12.

⁸⁸ *Tract.* 13.14 (CH 2:206). Trans. Copenhaver, 52. A similar perspective occurs in *Tract.* 13.2 (CH 2:201). Trans. Copenhaver, 49. For the distinction between corporeal and essential (οὐσιώδης), the latter denoting the invisible dimension of the human being, see *Tract.* 1.15., or *Asclepius* 8, where it is

A similar perspective occurs in *Tractate* 13.2, a passage which also stresses the divinization of the initiated:

“And whence comes the begotten (ὁ γεννώμενος), father? He does not share in my essence (οὐσίᾳ).” “The begotten will be of a different kind, a god (θεός) and a child of god (θεοῦ παῖς), the all in all (τὸ πᾶν ἐν παντί), composed entirely of the powers (ἐκ πασῶν δυνάμεων συνεστώς).”⁸⁹

The Hermetic corpus even conceives of the faculty of the intellect as a divine gift offered as an award to a few.

God shared reason (λόγον) among all people, O Tat, but not mind (νοῦν), though he begrudged it to none. ... All those who heeded the proclamation (τοῦ κηρύγματος) and immersed themselves in mind (ἐβαπτίσαντο τοῦ νοός) participated in knowledge (τῆς γνώσεως) and became perfect (τέλειοι) people because they received mind (τὸν νοῦν δεξάμενοι). But those who missed the point of the proclamation are people of reason because they did not receive < the gift of > mind (τὸν νοῦν μὴ προσειληφόντες) as well But those who participate in the gift that comes from god (τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ δωρεᾶς), O Tat, are immortal rather than mortal if one compares their deeds, for in a mind of their own they comprehended all (πάντα ἐμπεριλαβόντες τῷ ἑαυτῶν νοῷ).⁹⁰

Hermes further talks about a science of the intellect (ἡ τοῦ νοῦ ἐπιστήμη) which consists of the understanding of God (ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ κατανόησις).⁹¹ The ultimate goal of this science is the vision of God as the Good, of which the essential attribute is luminosity.⁹²

As we saw above, important *kabod* texts of the Bible, such as Ezekiel 1:26 play a constitutive role in the theoretical articulation of the Hermetic vision of God. In addition to this, philosophical features from Plato, Platonism, and Middle Platonism are even

commensurated with the human part shaped according to the image of God.

⁸⁹ *Tract.* 13.2 (CH 2:201). Trans. Copenhagen, 49. Cf. *Poim.* 26; *Tract.* 10.24; 10.25; 12.1.

⁹⁰ *Tract.* 4.3-5 (CH 1:50). Trans. Copenhagen, 15-16. Cf. *Poim.* 22 (CH 1:14) and *Asclep.* 7 (CH 2:303): *illum intellegentiae diuinum*. *Poim.* 26 (CH 1:16) also identifies the final stage of those who ascended to the Father, became heavenly powers, and entered God as the possession of knowledge (γνώσις) and becoming god (θεωθῆναι).

⁹¹ *Tract.* 4.6 (CH 1:51).

⁹² The identity between God and the Good is a central feature of the Hermetic tractates. Likewise, the luminous nature of God and the Good represents one of the emblematic aspects of these texts. See also *Poim.* 21 (CH 1:14), which also defines God the Father as light and life.

more obvious contributors to this theorization. Accordingly, the Hermetic corpus, alongside Philo's writings, constitutes a milestone of human culture. It represents the first synthesis between the *kabod* theology and an epistemology tracing its roots in back to Platonism. The assumed Platonic ontology of the two realms triggered, as well, Plato's epistemology distinguishing between noetic and ordinary perception and characterized the vision of the *kabod* as noetic. The Hermetic corpus thus represents the epistemological shift from contemplating the *kabod* through ordinary seeing to apprehending it through the noetic capacities of the mind.

V. THE NOETIC ANTHROPOS OF EARLY CHRISTIAN HELLENISM

One of the earliest Hellenistic challenges to anthropomorphism appears already in Aristobulus, who avows that, while the Law ascribes hands, arms, face, feet, and walk to the divine power (ἐπὶ τῆς θείας δυνάμεως), he will not fall into a mythic and anthropomorphic understanding (εἰς τὸ μυθώδες καὶ ἀνθρώπινον κατὰστημα).⁹³ His position is, certainly, a strong rejection of the anthropomorphic position and the literal interpretation of the Bible. It should be noticed, however, that he makes a connection between the concept of *dynamis* and anthropomorphism. Thus, it may be assumed that certain anthropomorphists of his time believed that God's *dynamis* took a particular form, most likely anthropomorphic. This might be one of the most ancient formulations of the idea of noetic anthropos. According to Aristobulus's opposite interpretation, the divine power cannot have any form because it is present everywhere in the universe. This interpretation is congruent with his further anti-anthropomorphic stance. God does not

⁹³ Aristobulus in Eusebius, *Prep. Evan.* 8.10.1-2 (GCS 43/1:451).

have a form since thousands of Jews saw him descending as fire and light to reveal the Law not only on the mount, but in the whole universe.⁹⁴

1. Hellenistic Noetic Anthropoi in Pseudo-Orpheus and the Hermetic Corpus

In the Alexandrian intellectual environment of the second century B.C.E., Aristobulus takes over and even makes some editorial adjustments to a pseudo-Orphic hymn which states that God is unseen by mortal eyes, but that a certain Chaldean wise man, skilled in astronomy, discerned God with his mind (νοῦς). The Chaldean—possibly Musaeus, Moses, or Abraham—had the vision of God or of Zeus enthroned on a heavenly golden throne, with his feet touching the earth and his hands the limits of the ocean. We are dealing here with a Greek poem in which Aristobulus preferred to see Yahweh portrayed as Zeus:

Walk wisely in the way, and look to none,
 Save to the immortal Framer of the world:
 For thus of Him an ancient story speaks:
 One (Εἷς), perfect in Himself (αὐτοτελής), all else by Him
 Made perfect: ever present in His works,
 By mortal eyes unseen (εἰσοράα), by mind (νόῦ δ' εἰσοράαται) alone Discerned.
 ... All other things
 'Twere easy to behold, could'st thou but first
 Behold Himself here present upon earth.
 The footsteps and the mighty hand of God
 Whene'er I see, I'll show them thee, my son:
 But Him I cannot see (ὁρώω), so dense a cloud
 In tenfold darkness wraps our feeble sight.
 Him in His power no mortal could behold,
 Save one, a scion of Chaldaean race:
 For he was skilled to mark the sun's bright path,
 And how in even circle round the earth
 The starry sphere on its own axis turns,
 And winds their chariot guide o'er sea and sky;
 And showed where fire's bright flame its strength displayed.
 But God Himself, high above heaven unmoved,
 Sits on His golden throne, and plants His feet

⁹⁴ *Prep. Evan.* 8.10.12-18 (GCS 43/1:454-454).

On the broad earth; His right hand He extends
 O'er Ocean's farthest bound; the eternal hills
 Tremble in their deep heart, nor can endure
 His mighty power (μέγος). And still above the heavens
 Alone He sits, and governs all on earth,
 Himself first cause, and means, and end of all.⁹⁵

Another document of Hellenistic culture, a passage from the *Corpus Hermeticum* conceives of God as having an incorporeal form (ἄσώματος ἰδέα), invisible for the ordinary eye. The nature of God, in this case, recalls the nature of Plato's ideas, invisible to the ordinary eye, and incorporeal:

For there can be no impasse in our understanding of god. Therefore, if he has any structure (ἰδέα) in him, it is one structure (μίαν ἰδέαν), incorporeal (ἄσώματος), that does not yield to appearances (ταῖς ὁψεσιν). ... Do not be surprised at the notion of an incorporeal structure (ἄσώματος ἰδέα), for it is like the structure of a word (ἡ τοῦ λόγου).⁹⁶

2. Irenaeus and the Invisible Christ Crucified over the Universe

In two very similar passages, Irenaeus maintains that the Logos saved the world through the cross because he had been already, before His Incarnation, invisibly crucified in the universe in the form of a cross. The two passages are *Demonstratio* 34 and *Adversus Haereses* 5.18.3. Reconstructing the two passages from the Armenian, Greek, and Latin existent fragments, Adelin Rousseau concludes that Irenaeus believed in the existence of the preincarnational cosmic Logos manifested in the entire universe, in an invisible way, in the form of the cross:⁹⁷

And since He is the Word of God Almighty, who invisibly (ὁ κατὰ τὸ ἄορατον) pervades <...> the whole creation (συνπαρεκτεινόμενος πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει), and encompasses its length, breadth, height and depth—for by the Word of God everything is administered—so too was the Son of God

⁹⁵ Eusebius, *Praep. Evan.* 13.12.5 (GCS 43/1:). Tr. E.H. Gifford (Oxford, 1903).

⁹⁶ *Tract.* 11.16-17 (CH 1:153-154). Trans. Copenhaver, 40-41.

⁹⁷ Cf. A. Rousseau, "Le Verbe 'imprimé' en forme de croix dans l'univers": A propos de deux passages de saint Irénée," in *Armeniaca: Mélanges d'études arméniennes* (ed. M. Djanachian; Venise: St. Lazare, 1969), 67-82.

crucified in these [fourfold dimensions] (ἐσταυρώθη εἰς ταῦτα), having been imprinted in the form of the cross in everything (κεχριασμένος ἐν τῷ παντί); for it <was> necessary for Him, becoming visible (ὁρατὸν γενόμενον), to make manifest (εἰς φανερόν ἀγαγεῖν) His <form of the cross> <in> everything (τὸν <ἐν> τῷ παντί χρίσμα αὐτοῦ), that He might demonstrate, by His visible form [on the cross], His activity which is on the <in>visible [level] (τὴν ἐνέργειαν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐν τῷ <ἀ>οράτῳ), for it is He who illumines the ‘heights’, that is, the things in heaven, and holds the ‘deeps’, which is beneath the earth, and stretches the ‘length’ from the East to the West, and who navigates the ‘breadth’ <of> the northern and southern regions, inviting the dispersed from all sides to the knowledge of the Father.⁹⁸

As already mentioned by Rousseau, the following text from *Adversus Haereses* parallels *Demonstratio* 34:

For the Creator of the world (Κοσμοποιητὴς) is truly the Word of God (Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ): and this is our Lord (ὁ Κύριος), who in the last times was made man (ἄνθρωπος), existing in this world, and who in an invisible manner (κατὰ τὸ ἀόρατον) contains (συνέχων) all things created, and is crucified in the entire creation (ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει κεχριασμένος), since the Word of God governs and arranges all things; and therefore He came to His own in a visible manner (ὁρατῶς), and was made flesh, and hung upon the tree, that He might sum up (ἀνακεφαλαιώσῃται) all things in Himself (τὰ πάντα εἰς ἑαυτὸν).⁹⁹

A different text from *Adversus Haereses* also claims that crucifixion was in fact the event which made manifest the hidden and invisible nature of the Logos, here also compared with a huge figure extending divine hands:

This word, then, what was hidden from us (κεκρυμμένον ὑφ’ ἡμῶν), did the dispensation of the tree make manifest (τοῦ ξύλου ἐφανερώσεν), as I have already remarked. For as we lost (ἀπεβάλομεν) it by means of a tree, by means of a tree again was it made manifest to all (διὰ ξύλου πάλιν φανερός τοῖς πᾶσιν ἐγένετο), showing (ἐπιδεικνύων) the height, the length, the breadth, the depth in itself (τὸ ὕψος καὶ μήκος καὶ πλάτος καὶ βάθος ἐν ἑαυτῷ); and, as a certain man among our predecessors observed, ‘Through the extension of the hands of a divine person (διὰ τῆς θείας ἐκτάσεως τῶν χειρῶν), gathering together the two peoples to one God.’ For these were two

⁹⁸ *Dem* 34 (SC 406,131-2;272-77; PO 12/5,33-34+PO 39/1/178,133). Trans. J. Behr, *St. Irenaeus of Lyons: On the Apostolic Preaching* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1997), 62. For the Latin text, see SC 406:130-132, A. Rousseau, *Irénée de Lyon: Démonstration de la prédication apostolique* (SC 406; Cerf: Paris; 1995). For the Armenian, see K. ter Mēkērttschian and S.G. Wilson, *The Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* (PO 12/5; Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1919) and C. Renoux, *Irénée de Lyon: Nouveaux fragments Arméniens de l’Adversus Haereses et de l’Epideixis* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978). For the Greek retroversion, see Rousseau’s version in SC 406:272.

⁹⁹ *Adv. Haer.* 5.18.3 (SC 153:245). Trans. ANF 1:546-647 slightly adjusted. Jean Daniélou describes the remarkable Jewish-Christian tradition which identified the divine *dynamis* with a cosmic cross and the cosmic Christ; see, Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (trans. J. A. Baker; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964), 270-292; cf. Justin, *1 Apol.* 55.1-6 (cf. ἵσχυς in *Dial* 91.1); Valentinians (*Iren. Adv. Haer.* 1.2.2); Irenaeus, *Dem.* 56; *Adv. Haer.* 1.3.5; Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 3.19; Clement of Alexandria, *Extr. Theod.* 43.1 (GCS 17/3:120); *Acts of John* 99; Gregory of Nyssa, *1 Or. Res.* (GNO 287).

hands, because there were two peoples scattered to the ends of the earth; but there was one head in the middle, as there is but one God, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.”¹⁰⁰

For Irenaeus, therefore, beyond the materiality of the visible universe there is not simply immateriality, but he conceives—as one can further see in Clement or the above mentioned texts—of various degrees of substantiality between material or visible substance and complete immateriality. The fact that Christ is invisible before Incarnation should not therefore lead to the conclusion that this invisibility reflects a complete immateriality.¹⁰¹ His invisible presence in the universe in the form of the cross presupposes a certain subtle substantiality distinct from complete immateriality. Incarnation, therefore, should be regarded as the passage from this invisible condition to the visibility of the human flesh. In a different passage from *Adversus*, Irenaeus depicts the preincarnated Christ whom the prophets saw in an “invisible manner” as a “man conversant with men:”

After this invisible manner, therefore, did they see God (*Secundum hanc igitur rationem invisibilem videbant Deum*), as also Esaias says, “I have seen with mine eyes the King, the Lord of hosts,” pointing out that man should behold God with his eyes, and hear His voice. In this manner, therefore (*Secundum hanc igitur rationem*), did they also see the Son of God as a man conversant with men (*hominem videbant conversatum cum hominibus*), while they prophesied what was to happen, saying that He who was not come as yet was present proclaiming also the impassible as subject to suffering, and declaring that He who was then in heaven (*eum qui tunc in coelis*) had descended into the dust of death.¹⁰²

Isaiah, therefore, saw the Son of God in an invisible manner (*rationem invisibilem*), in the same way he is also invisibly crucified in the whole universe. The prophet saw the Son of God who was God, the King of Hosts, and a Man. Moreover, we are told that this was the

¹⁰⁰ *Adv. Haer.* 5.17.4 (SC 153: 233-234). Trans. ANF 1:545.

¹⁰¹ Although Irenaeus believes that God should be seen, because the vision of God alone gives life (following Deut 5:24), it seems that he considers this vision as part of the resurrected life. He appears to profess the invisibility of the Son of God in Himself, since even the prophets saw only dispensations and similitudes of his glory; cf. *AH* 4.20.10-11.

¹⁰² *Adv. Haer.* 4.20.8. Trans. ANF 1:490.

condition in which the Son of God was then in heaven (*tunc in coelis*), before his Incarnation.

3. Clement of Alexandria and the Noetic Form of Christ

The doctrine of a noetic form of God is presented in one of its clearest illustrations in Clement of Alexandria. He already affirms in *Protreptikos* that God himself and his image or representation/statue (*agalma*) are noetic, not aesthetic: ἡμῖν δὲ οὐχ ὕλης αἰσθητῆς αἰσθητόν, νοητόν δὲ τὸ ἄγαλμα ἐστίν. Νοητόν, οὐκ αἰσθητόν ἐστι [τὸ ἄγαλμα] ὁ θεός, ὁ μόνος ὄντως θεός.¹⁰³ In his scholia to Theodotus, while responding to Theodotus's commentaries on the Johannine prologue and also on the titles of the Logos, Clement affirms that none of the existing realities is bereft of form and substance. He expressly formulates this general philosophical principle in these words:

Whereas every existing thing is not bereft of substance, those bodies belonging to this universe do not have a similar form and body. ... The Monogenes is peculiarly noetic and possesses his proper form and substance, exceedingly pure and absolutely sovereign, and enjoys the power of the Father without mediation.¹⁰⁴

Clement thus affirms that neither the pneumatic and noetic beings (τὰ πνευματικὰ καὶ νοερά), nor the Archangels, nor the Protocists, nor even the Son himself can be without form, shape, figure, and body (ἄμορφος καὶ ἀνείδος καὶ ἀσχημάτιστος καὶ ἀσώματος).¹⁰⁵ In addition to this, the Alexandrian conceives of degrees of materiality between all these celestial entities. He shows that stars, for instance, are immaterial and

¹⁰³ *Protr.* 4.51.6 (ANF 2:186): "But *we* have no sensible image of sensible matter, but an image that is perceived by the mind alone,—God, who alone is truly God."

¹⁰⁴ *Extr. Theod.* 10.2-3 (SC 23:78): "Ὅλως γὰρ τὸ γενητόν οὐκ ἀνούσιον μὲν, οὐχ ὁμοιον δὲ μορφήν καὶ σῶμα ἔχουσι τοῖς ἐν τῷδε τῷ κόσμῳ σώμασιν. ... Ἐκεῖ δὲ ὁ Μονογενὴς καὶ ἰδίως νοερός, ἰδέα ἰδίᾳ καὶ οὐσίᾳ ἰδίᾳ κεκρημένος, ἄκρως εἰλικρινεῖ καὶ ἡγεμονικωτάτῃ, καὶ προσεχῶς τῆς τοῦ Πατρὸς ἀπολαύων δυνάμεως. My translation.

¹⁰⁵ *Extr. Theod.* 10.1 (SC 23:76). For scholarship on Clement's doctrine of the Protocists in the larger context of early Christianity, see B. G. Bucur, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology: Clement of Alexandria and Other Early Christian Witnesses* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

without form (ἄσώματα καὶ ἀνείδεα) compared to the earthly things. Stars are, however, measured and sensible bodies (σώματα μεμετρημένα καὶ αἰσθητά) from the perspective to the Son, and similarly the Son as seen from the perspective of the Father.¹⁰⁶ The same idea is similarly expressed through light-vocabulary, and celestial realities are also described as noetic. The angels, as noetic spirits (πνεύματα νοερά) in their nature, are not completely immaterial, but have a body of noetic fire (νοερὸν πῦρ). Moreover, there is a light in which the angelic beings themselves ardently desire to partake, a more purified light than theirs, which Clement calls noetic (φῶς νοερόν). Nevertheless, Clement describes the Son as an even purer light than the noetic one, and, employing a Pauline expression from 1 Tim 6:16, entitles it “inaccessible light (ἀπρόσιτον Φῶς).” Finally, Clement identifies it with the “Power of God (Δύναμις Θεοῦ)” from 1 Cor 1:24.¹⁰⁷

The Alexandrian advances even a new argument, now from an epistemological perspective. Assuming the epistemic principle according to which both the seer and the seen cannot be without form and body (Τὸ τοίνυν ὁρῶν καὶ ὁρώμενον ἀσχημάτιστον εἶναι οὐ δύναται οὐδὲ ἄσώματον), he observes that the seven Protocists (the first created heavenly beings) always contemplate the Face of the Father, which is the Son. Consequently, the Son has to have a form and body in order to allow the Protocists the possibility to see him.¹⁰⁸ However, the theologian observes that the epistemic capacity through which the Protocists can see the Son is not an ordinary one. It is not the sensible

¹⁰⁶ *Extr. Theod.* 11.3 (SC 23:82).

¹⁰⁷ *Extr. Theod.* 12.2-3 (SC 23:83).

¹⁰⁸ *Extr. Theod.* 10.6 (SC 23:80).

eye, but the noetic eye given from the Father (ὀφθαλμῷ οὐκ αἰσθητῷ, ἀλλ' οἷω παρέσχεν ὁ Πατήρ, νοερῷ).¹⁰⁹

4. Hippolytus of Rome and the Preincarnational Glory of God

Hippolytus of Rome envisions the Incarnation as a mystery of the manifestation of the Logos, a mystery of economy (μυστήριον οἰκονομίας).¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, a careful eye can see that discussion of this mystery does not include solely the usual discourse about kenosis, but the passage from the glorious preincarnational condition of the Logos to earthly flesh. While Hippolytus expressly affirms that the only flesh in heaven is that of the resurrected Christ and that generally in heaven there is no flesh (ἐν οὐρανῷ σὰρξ οὐκ ἦν), he describes the glorious preincarnational nature of the Logos as Spirit (πνεῦμα), Power (δύναμις) and the one who is from the beginning Son of Man (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου), and then equates him with the Son of Man from Daniel's vision.¹¹¹ This Son of Man, called also light from light, is invisible (ἀόρατος) for the world but visible (ὀρατός) for the Father in his preincarnational state.¹¹² Incarnation is

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ *Adv. Haer.* 4, in P. Nautin, *Hippolyte: Contre les hérésies* (Études et textes pour l'histoire du dogme de la Trinité 2; Paris: Cerf, 1949), 241. For the manifestation of the Logos in the Incarnation, Hippolytus uses such expressions as ἐμφανῶς (*Adv. Haer.* 2 [Nautin, 237]) or ἐμφανῆς (*Adv. Haer.* 12 [Nautin, 255]) from the verb ἐμφαίνω (to exhibit, display, become visible, manifest), and ἐσημαίνετο (*Adv. Haer.* 2 [Nautin, 237]) from σημαίνω (to give signs, appear, be manifest). For an English translation of *Contra Noetum*, see R. Butterworth, *Hippolytus of Rome: Contra Noetum* (London: Heythrop Monographs, 1977).

¹¹¹ *Adv. Haer.* 4 (Nautin, 243). The idea is congruent with his *Commentary on Daniel* 4.11 (SC 14:282), where Christ is identified with the one Moses and Daniel saw.

¹¹² *Adv. Haer.* 10 (Nautin, 253): "But as Leader and Counselor and Craftsman for what was coming into being, he [the Father] brought forth the Word. This Word which he has in himself and is invisible to the world that is being created, he makes visible. In uttering what was formerly a sound, and in bringing forth light out of light, he sent forth in the creation, as its Lord, his own Mind, which previously was visible to himself alone." Trans. Butterworth, 68.

the process in which the Father makes his Image, the Logos, visible for the world, that is manifest in Jesus.¹¹³

A passage from Hippolytus's *Commentaries on Genesis*, a document of contested attribution, describes the preincarnated Logos in explicit glorious terms:

The word of prophecy passes again to Immanuel Himself. For, in my opinion, what is intended by it is just what has been already stated in the words, "giving increase of beauty in the case of the shoot." For he means that He increased and grew up into that which He had been from the beginning, and indicates the return to the glory which He had by nature. This, if we apprehend it correctly, is (we should say) just "restored" to Him. For as the only begotten Word of God, being God of God, emptied Himself, according to the Scriptures, humbling Himself of His own will to that which He was not before, and took unto Himself this vile flesh, and appeared in the "form of a servant," and "became obedient to God the Father, even unto death," so hereafter He is said to be "highly exalted;" and as if well-nigh He had it not by reason of His humanity, and as if it were in the way of grace, He "receives the name which is above every name," according to the word of the blessed Paul. But the matter, in truth, was not a "giving," as for the first time, of what He had not by nature; far otherwise. But rather we must understand a return and restoration to that which existed in Him at the beginning, essentially and inseparably. And it is for this reason that, when He had assumed, by divine arrangement, the lowly estate of humanity, He said, "Father, glorify me with the glory which I had," etc. For He who was co-existent with His Father before all time and before the foundation of the world, always had the glory proper to Godhead.¹¹⁴

To a certain extent recalling the language from the Johannine prologue, the text describes the Logos as having a glorious condition in his proper nature and being coexistent with the Father from eternity. As in Irenaeus's case, Hippolytus (*Adv. Haer.* 10) conceives of the Incarnation as the passage from the invisible to visible. Both of them, in fact, conceive of the invisible nature of Christ as glorious. Their concept of invisibility, therefore, has to be understood not as complete invisibility, but only pointing to the incapacity of ordinary human sight to see the noetic glory. Once thought of as beyond

¹¹³ *Adv. Haer.* 10 (Nautin, 253) and *Adv. Haer.* 7 (Nautin, 249).

¹¹⁴ Hippolytus, *Fr. Gen.* 49:21-26 (ANF 5:167). Whether or not of Hippolytan authorship (the passage is spurious for several scholars and not introduced in the GCS critical edition), the passage witnesses to the idea of Christ's glorious preincarnated status. See also the following passage about the return of the heavenly Lord to his Father, a passage of clear Hippolytan authorship, *Fr.* 44 (ANF 5:167-168): "Who else is this than as is shown us by the apostle, 'the second man, the Lord from heaven'? And in the Gospel, He said that he who did the will of the Father was 'the last.' And by the words, 'Turn back to me,' is meant His ascension to His Father in heaven after His passion."

ordinary sight, the preincarnational Christ is no longer invisible, but glorious and spiritual.¹¹⁵

5. Tertullian and the Heavenly Body of Christ

Tertullian writes extensively against the Docetic and Gnostic doctrine of a purely spiritual Jesus Christ.¹¹⁶ In order to emphasize the corporeal condition of Christ's Incarnation, Tertullian envisions even Christ's preincarnational status as characterized by body and form, in addition to the glorious garments. Certainly his whole theory is congruent with the Bible, on the basis of which he largely disputes with his contenders, and Tertullian does not have to invent something new for this purpose. *Adversus Praxean* 7, a passage about the generation of the Son from the Father in a glorious form is essential for sustaining our thesis. The argument starts with the generation of the Logos from the Father. The central idea of the argument—that the generation of the Son consists of his formation into a distinct form (*specia* or *effigia*)—comes out from the first sentence:

Then, therefore, does the Word (*sermo*) also Himself assume His own form and glorious garb (*speciem et ornatum*), His own sound and vocal utterance, when God says, "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3). This is the perfect nativity of the Word, when He proceeds forth from God—formed (*conditus*) by Him first to devise and think out all things under the name of Wisdom—"The Lord created or formed me as the beginning of His ways (*condidit me initium uiarum*)" (Prov. 8:22).¹¹⁷

In the next step of the argument, Tertullian defends the thesis according to which the Son is not void since he comes from the Father who is a substance and produces all the things of the world, which are also substances. On the basis of the metaphysical or philosophical

¹¹⁵ Cf. *Commentary on the Great Song*: "and though spiritual Himself, He made acquaintance with the earthy in the womb."

¹¹⁶ E.g., *De Carne*.

¹¹⁷ *Adv. Prax.* 7 (CCSL 2:1165-76). Trans. ANF 3:601-602. Here I preferred the ANF translation to the newer one by Ernest Evens, which sounds more awkward by rendering *sermo* with "Discourse" and *ornatum* with "equipment." See Evens, *Tertullian's Treatise against Praxeas* (London: SPCK, 1948), 136.

principle that nothing can come from nothing, the substance of creation itself, according to Tertullian, becomes a sound argument for the substantiality of the Son:

Do you then, (you ask) grant that the Word is a certain substance (*aliquam substantiam esse sermonem*), constructed by the Spirit and the communication of Wisdom? Certainly I do. But you will not allow Him to be really a substantive being (*substantium habere in re*), by having a substance of His own (*per substantiae proprietatem*); in such a way that He may be regarded as an objective thing and a person, and so be able (as being constituted second to God the Father,) to make two, the Father and the Son, God and the Word. For you will say, what is a word, but a voice and sound of the mouth, and (as the grammarians teach) air when struck against, intelligible to the ear, but for the rest a sort of void (*uacuum*), empty (*inane*), and incorporeal thing (*incorporale*). I, on the contrary, contend that nothing empty and void could have come forth from God (*nihil dico de Deo inane et uacuum prodire potuisse*), seeing that it is not put forth from that which is empty and void; nor could that possibly be devoid of substance (*carere substantia*) which has proceeded from so great a substance (*de tanta substantia processit*), and has produced such mighty substances (*substantias fecit*): for all things which were made (*fecit*) through Him, He Himself (personally) made (*facta sunt*). How could it be, that He Himself is nothing, without whom nothing was made? How could He who is empty have made things which are solid, and He who is void have made things which are full, and He who is incorporeal have made things which have body (*incorporalis corporalia*)? For although a thing may sometimes be made different from him by whom it is made, yet nothing can be made by that which is a void and empty thing.¹¹⁸

Tertullian continues his argument by employing the concept of form (*effigia*). The main thought is that God is not void because he has a form, as the Scripture says in Philippians 2:6. And every form involves a body. This is an undeniable notion for Tertullian because God is a Spirit and the Spirit has a body, a bodily substance, and, consequently, a form:

Is that Word of God, then, a void and empty thing, which is called the Son, who Himself is designated God? "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." It is written, "Thou shalt not take God's name in vain." This for certain is He "who, being in the form of God (*in effigie Dei constitutus*), thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Phil. 2:6). In what form (*effigie*) of God? Of course he means in some form, not in none (*utique in aliqua, non tamen in nulla*). For who will deny that God is a body (*quis enim negabit Deum corpus esse*), although "God is a Spirit (*etsi Deus spiritus est*)?" (Jn 4:24) For Spirit has a bodily substance of its own kind, in its own form (*spiritus enim corpus sui generis in sua effigie*).¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. There are texts where Tertullian uses the word *forma* instead of *effigia* in connection with God, for instance in *Adv. Marc.* 1.3.2 (SC 365:112): "God is the great Supreme in form and in reason, and in might and in power (*sit Deus summum magnum et forma et ratione et ui et potestate*).” Trans. ANF 3:273. An interesting question is to see whether Tertullian questioned if the pre-incarnational Christ's form was limited or not, since he conceives every body as having a form and a limit: "And yet, notwithstanding all this, we shall not be at all inconsistent if we declare that the more usual characteristics of a body (*corpulentiae*), such as invariably accrue to the corporeal condition, belong also to the soul (*adesse animae*)—such as form (*habitus*) and limitation (*terminum*); and that triad of dimensions (*distantium*)—I mean length, and breadth and height—by which philosophers gauge all bodies. What now remains but for us to give the soul a figure (*effigiem*)? Plato refuses to do this, as if it endangered the soul's immortality.” Cf. *De anima* 9 [CCSL 2:792]. Trans. ANF 3:188.

In the last passage of the chapter, Tertullian turns to an epistemological standpoint by affirming that invisible things—of course from the perspective of the limited human sight—are visible and possess body and form from God’s perspective:

Now, even if invisible things (*invisibilia illa*), whatsoever they be, have both their substance and their form in God (*habent apud Deum et suum corpus et suam formam*), whereby they are visible to God alone (*soli Deo uisibilia sunt*), how much more shall that which has been sent forth from His substance not be without substance (*quod ex ipsius substantia emissum est sine substantia non erit*)! Whatever, therefore, was the substance of the Word that I designate a Person, I claim for it the name of Son; and while I recognize the Son, I assert His distinction as second to the Father.¹²⁰

Proclaiming straightforwardly the corporeal nature of Christ endowed with spiritual body and form, Tertullian shares the same understanding of the concept of “invisibility” with Irenaeus and Hippolytus, namely that Christ’s spiritual form is invisible only for the ordinary eye. His doctrine, as seen for instance in *Adversus Marcionem* 5.10, is Pauline theology quoted directly: 1 Corinthians 15:38 (*corpora celestia*) or 1 Corinthians 15:44 (*corpus spiritale*). This spiritual corporeality is one of an extraordinary essence, since it not visible by the earthly and sensible power of seeing. To the contrary, it pertains to the noetic and spiritual realm, and it is visible from the Father’s perspective, as *Adversus Praxean* 7 clearly implies. Using Tertullian’s terminology, it is of a different quality (*qualitas*) as he affirms when discussing about the nature of the body of the soul or of the resurrected body.¹²¹ In a similar way, Tertullian accepts the existence of invisible bodies and describes the soul as such a substance. According to him, corporeality—whether visible or invisible—is a *sine qua non* condition of existence; only that which is nonexistent does not have a body:

And yet, although they say that it is invisible (*inuisibilem*), they determine it to be corporeal (*corporalem*), but having somewhat that is invisible. For if it has nothing invisible how can it be

¹²⁰ Ibid. (CCSL 2:1165-76). Trans. ANF 3:601-602.

¹²¹ *Adv. Marc.* 5.10.3 ; 5.15.7 (SC 483:208;298).

said to be invisible? But even its existence (*esse*) is an impossibility, unless it has that which is instrumental to its existence (*per quod sit*). Since, however, it exists (*sit*), it must needs have a something through which it exists (*per quod est*). If it has this something, it must be its body (*Si habet aliquid per quod est, hoc erit corpus eius*). Everything which exists is a bodily existence sui generis (*Omne quod est, corpus est sui generis*). Nothing lacks bodily existence but that which is non-existent (*nihil est incorporale, nisi quod non est*). If, then, the soul has an invisible body (*inuisibile corpus*)¹²²

In the process of Incarnation, which should be described, according to Tertullian, as clothing with flesh rather than transfiguration in flesh, the Logos remains unchanged in his divine substance and form:

Who, being God, was born in her? The Word, and the Spirit who with the Word was born by the Father's will. Therefore the Word is flesh (*sermo in carne*); while we must also enquire about this, how the Word was made flesh, whether as transformed into flesh (*transfiguratus in carne*) or as having clothed himself with flesh (*indutus carnem*). Certainly as having clothed himself. God however must necessarily be believed to be immutable and untransformable (*informabilem*), as being eternal. But change of form (*transfiguratio*) is a destruction (*interemptio*) of what was there first: for everything that is transformed into something else ceases to be (*desinit esse*) what it was and begins to be what it was not. But God neither ceases to be (*neque desinit esse*), nor can be anything else. And the Word is God, and *the Word of God abideth for ever*, evidently by continuing in his own form (*perseuerando scilicet in sua forma*). And if it is not feasible for him to be conformed <to something else> (*non capit transfigurari*), it follows he must be understood to have been made flesh in the sense that he comes to be in flesh (*fit in carne*), and is manifested (*manifestatur*) and seen (*uidetur*) and is handled by means of the flesh: because the other considerations also demand this acceptance.¹²³

Tertullian introduces the concept of form even in his Trinitarian doctrine.

According to him, the Trinity has a unity of substance and subsists in different forms.

The concept of form refers to what is usually called a divine person. For Tertullian, existence necessarily implies form and every existing being has to have a peculiar form. Since a divine person is a real existent entity and not a mere abstraction or phantasm, it should possess its own form:

¹²² *De carne* 11.3-4 (SC 216:258). Trans. ANF 3:531. Cf. *De carne* 3.9.

¹²³ *Adv. Prax.* 27 (CCSL 2:1199). Trans. Evans 173. Evans's translation is preferable to the ANF here since ANF 3:623 renders *informabilem* through "incapable of form," a solution coming in complete contradiction with the next lines which affirm that, in his Incarnation, the Logos does not lose his form, and generally with Tertullian's doctrine according to which God has a form. Evans's solution "untransformable" makes much more sense, because the idea is that the divine form of the Word is not changed through Incarnation.

[W]hile none the less is guarded the mystery of that economy (*oikonomiae sacramentum*) which disposes the unity into trinity, setting forth Father and Son and Spirit as three, three however not in quality but in sequence (*non statu sed gradu*), not in substance but in aspect (*nec substantia sed forma*), not in power but in <its> manifestation (*nec potestate sed specie*), yet of one substance and one quality and one power, seeing it is one God from whom those sequences and aspects (*formae*) and manifestations are reckoned out in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.¹²⁴

Another theme on which Tertullian converses is the visibility of the Son and Old Testament theophanies. Quite similar to Irenaeus and Hippolytus, he advances the distinction between the invisible divinity of the Son—from human perspective—and his visible manifestations in the sense that the patriarchs and the prophets did not see the divinity of the Son but enigmas, dreams, or imaginary forms:

For we say that the Son also on his own account is, as Word and Spirit, invisible (*inuisibilem*) even now by the quality of his substance (*ex substantiae condicione*), but that he was visible (*uisibilem*) before the incarnation (*ante carnem*) in the manner in which he says to Aaron and Miriam, *Although there be a prophet among you, I shall become known to him in a vision and shall speak to him in a dream; not as with my servant Moses shall I speak to him mouth to mouth in manifestation—that is, in truth (in veritate)—and not in an enigma—that is, not in imagination (non in imagine).* ... Or it is that the Son indeed was seen—albeit in face, yet even this in a vision and a dream and a mirror and an enigma (*in uisione et somnio et speculo et aenigmate*), because Word and Spirit cannot be seen except in imaginary aspect (*imaginaria forma*) ...¹²⁵

However, the text does not make clear what Moses' vision *in veritate* means.

Undoubtedly more than a vision in imaginary form, one may still suppose that the prophet was contemplating the form of God as only God can see. At the same time, Tertullian mentions in other passages that the apostles saw the wonderful glory of the Son on Mount Tabor and that glory which Paul contemplated. Tertullian's solution is that that glory which the apostles saw was the glory "of the visible Son, glorified by the invisible Father (*gloriam ... Filii, scilicet uisibilis, glorificati a Patre inuisibili*)."¹²⁶

¹²⁴ *Adv. Prax.* 2 (CCSL 2:1161). Trans. Evans 132. Cf. *Adv. Prax.* 8 and 11-13 for his further discussions on the unity and distinction in the Trinity. It is worth mentioning that Tertullian affirms in *De carne* 3.8 that the Spirit did not put an end to his substance (*substantia*) when he descended at the Baptism and took a different substance (SC 216:220).

¹²⁵ *Adv. Prax.* 14 (CCSL 2:1177-1178). Trans. Evans 150. Cf. 15 and 16. Tertullian considers in 14 the Son as the face of the Father and the Father as the face of the Son, in a sort of mutual reflection.

¹²⁶ *Adv. Prax.* 15 (CCSL 2:1179). Trans. Evans 152.

6. Origen and the Noetic Form of God

My final witness for the early Christian belief in the form of God among Hellenistic Christian authors is Origen, arguably the Christian archenemy of anthropomorphism. The presence in Origenian writings of the idea that God has a form consists of a great argument for the existence of this Jewish and Christian tradition strongly enforced by Pauline authority, as Philippians 2:6 and 1 Corinthians 1:15 played a catalytic role for all these thinkers. Origen's doctrine about the form of God is congruous with some formulas already present in Irenaeus and Tertullian. According to Origen, the form of God is not God in himself but one of his dispensations, a form of God's manifestation. The form of God, however, pertains to the invisible and noetic realm.

On the one hand, Origen is the champion of the ineffability and incomprehensibility of God's essence and rejects any anthropomorphic attribute for the description of the divine.¹²⁷ Moreover, he rejects as well the idea that God's nature might

¹²⁷ I prefer to use the classical terms apophaticism and cataphaticism (see the next chapter), following Harl and Crouzel and unlike Mortley who denies a *via negativa* in Origen's theology while qualifying it as a mystical theology of grace; cf. M. Harl, *Origène et la fonction révélatrice du Verbe incarné* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1958) 88-91; H. Crouzel, *Origène et la « connaissance mystique »* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1961) 85-154, esp. 89; and R. Mortley, "Origen: Christian Mysticism without the *Via Negativa*," in his *From Word to Silence II: The Way of Negation, Christian and Greek* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1986) 63-84, esp. 82-84. See also J. T. Chirban, "Developmental Stages in Eastern Orthodox Christianity," in K. T. Wilber, *Transformations of Consciousness* (Boston: New Science Library, 1986), 285-314 and 322-23, who curiously qualifies Origen's theology as merely cataphatic. I regard the two ways as both present in Origen as he follows the Alexandrian theological tradition (see, for example, Philo) which distinguishes between the ineffable and incomprehensible *ousia* of God and the manifestation of his divinity, identified sometimes, as in Origen's case, with God's glory or power, e.g. *Orat.* 23.5 (GCS 3:353). On the one hand, in an apophatic way Origen rejects the existence of any appropriate name for the Trinity one in substance (e.g., *Princ.* 4.4.1 [SC 268:402]; *Cels.* 6.65 [SC 147:342] and notes 9-10) and designates God as incomprehensible, and beyond mind, as one can see in this chapter. On the other hand, he accepts the vision or contemplation of the divine light, as seen in the next chapter, and in this way, God's apprehension through the mind, as in Mortley's note. For Origen's anti-anthropomorphism, see *Hom. Gen.* 1.13 (SC 7bis: 56-64); *Comm. Rom.* 1.22(19).102-130 (AGLB 16:96-98); *Dial.* 12 (SC 67:80); *Cels.* 4.37 (SC 136:276); *Sel. Gen.* 25 (PG 12.93A-B). In the last two texts he elaborates a special argument against the literal reading of the anthropomorphist party. If we accept a literal reading, then we have to accept the existence of all the limbs the Bible ascribes to God, from head to hands to feet to wings (e.g., Pss 15:8; 25:8; 90:4), which contradicts the idea of a human form.

be connected with visibility and matter.¹²⁸ Origen understands exclusively the substance of the Trinity in a radically immaterial modality:

But if it is impossible by any means to maintain this proposition, namely, that any being (*natura*), with the exception of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, can live apart from a body (*corpus*), then logical reasoning compels us to believe that, while the original creation was of rational beings (*rationabiles naturas*), it is only in idea and thought that a material substance (*materialem substantiam*) is separable from them, and that though this substance seems to have been produced for them or after them, yet never have they lived or do they live without it; for we shall be right in believing that life without a body (*incorporea uita*) is found in the Trinity alone.¹²⁹

At the same time, Origen still defines God in terms of light and glory. As the Father is the true Light (*lux*) and Glory (*gloria*), the Son represents his splendor (*splendor*) in the form of God (*forma dei*).¹³⁰ Nonetheless, Origen is not constant in his use of this terminology, since he also describes the Son as the “Light of the mind,” and explains that the Father and the Son live in the glory (*gloria*) which the Son shared with

¹²⁸ E.g., *Prin.* 1.1.5 (SC 252:96-98): “Having then refuted, to the best of our ability, every interpretation which suggests that we should attribute to God any material characteristics, we assert that in truth he is incomprehensible and immeasurable (*Omni igitur sensu, qui corporeum aliquid de deo intellegi suggerit, prout potuimus, confutato, dicimus secundum veritatem quidem deum incomprehensibilem esse atque inaestimabilem*). For whatever may be the knowledge which we have been able to obtain about God, whether by perception or by reflection, we must of necessity believe that he is far and away better than our thoughts about him (*Si quid enim illud est, quod sentire vel intellegere de deo potuerimus, multis longe modis eum meliorem esse ab eo quod sensimus necesse est credi*).” Trans. G. W. Butterworth, in *Origen: On First Principles* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966) 9. Cf. *Comm. Joh.* 13.123-152 (SC 222:94-114) and many other texts. Cf. Stroumsa, “The Incorporeality;” Gunar af Hällström, *Fides Simpliciorum According to Origen of Alexandria*, Eknäs 1984, 64-69; J. F. Dechow, “Origen and Corporeality: The Case of Methodius’ *On the Resurrection*,” in *Origeniana Quinta*, 509-518; J. T. Lienhard, “Origen and the Crisis of the Old Testament in the Early Church,” *ProEccl.* 9:3 (2000): 355-366; Torjesen, “The Enscripturation of Philosophy.” See also Origen’s difficulties with the term “incorporeal (ἄσώματος)” which does not appear in Scripture or the apostolic teaching in *Princ.*, Pref. 8 (SC 252:86). For the radical incorporeality of God’s nature see for instance *Princ.* 1.1.6 ([SC 252:100): “God therefore must not be thought to be in any kind of body, nor to exist in a body.” Trans. Butterworth, 10.

¹²⁹ *Princ.* 2.2.2 (SC 252:246-248). Trans. Butterworth, 81. See also *Princ.* 1.6.4 (SC 252:206): “we believe that to exist without material substance (*materiali substantia*) apart from any association with a bodily element (*corporeae adiectionis*) is a thing that belongs only to the nature of God (*dei nature*), that is, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Trans. Butterworth, 58. Cf. *Princ.* 4.3.15 (SC 268:396-398): “But the substance of the Trinity (*substantia trinitatis*) ... must not be believed either to be a body or to exist in a body, but to be wholly incorporeal (*ex toto incorporea*).” Trans. Butterworth, 312. Cf. *Princ.* 4.4.1; 4.4.5: *natura trinitatis* (SC 268:402;412).

¹³⁰ *Princ.* 1.2.7-8 (SC 252:124-128). See below that the form of God represents the luminous and glorious dimension Christ reveals to his disciples on Mount Tabor. Origen understands the Incarnation as the process of taking off (*exinaniens se filius*) this glorious form and putting on the human flesh (see also *Princ.* 1.2.8 [SC 252:126]).

the Father before the Incarnation and divested himself of this glory in order to assume a human form.¹³¹ While there are instances where Origen describes the light of God as a metaphor, he also affirms the existence of an intelligible light emanating from the Trinity, a light in which angels, souls, and all the minds live and participate according to capacity and earnestness:¹³²

Every mind (*mens*) which shares in intellectual light (*intellectualis luce*) must undoubtedly be of one nature (*naturae*) with every other mind which shares similarly in this light. If then the heavenly powers (*caelestes uirtutes*) receive a share of intellectual light, that is, of the divine nature (*diuinae naturae*), in virtue of the fact that they share in wisdom and sanctification, and if the soul of man receives a share of the same light and wisdom, then these beings will be of one nature (*naturae*) and one substance (*substantiae*) with each other. But the heavenly powers are incorruptible and immortal; undoubtedly therefore the substance of the soul of man will also be incorruptible and immortal. And not only so, but since the nature (*natura*) of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to whom alone belongs the intellectual light (*intellectualis lucis*) in which the universal creation has a share, is incorruptible and eternal, it follows logically and of necessity that every existence (*substantiam*) which has a share in that eternal nature (*naturae*) must itself also remain for ever incorruptible and eternal, in order that the eternity of the divine goodness may be revealed in this additional fact, that they who obtain its blessings are eternal too. Nevertheless, just as in our illustrations we acknowledged some diversity in the reception of the light, when we described the individual power of sight as being either dim or keen, so also we must acknowledge a diversity of participation in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, varying in proportion to the earnestness of the soul (*intentione sensus*) and the capacity of the mind (*mentis capacitate*).¹³³

¹³¹ Cf. *Princ.* 3.5.6 (SC 268:228): “And so the only-begotten Son of God, who was the word and wisdom of the Father, when he lived with the Father in that glory (*gloria*) which he had before the world was (*antequam mundus esset*), emptied himself (*exinaniuit se ipsum*), and taking the form of a servant became obedient even unto death in order to teach them obedience who could in no other way obtain salvation except through obedience.” Trans. Butterworth, 242. Cf. *Princ.* Pref. 4 (SC 252:80): *se ipsum exinaniens homo factus est*. See also *Comm. Joh.* 13.153 (SC 222:114), the Son as “an image of the goodness and brightness (*ἀπαύγασμα*), not of God, but of God’s glory (*δόξα*) and of his eternal light (*τοῦ αἰδίου φωτός αὐτοῦ*); ... and he is a pure emanation of God’s almighty glory (*δόξα*) and an unspotted mirror of his activity.” Trans. R. E. Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel according to John; Books 13-32* (FC 89; Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1993), 100. For the spiritual understanding of the Johannine expression “God is light” (1 John 1:5) see *Comm. Joh.* 13.132-137 (SC 222:100-104), although his reading is not always allegorical and remains unclear since he merely affirms for instance in *Comm. Joh.* 13.137 (SC 222:104): “But if God illuminates the mind according to the statement, ‘The Lord is my light (Ps 26:1),’ then we must assume that he is apprehended by the intellect, and is invisible and incorporeal, because he is the light of the mind (*νοῦ φως*).” Trans. Heine, 96. For a scholarly discussion on the light of the Trinity, see Crouzel, *Origène et la connaissance*, 130-142.

¹³² E.g., *Princ.* 1.1.1 (SC 252:90-92); *Comm. Joh.* 1.151-183 (SC 120:136-150); 13.132-137 (SC 222:100-104). Cf. J. Dillon, “Looking on the Light: Some Remarks on the Imagery of Light in the First Chapter of Origen’s *Peri Archon*,” in *Origen of Alexandria: His World and His Legacy* (eds. C. Kannengiesser and W. L. Petersen; Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1988), 215-30.

¹³³ *Princ.* 4.4.9 (SC 268:424-426). Trans. Butterworth, 326.

Since Origen defines God fundamentally as light and glory (*kabod/doxa*), his theology still represents a *kabod* theology.

Furthermore, several Origenian passages testify to the vision of the “form of God” of the transfigured Jesus. In the *Commentary on Matthew* 12.36-37, one can read as follows:

Now after six days, according to Matthew and Mark, he took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them. ... It seems to me then that those who are taken up by Jesus onto the high mountain and are found worthy of seeing his transfiguration (ἀξιουμένους τοῦ κατ’ ἰδίαν αὐτοῦ τὴν μεταμόρφωσιν θεωρῆσαι) apart (from the others) are intentionally brought up six days after the discourses he has just spoken. Six is the perfect number and the whole world was made in six days, a perfect work of art. This is why, I think, the man who transcends all the things of the world (τὸν ὑπερβαίνοντα πάντα τὰ τοῦ κόσμου πράγματα) is represented in the words: ‘after six days Jesus took up with him’ certain men. Such a man no longer beholds visible realities which are temporal, but already beholds realities that are invisible since they are eternal (τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτὰ αἰώνια). ... He will rejoice on the high mountain as he sees Jesus transfigured before him. The Word has different forms (διαφόρους γὰρ ἔχει ὁ λόγος μορφάς) and he appears to each as is expedient for him to see (φαινόμενος ἐκάστῳ ὡς συμφέρει τῷ βλέποντι). He is never revealed to any man beyond his capacity to see (μηδενὶ ὑπὲρ ὃ χωρεῖ ὁ βλέπων). Perhaps you will ask, when Jesus was transfigured before those he led up the high mountain, did he appear to them in the form of God in which he previously was (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ἢ ὑπῆρχε πάλαι), so that for those below he had the form of a slave but for those who had followed him to the high mountain after the six days he did not have that form, but the form of God? But hear these things, if you can, and pay attention spiritually for it is not said simply: ‘He was transfigured’ because Mark and Matthew have also recorded a certain necessary addition, for they both say: ‘He was transfigured before them.’ And so, according to this you will say that it is possible for Jesus to be transfigured before some people in this transfiguration, but even at the same time not to be transfigured before others. If you wish to see how Jesus was transfigured before those he had led apart with him up the high mountain, then first see with me Jesus in the Gospels, for there he is more simply appreciated, and we might say ‘known according to the flesh’ by those who do not go up the high mountain by means of uplifting works and words (ἀναβαίνουσι διὰ τῶν ἐπαναβεβηκότων ἔργων καὶ λόγων), yet ‘known no longer according to the flesh’ by means of all the Gospels, for there he is known in his divinity (θεολογούμενον) and seen in the form of God (ἐν τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ μορφῇ ... θεωρούμενον) according to their knowledge. It is before such as these that Jesus is transfigured, not before any of those below.¹³⁴

¹³⁴ *Comm. Mt. 12.36-37* (GCS 40:150-153). Trans. J. McGuckin, *The Transfiguration of Christ in Scripture and Tradition* (SBEC 9; Lewiston/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 155-157. These Origenian passages contradict Quispel-Stroumsa theory regarding Origen as the initiator of *Seinsmystik* or aniconic mysticism; cf. G. Quispel, “Sein und Gestalt,” in *Studies in Mysticism and Religion Presented to Gershom G. Scholem* (eds. E. E. Urbach et al.; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1967), 191-5, esp. 193; G. Stroumsa, “The Incorporeality of God: Context and Implications of Origen’s Position,” *Religion* 13 (1983): 345-358, esp. 353.

One may also observe that the author equates Jesus' form of God revealed on Mount Tabor with his preincarnational form. A similar perspective about the vision of Christ's divine and preincarnational form appears in *Contra Celsum* 4.16 and 6.68 and still a third text which I shall quote, from *Contra Celsum* 6.77:¹³⁵

Again when he said, *If a divine spirit was in a body, it must certainly have differed from other bodies in size or voice or strength or striking appearance or powers of persuasion*, how did he fail to notice that his body differed (τὸ παραλλάττον) in accordance with the capacity of those who saw it (πρὸς τὸ τοῖς ὁρῶσι δυνατόν), and on this account appeared in such form (τοιούτου φαινόμενον) as was beneficial for the needs of each individual's vision (βλέπεσθαι)? It is not remarkable that matter (ὕλην), which is by nature (φύσει) subject to change, alteration, and transformation (τρεπτήν καὶ ἀλλοιωτήν καὶ ... μεταβλητήν) into anything which the Creator desires, and is capable of possessing any quality (πάσης ποιότητος) which the Artificer wishes, at one time possesses quality (ποιότητα) of which it is said, "He had not form or beauty", and at another time a quality so glorious (ἐνδοξον) and striking and wonderful that the three apostles who went up with Jesus and saw the exquisite beauty fell on their faces. ... The doctrine has an even more mysterious meaning (μυστικώτερον ὁ λόγος) since it proclaims that the different forms of Jesus (τὰς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ διαφορὰς μορφάς) are to be applied to the nature of the divine Logos (ἀναφέρεσθαι ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου φύσιν). For he did not appear in the same way (ὁμοίως φαινομένου) both to the multitude and to those able to follow him up the high mountain which we have mentioned. To those who are still down below and are not yet prepared to ascend (ἀναβαίνειν), the Logos "has not form nor beauty". ... However, to those who by following him have received power to go after him even as he is ascending (ἀναβαίνουντι) the high mountain, he has a more divine form (θειοτέραν μορφήν). ... But how can Celsus and those hostile to the divine Word, who do not examine the teachings of Christianity with a desire to find the truth, realize the meaning of the different forms of Jesus (τὸ βούλημα τῶν διαφορῶν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μορφῶν)?¹³⁶

These two passages disclose a very similar mystical formula particular to Second Temple mysticism. The vision of the glorious form of God is reserved for the few initiated who have overcome earthly desires and the visible universe. Such textual evidence compels us to develop a new explanatory theory regarding the nature of Origen's mysticism. On the one hand, as Quispel, Stroumsa, and several other scholars

¹³⁵ For *Cels.* 6.68 (SC 147:348-350), see the following sentences from the same passage: "But even while he tabernacled and lived among us he did not remain with his primary form (οὐκ ἔμεινεν ἐπὶ τῆς πρώτης μορφῆς). After leading us up to the spiritual 'high mountain', he showed us his glorious form (τὴν ἐνδοξον μορφήν) εἰς αὐτοῦ) and the radiance (τὴν λαμπρότητα) of his clothing." Trans. H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 383.

¹³⁶ *Cels.* 6.77 (SC 147:370-374). Trans. Chadwick, 390-391.

have pointed out, Origen conceives of the three divine persons as purely immaterial and formless while articulating in his own way an apophatic discourse, already a topos of Middle Platonist philosophy. On the other hand, the advanced and initiated mystic is able to apprehend the divine form of Christ, which is not his “completely immaterial” nature, but one of the forms or appearances of his corporeal incarnation, since only corporeal nature is characterized by forms.

Regarding this last conception, Origen develops an intricate philosophical theory about the matter which Christ assumes, a theory harking back to Aristotle’s concept of matter, *hyle*, as a receptacle able to receive various forms. Yet Origen speaks about more spiritual and refined types of matter belonging to the noetic realm which is not accessible to the uninitiated. Furthermore, since the terms of light and form are still essential for Origen, I would qualify Origen’s theology as a *kabod* theology in a Hellenistic philosophical frame, a paradigm which is already present in Philo and Clement of Alexandria. Unlike Quispel and Stroumsa, I would perceive this paradigm as still defining God as light and glory, therefore as a *kabod* theology, although the discursive instrumentarium was radically different from and more refined than that of its anthropomorphist contenders.

Harl and Crouzel have already observed that *visio Dei*, according to Origen, demands certain conditions, first of all the ascetic preparation of the visionary.¹³⁷ As one can see in the passages from *Contra Celsum* given in the introduction, the vision of the glorious form of Christ is accessible to those who transcend earthly, temporal, and visible things, the desire and lusts after them, and to those who particularly practice the

¹³⁷ E.g., Harl, *Origène*, 92, for the purity of the mind; Crouzel, *Origène et la connaissance*, 399-442.

“uplifting works and words (ἀναβαίνουνσι διὰ τῶν ἐπαναβεβηκότων ἔργων καὶ λόγων)” and are thus “able to follow him up the high mountain.” The divine form therefore is revealed only to those “prepared to ascend (ἀναβαίνειν παρασκευασμένοις).”¹³⁸ It is highly significant that while such distinctions as visible vs. invisible, temporal vs. eternal are obviously rooted in Plato’s system (for example, *Timaeus* 27c-29d), the mystical sequential features of purification, ascension, and vision of the divine *kabod*/glory are part of the Biblical and Second Temple mystical outlook.

At the same time, one should mention two distinct epistemological principles as *sine quibus non* of any vision of Christ’s divine form. The first may be considered as the principle of knowing corporeality in general, where Origen explains how visual perception, the human capacity of seeing, is always exerted through shape, size, and color: “For in no other way can anything be seen [*uideri*] except by its shape [*habitus*] and size [*magnitudinem*] and colour [*colorem*], which are properties of bodies [*specialia corporum*].”¹³⁹

Second, Origen asserts in various instances that ordinary epistemological capacities cannot perceive the form of God, but the visionary must actualize special faculties in order to fathom beyond the visible universe. The Alexandrian refers then to intuition or understanding (*nous*), and formulates the second epistemological principle: intelligible things are perceived through understanding. In this way, Moses, the prophets, and the apostles actually did not see God, but rather understood him:

This certainly involves you in serious difficulties, whereas we interpret it (*sentitur*) more correctly as referring not to sight (*pro uidendo*) but to understanding (*pro intellegendo*). For he who has

¹³⁸ *Comm. Mt.* 12.37 (GCS 40:153) and *Cels.* 6.77 (SC 147:372).

¹³⁹ *Princ.* 2.4.3 (SC 252:284). Trans. Butterworth, 98. Cf. *Princ.* 2.10.2 (SC 252:376-378).

understood (*intellexerit*) the Son has understood (*intellexerit*) the Father also. It is in this manner then that must suppose Moses to have seen (*uidisse*) God, not by looking (*intuens*) at him with eyes of flesh (*oculis carnalibus*), but by understanding (*intellegens*) him with the vision of the heart (*uisu cordis*) and the perception of the mind (*sensu mentis*), and even this in part only. For it is well-known that he, that is, the one who gave the oracles to Moses, says, ‘Thou shalt not see (*uidebis*) my face, but my back’ (Exod 33:23). Certainly these statements must be understood by the aid of that symbolism (*sacramento*) which is appropriate to the understanding of divine sayings, and those old wives’ fables, which ignorant people invent on the subject of the front and back parts of God, must be utterly rejected and despised.¹⁴⁰

As *nous* is also called “vision of the heart,” “perception of the mind,” and many other names, the famous doctrine of the noetic senses enters the scene at this point of the discussion.¹⁴¹ Besides this, the text unveils the fact that Origen elaborated this doctrine in the intellectual context of the anthropomorphic debate. In one of their penetrating insights, both Henri Crouzel and John Dillon made the connection between biblical anthropomorphisms—therefore the vision of the form of God—and Origen’s doctrine of noetic senses.¹⁴² Commenting on Origen’s *Contra Celsum* 1.48 and 7.34, Dillon remarks:

¹⁴⁰ *Princ.* 2.4.3 (SC 252:286). Trans. Butterworth, 99.

¹⁴¹ See also *Princ.* 1.1.9 (SC 252:108-110): “But if the question is put to us why it was said, ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God’ (Matt. 5:8), I answer that in my opinion our argument will be much more firmly established by this passage. For what else is ‘to see God in the heart’ but to understand and know him with the mind (*mente eum intellegere atque cognoscere*), just as we have explained above? For the names of the organs of sense are often applied to the soul, so that we speak of seeing with the eyes of the heart, that is, of drawing some intellectual (*intellectuale*) conclusions by means of the faculty of intelligence (*uirtute intelligentiae*). So too we speak of hearing with the ears when we discern the deeper meaning of some statement. So too we speak of the soul as being able to use teeth, when it eats and consumes the bread of life which comes down from heaven. In a similar way we speak of it as using all the other bodily organs, which are transferred from their corporeal significance and applied to the faculties of the soul; as Solomon says, ‘You will find a divine sense’ (*Sensum diuinum inuenies*) (Prov 2:5). For he knew that there were in us two kinds of senses (*sensuum*), the one being mortal, corruptible and human (*mortale, corruptibile, humanum*), and the other immortal and intellectual (*immortale et intellectuale*), which here he calls ‘divine’ (*diuinum*). By this divine sense (*sensu diuino*), therefore, not of the eyes but of a pure heart, that is, the mind (*mens*), God may be seen (*uideri*) by those who are worthy (*digni*).” Trans. Butterworth, 14. See also *Dial.* 16-24 (SC 67: 88-102), one of the most illustrative passages on the doctrine of the noetic senses. Butterworth observes that Origen’s reading of Prov 2:5, preserved in the Greek version in *Cels.* 7.34 (SC 150:92), is not identical with that of the Septuagint. While the scriptural phrase is ἐπίγνωσιν θεοῦ εὐρήσεις, Origen reads αἰσθησιν θεῶν εὐρήσεις. See Butterworth, *Origen*, 14.

¹⁴² See also H. Crouzel, *Origène et la connaissance*, 262 and J. Dillon, “*Aisthêsis Noêtê*: A Doctrine of Spiritual Senses in Origen and in Plotinus,” in *Hellenica et Judaica: Hommage à Valentin Nikiprowetsky* (eds. A. Caquot et al.; Leuven/Paris: Peeters, 1986), 443-455. Dillon also shows in his “*Aisthêsis Noêtê*” that there are some traces for a noetic correlate of sense-perception in the Platonist heritage before Origen. For other secondary sources on the idea of spiritual senses, see for instance Karl

It is plain that he has here developed a systematic theory of analogical, 'spiritual' senses for the intellect, or *hegemonikon*, apparently to solve a series of problems of exegesis posed by anthropomorphic expressions about the godhead and about spiritual life which abound in both the Old and New Testaments.¹⁴³

7. The Hellenistic Doctrine of the Changing Forms of God from Philo to Origen

De Lubac already made a connection between Origen's doctrine of changing forms of Jesus and Philo's *De somniis* 1.232, where the Jewish exegete clarifies that Yahweh manifests himself in creation in various forms and icons, while his essence remains impenetrable:

To the souls indeed which are incorporeal and are occupied in His worship it is likely that He should reveal Himself as He is (αὐτὸν οἶός ἐστιν ἐπιφαίνεσθαι), conversing with them as friend with friends; but to souls which are still in a body, giving Himself the likeness (εἰκαζόμενον) of angels, not altering His own nature (οὐ μεταβάλλοντα τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν), for He is unchangeable (ἄτρεπτος), but conveying to those which receive the impression of his presence a semblance in a different form (δόξαν ἐντιθέντα ταῖς φαντασιουμέναις ἑτερόμορφον), such that they take the image to be not a copy (τὴν εἰκόνα οὐ μίμημα), but that original form itself (αὐτὸ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον εἶδος).¹⁴⁴

Human mind, therefore, does not have access to the archetypal form of God (τὸ ἀρχέτυπον εἶδος). The text, however, seem to imply that God has a form, although inaccessible for human perception.¹⁴⁵

Rahner, "Le début d'une doctrine des cinq sens spirituels chez Origène," *RAM* 13 (1932) : 113-145; Crouzel, *Origène et la connaissance*, 505-7; M. Harl, "La 'bouche' et le 'cœur' de l'Apotré: Deux images bibliques du 'sensus divinus' de l'homme ('Proverbes' 2, 5) chez Origène," in *Forma Futuri: Studi in onore del Cardinale Michele Pellegrino* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmio, 1975), 17-42; or B. Julien-Fraigneau, *Les sens spirituels et la vision de Dieu chez saint Syméon le Nouveau Théologien* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1985).

¹⁴³ Dillon, "Aisthêsis Noêtê," 445; cf. 449.

¹⁴⁴ *Som.* 1.232 (LCL Philo 5:418-420). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 419-421. Cf. *Spec. Leg.* 1.45 for the inaccessibility of the divine *eidōs*. For de Lubac, see H. de Lubac, *Aspects of Buddhism* (trans. G. Lamb; London: Sheed and Ward, 1953), Ch.3, 89-92.

¹⁴⁵ We have met a similar position in *Quod Deterius* 86-87, where *eidōs* and *eikōn* play different roles. There Philo also denies the knowledge of the Archetype and of his image (*eikōn*). Although that text defines God as formless (ἀειδέες), it seems that God has an image.

The reason for changing forms is the intention of God to give instruction (*Som.*

1.234) and manifest himself according to the need and capacity of each:

Why, then, do we wonder any longer at His assuming the likeness of angels (ἀπεικάζεται), seeing that for the succour of those that are in need He assumes that of men (ἀνθρώποις)? Accordingly, when He says “I am the God who was seen of thee in the place of God” (Gen. 31:13), understand that He occupied the place of an angel (τὸν ἀγγέλου τόπον ἐπέσχευεν) only so far as appeared (ὅσα τῷ δοκεῖν), without changing (οὐ μεταβάλλον), with a view to the profit of him who was not yet capable of seeing the true God (τὸν ἀληθῆ θεὸν ἰδεῖν). For just as those who are unable to see the sun itself see the gleam of the parhelion and take it for the sun, and take the halo round the moon for that luminary itself, so some regard the image of God (τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰκόνα), His angel the Word (τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ λόγον), as His very self (ὥς αὐτόν).¹⁴⁶

In a similar text in *De specialibus legibus*, following the affirmation that no one on earth and in heaven is able to reach an adequate comprehension of God (1.44), Philo depicts Moses proclaiming the following words:

I bow before Thy admonitions, that I never could have received the vision of Thee clearly manifested (τὸ τῆς σῆς φαντασίας ἐναργὲς εἶδος), but I beseech Thee that I may at least see the glory that surrounds Thee (περὶ σὲ δόξαν θεάσασθαι), and by Thy glory I understand the powers that keep guard around Thee (τὰς περὶ σὲ δορυφορούσας δυνάμεις), of whom I would fain gain apprehension (κατάληψις), for though hitherto that escaped me up, the thought of it creates in me a mighty longing to have knowledge of them (πόθον τῆς διαγνώσεως).¹⁴⁷

As the text about God’s appearances follows immediately after Philo’s excursus about God’s incomprehensibility, the two ideas are strongly connected and certainly equally valid at the same time. While defending a strict apophaticism of the divine nature (*ousia*), Philo still agrees that the human being can see God’s manifestation or *ek-stasis*, his glory, operations, and powers, which are also beyond human comprehension.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ *Som.* 1.238-239 (LCL Philo 5:422). Trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, 423. Philo also affirms a line further that “the Unoriginate [God] is free from alteration and from movement (τὸ δὲ ἀγέννητον ἀτρεπτόν τε καὶ ἀκίνητον).” See *Som.* 1.249 (LCL Philo 5:426). Trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, 427.

¹⁴⁷ *Spec. Leg.* 1.45 (LCL Philo 7:124). Trans. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, 125.

¹⁴⁸ See *Spec. Leg.* 1.41-49 (LCL Philo 7:122-126): οὐσία vs. δόξα, δυνάμεις, ἐνέργειαι. Cf. *Quod Deus* 61-62 (LCL Philo 3:40-42) and *Som.* 1.230-231 (LCL Philo 5:418): ὄν vs. ὑπαρξίς. Regarding the apophatic language, several scholars have shown that Philo is the real initiator of apophatic theology in its proper sense; see, for instance, H. A. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947) 121-158; and E. Mühlenberg, *Die Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 58-64. Cf. Philo, *Som.* 1.230 (LCL Philo 5:418); *Mut.* 7-15 (LCL Philo 5:144-150); *Mos.* 1.75 (LCL Philo 6:314).

God's powers have a similar productive function to the aforementioned powers in Origen, where they were destined to create the spiritual luminous body. On the one hand, Philo envisions them as symbolized in the two cherubim which guard the Ark of the Holy of Holies. While the cherub from the right side of the Ark represents the creative and beneficent power called "God", the cherub dwelling on the left side refers to the royal, governing power called "Lord".¹⁴⁹ But on the other hand, Philo equates divine powers and ideas, in a philosophical perspective, which again, as in Origen's case, should not be associated with the Platonic doctrine of separate ideas, but with Poseidonius's concept of ideas envisioned as active principles in the universe:

But while in their essence they are beyond your apprehension (*ἀκατάληπτοι κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν*), they nevertheless present to your sight a sort of impress and copy of their active working (*ἐκμαγεῖόν τι καὶ ἀπεικόνισμα τῆς ἐαυτῶν ἐνεργείας*). You men have for your use seals which when brought into contact with wax or similar material stamp on them any number of impressions (*τύπους*) while they themselves are not docked in any part thereby but remain as they were. Such you must conceive My powers (*τὰς περὶ ἐμὲ δυνάμεις*) to be, supplying quality and shape (*ποιότητος καὶ μορφᾶς*) to things which lack either and yet changing or lessening nothing of their eternal nature (*τῆς αἰδίου φύσεως*). Some among you call them not inaptly 'forms' or 'ideas' (*ἰδέας*) since they bring form (*εἰδοποιοῦσι*) into everything that is, giving order to the disordered, limit to the unlimited, bounds to the unbounded, shape to the shapeless, and in general changing the worse to something better. Do not, then, hope to be ever able to apprehend Me or any of My powers in Our essence (*κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν ... καταλαβεῖν*).¹⁵⁰

Irenaeus of Lyon elaborates a quite similar perspective. Although God is invisible, he was manifested in Christ through different forms: "God, though invisible, manifested

¹⁴⁹ *Abr.* 119-124 (LCL Philo 6:62-64); cf. *Cher.* 27-30 (LCL Philo 2:24-26). In fact, they represent the manifested facet of God, in contradistinction to the divine essence which remains incomprehensible. Unlike this concealed dimension of God, there is also a manifested dimension which Philo usually calls divine *ek-stasis* (*hyparxis*), active power (*dynamis*), glory, or rays, and represents the accessible, knowable dimension of God; cf. *Post.* 168-169 (LCL Philo 2:426-428); *Quod Deus* 62 (LCL Philo 3:40); *Fug.* 165 (LCL Philo 5:101); *Spec. Leg.* 1.32-40 (LCL Philo 7:116-120); *Virt.* 215 (LCL Philo 8:294); *Mos* 2.99-100 (LCL Philo 6:498-500).

¹⁵⁰ *Spec. Leg.* 1.47-48 (LCL Philo 7:124-126). Trans. F. H. Colson, 125-127. He also identifies powers and ideas in *Spec. Leg.* 1.329 (LCL Philo 7:290): "For when out of that confused matter God produced all things, He did not do so with His own handiwork, since His nature, happy and blessed as it was, forbade that He should touch the limitless chaotic matter (*ἀπείρου καὶ πεφυρμένης ὕλης*). Instead He made full use of the incorporeal potencies (*ἀσωματοῖς δυνάμεσιν*) well denoted by their name of Forms (*αἰδέαι*) to enable each kind to take the appropriate form (*μορφήν*)." Trans. F. H. Colson, 291.

Himself to the prophets not under one form, but differently to different individuals”¹⁵¹

There is, however, a dimension of the divine which remains inaccessible to human inquiry: “As regards His greatness, therefore, it is not possible to know God, for it is impossible that the Father can be measured.”¹⁵² Irenaeus also talks about prophetic visions in terms of the dispensations God made for human knowledge:

The prophets, therefore, did not openly behold the actual face of God, but [they saw] the dispensations and the mysteries through which man should afterwards see God. ... This, too, was made still clearer by Ezekiel, that the prophets saw the dispensations of God in part, but not actually God Himself. For when this man had seen the vision of God, and the cherubim, and their wheels, and when he had recounted the mystery of the whole of that progression, and had beheld the likeness of a throne above them, and upon the throne a likeness as of the figure of a man, and the things which were upon his loins as the figure of amber, and what was below like the sight of fire, and when he set forth all the rest of the vision of the thrones, lest any one might happen to think that in those [visions] he had actually seen God, he added: “This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God.” If, then, neither Moses, nor Elias, nor Ezekiel, who had all many celestial visions, did see God; but if what they did see were similitudes of the splendour of the Lord, and prophecies of things to come; it is manifest that the Father is indeed invisible, of whom also the Lord said, “No man hath seen God at any time.”¹⁵³

As seen above, in Tertullian, God cannot be seen in himself, but what the prophets saw were enigmas, images, and imaginary forms. A similar perspective appears in Origen, who talks about Christ’s manifested dimension as his capacity to assume different forms. While Henri Crouzel talks about Origen’s vision of the “différentes formes du Christ,” John McGuckin defines it as the doctrine of the changing forms or appearances of Jesus, a doctrine also connected with the “philosophical axiom, which he takes for granted, of the variable plasticity and instability of all matter.”¹⁵⁴ In one of the

¹⁵¹ *AH*. 1.10.3 (ANF 1:331).

¹⁵² *AH*. 4.20.1 (ANF 1:487).

¹⁵³ *AH* 4.20.10-11 (ANF 1:490-491).

¹⁵⁴ Crouzel, *Origène et la connaissance*, 470-474; J. McGuckin, “The Changing Forms of Jesus,” *Origeniana Quarta*, ed. Lothar Lies (Innsbruck/Vienna: Tyrolia Verlag, 1987), 215-222, quotation from “The Changing,” 214. See above my analysis of the essential Origenian doctrine on matter as receptacle without qualities and forms, and its capacity to accept a plurality of changing qualities. Elaborating this doctrine, Origen associates it with his doctrines of the different forms of Jesus and the glorious pneumatic bodies of the eschaton.

Fragments on Luke, Origen conceives of the manifestation on Mount Tabor as a glorious corporeality:

The Transfiguration on the mountain manifested to the disciples a token of the Savior's future glory (δόξης). And he was manifested corporeally (σωματικῶς), to give their mortal eyes a vision (θεᾶν), even if they could not bear the exceeding greatness of his splendor (τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῆς λαμπρότητος), which was untempered and could not be borne by our eyes. The disciples showed that the glory that befits the divine essence (ἡ τῇ οὐσίᾳ τῇ θείᾳ πρέπουσα δόξα) is invisible (ἀθέατος) to, and unapproachable (ἀπρόσιτος) by, any created nature; they were unable to bear even this corporeal vision (σωματικὴν ὄψιν) manifested to them upon the mountain, but fell to the earth. But, when someone goes up with him, and is exalted with him, he sees (ὁρᾷ) the Word gloriously (ἐνδόξως) transfigured, and sees him as the Word Itself and as the High Priest who both takes counsel with the Father and prays to him.¹⁵⁵

McGuckin similarly observes that the doctrine of the changing forms is closely connected with Origen's conception of the multiplicity of the aspects-names (*epinoiai*) of the Logos, as a reflection of the second doctrine.¹⁵⁶ Origen himself associates the two theories in *Contra Celsum* 2.64 where he first affirms the principle of the doctrine of different forms of Jesus: "Although Jesus was one, he had several aspects (εἰς ὧν πλείονα τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ ἦν); and to those who saw him he did not appear alike to all (οὐχ ὁμοίως πᾶσιν ὁρώμενος). ...his appearance was (ἐφαίνετο) not just the same to those who saw him, but varied according to their individual capacity (ὥς ἐχώρουν οἱ βλέποντες)."¹⁵⁷ Origen further gives some examples of divine titles-functions of Christ such as "way," "truth," "life," "bread," "door," and eventually recounts the event of the Transfiguration.¹⁵⁸

Another aspect McGuckin points out is that the episode of the Transfiguration represents Origen's *locus classicus* for illustrating the doctrine of the changing forms,

¹⁵⁵ Origen, *Fr. Lc.* 140 (GCS 49[35]:283). Trans. J. T. Lienhard, *Origen: Homilies on Luke; Fragments on Luke* (FC 94; Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1996) 181. It should be mentioned that some scholars doubted the authenticity of this fragment, as Crouzel and Simonetti did not include it in their critical edition in SC 87. However, Rauer inserted it in GCS 49[35]:283-284.

¹⁵⁶ McGuckin, "The Changing," 215.

¹⁵⁷ *Cels.* 2.64 (SC 132:434). Trans. Chadwell, 115.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

while the exegete never relates it to the Resurrection.¹⁵⁹ In addition, McGuckin remarks that the doctrine actually represents a more ancient Christian tradition also present in such writings as the *Acts of John* 89-93, the *Acts of Peter* 20, Irenaeus's testimony on Basilides (*AH* 1.24.4), and some passages in Clement of Alexandria.¹⁶⁰ The same episode of the Transfiguration is always the illustration of the doctrine in all these texts. It should also be noted that all these early Christian writings represent the *kabod* tradition refashioned in several Christian environments. *Kabod*/glory Christology is an ancient Christian doctrine already encountered in the writings of the New Testament.¹⁶¹ It represents in early Christian times the identification of Christ and the divine *kabod*, which is his real nature. In contradistinction, Christ's Incarnation and earthly life should be understood as a concealment of the divine *kabod* behind the veil of the flesh.

Likewise, McGuckin observes that Origen reads the episode of the Transfiguration while connecting Isa 53:2 (about the servant without form and beauty) with the kenotic hymn of Phil 2:6-11 (about Christ who existed in the form of God and took the form of a servant). In this fashion, Incarnation and Transfiguration are connected and both of them understood as metamorphoses of the Logos. As McGuckin underlines:

By using this hymn Origen is able to make a typical expansion of the theological context of the argument into a vast soteriological scheme marked by the two great metamorphoses of the Logos (incarnation and exaltation) which set the stage for other, more personally directed, economies of salvation within his earthly life.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ McGuckin, "The Changing," 215.

¹⁶⁰ For Clement of Alexandria see *Hypotyposes* 24.3 (*In Primam Joannis* 1.1; GCS 17:210); *Excerpts from Theodotus* 4-5 (SC 23:58-62); *Str.* 6.16.140.3 (GCS 52[15]:503). For other texts see Joseph Flamon, "Les Actes Apocryphes de Pierre," *RHE* (1909) : 257-258; de Lubac, *Aspects of Buddhism*, Ch.3. The doctrine of the different forms of Christ similarly represents a central axiom of the book of the *Ascension of Isaiah*.

¹⁶¹ See, for instance, Newman, *Paul's Glory-Christology*; L. W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003).

¹⁶² McGuckin, "The Changing," 217.

In addition, McGuckin further observes that Origen describes Christ as possessing the capacity to appear to the humans as a human and to the angels as an angel, changing his form in a pedagogical and soteriological way to suit the needs of all and to become “all things to all men.”¹⁶³ As McGuckin expresses it:

It is a principle which he [Origen] applies also to the pre-incarnate economy of the Logos. He appears for the sake of angels with an angelic role himself, and becomes man for the sake of men, constantly working the economy for others and tempering his appearances according to the need of the recipients for whose sake the whole economy is undertaken in the first place.¹⁶⁴

In *Contra Celsum* 4.16, Origen affirms both the principle of manifestation (to each according to its ontological and spiritual capacities) and the fact that Christ reveals on Mount Tabor his “higher nature” and his “glorious and more divine” condition:

There are, as it were, different forms of the Word (διάφοροι οἶονεὶ τοῦ λόγου μορφαί). For the Word appears (φαίνεται) to each of those who are led to know him in a form corresponding to the state of the individual (ἀνάλογον τῇ ἑξεί), whether he is a beginner, or has made a little progress, or is considerably advanced, or has nearly attained to virtue already, or has in fact attained it. ... [O]ur God was transformed when he went up a high mountain and showed his other form (τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μορφήν) ... For the people down below had not eyes capable of seeing the transfiguration of the Word into something wonderful and more divine (τὴν τοῦ λόγου ἐπὶ τὸ ἐνδοξον καὶ θεϊότερον μεταμόρφωσιν). They were hardly able to receive him as he was, so that it was said of him by those not able to see his higher nature (τὸ κρεῖττον αὐτοῦ βλέπειν) ...¹⁶⁵

Likewise, Origen equates the form Christ took on Mount Tabor with the form in which he existed before the Incarnation:

He ‘was in the beginning with God’; but because of those who had cleaved to the flesh and become as flesh, he became flesh, that he might be received by those incapable of seeing him in his nature as the one who was the Logos (αὐτὸν βλέπειν καθὸ λόγος), who was with God, who was God. And being spoken of under physical forms (σωματικῶς), and being proclaimed to be flesh, he calls to himself those who are flesh that he may make them first to be formed like the Logos (μορφωθῆναι κατὰ λόγον) who became flesh, and after that lead them up to see him (ἀναβιβάσῃ ἐπὶ τὸ ἰδεῖν αὐτόν) as he was before he became flesh (ὅπερ ἦν πρὶν γένηται σὰρξ).¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ 1 Cor 9:22. See the idea in Origen *Hom. Gen.* 8.8 (SC 7bis:226-228); *Comm. Joh.* 1.31.225-226 (SC 120:170); *Comm. Rom.* 1.6(4) (AGLB 16:54-56); *Comm. Mt.* 15.24 (GCS 40:421-422). See the same idea in the passages given in the introduction of this study. For a treatment of the Logos’ angelic economy, see de Lubac, *Aspects of Buddhism*, 89-92.

¹⁶⁴ McGuckin, “The Changing,” 218.

¹⁶⁵ *Cels.* 4.16 (SC 136:220-222). Trans. Chadwick, 194.

¹⁶⁶ *Cels.* 6.68 (SC 147:348). Trans. Chadwick, 382. See also the passage from the same *Cels.* 6.68. Compare with the following expression from a rhetorical question Origen asks his contender in *Comm. Mt.* 12.37 (GCS 40:152): “the form of God in which he previously was (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ἢ ὑπῆρχε πάλαι).”

This passage is also particularly remarkable in that the entire economy of salvation is expressed through form-language: the Logos—who before the Incarnation existed in the spiritual and glorious form of God—took the physical form of the servant in order to allow the servant to be formed in the spiritual and glorious form of the Logos.¹⁶⁷ In the larger design of the economy of salvation, the event of the Transfiguration plays the significant pedagogical role of revealing both the preincarnational form of the Logos and the paradigm and *telos* of human destiny, its eschatological deified and glorious condition.

The idea that the form of Jesus seen at the Transfiguration is his divine, pre-incarnational condition is equally supported by a different passage in *Contra Celsum* where Origen identifies the divine glory with the divinity of Christ. He first talks about the “divinity within him [Jesus] which was hidden from the multitude (τὴν ἑνδον καὶ ἀποκεκρυμμένην τοῖς πολλοῖς θειότητα),”¹⁶⁸ and then takes into consideration the

Trans. McGuckin, 156. In addition, *Comm. Mt.* 15.23-24 (GCS 40:417-422) equates the preincarnational Christ (“in the beginning”) with the divinity of glory. It is difficult, however, to understand if Origen thought this condition of Christ material as he talks about the vision on Tabor in the aforementioned *Fr. Lc.* 140. If this luminous form of Christ is corporeal, then it has to be different from his condition within the Trinity, which is completely immaterial. This ambiguity may be connected with the harsh rejection of the doctrine of the changing forms of Christ and his preincarnational form (sometimes identified with the preexistent soul of Christ; e.g., *Princ.* 4.4.5) in Anathema VII of the Second Council of Constantinople and the Fourth Anathema of the Emperor Justinian against Origen (Jerome, *Apol.* 2.12, and Theophilus of Alexandria, *Ep. synod.* 4; Jerome, *Ep.* 92 [CSEL 55]; *Ep. pasch.* 2.14 [Jerome, *Ep.* 98]); *apud* Butterworth, *Origen*, 320, fn.1. See also McGuckin’s observations regarding the Christian antiquity of this doctrine. Especially in the light of the *Ascension of Isaiah*, one may suppose that the pre-existent form of Christ was the way the angels perceived him. However, Origen’s doctrine remains at least not sufficiently explained, if not a deficient point in his system.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Harl, *Origène*, 256: “Il viendra dans la gloire une fois qu’il aura préparé ses disciples par sa venue sans forme ni beauté, se faisant comme eux pour qu’ils deviennent comme lui, conformes à l’image de sa gloire, une fois que lui-même s’est fait conforme au corps de notre humilité en s’anéantissant et en prenant la forme d’esclave. Mais il reviendra à sa forme de Dieu et il rendra ses disciples conformes à cette forme.”

¹⁶⁸ *Cels.* 2.64 (SC 132:436). Trans. Chadwick, 115. Cf. *Cels.* 1.60;66; 2.8;34 (SC 132: 238;260;300;368); 7.17; 8.42 (SC 150:52;264); *Hom. Lev.* 2.3 (SC 286:104). Likewise, divinity is clearly conceived of in *Cels.* 4.5 (SC 136:198) as a sort of grace able to dwell in a person: “The power and divinity of God come to dwell among men through the man whom God wills to choose and in whom He finds room

revelation of this luminous divinity on Mount Tabor: “For not even with the apostles themselves and disciples was he always present or always apparent (ἀεὶ συνῆν ἢ ἀεὶ ἐφαίνετο), because they were unable to receive his divinity (αὐτοῦ χωρῆσαι τὴν θεωρίαν) without some periods of relief. After he had accomplished the work of his incarnation his divinity (θειότης) was more brilliant (λαμπροτέρα).”¹⁶⁹ Consequently, Origen does not conceive of the concept of divinity as an intangible essence isolated in heaven, but as a divine manifestation in history, sometimes as a hidden divine power, sometimes as the divine *kabod* or *doxa* which the apostles contemplated on Mount Tabor.

As seen above, Origen advocates the incomprehensibility of God’s substance. Nevertheless, he conceives of a perception of God’s divinity, which—according to *Contra Celsum* 2.65 and following Marguerite Harl—I would identify in the above passages with the divine glory or light disseminated by the glorious body of Christ.¹⁷⁰ However, Harl exquisitely understands the glory of transfiguration as an adaptation of Christ’s divinity to human epistemic capacities:

La gloire du Christ est sa divinité: matérialisée par la lumière éblouissante qui frappe les yeux des trois apôtres, elle est, pour une fois, devenue perceptible. Le Christ a laissé voir par avance en lui la divinité qui sera pleinement connue à la fin des temps. Il a donné un corps sensible à cette divinité, un corps lumineux qui la laisse transparaître, ce que ne faisait pas le corps opaque sous lequel elle se trouvait voilée plutôt que révélée. Il a ainsi adapté la divinité à ce qui est le moyen de connaissance des hommes: le corps.¹⁷¹

...” (Trans. Chadwick, 187).

¹⁶⁹ *Cels.* 2.65 (SC 132:438). Trans. Chadwick, 116. For the light of divinity, see also *Cels.* 1.60 (SC 132:238); *Princ.* 4.4.9 (SC 268:424) et al. Of course, there are also some passages which can be interpreted as referring to Christ’s divine nature, e.g. *Cels.* 1.47;56 (SC 132:200;228); 3.28 (SC 136:68). *Cels.* 7.46 (SC 150:126) equates the eternal power (ἄιδιος δύναμις) of God with his divinity. Cf. *Cels.* 4.5 (SC 136:198); 6.4 (SC 147:187); 7.17 (SC 150:52); *Princ.* 2.6.1 (SC 252:310).

¹⁷⁰ Harl, *Origène*, 249-258. See for instance: “Origène utilise δόξα pour désigner la divinité nue de Dieu ou du Christ, en tant que lumière trop éclatante pour que les yeux humains puissent la contempler” (ibid., 249). Cf. “La gloire du Christ est sa divinité” (ibid., 251).

¹⁷¹ Harl, *Origène*, 251.

Three ideas should be emphasized at this point. First, a special aspect of the doctrine of the changing forms of the Logos should be necessarily underlined, namely, that, according to Origen, the Logos remains unaltered in its essence while manifested in the forms he wishes to substantiate:

If the immortal divine Word assumes both a human body and a human soul, and by doing so appears to Celsus to be subject to change and remoulding, let him learn that the Word remains Word in essence (τῇ οὐσίᾳ μένων λόγος). He suffers nothing (οὐδέν μὲν πάσχει) of the experience (πάσχει) of the body or the soul.¹⁷²

Second, by associating the axiom of the complete immateriality of the Trinity and the epistemic principle further investigated in this study, according to which the perception of any form is necessarily connected with corporeality, one may conclude that Jesus' form of God involves a certain corporeality, although of a glorious or ethereal nature. The aforementioned passage from *Princ.* 2.2.2, which primarily proclaims the complete immateriality of the Trinity, continues in the following way:

Now as we have said above, material substance (*materialis substantia*) possesses such a nature (*naturam*) that it can undergo every kind of transformation (*transformetur*). When therefore it is drawn down to lower beings (*ad inferiores*) it is formed (*formatur*) into the grosser and more solid condition of body (*corporis statum*) and serves to distinguish the visible species of this world in all their variety. But when it ministers to more perfect (*perfectioribus*) and blessed beings, it shines in the splendour (*in fulgore micat*) of 'celestial bodies' and adorns either the 'angels of God' or the 'sons of the resurrection' with the garments of a 'spiritual body' (*spiritualis corporis indumentis*). All these beings go to make up the diverse and varying condition of the one world.¹⁷³

¹⁷² *Cels.* 4.15 (SC 136:220). Trans. Chadwick, 194-195. Cf. *Cels.* 4.5.14 (SC 136:198;216).

¹⁷³ *Princ.* 2.2.2 (SC 252:248). Trans. Butterworth, 81-82. In *Cels* 6.77 (SC 147:370) Origen affirms that the apostles saw on Mount Tabor the transfigured body (σῶμα) of Jesus. See also the stress on the corporeality of the glorious form in *Fr. Lk.* 140. Nevertheless, Origen practices a certain precaution, if not a complete rejection, in describing the form the glory of a spiritual body may have; cf. *Princ.* 2.10.2 (SC 252:379).

Third, the divinity of Christ is fully present in each of the forms in which the Logos manifests itself, either in a hidden, concealed modality—when the Logos is incarnated in the human earthly flesh—or plainly manifested on Mount Tabor and at the eschaton.¹⁷⁴

Summary

From Philo to Origen, the most important representatives of the Jewish and Christian Hellenizing movement did not reject without comment the idea that God has a form. They indeed struggled with this and made an impressive intellectual effort to understand it. These facts are congruent with the conclusions recent scholarship brought to light about the strong anthropomorphic traditions present in the late Second Temple, early Christianity, and early rabbinic movements. In addition, the language of Scriptures themselves is mostly anthropomorphic and the idea of allegorical or non-literal reading was a Hellenistic sophisticated hermeneutical technique mostly accessible to the educated elite of Jewish and Christian communities of antiquity.

It is quite understandable, given this context, that Clement and Tertullian believed that God has a heavenly form and Irenaeus took over the early Christian tradition of the cosmic Cross, which is the cosmic and glorious Christ. However, with Irenaeus and Tertullian one may see the first stages of a new solution having its first forms present already in Philo, and later theorized in Origen. One should make a distinction between God in himself and his manifestations in creation, his changing forms which Origen continues to call “divine” and “heavenly.” What prophets and apostles contemplated was certainly something divine, but not God in himself.

¹⁷⁴ While the glory radiating from Jesus’ body is straightforwardly called the divinity of Jesus, his flesh also encapsulates his divinity, although in a hidden manner.

Accordingly, Hellenizing theologians employed two languages: the idiom of Greek philosophy, anti-anthropomorphic and aniconic in its essence, where the Logos has to remain incomprehensible in his essence; and *kabod* Biblical terminology, an iconic mysticism where the Logos manifests himself through various material forms. Most likely Hellenistic theologians found themselves compelled to accept both languages, the first one being required by reason, the second by revelation. Philo's solution, present as well in Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Origen, was to postulate two dimensions of the divine: one hidden, formless and incomprehensible, the other accepting various forms of manifestation, either material or immaterial.

The visionary who struggles to follow God can see the divine form in a mystical way, invisible to the ordinary worldly eye, but perceptible by the noetic eye of the initiated. In general lines, the Alexandrian mystical theology may be labeled as a *kabod* theology reshaped through Hellenistic categories. The new linguistic frame and the distinction between the complete immaterial essence of God and his corporeal forms, saved the concept of the "form of God" for another generation or two.

Finally, this part has shown that Hellenistic authors starting with Philo made an important shift in the epistemology of the divine glory. Representing the same ancient *kabod* tradition, they preferred to adjust its anthropomorphic stances and also to talk about the noetic form of God, which is invisible for the ordinary eye, but visible for the initiated. Some of them even conceived of this form as humanlike, but in general they transferred the Anthropos to the noetic realm. As the process of abstraction was already started and sometimes the Hellenistic authors took it as a metaphor, Christian paschal theology will embrace the whole idea of noetic Anthropos, make of it arguably the

central feature of the paschal discourse, and continue the process of turning it more and more abstract.

PART THREE:

THE DIVINE ANTHROPOS AS DEMIURGE AND SAVIOR:
PASCHAL CHRISTOLOGIES AND SOTERIOLOGIES

Salvation represents a fundamental religious category. Humanity has ever conceived itself in a deplorable condition from which only a hero or a god, therefore a being possessing functions greater than those of the ordinary human being, may rescue it. From Gilgamesh to Hercules, ancient civilizations conceived in various modalities the possible ways out of their unfortunate conditions, and Judaism and Christianity developed their own soteriological models.¹ Thus, the biblical text already offers a variety of metaphors and languages, from the salvation history of the Son of Man to pecuniary-redemptional terminologies, from juridical to sacrificial, liturgical, and theophanic perspectives.

Sacrificial and liturgical soteriological doctrines have a preeminent place in Jewish and Christian cultures and their Pesach/Paschal festival were definitely the center of their liturgical lives. One of the most ancient features of the paschal feast, the sacrifice of the lamb, brings salvation in the houses of the Jewish people in Egypt, in the Promised Land, or in its long-lasting diaspora. With its roots lost in the agricultural rites of the Semitic tribes before the construction of the first Temple, the sacrificial dimension of the

¹ J.-P. Jossua, *Le Salut, incarnation ou mystère pascal, chez les Pères de l'Église de saint Irénée à saint Léon le Grand* (Paris: Cerf, 1968); A. Brontesi, *La soteria in Clemente Alessandrino* (Roma, Università gregoriana, 1972); J. P. Theisen, *The Ultimate Church and the Promise of Salvation* (Collegeville, Minn.: St. John's University Press, 1976); B. Studer and B. Daley, *Soteriologie in der Schrift und Patristik* (Freiburg: Herder, 1978); D. Wiederkehr, *Belief in Redemption: Concepts of Salvation from the New Testament to the Present Time* (tr. Jeremy Moiser; Atlanta : J. Knox Press, 1979); R. Schwager, *Der wunderbare Tausch: Zur Geschichte und Deutung der Erlösungslehre* (München: Kösel, 1986); J. Werbick, *Soteriologie* (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1990); C. H.T. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (Tübingen : Mohr Siebeck, 1997); E. Condra, *Salvation for the Righteous Revealed: Jesus amid Covenantal and Messianic Expectations in Second Temple Judaism* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2002); S. Schaede, *Stellvertretung: Begriffsgeschichtliche Studien zur Soteriologie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); J. G. Van Der Watt, ed., *Salvation in The New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology* (Society of Biblical Literature, 2008).

Pesach is an obvious matter.² For Christians, as well, the sacrificial dimension of the Pascha remains essential, though nuances are different.³ Christ is the Paschal lamb sacrificed for the salvation of the entire human race, as Paul already affirms in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, a perspective which all the paschal homilies and tractates will take over.⁴ Consequently, the main change in the Christian Pascha is the identification of Christ with the Paschal lamb, which we find in Paul, and the idea that Yahweh Sabaoth (the Lord of Hosts) descended on earth and sacrificed himself for the salvation of humankind.

Nevertheless, beyond this traditional understanding on the paschal soteriology as the sacrifice of the lamb, I will propose three new paschal soteriological models which do not start from envisioning Christ as lamb but as a humanlike and glorious figure. The three models are glory soteriology, eikonic soteriology, and the combat myth paradigm, an ancient language reconceived within the paschal sacrificial framework. According to this third model, the paschal Christ is both a warrior and self-sacrificial celestial figure. All these titles emphasize Christ's divine functions as Saviour and Warrior, his salvific manifestation in glorious form, his Demiurgic function, and his status as Divine Image. A special chapter will be dedicated to the insertion of the divine Anthropos within the

² See, for example, Gaster, *Passover*; Segal, *Hebrew Passover*; Le Déaut, *La Nuit Pascale*; Huber, *Passa und Ostern*; Haag, *Vom alten zum neuen Pascha*; Haran, "The Passover Sacrifice;" B. M. Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder: The Passover Rite and Early Rabbinic Judaism* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1984); R. T. Beckwith and M. J. Selman, eds., *Sacrifice in the Bible* (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster Press; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995); Bradshaw and Hoffman, *Passover and Easter*; S. E. Loewenstamm, *The Evolution of Exodus Tradition* (trans. B. J. Schwartz; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1999); F. M. Colautti, *Passover in the Works of Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); E. Noort and E. Tigheelaar, eds., *The Sacrifice of Isaac: The Aqedah (Genesis 22) and Its Interpreters* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); T. Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover until 70 CE* (London; New York: T & T Clark International, 2004); O. Boehm, *The Binding of Isaac: A Religious Model of Disobedience* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2007).

³ Cf. Talley, "Pascha the Center of the Liturgical Year," 1-70.

⁴ For Paul, see 1 Cor 5:7: "Christ our Pascha has been sacrificed (τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός)."

paschal tradition in Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Origen, where its noetic character will be underlined.

With no doubt salvation is a divine function, a divine amendment of the ancient Near Eastern religions which highly influenced Judaism and Christianity. Likewise, ancient Judaism and Christianity experienced a large variety of soteriological doctrines or rather languages. Their articulation was not through doctrinal systems of premises and conclusions but through the mediation of various fundamental titles and metaphors such as fight, sacrifice, redemption, etc.

VI. GLORY SOTERIOLOGY IN EARLY CHRISTIAN PASCHAL MATERIALS AND RABBINIC LITERATURE⁵

Previous scholars have undertaken seminal investigations concerning the paschal or Pesach messianic expectations present in both Christian and rabbinic documents, as well as similar hints in the Hebrew Scriptures or pseudepigraphic writings.⁶ However, the present chapter tries to analyze the same festival from a different perspective, namely the apocalyptic one, and to focus on a particular theme, the divine glory, *kabod*, in two of its particular aspects, namely the tradition regarding the salvific function of the *kabod* and its spatial descent. I would call this conception of salvation glory soteriology or *kabod* soteriology. Both themes seem to be part of old priestly traditions, represent one of the

⁵ The expression “Seeking to See Him” is inspired by the well-known work of A. De Coninck: *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1996).

⁶ See, for example, A. Strobel, “Zum Verständnis Von Mt XXV 1-13,” *NT* 2 (1958): 199-227; Idem, “Die Passa-Erwartung als urchristliches Problem in Lc 17 20 f.,” *ZNW* 49 (1958): 157-196; Idem, “Passa-Symbolik und Passa-Wunder in Act. xii. 3ff.,” *NTS* 4 (1958): 210-215; *Untersuchungen zum eschatologischen Verzögerungsproblem* (Leiden: Brill, 1961); and R. Le Déaut, *La nuit pascale: Essai sur la signification de la Pâque juive à partir du Targum d’Exode XII 42* (Rome: Institute biblique pontifical, 1963).

most ancient themes of the Pesach/Paschal theology, and are preserved in the later Christian and rabbinical theologies of Pascha or Pesach. Accordingly, this chapter argues that both the early rabbinic materials on Pesach and the early Christian Paschal homilies of Asia Minor testify to the expectation of divine glory at the time of the Pesach/Paschal festival. The main rationale for this expectation consists in the salvific function of the divine *kabod*, and the festival of Pascha is the privileged time for the divine descent and manifestation. Since the same expectation may be also encountered in some of the Jewish documents of the Second Temple Period ascribed to Philo, the present study suggests that the rabbinic and Christian expectations of divine glory represent two different developments of a previous feature in the Second Temple festival of Pesach. Observing these materials from a mystical perspective, it seems that all of them (and even others such as the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice or the Christian liturgies) reflect the existence of a form of mysticism that engages a whole community and not only an individual. Pascha was therefore a community-centered, not individual, form of mysticism, where the liturgical celebration represented the prescribed steps in which the mystical experience (or at least the preparation for this experience) should materialize.

1. The Origins of *Kabod* Soteriology

Historical investigations on the origins of the Jewish festival of Pesach cannot draw a definite conclusion concerning the time when the theme of the divine light became part of the Passover symbolism. While historians still debate whether the festival's origins were nomadic, semi-nomadic, pastoral or agricultural, the concept of

salvation from Egyptian slavery appears to be a later addition.⁷ T. Prosic generally views the light as “a sign of the act of creation” in opposition to the dark powers of the primordial chaos.⁸ Occurring in the first month at the vernal equinox, Pascha implies all the positive symbolisms associated with the sun and the new harvest: from order and creation, to salvation and perfection.⁹

The connection between the vision of the divine light and the idea of salvation was a very ancient belief in Israel, as some of the proto-Isaianic oracles seem to indicate. Thus, the concept appears to go back to the pre-exilic period.¹⁰ A passage such as Isaiah 9:2-3 is most likely part of an oracle related to the Assyrian invasion between 734 and 732 B.C.E. when Tiglath-Pileser III annexed three Samarian provinces to Assyria: the Way of the Sea, Trans-Jordan, and Galilee of the nations (i.e., Dor, Megiddo, and Gilead):¹¹

The people who walked in darkness (חשך) have seen a great light (אור); those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light (אור) has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have

⁷ T. Prosic makes a general review of the previous theories on the origins of the festival (Prosic, 19-32). She maintains that the recent developments in the history of early Israel have eliminated the nomadic theory (Prosic, 32); moreover, she supports the theory of a single origin for Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Sheaf (Prosic, 69).

⁸ Prosic, *The Development*, 99-100.

⁹ Ibid., 83-97. A similar perspective may be encountered in Le Déaut, where he explains the later rabbinic symbolism of the Pesach: “Si la Pâque (et l’Exode) est décrite comme une sorte de création nouvelle, celle-ci s’accompagnera, comme la première, de la victoire de la lumière sur les ténèbres du chaos” (Le Déaut, *La nuit*, 232).

¹⁰ According to M. Smith, solar language, a common element of the Near East as early as the second millennium, developed in ancient Israel in a first stage as a general terminology for theophanic luminosity. In a second stage, monarchy played an important influence in associating solar symbolisms with Yahweh (M. S. Smith, “The Near Eastern Background of the Solar Language for Yahweh,” *JBL* 109/1 [1990]: 29-39). Cf. Segal, *The Hebrew*, Prosic, *The Development*; H. P. Stähli, *Solare Elemente im Jahweglauben des Alten Testaments* (OBO, 66; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985); B. Langer, *Gott als “Licht” in Israel und Mesopotamien: Eine Studie zu Jes. 60:1–3.19f.* (ÖBS 7; Klosterneuburg: Verlag Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1989); J. G. Taylor, *Yahweh and the Sun: Biblical and Archaeological Evidence for Sun Worship in Ancient Israel* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1993). See also the authors from the next footnote.

¹¹ E. D. Kissane, *The Book of Isaiah* (Dublin: The Richview Press, 1960), 104. R. E. Clements, *Isaiah 1-39* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1980), 34; J. D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33* as vol. 24 of *World Biblical Commentary* (Waco, Texas: World Books, 1985), 133-4; J. J. Collins, *Isaiah* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press), 106; H. Wildberger, *Isaiah 1-12: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 394.

increased its joy; they rejoice before (פָּנִים = face) you.¹²

The proto-Isaianic oracles reveal a large and “democratic” accessibility to the vision of divine glory, which probably represented the general expectation of the entire people of Israel. The meaning of this accessibility to the divine glory is rooted in its salvific power. Isaiah 9:2-3 would, therefore, be one of the first testimonies which associate the vision of God’s glory with the manifestation of his salvific power. Other passages with the same soteriological emphasis, either in the Isaianic texts or in psalms, seem to be a later, post-exilic development.

The prophetic text appears to make a reference in chapter 9 to a future time, when the people of Israel will be saved from the Assyrian oppression and will be elevated to the highest and happiest possible status: to be in the light (אֹר) of Yahweh and to see his face (פָּנִים). The well-known Jewish tradition which identifies God’s glory with his face is encountered in this context. One can see a few verses further that the salvific status will not be just a temporary phenomenon but one extended without limit into the future. It will be a kingdom of Davidic descent, led by a child who is an “everlasting father (אב עֵד)” (9:6), in which an “endless peace (שְׁלוֹם אֵין קֵץ)” will be established and justice and righteousness will be instituted “from this time onward and forevermore (עַד)” (9:7). Consequently, all these descriptions of future salvation highlight the eschatological aspect of the text.

According to the Isaianic author, in the eschatological times the people of God will acquire the luminous or glorious characteristics of Yahweh. While 6:3 describes Yahweh as “luminous” (“Holy [קדוֹשׁ], Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth

¹² Isa 9:2-3.

is full of his glory [כבוד]),¹³ 4:2 ascribes the same attribute to the eschatological human condition: “On that day the branch of the Lord (Yahweh) shall be beautiful and glorious (כבוד).” The glory is also a central element of the soteriological geography in which certain terrestrial and sacred places, such as the mount of Zion or the city of Jerusalem, represent the inhabited domains of salvation:

Whoever is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy (קדוש), everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, [...] The Lord will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over its places of assembly a cloud by day and smoke and a shining (נִגְהָ) of a flaming fire by night. Indeed over all the glory (כבוד) there will be a canopy.¹⁴

In 46:13, which is part of the deutero-Isaianic corpus, we find an even clearer connection between salvation, glory, and a special geography of salvation: “I will put salvation (תְּשׁוּעָה) in Zion, for Israel my glory (תְּפָאֳרָה).”

The idea of sacred geography is important for any religious manifestation, because it implies search, pilgrimage, procession, and festival.¹⁵ Thus, the theme of procession towards the divine light may be encountered in the second chapter of Isaiah: “O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord” (2:5). A key text where the concepts of light and salvation start being connected with a certain festival for Yahweh is 33:20-22, written probably at the time of the Second Temple:

Look on Zion, the city of our appointed festivals! Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation,

¹³ קדש does not have only the meaning of “separated,” which is probably a later development; its root – קד – also carries the meaning of “bright,” an adjective especially connected with divinity and the things related to the divine. (Kornfeld and Ringgren, “קדש qdš,” in *TDOT* [2003], 12:521-45).

¹⁴ Isa 4:3-5. Cf. Isa 28:5: “In that day the LORD of hosts will be a garland of glory (צִבִּי), and a diadem of beauty (תְּפָאֳרָה = also “glory,” “splendor”), to the remnant of his people.” Cf. Isa 33:20-21. Another ancient text, the passage of Exodus 15 generally called the Song at the Sea, sees salvation as an eternal dwelling in Yahweh’s sacred sanctuary; Exod 15:17-8: “You brought them and planted them in the mountain of your own possession, the place (מִכּוֹן), O Lord (Yahweh), that you made your abode (יָשַׁב), the sanctuary (מִקְדָּשׁ), O Lord, that your hands have established. The Lord will reign forever and ever (עַד).”

¹⁵ Cf. M. Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York, Sheed & Ward, 1958); *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1959); *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism* (New York, Sheed & Ward, 1961).

an immovable tent, whose stakes will never be pulled up, and none of whose ropes will be broken. But there the LORD in majesty (אדיר) will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams, where no galley with oars can go, nor stately ship can pass. For the LORD is our judge, The LORD is our ruler, the LORD is our king; he will save (ישע) us.

The book of Psalms discloses a similar perspective of salvation in the glory of Yahweh, as one can see, for example, in Psalm 68:2. Moreover, the context of Psalm 68 does not appear to be an ordinary Temple service (like probably those of Psalms 26; 27; 63:2; 68:35; or 99), but a special festival where an embedded procession represents a significant ingredient of the celebration:

7 O God (אלהים), when you went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, 8 the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain at the presence (פנים) of God, the God of Sinai, at the presence (פנים) of God, the God of Israel. ... 24 Your solemn processions (הליכה) are seen, O God, the processions of my God, my King, into the sanctuary (קדש)—25 the singers in front, the musicians last, between them girls playing tambourines.

While in Psalms 67:1-2, 80:3, and 80:7 God's shining face or presence (פנים) procures salvation (ישועה), Psalm 104 makes clear that the manifestation of פנים is the way God grants life to all creatures.¹⁶ Most likely, the central significance of the *visio Dei* in the Isaianic and Psalmic corpora is the salvation of the people of Jerusalem, and for this reason the expectation of the *visio Dei* probably becomes a key social feature. Analyzing the function of the light of theophany in the Old Testament, Aalen states: "The primary purpose of the theophany of God is the deliverance and salvation of the nation and of the individual."¹⁷

¹⁶ Ps 104:29-31: "You hide your face (פנים), they [the living creatures] are dismayed; when you take away their breath (רוח), they die and return to their dust. You send forth your spirit (רוח), they are created; and you renew the face (פנים) of the ground. Let the glory (כבוד) of the Lord (Yahweh) endure forever."

¹⁷ Cf. *TDOT* (1974), 1:165. On page 161, Aalen has the following remark: "The situation is the same when the OT speaks of 'the light of Yahweh' (Isa. 2:5), 'his (God's) light' or 'lamp' (Job 29:3), or in the same sense, of 'the light' (Ps. 36:10[9]; 43:3). Here too light is to be understood as a symbol not of God's person, but of the salvation which God gives."

Certainly, the manifestation of God's glory in the books of Isaiah and Psalms may include other functions, such as punishing enemies, or proving that God is the first instance of knowledge, kingship, judgment, or lawgiving. The punitive function, for example, is strongly connected with the concept of salvation, insofar as Yahweh himself is the agent of salvation, and the liberation from the enemies' oppression implies a salvific act. Seeing his glory, the enemies "enter into the rock, and hide in the dust from the terror of the Lord (Yahweh), and from the glory (הדר) of His majesty (גאון)" (Isa 2:10). The same expression, "the terror of the Lord (Yahweh) and from the glory (הדר) of His majesty (גאון)," occurs at Isaiah 2:19 and 2:21. The theme appears, although differently expressed, in various other passages. As Psalm 104:1 shows, the terms of הוד (splendor) and הדר (majesty) seem to refer to Yahweh's garments.

The evidence above suggests that the connection between salvation and the vision of the divine glory has a venerable history, probably conveyed as early as the time of the First Temple. In addition, some texts pertaining to the Second Temple period such as Isaiah 33 and Psalm 68 seem to illustrate the connection between these two ideas and particular Jewish festivals.

Special attention should be paid to the original location of the divine *kabod* and its spatial movements. Salvation appears to involve a particular movement from the original location of divine glory to the new location of its manifestation, specifically to the place where the glory enacts its salvific operations. The old Hebrew references appear to be divided into two traditions. First, some texts such as Isaiah 2:3-5 and Ezekiel 1, 8, or 10 seem to talk about a terrestrial location, the Temple of Jerusalem or the river Chebar. At least for Isaiah, it is more plausible to conceive the divine manifestation of the *kabod* as a

descent than as a horizontal movement, because the Temple is placed on a mountain. In a very concrete way, salvation comes when Yahweh's glory descends from the mountain.¹⁸ A second tradition seems to be quite clear in representing the divine *kabod* as descending from above. The narrative about the consecration of Solomon's temple is a good example of this tradition:

When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven (האש ירדה מהשמים, τὸ πῦρ κατέβη ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) and consumed the burned offering and the sacrifices; and the glory (כבוד, δόξα) of the Lord filled the temple. The priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory (כבוד, δόξα) of the Lord filled the Lord's house. When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory (כבוד, δόξα) of the Lord on the temple, they bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord.¹⁹

2. The Second Temple Passover and the Expectation of the Divine Light

Our next question concerns the time when the two ideas of the vision of divine light and salvation started being associated with the festival of Pesach. Several of the writings ascribed to Philo of Alexandria support the hypothesis that the connection was already functional at the time of the Second Temple. In the second part of his *De specialibus legibus*, while describing the “ten feasts which are recorded in the law,”²⁰ Philo explains why Pascha falls on the fifteenth day of the first month. At that time light is an uninterrupted phenomenon of two days, the sun enlightening all the day of the fourteenth and the moon all the night of the fifteenth (in our modern calendar the day of the 14th and the night of the 14th to 15th):

¹⁸ See also Deut 33:2: “The Lord came from Sinai and shone forth from Seir. He appeared from Mount Paran.”

¹⁹ 2 Chr 7: 1-3. Likewise, in the paradigmatic theophany on Mount Sinai, Moses sees Yahweh descending on the mount in order to write down the commandments. See Exod 19:11: “the Lord (יהוה) will come down (ירד, καταβήσεται) upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people;” 34:5: “The Lord descended (ירד, κατέβη) in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name, ‘The Lord.’”

²⁰ Philo, *Spec.* 2.41 (LCL Philo 7: 390): δέκα ἑορταί, ἃς ἀναγράφει ὁ νόμος. Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 391.

The feast begins at the middle of the month, on the fifteenth day, when the moon is full, a day purposely chosen because then there is no darkness, but everything is continuously lighted up (φωτὸς ἀνάπλεα πάντα διὰ πάντων) as the sun shines from morning to evening and the moon from evening to morning and while the stars give place to each other no shadow is cast upon their brightness (φέγγος).²¹

The element of light was therefore an important part of the feast.

Light was not only a physical or cosmological event, but also one pertaining to the spiritual domain, and the first part of the treatise *Questions and Answers on Exodus* points out this idea. This treatise contains a commentary on Exodus 12, which represents the foundational biblical passage for Philo's commentaries on Passover, as well as for the "rabbinic" targums and early Christian paschal homilies. Yahweh lets Moses and Aaron know about his coming and asks them to further inform the people of Israel to be prepared for such a crucial encounter with his God. They must keep aside a chosen lamb for a period of four days and slaughter it afterwards in the twilight of the fourth day; Yahweh will come that night. A particular aspect that needs to be underlined is the tension of the high, if not the highest possible, expectation, namely that of God's coming. Pesach and Paschal festivals will preserve this tension of expectation as we will see that Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus preserve this feature in their homilies.

Philo's book may be viewed as a first treatise on the paschal tradition. The Christian homilists will conceive a difference between the old and the new Pascha, using a Christological typological, while Philo offers an interpretation that envisions Passover as the passage from the sensible to the intelligible realm, from literal meaning (τὸ ῥητόν) of the text to its deeper sense according to reason (τὸ πρὸς διάνοιαν).²² Every chapter is

²¹ *Spec.* 2.155. Cf. *QE* 1.9 on Exod 12:6a: "Why does He command (them) to keep the sacrifice until the fourteenth (day of the month)? ... For when it has become full on the fourteenth (day), it becomes full of light in the perception of the people." (LCL 401; Philo: Supplement II:17). Trans. R. Marcus, 17.

²² *QE* 1.4. The soul and the mind have to pass from their vicious function to the virtuous one and

methodically articulated, starting with an initial, literal reading and continuing with a second reading, which is an intelligible or dianoetical explanation. At this second level, the Passover represents the progress (προκοπή) of the soul, and most likely the culmination of this process consists in reaching illumination:²³

For when the souls appear bright and visible, their visions begin to hold festival, hoping for a life without sorrow or fear as their lot and seeing the cosmos with the weight of the understanding as full and perfect, in harmony with the decad.²⁴

A passage from *De congressu quaerendae eruditionis gratia* summarizes the articulation of all these key ideas of Passover, progress of the soul, and illumination:

We find this “ten” plainly stated in the story of the soul’s Passover, the crossing (διάβασις) from every passion and all the realm of sense to the tenth, which is the realm of mind and God; for we read “on the tenth day of this month let everyone take a sheep for his house” (Ex. xii.3), and thus beginning with the tenth day we shall sanctify to Him that is tenth the offering fostered in the soul whose face has been illumined (πεφωτισμένη) through two parts out of three, until its whole being becomes a brightness (φέγγος), giving light to the heaven like a full moon by its increase in the second week. And thus it will be able not only to keep safe, but to offer as innocent and spotless victims its advances on the path of progress (προκοπαί).²⁵

Thus, envisioning the Paschal festival as the progress (προκοπή) of the soul on the way toward illumination or meeting God, these Philonian passages illustrate that the expectation of Paschal enlightenment was a lively tradition during the Second Temple period. Note that Philo composed the whole visionary argument in an internalized form, namely as the progress of the soul.²⁶ The internalized way to illumination parallels the

ultimately the soul has to overcome the body, the mind has to overcome the senses, while the thoughts have to become prophetic. Cf. *Spec.* 2,147 where the opposite word for τὸ ῥητόν is ἀλληγορία, and Pascha concerns the purification of the soul.

²³ *QE* 1.3; 1.7; and 1.11.

²⁴ *QE* 1.2 (LCL 401:8). Trans. Marcus, 8. The same perspective is also expressed a few pages further in the eighth chapter: “First it was necessary [for the soul desiring perfection] to pluck out sins and then to wash them out and, being resplendent, to complete the daily (tasks) in the practice of virtue” (*QE* 1.8; LCL 401:17).

²⁵ Philo, *Congr.* 106 (LCL 261; Philo 4: 510). Trans. Colson and Whitaker, 511.

²⁶ Internal progress or advance of the soul represents, according to Hans Jonas, a paradigmatic form of interiorization, an internalized version of the ancient ritual stages of initiation; see H. Jonas, “Myth and Mysticism: A Study of Objectification and Interiorization in Religious Thought,” *JR* 49 (1969): 315-

cosmic growth of the moon from two-thirds on the tenth day of Nissan to the full moon on the fourteenth. Thus, the Alexandrian depicts the dynamic of the spiritual advancement and of the gradual illumination of the soul to the completion of its entire brightness (φέγγος) in the context of the Passover festival.²⁷ This dynamic will also be present, in a different form, in Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus.

3. The Mediation of the New Testament: Identifying Christ with the Divine *Kabod*

The central distinction between the Jewish Pesach and the Christian Pascha is a matter of theology, consisting in the Christian identification of Yahweh or of the divine *kabod* with Jesus Christ. This process is already present in the Christian documents of the first century pertaining to the New Testament, and some scholars consider it as originating within the religious or liturgical practice of the first Christian century.²⁸ The theological position ascribing a divine or godly nature to Jesus Christ is usually called “high Christology.”

The process of identifying Jesus Christ with Yahweh can be encountered, for example, in 1 Corinthians 2:8, where Christ receives the title of the “Lord of glory” (Κύριος τῆς δόξης), one of Yahweh’s Old Testament titles. Likewise, after the narrative of the events of Baptism and Christ’s temptations in the wilderness, Matthew 4:13-16 connects Christ’s first kerygmatic actions to the salvific intervention of the divine light promised in Isaiah 9:1-2:

329, 315-316.

²⁷ For the theme of progressive illumination of the soul in Philo, see also *Spec.* 2.145-149 and *QE* 1.7-8.

²⁸ See, for example, L. Hurtado’s *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (London; New York: T&T Clark, 1998), or *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003) and R. Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998).

[A]nd leaving Nazareth he went and settled at Capernaum on the sea of Galilee, in the district of Zebulun and Nephtali. This was to fulfil the words of the prophet Isaiah about “the land of Zebulun, the land of Nephtali, the road to the sea, the land beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:” The people that lived in darkness have seen a great light; light has dawned on those who lived in the land of death’s dark shadow.

Matthew 1:22-3 also identifies the newborn Christ with the character of the newborn Emmanuel found in Isaiah 7:14. The fact that New Testament communities identified the newborn child with the Lord of Glory is also obvious in the way Luke describes Nativity as a descent of heaven or merkavah on earth in 2:8-20, and the way Luke makes the old priest Symeon in the narrative of the presentation in the Temple (2:29-32) to equate the baby with the glory of Israel: “My eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light (φῶς) for revelation to the nations, and the glory (δόξα) of your people Israel.”²⁹

The Gospel according to John depicts the event of the Incarnation as the coming of the divine light, therefore using glory terminology. After identifying in 1:4 “Word” with “life” and “life” with “light,” in a fashion similar to that in the *Targum Neofiti 1*, the Gospel states in 1:9 that “[t]he true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.” Besides this, while in 1:14 the Gospel testifies that the disciples have seen Christ’s glory (δόξα), in 8:12, 9:5, and 12:35-36,⁴⁶ it gives witness that Christ defines himself as the light of the world (τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου), or the light that came into the world. The glory language which depicts Christ’s coming to the world as the descent of the divine *kabod* was therefore commonplace as early as the first century C.E., and the soteriological intention of this coming was an integrated element.

²⁹ I am indebted for this idea to Fr. Alexander Golitzin.

The book of Revelation does not associate the salvific glory with the event of Incarnation but with the eschatological reality of the heavenly kingdom. Thus, discussing eschatological Jerusalem, Revelation 21:23-24 states that “the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.” Consequently, salvation comes through the divine *kabod* and the state of salvation is conceived of as existing within the glory of God. Likewise, the distinctive element of the Christian glory soteriology consists of the identification of Jesus Christ with the *kabod*.

4. Glory Soteriology at the Paschal Festivals of Asia Minor

Christian paschal theology will appropriate the identification between Jesus Christ and the divine *kabod* and will develop it as one of its central tenets. Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus associate the festival of Pascha with the descent of the heavenly Christ as glory (δόξα). Melito, for instance, writes:

[T]he temple below was precious, but it is worthless now because of the Christ above. The Jerusalem below was precious, but it is worthless now because of the Jerusalem above For it is not in one place (τόπος) nor in a little plot that the glory (δόξα) of God is established (καθιδρυται), but on all the ends of the inhabited earth his bounty overflows, and there the almighty God has made his dwelling (κατεσκήνωκεν) through Christ Jesus.³⁰

This passage recalls the text of Revelation 21, which gives a picture of the heavenly Jerusalem descending to earth. The difference primarily consists in the fact that Christ’s divine descent as glory is not temporally situated at the end of time, but in a well-specified present time, “now” (νῦν – emphatically repeated in the previous verses), which most likely refers to the paschal celebration when the homilist declaims his work.

³⁰ *Peri Pascha* [abbreviated *PP*] 44 (288)[chapter 44, verse 288]-45(299).

Furthermore, the divine *kabod*, usually depicted as sitting on the divine throne, appears in the homily as enthroned on the earth and overflowing beyond earth's boundaries. Melito articulates his discourse on Pascha in terms and images related to the descent and terrestrial activity of the Lord, first within the events of the Old Testament, which are the types of the events of the New Testaments, and then in terms and images related to Christ's coming, Passion, and salvation:

It is he who, coming from heaven to the earth because of the suffering one, and clothing himself in that same one through a virgin's womb, and coming forth a man, accepted the passions of the suffering one through the body which was able to suffer, and dissolved the passions of the flesh; and by the Spirit which could not die he killed death the killer of men.³¹

In a different passage, which is almost identical with the saying found in *Mishnah Pesahim* 10.5, Melito also projects the ideas of light and salvation on the Paschal event:

It is he that delivered us from slavery to liberty, from darkness to light, from death to life, from tyranny to eternal royalty, and made us a new priesthood and an eternal people personal to him. He is the Pascha of our salvation.³²

The other paschal document, *In sanctum Pascha*, begins with the following words:

Now is it the time when the blessed light of Christ sheds its rays; the pure rays (φωστῆρες) of the pure Spirit rise and the heavenly treasures of divine glory (δόξα) are opened up. Night's darkness and obscurity have been swallowed up, and the dense blackness dispersed in this light of day; crabbed death has been totally eclipsed. Life has been extended (ἐφηπλώθη) to every creature and all things are diffused in brightness (φῶς). The dawn of dawn ascends over the earth (ἀνατολαὶ ἀνατολῶν ἐπέχουσι τὸ πᾶν) and he who was before the morning star and before the other stars, the mighty (μέγας) Christ, immortal and mighty (πολύς), sheds light brighter than the sun on the universe.³³

³¹ *PP* 66 (451-458); cf. 46-47 (303-310).

³² *PP* 68 (473-480). S. G. Hall has studied this Melitonian passage in parallel with two Jewish texts, namely *Mishnah Pesahim* 10.5 and *Exodus Rabbah* 12.2 (cf. S. G. Hall, "Melito in the Light of the Passover Haggadah," *JTS* 22 [1971]: 29-46).

³³ *In sanctum Pascha* (abbreviated *IP*) 1.1 (Visonà, 231). Trans. Holton, 50.

The passage undeniably talks about the descent of the divine light at the time of the paschal celebration. The paschal night is the moment of Christ's coming (ἐπιδημία), when the border between heaven and earth is removed and the divine glory, stored in heaven probably from the first day of creation, floods the whole universe: "the heavenly treasures of the divine glory (δόξα) are opened up."³⁴ The light of the glory (δόξα) of Christ, which illumines the heavenly Jerusalem in Revelation 21, is now spread over the entire cosmos: "... the blessed light of Christ sheds its rays [T]he mighty Christ, immortal and mighty, sheds light brighter than the sun on the universe (τὸ πᾶν)."³⁵

Pseudo-Hippolytus also uses the languages of the Incarnation to describe the Pascha, and depicts this moment as the descent of divine glory.³⁶ Hence, expressed in the same glory language, Pascha does not seem to be a very different sort of event than that of Christ's coming. Furthermore, the Paschal expectation of the divine *kabod* has also been closely connected to, or even identified with, the expectation of the Parousia. For instance, Tertullian affirms that the event of Parousia will likely occur during the celebration of Pentecost.³⁷ While *Epistula apostolorum* 17 places the same eschatological event between the Pentecost and the festival of Azymes, the Vatican codex of the *Gospel of the Hebrews* reads that the final judgment will take place during the eight paschal days.³⁸ However, two of the most significant testimonies of the paschal expectation are preserved in Lactantius and Jerome. Lactantius, in his *Divinae institutiones* 7.19.3, written after 313 C.E., states that Christians celebrate the paschal night by a vigil because

³⁴ A. Hamman, *The Paschal Mystery*, 50.

³⁵ Ibid., 50. *IP* 1,1.

³⁶ For him, the Incarnation was both a coming (ἐπιδημία, *IP* 43-4) of Christ, who is the eternal priest, the King of glory, and the Lord of the powers (*IP* 46), and a compression of the magnitude of divinity in a human form (*IP* 45).

³⁷ *De baptismo* 19.2.

³⁸ Cod. Vat. Reg. Lat. 49, from R. Cantalamessa, *La Pâque dans l'Eglise ancienne* (Berne: Peter Lang, 1980), 30.

of the coming (*adventum*) of the king and God.³⁹ In a similar, although more obvious way, Jerome affirms in his *Commentary on Matthew* 4.25.6 that, according to a Jewish tradition, Christ will come during the night of Pascha as he also came in ancient Egypt, during the night, following the angel of death. This particular expectation seems to be, according to Jerome, the theological reason for the “apostolic tradition” of not dismissing the community before the midnight of the Paschal celebration.

5. Rabbinic Expectations of the Divine Light at the Passover Night

One of the Mishnahic sayings ascribed to Rabbi Gamaliel, a saying later taken over into the final prayer of the Haggadah for Pesach, depicts the Passover as a passage from darkness to light and from servitude to salvation: “He has brought us from bondage to freedom, from sadness to joy, from mourning to festivity, from darkness to light, and from servitude to redemption.”⁴⁰

In its turn *Codex Neofiti* 1, makes obvious the expectation of divine glory during the night of Passover. Exodus 12:23 (“For the Lord will pass through to strike down the Egyptians”) appears in this targum in the following form:

And the Glory of the Shekinah of the Lord (אֵיקָר שְׁכִינָתָא דִּיִּי) will pass to blot out the Egyptians; and he will see the blood upon the lintel and upon the two doorposts and he will pass by, and the *Memra* (מִמְרֵיהּ דִּיִּי) of the Lord will defend the door of the fathers of the children of Israel.⁴¹

³⁹ *Haec est nox quae a nobis propter adventum regis ac dei nostri pervigilio celebratur* (ed. S. Brandt, CSEL 19, Prague-Viena-Leipzig 1890, p.645).

⁴⁰ *Mishnah Pesahim* 10.5. Cf. E. D. Goldschmidt, *The Passover Haggadah: Its Sources and History* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1960). See also *Mishnah, Exodus Rabbah* 12:2.

⁴¹ *Tg. Neof. 12:23*, in M. McNamara and R. Hayward, *Targum Neofiti 1: Exodus* (vol.2 of *The Aramaic Bible. The Targums*; Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 49. For the Aramaic text, see A. D. Macho, *Neophiti 1: Targum Palestinense Ms de la Biblioteca Vaticana, Tomo II Exodo*, trans. M. McNamara and M. Maher (Madrid-Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1970), 439. See also Jastrow, 775: מִמְרֵ, רִמָּא, or אִרְמִי = “word, command.” Likewise, הַנִּיכָשׁ, אֲתִנִּיכָשׁ, or נְשִׁכָּי נְחִי some editions means “royal residence, royalty, glory, divine glory.” (Jastrow, 1573).

This text brings into the paschal narrative a new character, the *Memra* (מימר) or the Word of Yahweh. It is also worth noting the change of Exod. 12:12-13 from the biblical “For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night; ... I am the Lord. ... [W]hen I see the blood, I will pass over you” to the targumic “I will pass in my *Memra* (מימר) through the land of Egypt this night of the Passover I in my *Memra* will defend you.”⁴² It appears that, for the targumic writer, the divine agent that is manifest or acting within the world is not Yahweh any more, but the Word of Yahweh, or Yahweh through his Word.

The targumic passage corresponding to Exodus 12:42 identifies the Word (*Memra*) with the Light of the first day of creation.⁴³ Hence, the whole targumic passage summarizes Yahweh’s gradual manifestation within the history of the world:

The first night: when the Lord was revealed over the world to create it. The world was without form and void, and darkness was spread over the face of the abyss and the *Memra* (ממריה ריין) of the Lord was the Light (ארוה), and it shone; and he called it the *First Night*. The *second night*: when the Lord was revealed to Abram The *third night*: when the Lord was revealed against the Egyptians at midnight: his hand slew the first-born of the Egyptians and his right hand protected the first-born of Israel The *fourth night*: When the world reaches its appointed time to be redeemed: the iron yokes shall be broken [cf. Isa 9:4; 10:27 etc. and Jer 28:2-14], and the generations of wickedness shall be blotted out, and Moses will go up from the desert <and the king Messiah (מלכא משיחא) from the midst of Rome.> ... and his *Memra* (רמימ) will lead between the two of them, and I and they will proceed together. This is the night of the Passover to the name of the Lord [cf. Exod 12:11]; it is a night reserved and set aside for the redemption of all Israel, throughout their generations.⁴⁴

⁴² *Tg. Neof.* 12:12-13, in McNamara, *Targum Neofiti I*, 47-48 and Macho, 437. For the various theories regarding the age of the Palestinian and Babylonian Targums, the traditions that they preserve, and their mutual influences, see R. Le Déaut and J. Robert, “Targum,” *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 2002), 52-54. Generally, there are three hypotheses: *Tg. Ps-J.* is a document revised after *Tg. Onq.*: P. Kahle (1959), G. Vermes (1959-1960), G. J. Cowling (1968), S. A. Kaufman. On the contrary, the second hypothesis sees *Tg. Onq.* as a revised version of an ancient *Tg. Ps-J.*: Vermes (1963), P. Schäfer (1971-1972), G. E. Kuiper (1968 and 1972), R. T. White (1981). The third hypothesis proposes a common source *Proto-Onq.* or *Proto-TP.*: A. Berliner (1884), White (1981), Le Déaut (2002).

⁴³ This text can be correlated with Jn 1:4-9 (esp. 9) and *IP* 1,1. Thus, it can be supposed that the Christian and Jewish communities developed various speculations about the divine light of the first day of creation and its presence within the created universe. These speculations may further be connected with the later Byzantine interest in the uncreated light or grace and their manifestations within creation.

⁴⁴ *Tg. Neof.* 12:42, in McNamara, *Targum Neofiti I*, 52-53; Macho, 441-442. It is worth mentioning that, in Macho’s edition, McNamara preferred to translate מן גו רומא with “from on high” instead of “from the midst of Rome.” He is in agreement with Macho’s “de lo alto” (Macho, 78) and Le Déaut’s “d’en-haut” (Macho, 313). See also Le Déaut’s classical study on the theme of the four nights, *La nuit pascale*.

All four manifestations of God in four different nights reflect the gradual illumination of creation accomplished in the final appearance of the Word at the eschaton, when he will come in the company of Moses and the Messiah. While the Word is identified at the beginning of the fragment with the light of the first day of creation, at the end of the world the Word will reveal himself during the night of the Passover. As a consequence, it seems that the *Targum Neofiti I* preserves a special tradition in which the end of the actual world and the beginning of the eschatological one will happen on a paschal night.⁴⁵

In a different manner, yet emphasizing the same conception as that of *Neofiti I*, the *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* on Exodus changes the passage Exodus 12:11-12 (“and you shall eat it [the lamb] hurriedly. It is the Passover of the Lord. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night”) to the following:

And you shall eat in the *haste* of the Shekinah (תניכש) of the Lord of the world, because it is a mercy from before the Lord for you. On that night I will be revealed in the land of Egypt in the Shekinah (תניכש) of my Glory (יקרי), and with me there will be ninety thousand myriads of destroying angels.⁴⁶

Once again, glory language finds its place in the paschal discourse. Also, in 12:23, the glory (ארכי) is the agent which strikes the Egyptians, while the “*Memra* (ארמימ) of the Lord will protect the door and will not allow the Destroying Angel to enter and smite

⁴⁵ Compare with the Christian documents mentioned above. Cf. Hippolytus, *Comm. Dan* 4, 55ff.

⁴⁶ *Tg. Ps-J.* 12:11-12, in M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodos*, vol. 2 of *The Aramaic Bible. The Targums* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 191. Cf. J.W. Etheridge, *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch with the Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1968), 457. Also, see manuscript Add. 27031 of *Tg. Ps-J.* from the British Museum in R. Le Déaut, *Targum du Pentateuque : Tome II, Exode et Lévitique* (SC 256; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1979), 87). For the Aramaic text, see M. Ginsburger, *Pseudo-Jonathan: Thargum Jonathan ben Uziel zum Pentateuch* (Berlin: S. Calvary & Co., 1903) or D. Rieder, *Pseudo-Jonathan: Targum Jonathan ben Uziel on the Pentateuch Copied from the London MS* [British Museum Add. 27031] (Jerusalem: Solomon's, 1974) and E. G. Clarke, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch: Text and Concordance* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Ktav, 1984). For יקרא, יקירו, or יקרי, which means “honor, dignity”, see Jastrow, *A Dictionary*, 592.

your houses.”⁴⁷ The passage, therefore, does not make clear whether it is the glory or the destroying angel that strikes the Egyptian first-born. Furthermore, the *Targum Pseudo-Johnatan* to Exodus 12:29 introduces a third destroying agent, the Word of Yahweh: “In the middle of the night of the fifteenth (of Nisan) the *Memra* (אַרְמִיָּה) of the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt.”⁴⁸ Since the *Babylonian Targum* does not use glory language when discussing the Passover, it follows that glory language reflects a Palestinian development.

It might be, therefore, concluded that certain rabbinic writings associate the festival of Pesach with the expectation of a salvific theophany, whether of Yahweh, or of his Word or Light, or that of his *Shekinah*.

6. Conclusion

Documentary evidence allows for the hypothesis that the divine salvific glory was an emblematic expectation in the Passover ritual traditions of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, and both rabbinic and Christian paschal traditions preserved it as a central assumption of their theologies. Moreover, at least for the Christian and rabbinic traditions, the festival of Pascha was the privileged time for the divine descent and manifestation. Thus, the present study proposes the model of a two-branched theological tradition—*kabod*-glory soteriology—developed from a common trunk. While this trunk points to the shared use of words such as “glory,” “light,” or “Lord,” the Christian communities make a radical semantic shift at the level of theory and worship by

⁴⁷ *Tg. Ps-J.* 12:23, in M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, 192; cf. J.W. Etheridge, *The Targums*, 476-477.

⁴⁸ *Tg. Ps-J.* 12:29, in M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, 193; cf. J.W. Etheridge, *The Targums*, 447. The destroying agent in *Tg. Onq.* and *Tg. Neof.*, in accordance with the biblical Exod. 12:29, is Yahweh.

identifying Christ with the divine agent that comes in glory (Yahweh, *Shekinah*, or the Word of Yahweh). This shift may have occurred earlier than 70 C.E. (or, at least at some point within the first century), since several early Christian texts identify Christ with Yahweh or the Lord of Glory, one of Yahweh's Old Testament titles.

From a mystico-experiential perspective, all three forms of the Paschal festival (Second Temple, Christian, and rabbinic) reflect the expectation of seeing God and of being saved, which is frequently a most important goal of mysticism. A noteworthy feature of the Paschal festival is that the practical method of this form of mysticism is one performed by a group or community, not by an isolated individual. Some ritual acts such as the repentance pertaining to the Day of Atonement, or the Jewish and Christian fasting periods, the Paschal vigil, and the whole Paschal ritual of gestures, hymns, and homilies seem to play a role similar to ascetic exercises: they prepare the individual for the divine vision of the *kabod*. However, it seems that the Paschal celebration is a form of group mysticism, and it does not seem to be unique. The liturgical celebration of the Sabbath Sacrifice in the community of Qumran might be also seen as a type of group mysticism. Likewise, the Christian liturgy, as one can see in many scholarly investigations, may also be regarded as a form of community-oriented mysticism.⁴⁹

49 See, for instance, L. Schiffman, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Early History of Jewish Liturgy," in *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lee A. Levine (Philadelphia: American Schools of Oriental Research and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1984), 33-48; C. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985); M. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991); S. Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer: New Perspectives on Jewish Liturgical History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); D. K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1998); A. Golitzin, "Liturgy and Mysticism: The Experience of God in Eastern Orthodox Christianity," *ProEccl* 8, no. 1 (1999): 159-186; see also A. Golitzin's idea that the angelic hierarchy is a mirror and shaper of the soul in "Dionysius Areopagites in the Works of Saint Gregory Palamas: On the Question of a 'Christological Corrective' and Related Matters," *SVTQ* 46, no. 2/3 (2002): 163-190; D. K. Falk, F. García-Martínez, E. M. Schuller, eds., *Sapiential, Liturgical, and Poetical Texts from Qumran: Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Oslo 1998: Published in Memory of Maurice Baillet* (Leiden: Brill, 2000); M. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Which God Gave to Him*

This chapter leads to several conclusions. First, regarding the roots of the glory soteriology, it seems that a tradition which ascribed salvific power to the divine *kabod* existed in Second Temple Judaism, and this position probably had its roots in the First Temple period. The main element of this theological position was that salvation comes through the manifestation of God's glory and consists of living before the divine Face.

Second, documents pertaining to the Second Temple period, such as Philo's writings, associate the vision of light with the Passover festival. Early rabbinic texts such as *Mishnah Pesachim* and the targums *Neofiti 1* and *Pseudo-Jonathan* preserve the same tradition originating within the Second Temple period.

Third, Christian authors, such as Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus, point to the Christian expectation of the divine light at the time of the Paschal festival.

VII. THE DIVINE ANTHROPOS INSERTED WITHIN THE PASCHAL THEOLOGY

One of the most remarkable aspects of Paschal theology is reflected in the Adamic and anthropomorphic traditions present in the writings of Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Origen, and Methodius. In the following pages I will point out those passages which reflect the tradition of a heavenly humanlike image or Anthropos.

to Show to His Servants what Must Soon Take Place [Revelation 1.1] (Edinburgh : T&T Clark, 2000), esp. "Excursus: Parousia and Liturgy," 373-388; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam. Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); G. Schimanowski, *Die himmlische Liturgie in der Apokalypse des Johannes: Die frühjüdischen Traditionen in Offenbarung 4-5 unter Einschluss der Hekhalotliteratur* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002); M. Barker, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2003); J. R. Davila, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity: Papers from an International Conference at St. Andrews in 2001* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); R. Elier, *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford; Portland, Or.: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2004).

1. Melito's Belief in a Divine Corporeality?

Already in Melito, Christ is described as a cosmic Man. The starting point of this discussion should be the aforementioned idea that, for Melito, Christ the Logos represents the active agent in both Old and New Testaments. This hermeneutical strategy is part of an early Christian exegetical method which can be called “Bible re-written through Christological lens,” since Melito identifies Yahweh with Christ and interprets all the Old Testament narratives about Yahweh in Christological terms.⁵⁰ According to Melito's hermeneutical method, there is only one mystery of the Pascha because Christ worked in both, the old and the new Pascha.

Understand, therefore, beloved, how it is new and old, eternal and temporary (ἄιδιον καὶ πρόσκαιρον), perishable and imperishable (φθαρτὸν καὶ ἄφθαρτον), mortal and immortal (θνητὸν καὶ ἀθάνατον), this mystery of the Pascha (τὸ τοῦ πάσχα μυστήριον): old as regards the law (νόμον), but new as regards the word (λόγον); temporary as regards the model (τύπον), eternal because of the grace (χάριν); perishable because of the slaughter of the sheep, imperishable because of the life of the Lord; mortal because of the burial (ταφὴν) in earth, immortal because of the rising (ἀνάστασιν) from the dead.⁵¹

Since it is the same divine agent who operates in both testaments, the Pascha is old and new, temporary and eternal, perishable and imperishable, mortal and immortal. While every left term denotes an attribute of Christ's manifestation in the Old Testament—characterized as “old,” “temporary,” “perishable,” and “mortal,” namely the old Law, temporary type, perishable and mortal sheep—the terms on the right represent the new manifestations of the Logos. They are perceived in a new light, they are “eternal,” “imperishable,” and “immortal,” attributes which suggest a Platonic dual

⁵⁰ See for this especially B. G. Bucur, “Exegesis of Biblical Theophanies in Byzantine Hymnography: Rewritten Bible?” *TS* 68 (2007): 92–112.

⁵¹ Melito, *PP* 2-3 (H. 2; H. 2).

world, where the eternal and incorruptible ideas are replaced with the divine Logos or Truth (ἀλήθεια).⁵²

Although the divine and human natures of Christ are conspicuously present in the Melitonean discourse, they are differently expressed, and the reader has to operate a sort of *epoché* of his/her familiar Christological terminologies originating in the later Church Councils, and put them into parentheses in order to grasp the remarkable thought of the Sardisean bishop.⁵³ In his divine nature, Christ is not conceived of as an abstract nature, but as a lofty, immaterial, and glorious nature. *Peri Pascha* 45, for example, describes Christ as the “Jerusalem above” descended with a “widespread grace” (πλατεῖα χάρις) and explains this descent in the following manner:⁵⁴

For it is not in one place nor in a little plot that the glory of God is established (ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ δόξα καθιδρυται), but on all the ends of the inhabited earth his bounty (χάρις) overflows, and there the almighty God (ὁ παντοκράτωρ θεός) has made his dwelling (κατεσκήνωσεν) through Christ Jesus.⁵⁵

The text may refer to the Old Testament glory or Lord of Glory who dwells enthroned in heaven or Temple (for instance, Isa 6:1-5). The heavenly figure now “sits down, is established” (καθιδρυται) all over the world. In addition, Christ manifested himself in the Law, sheep, and lamb of the Old Testament as in a parable, and fully, as Logos and Truth, after his Incarnation. As Melito further explains, the humanity of Christ—the

⁵² For Plato, see for instance *Timaeus*. For ἀλήθεια, see Melito, *PP* 4.32 (H.4).

⁵³ Melito indeed affirms that Christ “rose from the dead as God, being by nature God and Man (φύσει θεὸς ὢν καὶ ἄνθρωπος).” See *PP* 8.53 (H. 6; H. 7). A monophysite reading of the verse would be an anachronism.

⁵⁴ *PP* 45.293 (H. 22). The descent of the Jerusalem above may be connected with the vision of the descent of the heavenly Jerusalem of the Book of Revelation 3:12 and 21:2;10; Rev 21:11 describes this Jerusalem shining “with the glory (δόξαν) of God; it had the radiance (φωστήρ) of some priceless jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.” Cf. Rev 21:23.

⁵⁵ *PP* 45.294-99 (H. 22; H. 23).

man—veils the Christ who comprised all things (ἐν δὲ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ Χριστὸς ὅς κεχώρηκεν [τὰ] πάντα).⁵⁶

At this point, however, where Melito approaches the theme of Christ's relation to the universe, Jean Daniélou's observations on *Peri Pascha* 96 become very significant: "He who hung the earth is hanging; he who fixed (ὁ πῆξας) the heavens has been fixed (πεπήκται); he who fastened the universe (ὁ στηρίζας τὰ πάντα) has been fastened to a tree (ἐπὶ ξύλου ἐστήρικται)."⁵⁷ In his *Theology of Jewish Christianity*, the French scholar sets in parallel this passage with the passage we have analyzed in our discussion on the noetic Anthropos in Irenaeus:

For the Creator of the world is truly the Word of God; and this is our Lord who in the last times was made Man, existing in this world, and who in His invisible nature contains all created things, being implanted (*infixus*) in the whole Creation, since the Word of God governs and arranges all things; and that is why He came to His own in a visible manner, and was made flesh, and hung upon the tree, that He might sum up all things in Himself, in such a way that His own creation bore Him, which itself is borne by Him.⁵⁸

The parallel thought is striking since it encompasses the same logic: Christ who was crucified on the cross is actually the one who sustains the universe, and the way early Christians imagined this was by a cosmic Cross. As Daniélou asserts:

There is certainly an allusion to the Cross here [in Irenaeus], which is confirmed by a parallel text in Melito: 'He who bears the Universe is borne by the tree.' In the text of Irenaeus the Cross symbolises the summing up of all things by the Word, but this summing up is only possible because the Word contains all things. The train of thought is the same as that of Col. 1:20.⁵⁹

In a different passage, Daniélou expounds on the verb στηρίζω, which Melito uses in connection with Christ who fastens or consolidates the universe, a verb which

⁵⁶ *PP* 5.35 (H. 4; H. 5). The expression "the one who comprises all" is also a divine attribute in Irenaeus of Lyon (e.g., *Adv. haer.* 4.20.2).

⁵⁷ *PP* 96.711-4 (H. 54; H. 55).

⁵⁸ Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 5.18.3. Trans. *ANF* 1:546.

⁵⁹ Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 283.

occurs as well with the same meaning in two other writings of the first centuries.⁶⁰ The first is found in Irenaeus's account of a Gnostic doctrine about Horos (the Limit), one of the aeons emanated from the Father. This aeon has a privileged status as long as it retains other important attributes such as "Cross (σταυρός), Redeemer (λυτρωτής), Reaper (καρπιστής), Guide of the Return (μεταγωγεύς),"⁶¹ and it is conceived as a power which consolidates (ἐσθηρίχθαι) all the aeons and preserves them outside of the inexpressible greatness of the Father.⁶² With no doubt all these attributes are Christological titles ascribed to the aeon Horos, and its function of consolidating the universe is one of the demiurgic functions of the noetic Anthropos. The second writing is Ps-Hippolytus's *In sanctum Pascha* 51, an obvious case where Christ is portrayed as the divine Anthropos consolidating the universe, as we will see in the following pages.

Consequently, although Christ preserves several old attributes of the anthropomorphic Yahweh—such as a glorious nature and a gigantic extension, in addition to the demiurgic and salvific functions and the capacity to work wonders in the history of humankind—he does not seem to have anthropomorphic delineations in Melito's portrait. Although the anthropomorphic attributes of God are not obvious in *Peri Pascha*, there are certain documents supposedly indicating Melito as an anthropomorphist. According to one of the texts ascribed to Origen, Melito believed in God's corporeality, therefore in his heavenly humanlike figure. Thus in *Selecta in Genesim* 25, while commenting on Gen 1:26, Origen affirms that Melito was among the literal interpreters of the Bible in terms of anthropomorphism, and that for Melito the image (εἰκών) of God in the human being is located in the body (ἐν σώματι), which is

⁶⁰ Ibid. 284-7.

⁶¹ Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 1.2.4.

⁶² Ibid. 1.2.2.

logical for a corporeal understanding of the image. This bishop even wrote about the fact that God has a body (περὶ τοῦ ἐνσώματον εἶναι τὸν Θεόν).⁶³ Origen also relates the argument of the anthropomorphites according to whom God has to have a form (μορφή) because he showed himself to Abraham and Moses, and a vision is possible only through the mediation of a form.⁶⁴

Nevertheless, as there are no anthropomorphic elements in *Peri Pascha*, apart from the mention of the μορφή θεοῦ, it may be presumed either that a later editor made some “corrections” to the Melitonian text, or that the Melitonian understanding of the μορφή θεοῦ was actually less material than the Origenian text suggests, or that Origenian text is not very accurate. The arguments for Melito’s anthropomorphism depend, therefore, on how much someone wants to credit the “Origenian” text. Further considerations on Melito’s position, however, would place us into pure speculation.

2. Divine Anthropos in Pseudo-Hippolytus’s *In sanctum Pascha*

Pseudo-Hippolytus describes Christ as a cosmic anthropomorphic, therefore, Adamic figure of luminous consistency. In 1.1-12, Christ is mighty (μέγας), immortal, immense (πολύς), and sheds light brighter than that of the sun.⁶⁵ While in the Gospel of John he is “the light of the world,” in 55.11 he receives in addition the attribute “mighty” (τὸ μέγα τοῦ κόσμου φῶς). *In sanctum Pascha* 26 also talks about “the great body of

⁶³ Origen, *Sel. Gen.* 25 (PG 12.93.11-13).

⁶⁴ Ibid. Two Syriac fragments ascribed (among others) to Melito—namely, Fr. 13.2 (H. 80) and Fr. 14.3 (H. 81)—associate the attribute “immaterial” with the Son. See Hall, *Melito of Sardis*, xxxiv-vii for a commentary on the questionable attribution of these fragments.

⁶⁵ The idea of a gigantic body of Christ occurs for example in *IP* 1.11: μέγας Χριστός; 2.3: μεγάλη μεγάλου βασιλέως επιδημία; 9.28: μεγάλου βασιλέως; 32.3: τῷ μεγάλῳ σώματι; *IP* 45.10: τὸ μέγεθος πᾶν τῆς θεότητος (cf. Col 2:9: πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος); *IP* 15.14: τῶν ἐκταθεισῶν χειρῶν Ἰησοῦ; 38.3-4: χεῖρας ἐξέτεινας πατρικάς, ἐκάλυψας ἡμᾶς ἐντὸς τῶν πτερύγων σου τῶν πατρικῶν; 63.2-3: τὰς χεῖρας τὰς μεγάλας. For the huge dimensions of the cosmic tree and body, see also *IP* 51.

Christ” and about his “rational body of fiery nature (ἔμπυρον γὰρ λογικὸν σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ).” Christ is also called the Orient or Dawn (ἀνατολή) in 3.4; 17.14; 45.23, a title which in one of the instances receives the qualification of “spiritual” (πνευματική; *IP* 45.23).

On the premises of a gigantic and luminous nature of Christ, Christology is mainly possible in two similar ways: Christ covers this glory with his body as with a garment (an ancient Christology also present in Melito, *PP* 47; cf. *IP* 61) or the huge luminous body becomes contracted (συστείλας), collected (συναθροίσας), and compressed (συναγαγών) to the shape of an ordinary human body,⁶⁶ while the immensity of his whole divinity (τὸ μέγεθος πᾶν τῆς θεότητος] remains unchanged:

He willingly confined himself to himself and collecting and, compressing in himself all the greatness of the divinity, came in the dimensions of his own choice in no way diminished or lessened in himself, nor inferior in glory (οὐ μειούμενος ἐν ἑαυτῷ οὐδὲ ἐλαττούμενος οὐδὲ τῇ δόξῃ δαπανούμενος).⁶⁷

However, while commenting on the idea that the Pascha is celebrated in the first month and that it is the “beginning of months,” Pseudo-Hippolytus unveils a “secret” Hebrew tradition about creation:

Why is the month of the Pasch the first month of the year? A secret tradition among the Hebrews says that it was in this month (τὸν καιρὸν εἶναι ἐν ᾧ) that the Divine artist (τεχνίτης) God, the creator of the universe (δημιουργός), conceived this world (τὸ πᾶν). This was the first flower of creation (τῆς κτίσεως τὸ πρῶτον ἄνθος), the beauty of the world (τοῦ κόσμου τὸ κάλλος), when the creator saw (εἶδε) the statue of his artistic making (τὸ πανδαίδαλον ἄγαλμα) move (κινούμενον) in harmonious accord (ἑμμελῶς) with his intentions (κατὰ νοὺν ἑαυτοῦ).⁶⁸

⁶⁶ For ἔδου, see *IP* 26.1; for the other three attributes see *IP* 45.10-11. The idea is not new in a Christian context; cf. Phil. 2:6; *Odes of Solomon* 7:3-6; *Acts of Thomas* 15 and 80.

⁶⁷ *IP* 45.10-13. Cf. Melito of Sardis, *Frg.* 14. For a more detailed analysis in the context of the second century, see Cantalamessa, *L'Omelia*, 187-273. Also, cf. Philo, *De Gig.* VI, 27: “the good spirit, the spirit which is everywhere diffused, so as to fill the universe, which, while it benefits others, is not injured by having a participation in it given to another, and if added to something else, either as to its understanding, or its knowledge, or its wisdom.”

⁶⁸ *IP* 17.4.

The universe therefore, is seen as a statue and the beginning of times as the moment when God saw the first beauty of his statue. One also may recall that a statue (ἄγαλμα) in antiquity had first and foremost a human shape and Philo even conceives of the universe as the first image of the Image of God, of the archetypal Model, which is the Logos of God.⁶⁹ Although Pseudo-Hippolytus finds this exegesis a good interpretation of the expression the “beginning of months,” he offers instead his own interpretation. As Christ is the first-engendered and firstborn of all noetic and invisible beings (τῶν πάντων νοητῶν τε καὶ ἁοράτων πρωτόγονός ἐστι καὶ πρωτότοκος), this month is the beginning of time. The main point of this discussion, however, is that in Pseudo-Hippolytus’s view Christ is one of the noetic and invisible beings.

Yet, it is in *In sanctum Pascha* 51 that he gives the account of a tree or cross which touches the heavens and makes the earth fast by its feet, while the huge hands embrace the winds between heaven and earth.

This cross is the tree of my eternal salvation (μοι φυτὸν εἰς σωτηρίαν αἰώνιον) nourishing and delighting me. I take root in its roots, I am extended in its branches, I am delighted by its dew, I am fertilized by its spirit (τῷ πνεύματι) as by a delightful breeze. In my tent I am shaded by its shade and fleeing the excessive heat I find this refuge moist with dew. Its flowers are my flowers; I am wholly delighted by its fruits and I feast unrestrainedly on its fruits which are reserved for me always. This is my nourishment when I am hungry, my fountain when I am thirsty, my covering when I am stripped, for my leaves are no longer fig leaves but the breath of life (τὰ φύλλα πνεῦμα ζωῆς). This is my safeguard when I fear God, my support when I falter, my prize when I enter combat, and my trophy when I triumph. This is my narrow path (ἄτραπὸς ἢ στενή), my steep way (ἡ τεθλιμμένη ὁδός). This is the ladder (κλίμαξ) of Jacob, the way (πορεία) of angels, at the summit of which the Lord is truly established (ἐσθῆρικται). This is my tree, wide as the firmament (δένδρον οὐρανομήκες), which extends from earth to the heavens (ἀπὸ γῆς εἰς οὐρανοὺς ἀνέβαινεν), with its immortal trunk established between heaven and earth (φυτὸν στηρίξας ἑαυτὸν ἐν μέσῳ οὐρανοῦ τε καὶ γῆς); it is the pillar of the universe (ἔρεισμα τῆς ὅλης οἰκουμένης), the support of the whole world (στήριγμα τοῦ παντός), the joint of the world (σύμπλεγμα κοσμικόν), holding together the variety of human nature, and riveted by the invisible bolts of the Spirit (ἁοράτοις γόμοις τοῦ πνεύματος), so that it may

⁶⁹ Cf. Philo, *Opif.* VI (25).

remain fastened to the divinity (τῷ θεῷ) and impossible to detach. Its top touches the highest heavens (Ἐκραις μὲν κορυφαῖς τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐπιψάνων), its roots are planted in the earth (τὴν γῆν δὲ στηρίζων ποσί), and in the midst its giant arms (χερσὶν ἀμετρήτοις) embrace the ever present breaths of air (πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀέρος). It is wholly in all things and in all places (ἐν πᾶσι καὶ πανταχοῦ).⁷⁰

These lines represent one of the most impressive mystical passages of antiquity. The mystic first describes his identification with the cross while becoming one with the roots, branches, and flowers of the tree. As Henri de Lubac and other scholars after him have noted, the cross is identified with a tree, then with the pillar of the universe, and finally with Christ himself.⁷¹ On the one hand, the tree is the cosmic tree, the *arbor mundi* and *axis mundi*, which connects heaven and earth, the sacred and the profane, an ancient theme present in various ancient religions.⁷² For Pseudo-Hippolytus, this tree is “wide as the firmament,” extended “from earth to the heavens,” with the “trunk established between heaven and earth.” In addition, the tree is the “pillar of the universe,” an image which still sends to the idea of *axis mundi*, and it is also the “support (στήριγμα) of the whole world,” an image which refers to its consolidating

70 Ps-Hippolytus, *IP* 51 (V. 300-302; H. 64-65). Cf. *IP* 63, for the hands of God. For Theophilus of Antioch, the Holy Spirit is identical with the “Hand of God,” one of the most ancient Jewish anthropomorphic expressions for the Spirit of God, e.g., Exod 15:16; 32:11; Deut 6:21; 7:8,19; 9:26; Isa 25:10 or Ezek 37:1 where the hand of God is identified with the Spirit of God. It can be found even in the first Letter of Peter 5:6. Actually, the Hebrew word יָד denotes simultaneously “hand” and “power,” the latter term being a well-known synonymous for the Spirit (e.g., Micah 3:8). For Irenaeus of Lyon, the Son and the Holy Spirit are the hands of God in the universe.

⁷¹ H. de Lubac, “L’arbre cosmique,” in *Mélanges E. Podechard* (Lyon: Facultés catholiques, 1945) 191-98, 192. See also G. Q. Reijnders, *The Terminology of the Holy Cross in Early Christian Literature, As Based upon Old Testament Typology* (Nijmegen, Dekker & Van de Vegt, 1965); Cantalamessa, *L’omelia*, 109-38; Vittorio Grossi, “La Pasqua quattordicesimana e il significato della croce nel II secolo,” *Aug* 16 (1976): 557-71; W. J. McCarthy, *Sol Salutis, Arbor Mundi, Lucerna Christi: Cosmic Cross and Cosmic Christ in a Second Century A.D. Paschal Homily (A Literary Interpretation)* (Unpublished PhD Thesis at The Catholic University of America, 1983), 135-88; Visonà, *Pseudo-Ippolito*, 466-78.

⁷² See Eliade, *Patterns*, 265-330. The theme of the tree as *axis mundi* has a larger circulation than the Hellenistic world, as McCarthy presupposes in his *Sol Salutis, Arbor Mundi*. Scandinavian, German, Mesopotamian, and Vedic mythologies convey this symbol, too.

function in the universe Daniélou noticed in his study.⁷³ In addition, the verb Daniélou pointed out as denoting one of the cosmic function of Christ as gigantic cross (στηρίζω = to make fast, to consolidate) is twice used in connection with the function the tree plays in the universe.

On the other hand, the text unveils that the cosmic tree is identical with the cosmic body of Christ depicted in clear anthropomorphic traits. His tops touch the heaven, his feet consolidate the earth, and his gigantic arms embrace the atmosphere.⁷⁴ As this body is not the earthly body of Christ, it should consequently represent the portrait of Christ as divine Anthropos. But if one takes into account the rational and pneumatic nature of this divine figure, as one can see two pages before, the text can be regarded as a case of theorization on the noetic Anthropos.

As the identity between the cross and the cosmic tree is, however, a conspicuous element in this representation, Daniélou's opinion about the cosmic cross which consolidates the universe is again supported here as well as in *In sanctum Pascha* 56. In this latter passage Pseudo-Hippolytus addresses directly to Jesus with a hymn in which he equates the crucified Jesus with a divine and cosmic cross:

O divine extension (τῆς θείας ἐκστάσεως) in all things and everywhere! O crucifixion spread out in the whole universe (τῆς διὰ πάντων ἀπλουμένης σταυρώσεως). O you who art unique among all things unique in the universe, may the heavens possess your spirit, and paradise your soul—for he said, *This day will I be with you in paradise*—and may the earth possess your body. For the indivisible is divided (Μεμέρισται ὁ ἀμερής) so that all may be saved (ἵνα τὰ πάντα σωθῇ), so that even the lowest place may be accessible to the divine coming (τῆς θείας ἐπιδημίας).⁷⁵

⁷³ Cf. Daniélou, *Theology*, 287.

⁷⁴ See also *IP* 63 (V. 318.2-3) for the gigantic hands (τὰς χεῖρας τὰς μεγάλας) of Christ.

⁷⁵ *IP* 56 (Hamman translation with some changes, 66).

The interesting thing is that the whole passage which follows the Passion narrative and Christ death on the cross is preeminently Christological. The reader realizes towards the end of the passage that the vague term “divine extension” refers unquestionably to Christ who divided his being at the moment of death: the spirit ascended to heaven with the Father, the soul went to Paradise with the thief, and his body remained in the tomb. The divine extension, therefore, has to be the divine Christ, his divine and cosmic body. Certainly, the author makes a distinction between the gigantic and invisible body of Christ and his visible body buried in the tomb. His cosmic body represents a cosmic crucifixion (σταύρωσις) of an indivisible nature, extended to the entire universe. In addition to this, Pseudo-Hippolytus lets us know that salvation comes through this cosmic extension of Christ. The careful reader can also notice that salvation actually comes through the identification of the visionary with Christ’s cosmic body. This soteriological doctrine should also be connected with the eikonic-soteriology investigated in the next chapter, where salvation is envisioned as the recreation of the primordial luminous body of Adam. For Pseudo-Hippolytus, salvation represents the transformation of the visionary into Christ’s gigantic, glorious, and fiery corporeality.

A final remark should also be made in regard to the Christology and Pneumatology of this text. As especially Cantalamessa and Simonetti previously noted, the text raises real problems about making a clear distinction between the Son and the Spirit and the two scholars deem that the Christology of the text can easily be classified as Spirit Christology.⁷⁶ A doctrine largely spread in early Christianity because of the

⁷⁶ See Cantalamessa, *L’omilia*, XXX. Simonetti, “Note di Cristologia pneumatologica,” *Aug* 12 (1972): 201-32.

undeveloped Pneumatological theorization of the time, it seems to appear, too, in *In sanctum Pascha*. Nevertheless, one can see that although there are instances where Christ is described as Spirit (and scholars pointed out that the term represented an attribute synonymous with “divine” and referring to the divine, for instance, *IP* 45), there are also various instances in which “Spirit” is not identical with Christ, but is attributed to Christ, as Christ’s inseparable instrument in his economic activity.

In sanctum Pascha 35 for example defines Christ as a staff on which rest the seven Isaianic divine spirits find their rest:

The staff of Moses, the staff of Aaron, the nut-like staff, the staff which cleaves the depths of the (Red) sea, the staff which makes sweet the bitter waters, the staff on which repose the seven holy spirits of God: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength (the spirit of knowledge and godliness), the spirit of the fear of God shall fill him (Isa 11:2).⁷⁷

In addition, the aforementioned passage 51 specifically depicts Christ as a tree provided with roots, trunk, branches, and flowers and identifies the Spirit with the leaves of the tree: “leaves are no longer fig leaves but the breath of life (τὰ φύλλα πνεῦμα ζωῆς).” Likewise, *In sanctum Pascha* 55 describes the Divine Spirit rising again when Christ dies on the cross and giving back life, vitality, and stability (ψυχούμενον καὶ ζωοποιούμενον καὶ στηριζόμενον) to the whole universe.⁷⁸ The Spirit, therefore, is the Spirit of Christ and accompanied him during his earthly life. In 55-56, the narrator describes the Spirit leaving Jesus at the moment of his death, resurrecting the entire

⁷⁷ *IP* 35 (V. ; H. 59-60). As B. G. Bucur shows in his study *Angelomorphic Pneumatology: Clement of Alexandria and Other Early Christian Witnesses* (VCSup 95; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009), the language of the seven spirits represents an early Jewish and Christian pneumatology.

⁷⁸ *IP* 55 (H. 66).

nature amazed and petrified by Jesus' death, and assumes that the Spirit will take his place somewhere in heavens: "may the heavens possess your spirit."⁷⁹

3. Origen's *Anthropos* between Allegory, Noetic Reality, and Human Nature

As the word "Pascha," for Origen, has primarily the meaning of "passage" rather than "sacrifice," the Alexandrian organizes the whole logic of his tractate around this concept. Hence, while for Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus the Christian Pascha represents the perfection of the mystery in the type, which is the Temple Passover, a pre-figuration of the perfect one, Origen conceives even of the Christian Paschal mystery as a pre-figuration of the heavenly mysteries:

Just as the mysteries of the passover which are celebrated in the Old Testament are superseded by the truth of the New Testament, so too will the mysteries of the New Testament, which we must now celebrate in the same way, not be necessary in the resurrection.⁸⁰

It is in this dynamic evolution of history of human initiation in the divine mysteries that Christ becomes himself incarnate, offers himself and becomes a consecrated victim in order to make humankind consecrated:

By this offering of himself (δι' ἧς προσφορᾷς αὐτοῦ καθαρίζεται πλανώμενος κόσμος εἰς ἐπιστροφὴν ἐρχόμενος) the world which has gone astray is purified and converted, and he *pacifies* all things *in the blood of his cross by putting to death hostility* (Eph 2:16), i.e., the *wrath* which leads to the destruction of the *desobedient* (Rom 2:8). For if they were eager to obey what was said in the ordinance, carrying out the ceremony with a *bunch of hyssop* (Exod 12:22), i.e., with a sacrificial fragrance of thoughts (ἀναθυμιάσει ἐννοιῶν) on conversion, that was for them the realization of the true passover of Christ, who says: *For these I consecrate myself* (Ἀγιάζω ἑμαυτὸν ὑπὲρ τούτων), *and not for these alone but for all those who believe in you* (Jn 17:19-20).⁸¹

Origen conceives in this way the final goal of the human being because he conceives of the resurrected life as the celebration of a mystery. In this exegetical

⁷⁹ *IP* 56 (H. 66).

⁸⁰ Origen, *PP* 32.20-25.

⁸¹ *PP* 47.1-20.

context, Christ's economic work should first of all be understood as both pedagogical initiation into the heavenly mysteries and a high mystery of self-sacrifice. Another important idea that should be point out here is that the highest mystery, according to Origen, is the mystery of eating the entrails of the Logos, therefore the mystery of the Incarnation.⁸²

There are two ways in which Origen conceives of the divine Anthropos in the figure of Christ, namely in the first and second part of his *Peri Pascha*. While the first part represent a "word-by-word exegesis of the passover (τῆς κατὰ λέξιν ἐξηγήσεως τῆς τοῦ πάσχα),"⁸³ the second unveils its "spiritual meaning (τὴν πνευματικὴν ἔννοιαν)."⁸⁴ What Origen does in the two parts represents first a typological interpretation of the key expressions of Exodus 12 seen from a mystery perspective similar to those of Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus. The way he views the sacrifice and eating of Christ represents the allegorical consumption of a man-like divine figure, where in fact eating means interpreting Scripture and perceiving in a noetic way the manifestations of the Logos.

Origen thus expounds that, if the Logos-Christ is the lamb, the flesh of the Logos-Christ has to be the divine Scriptures.⁸⁵ The Alexandrian even advises his reader that this interpretation has to be spiritual, because the flesh of the lamb has to be eaten roasted with fire, and, since the fire denotes the Spirit, they should be interpreted spiritually:

Therefore the Holy Spirit is rightly called *fire*, which it is necessary for us to receive in order to have converse with the *flesh* of Christ, I mean the divine Scriptures, so that, when we have roasted them with this divine *fire*, we may eat them roasted with fire.⁸⁶

⁸² *PP* 31.

⁸³ *PP* 1.1.

⁸⁴ *PP* 40.35.

⁸⁵ *PP* 26.

⁸⁶ *PP* 26.

The effect of such an exegetical method will lead to a special type of spiritual, noetic consumption of the flesh of Christ through the five purified senses. In fact Origen makes use in this context again of his famous doctrine of the five noetic senses. According to him, perception through the noetic senses comes after the five days of preparation. It is Christ himself, however, who come to each sense to purify it and secure its good functioning:

For there are five senses in the human being (πέντε γὰρ οὐσῶν αἰσθήσεων τῶν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου), unless Christ comes to each of them (εἰ μὴ ἐν ἑκάστη αὐτῶν γένηται Χριστός), He cannot be sacrificed and, after being roasted, be eaten. For it is when *he made clay with his spittle and anointed our eyes* (John 9:6-7) and made us *see clearly* (Mk 8:25), when He *opened the ears* (Mk 7:33-35) of our heart so that *heaving ears* we can *hear* (Matt 11:15; 13:19), when we smell his *good odor* (Eph 5:2; 2 Cor 1:15), recognizing that his name is a *perfume poured out* (Cant 1:13; Phil 2:7), and if, *having tasted*, we *see how good the Lord is* (1 Pt 2:3; Ps 34[33]:8), and if we touch him with the touch of which John speaks: *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life* (1 Jn 1:1), then it is that we will be able to sacrifice the lamb and eat it and thus come out of Egypt.⁸⁷

A similar passage occurs a few pages further in a discussion which no longer gravitates around the theme of the senses, but around what the consumption of each part of Christ's body means: head—the divinity of Christ; eating his ears is hearing his words; eyes are clear seeing; hands are charitable workers; breast is the devoted or loyal believer; entrails are the depths of God; thighs represent chastity; and feet the running to Christ.⁸⁸

The second part of the tractate, however, seems to be focussed more on Christ's sacrifice as a fight with Death, a theme analyzed in one of the following chapters of this part. In the hermeneutical context of this spiritual and allegorical interpretation, Origen unveils the meaning of what he considers the central mystery, Christ's Incarnation. It is

⁸⁷ PP 18.10-25.

⁸⁸ PP 30-31.

also the mystery of his self-offering and consecration in order to consecrate those who believe in him, and his fighting Death.

Origen adopts the Pauline idea that the final goal of the divine economy was the reconciliation of the world in Christ. “And he [the Father] did in Christ, as Scripture said: *For God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself* (2 Cor 5:19).”⁸⁹ The Alexandrian interpreter sees now Christ as the Man (ἄνθρωπος) who assembles into himself the reconciled humanity:

For just as they [the Hebrews] were prefigured in a *male lamb* [προετυπώθησαν ἐν ἀρσενικῷ προβάτῳ] (Exod 12:5), so are we in the *man like a lamb* [ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ τῷ ὡς ἀμνῷ] (Isa 53:7); just as they were prefigured in a *perfect lamb* (Exod 12:5), so are we in the *fullness* [ἐν πληρώματι] (Jn 1:16) of him who has carried out his Father’s will; just as they were prefigured in a one-year-old lamb, so are we *at the end of the ages* (1 Cor 10:11)—for just as the year is the fulfillment of the months, so is he the fulfillment of the law and the prophets—just as they in a lamb *without blemish* (Exod 12:5 etc.), so we in a man without sin; just as they in the *first month* (Lev 23:5), so we in the *beginning of all creation, in which all things were made* [ἐν ἀρχῇ πάσης κτίσεως, ἐν ᾗ ἐκτίσται τὰ πάντα] (Rev 3:14; Col 1:15-16); [there] *in the tenth month* (Exod 12:3), [here] in the fullness of the unicity [of God] (ἐν πληρώματι μοναρχίας).⁹⁰

This passage combines various human and divine titles of Christ. While the first two titles of Christ (“man like a lamb” and “perfect lamb”) seem to refer to his human dimension, the pleroma of John 1:16 (“From his pleroma we have received grace upon grace”) refers to Christ’s divine stores from which he offers glory. While the next expression, “the end of the ages,” denotes the time of his Incarnation, namely the end of history, the following attribute, “lamb without blemish”, refer to Christ’s human pure nature. The next two titles also denote his divine nature: first, “the beginning of all creation, in which all things were made,” refers to Christ as beginning (ἀρχή) in the sense of Johannine prologue; second, the text calls him Demiurge.

⁸⁹ PP 48.

⁹⁰ PP 42.

For Origen, therefore, the Anthropos of Christ seems to denote either Christ's humanity, or an allegorico-metaphorical expression about the perception of the spiritual senses understood as eating something spiritual or noetic.

4. Conclusion

There are some important differences in the way the authors investigated above conceive of the divine Anthropos. While some of Melito's terms echo the early Jewish-Christian conception of a cosmic Christ who sustains the universe, Pseudo-Hippolytus translated the Anthropos onto the noetic level as previously Irenaeus or Clement had done. Origen, in his turn, conceived allegorically of the divine Anthropos as Christ, the noetic Man in which he gathers all the consecrated ones for the Father.

VIII. EIKONIC SOTERIOLOGY

IN EARLY PASCHAL WRITINGS AND OTHER EARLY CHRISTIAN TEXTS

Every soteriological doctrine encompasses its own presuppositions regarding the essence or definition of the perfect human being to be fulfilled. It proposes in this way a model of the perfect human being, therefore an anthropology. Hence, anthropology and soteriology are deeply interconnected. Anthropology gives a model of perfect being according to which the present condition of the human being is measured as precarious or fallen, and consequently in need of evolving toward the perfection of the human being. This path to perfection is the soteriological process in which an ordinary human being evolves in various ways from its precarious condition towards perfection. In the case of

the paschal soteriology, the anthropological model is Christ, the heavenly Adam dressed in garments of light. The soteriological process consists of the passage and the process from the imperfect to the perfect being, from the fallen Adam to the heavenly Adam. Paschal soteriology becomes, in this way, as we have seen in the previous chapters and as we will see in the present one, an Adamic soteriology.

At the same time, paschal eikonic soteriology can be regarded as a new development of eikonic anthropology in general. For Christians, Christ is the Divine Anthropos of Paul (especially Romans 5 and 1 Corinthians 15:49), a divine human image which is ontologically part of the divine and eternal realm, of the highest domain of reality. As I mentioned before, the Pauline Heavenly Anthropos is one of the most exalted Anthropos figures, certainly higher than Philo's divine/angelic Logos and probably than the Hermetic Anthropos.

It is this Pauline Anthropos that the paschal writings take over to develop into a paschal eikonic soteriology. The paschal Anthropos created *ab origine*, the human being according to its own form, and descended towards the end of time in order to elevate to its previous condition the human shape and the fallen Adam. The descent of the Anthropos causes the ascension and exaltation of the fallen protopater. Paschal theological anthropological and soteriological discourse articulates therefore a synthesis of the two Adamic developments, since the earthly and fallen Adam is exalted through the divine descent of the heavenly one.

1. Melito's "Idiocy" and the Salvation of the Image of God

While dealing with the famous passage Gen 1:26, Origen comments that the image of God in the human being can be conceived as being imprinted either in the body or in the soul. As the first possibility seems to the learned Alexandrian as pure idiocy ("How should not be called idiot [μωρός] the one who thinks such things about God?") he commits himself to the second.⁹¹ According to his argument, the anthropomorphic theory offers a purely impossible interpretation due to its attendant contradictions. Origen observes that literally the Bible also speaks about the wings of God, and, if the human being is the image of God, it should also be equipped with wings. The true interpretation has to be therefore allegorical, and the place where the copy of the divine image dwells should be without any doubt the human soul or the interior man.

Origen classifies Melito among the literalists and, consequently, among the theologians who considered the human body as the image of God. On the other hand, as several scholars have already noticed, a Melitonian doctrine of an incorporeal God is questionable.⁹² The recovered fragments of the lost Melitonian work which describe the Son as incorporeal seem to be spurious. Fragment 13.2, fragment 14.3, and the new fragment II 4.34, where the incorporeal is predicated of the heavenly Son, are also

⁹¹ *Sel. Gen.* 25 (PG 12:93A). Cf. Gennadius, *Dog. eccl.* 24.2 (C. H. Turner, "The *Liber Ecclesiasticorum Dogmatum* Attributed to Gennadius," *JTS* 7 [1906] 90).

⁹² E.g. Carl W. Griffin and David L. Paulsen, "Augustine and the Corporeality of God," *HTR* 95, no. 1 (2002): 97–118, 102, n.27: "Even though it is not apparent in any of Melito's extant writings, the charge against him of anthropomorphism persisted in the heresiological literature.... It is possible that Origen's assertion about Melito's συγγράμματα περὶ τοῦ ἐνσώματου εἶναι τὸν Θεόν actually refers to Melito's lost ὁ περὶ ἐνσώματου θεοῦ λόγος (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.26.2). If so, Origen was probably acquainted with the title only and has misunderstood what was certainly a treatise on the incarnation to be a treatise on the corporeal/anthropomorphic nature of God."

ascribed to Alexander of Alexandria, Athanasius, Epiphanius, or John Chrysostom, though all these fragments, as Hall observes, preserve Melitonian terminology.⁹³

Accordingly, while our knowledge about Melito's anthropomorphism remains ambiguous, some elements of an eikonic soteriology occur in his *Peri Pascha*. Although Origen's affirmation is important, it is not validated in the text of *Peri Pascha*. While offering his perspective on Genesis 1 and 2 in *Peri Pascha* 47-56, Melito depicts in dark nuances Adam's fall and the disastrous consequences that followed it. He then reveals the mysterious arrangements and works of Christ in the patriarchs and prophets as preparations for the great mystery of his incarnation. But in 47-56 he describes the creation of the human being first according to Genesis 2:7, therefore in a pneumatic anthropology. Melito is constant in this anthropology, though he exchanges later the biblical breath for the human soul. In his conception, the human being seems to be the unity of the soul and flesh, or soul and body, as this passage confirms:

At these things [i.e., human crimes] sin (ἁμαρτία) rejoiced, who in the capacity of death's fellow worker (τοῦ θανάτου σύνεργος) journeys ahead into the souls (ψυχάς) of men, and prepares as food for him the bodies (σώματα) of the dead. In every soul sin made a mark, and those in whom he made it were bound to die. So all flesh (σάρξ) began to fall under sin, and every body under death, and every soul was driven out of its fleshly dwelling (ἐκ τοῦ σαρκίκου οἴκου ἐξηλαύνετο). And what was taken from earth was to earth dissolved, and what was given from God was confined in Hades (εἰς ἧδην κατεκλείετο); and there was separation (λύσις) of what fitted beautifully (τῆς καλῆς ἁρμογῆς), and the beautiful body (τὸ καλὸν σῶμα) was split apart (διεχωρίζετο).⁹⁴

⁹³ Hall, *Melito*, 81, n.56. For the manuscripts which preserve these fragments, see Hall, *Melito*, xxxiii-xxxix. Hall also points out many other similarities between these fragments and *Peri Pascha* in terms of vocabulary, imagery, and doctrine. Cf. R. Cantalamessa, "Méliton de Sardes, une christologie antignostique du ii^{me} siècle," *RevScRel* 37 (1963): 1-26. However, Hall mentions as well those terminologies in these fragments which reflect theological interests and terminologies of later periods and can hardly be associated with Melito. Cf. P. Nautin, *Le Dossier d'Hippolyte et de Méliton dans les florilèges dogmatiques et chez les historiens modernes* (Paris: Cerf, 1953). For the fragments, see Hall, 80, 81, and 87 respectively.

⁹⁴ *PP* 54-55 (379-390).

The human body therefore, was created as a beautiful psychosomatic harmony which the fall of Adam destroyed. The soul was confined in Hades, the flesh dissolved.⁹⁵

In the next passage Melito continues his account of the tragedy of the fall, but now he depicts the human being as divided and finally inserts the concept of image. Hence both passages form together a synthesis of the pnoetic anthropology of Genesis 2:7 and the eikonic anthropology of Genesis 1:26:

For man (ἄνθρωπος) was being divided (μεριζόμενος) by death; for a strange disaster and captivity were enclosing (περιείχεν) him, and he was dragged off a prisoner (εἵλκετο αἰχμάλωντος) under the shadows of death, and desolate (ἐρημος) lay the Father's image (ἡ τοῦ πατρὸς εἰκών).⁹⁶

The whole imagery reflected in the terminology of περιέχω (to encompass, embrace, surround), εἵλκετο αἰχμάλωντος (was dragged off a prisoner), and ἐρημος (desolate, lonely, solitary) creates the scenario of a captive or exiled person in a tenebrous realm. There reside the souls of the human beings after the fall. The aforementioned ἐκ τοῦ σαρκίκου οἴκου ἐξηλαύνετο reflects the same scenario of the human soul as taken out of flesh as from its own home. Contrary to what Origen says about him, Melito seems to identify in this text the image of God with the human soul imprisoned in Hades, in the kingdom of death. The image of God does not seem to be lost from the unfortunate human being, but imprisoned, though mutilated, its flesh amputated. But it is the soul that resides in Hades and it is the soul which actually constitutes the only remains of the human being: “what was given from God was confined in Hades.”⁹⁷

This status quo of the human being constitutes the whole sufficient reason which requires a divine economy. As in the case of the ancient Israel, humanity resides

⁹⁵ Hall also confirmed this doctrine: “If it is true that Melito believed God to be corporeal, the reference is to man as a psychosomatic unity, and the image would not be merely the soul or reason” (Hall, *Melito*, 31, n. 20).

⁹⁶ *PP* 56 (392-395).

⁹⁷ *PP* 55 (389).

imprisoned in Hades and Christ, who saved Israel from Egypt as a prefiguration of his future act, saves humanity from Hades and takes it back to heaven. Yet, in order to reach the tenebrous realm of Hades, Christ has to assume the human condition and death. This way he treads down Hades, binds the strong one (*PP* 102), and “by the Spirit which could not die he killed death the killer of men.”⁹⁸

Consequently, important elements of eikonic soteriology are already developed here. First of all the destitute condition of the image of God constitutes the real trigger of the divine economy. Melito himself affirms this in the following verse: “... desolate lay the Father’s image. This, then, is the reason (τὴν αἰτίαν) why the mystery of the Pascha has been fulfilled in the body of the Lord.”⁹⁹ However, unlike Paul, Melito does not emphasize the aspect of recreation, but salvation from Hades. He does not speak of the broken primordial image to be remolded in the eschaton, but of an imprisoned one that needed urgent liberation. Although Christ is clearly identified with the Demiurge of the world in his *Peri Pascha*, His salvific function is first of all that of Savior or Liberator.

2. Pseudo-Hippolytus

A. Christ, the Heavenly Eikon which Saves His Earthly Eikon

A similar scenario about the enslaved and liberated image of God recurs in Pseudo-Hippolytus. On the one hand, *In sanctum Pascha* 45 describes the enslaved condition of the human being and how Christ assumes the nature of the first man, most likely of the prelapsarian Adam, and not that of the enslaved one:

⁹⁸ *PP* 66 (457-78).

⁹⁹ *PP* 56 (396-97).

From heaven he saw us tyrannized by death (ὑπὸ θανάτου τυραννουμένους), bound (δεσμουμένους) and loosed at the same time in the chains of death (δεσμοῖς φθορᾶς), traversing the fatal road which has no point of return. He came and assumed (λαβὼν) the first man's nature (τοῦ πρώτου πλάσματος) according to the design of his Father, and he did not entrust to his angels and archangels the charge of our souls, but he himself, the Word (ὁ λόγος), undertook the entire challenge (τὸν ἀγῶνα) for us in obedience to his Father's orders. ... He filled it with radiance and fire, making it virginal and, so to speak, angelic. Such is the body that he models in the image of man (εἰς τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην εἰκόνα σωματικῶς ἐμορφοῦτο), and keeping his spiritual beauty (πνευματικὴν ἀνατολήν) he has taken flesh (σωματικὴν μόρφωσιν).¹⁰⁰

Pseudo-Hippolytus's universe is again dual, spiritual and material. While Christ spiritually remains the spiritual Orient, he somatically fashions a body in the image of man.

In chapter 61, Pseudo-Hippolytus relates the salvation of the image describing how the Son took the shape of the image in order to save the image from the slavery to death and take it to the heights of heaven:

In his [Christ's] brief sojourn he gave proofs in confirmation of his sacred resurrection even to the incredulous so that they might believe that he rose body as well as soul from the dead. And while carrying in himself the complete image (ὅλην τὴν εἰκόνα ἐν ἑαυτῷ φέρων ἐνεδύσατο), he put on the old man (τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀναστολίσάμενος) and transformed it into the heavenly man (μετέθηκεν εἰς τὸν ἐπουράνιον ἄνθρωπον), and then ascended into the heavens, carrying with him man's image assimilated to himself (συνανέβαινεν αὐτῷ καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν συγκεκραμένη εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς). In view of such a great mystery—man ascending (συναναβαίνοντα ἤδη ἄνθρωπον ἐν θεῷ) to God—the Powers cried with joy to the hosts above: *Princes, raise your gates*.¹⁰¹

Hamman's translation needed a small but essential revision according to Visonà's new critical edition, namely the participial form ἀναστολίσάμενος ("having put on," from ἀναστολίζω) instead of ἀναστολησάμενος ("having put off," from ἀναστόλῃμαι). As Visonà mentioned, the change modifies the soteriology of the text.¹⁰² Christ therefore does not put off but put on the old man. As Visonà mentions, the passage does not reflect

¹⁰⁰ IP 45 (V. 286-288; H. 61-62). Hamman's translation bares certain post-Nicene nuances, as the noun "nature" is not in the Greek text and also the verb λαμβάνω, to "assume," is actually the less pretentious to "take." Hamman follows in this way the first editor, Nautin, who presupposed a τὴν φύσιν; Cantalamessa proposed τὸ σῶμα, Orbe τὴν οὐσίαν, while Visonà left the text as such with the lacuna (see all in Visonà, 286).

¹⁰¹ IP 60-61 (V. 314; H. 67).

¹⁰² See Visonà's commentary in Visonà, *Pseudo Ippolito*, 315 and 507-709.

an Appollinarian perspective, as Nautin proposed, but a doctrine which finds its roots and terminologies rather in 1 Corinthians 15:47-49, Ephesians 4:22-23, and Colossians 3:9-10.¹⁰³ These texts are the central passages of the Pauline eikonic soteriology analyzed before. In this way, according to Visonà, Pseudo-Hippolytus delineates the process of salvation in two successive passages of Christ. First of all Christ, as the perfect image in itself puts on the “old man,” and transforms it into a heavenly man. Second of all, Christ ascends triumphally to heaven.¹⁰⁴

The notion of image is cardinal for the entire articulation. The first expression, Christ has clothed and wears in himself the perfect image (ὅλην τὴν εἰκόνα ἐν ἑαυτῷ φέρων ἐνεδύσατο), echoes the figure of Yahweh from Psalm 93[LXX 92]:1 clothed in majesty: Ὁ κύριος (ᾠπ) ἐβασίλευσεν, εὐπρέπειαν ἐνεδύσατο, ἐνεδύσατο κύριος δύναμιν καὶ περιεζώσατο. The ancient *kabod*, sometimes identified with Yahweh’s *tselem*, is now in Pseudo-Hippolytus as his Divine Image. But the salvific process actually starts at the point where the old man is assumed into Christ’s perfect Image. This is the event of “Incarnation” which Pseudo-Hippolytus describes as putting on the παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος, and the contact with the perfect image of Christ transforms the old man into a heavenly one, most likely an image of the perfect image of Christ (*IP* 61).

Paul’s notion of παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος, however, denotes the fallen condition of humanity deluded by its desires and in the process of decay, therefore without any positive connotation. To the contrary, Pseudo-Hippolytus, in Visonà’s reformulation, seems to envision the παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος as the prelapsarian Adamic condition, since it

¹⁰³ For Nautin, see SC 27, 47. Visonà especially underlines that, while the discussion on the heavenly man in Apollinarius focusses on the event of Incarnation, it gravitates in Pseudo-Hippolytus around the ideas of salvation and transformation of the old man into a heavenly man.

¹⁰⁴ Visonà, *Pseudo Ippolito*, 507.

is difficult to conceive Pseudo-Hippolytus thinking that Christ took the condition of being deluded by desires and in the process of decay. Visonà himself affirms that Christ clothes himself with the ancient Adam and, through his passion, transforms the forefather of humanity into a heavenly man.¹⁰⁵

The second stage of salvation—namely the ascension—involves as well the notion of image since Christ takes the human image to heaven mixed with himself. In this way, the whole unfolding of ascension is actually conceived of as the process of taking up the image to heaven. There is no doubt that salvation here is essentially eikonic. In addition, it appears that Pseudo-Hippolytus's eikonic soteriology is very similar to Melito's and should be classified in the same category of an eikonic soteriology of liberation rather than of an eikonic soteriology of re-creation, as is encountered in Paul.

B. The Mystic Who Becomes Christ, the Cosmic Anthropos

In the very peculiar passage *In sanctum Pascha* 51 about the cosmic tree-cross-Christ discussed in the previous chapter, one may observe a sort of mystical experience in which the author describes his identification with this cross-tree-Christ while becoming one with the roots, branches, and flowers of the tree.

In a first instance, the cross-tree nourishes and delights the mystic. Then the mystic extends into the roots and branches of the tree taking on in his own turn cosmic dimensions. At this point the mystic adds new forms of spiritual nourishment: he is delighted in the “dew” (δρόσος) of the tree, an ancient biblical term deployed to indicate the presence of God.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, in the expression which follows immediately, the

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ See for example Exod 16:13-14; Num 11:9; Judg 6:36-40. The first two instances are

mystic speaks about the Spirit (πνεῦμα) of this tree and the fact that he feels this Spirit as “a delightful breeze.” He again mentions the “shade” (σκιά) of the tree, another image biblically connected with the Spirit and again the dew.¹⁰⁷ In the next sentences the extension of the mystic and his identification with the tree continues to the flowers, fruits, and leaves, while the leaves are in their turn connected with the Spirit, since the author describes them as the “breath of life (πνεῦμα ζωῆς).”

The mystic therefore identifies himself with the tree through its roots, branches, flowers, fruits, and leaves which become his breath of life. The mystic identifies himself with Christ, the cosmic tree-Anthropos and is nourished with the dew and the breath of life he finds everywhere on this tree. Hence the Spirit functions as as a mediator and source of life for the mystic who identifies eventually with the divine Anthropos. Better expressed, although the text remains to a certain extent ambiguous, the mystic becomes Christomorphic insofar as Pseudo-Hippolytus does not speak of the mystic becoming Christ himself.

3. Conclusion

Eikonic soteriology develops its primary form in Pauline theology against the background of previous biblical and extra-biblical speculations about the eschatological reconstruction of the world and the eschatological reconstruction of the human being in the glorious form of the prelapsarian Adam. While Pauline theology inaugurates the doctrine of eikonic soteriology as re-creation, Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus develop an

interesting since the dew comes from heaven with the manna, and Ps-Hippolytus conceives of Christ as the “manna come down from heaven (τὸ μάννα τὸ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν)” (*IP* 25 [V. 274,11-12 H. 58]).

¹⁰⁷ For the connection between the shade and the divine presence of God, see especially LXX: Exod 25:20; 38:8; 40:35; Deut 33:12; 1 Chr 28:18; and Luke 1:35 for the direct connection between the Spirit and overshadowing.

eikonic soteriology of liberation. Christ as the Image of God and Savior puts on humankind in order to save His image on earth—the human being—from the tyranny of death.

IX. EATING THE DIVINE WARRIOR: NOETIC BANQUET AND ECONOMIC COMBAT IN PSEUDO-HIPPOLYTUS AND ORIGEN

1. Introduction: The Near Eastern Background of the Ideas of Divine Combat, Divine Banquet, and Their Foundational Function for Ritual Institution

One of the most interesting salvation theories emerges with the combat myth also known under the name of the Divine Warrior. Present in such ancient materials as *Lugal-e*, *Enuma Elish*, and the Baal cycle, it also occurs in the Hebrew Bible as the *Chaoskampf* myth. The Divine Warrior fights the primordial chaos and saves his people, whether his divine family or his people Israel. A shift of the salvific process from divine level of gods to that of humankind takes place. Yahweh, as Divine Warrior, is no longer a savior of his divine court or family, but of his holy people. In fact, the people of Israel take the place of the gods in the role not only of the saved, but also of the divine court.

In his *Peri Pascha*, Origen shows how every partaker of the paschal Eucharist should assume a priestly condition, and sacrifice and eat the invisible, intelligible, and mysterious body of the Logos-Christ:

... some partake (μεταλαμβάνουσιν) of its *head*, other of its hands, others of its breast, others of its *entrails*, still others of its thighs, and some even of its *feet*, where there is not much flesh, each partaking of it according to his own capacity (ἐκάστου κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν μεταλαμβάνοντος δύναμιν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ). Thus it is that we partake of a part of the true Lamb according to our capacity to partake of the Word of God (μεταλαμβάνοντες τοῦ λόγου τοῦ θεοῦ). There are some who partake of the head, if you wish, of each part of the head, for example, of the ears so that, *having ears*, they can *hear* his words. Those who *taste* of the eyes *will see* clearly; *lest you dash your foot*

*against a stone. Those who taste the hands are the workers who no longer have drooping hands which are closed against giving....*¹⁰⁸

After Origen offers an allegorical interpretation of the Passover narrative of Exodus 12, he then describes Christ's combat with Death for the salvation of humankind and its homecoming to the Father's heaven. Origen's discourse incorporates as well the idea that Christ—at the same time Warrior and Lamb—offers himself to be consumed in the Paschal celebration.¹⁰⁹

This narrative most likely represents a Christian expression of what Frank M. Cross labeled as the myth of the Divine Warrior.¹¹⁰ I will argue in this chapter first that many paschal writings depict the paschal Christ as a Divine Warrior fighting and defeating death, and especially two documents—Pseudo-Hippolytus's *In sanctum Pascha* and Origen's *Peri Pascha*—describe the banquet that follows the victory as Christ's self-offering as divine sacrifice. As he is depicted as a noetic Anthropos, the banquet becomes a consumption of Christ's noetic body, a consumption followed by human transformation into divine *anthropoi* as copies of Christ, the divine Anthropos.

A. Near Eastern Roots of the Idea of Divine Warrior

Also called the combat myth, the myth of the Divine Warrior is the core plot of such emblematic textual collections of the ancient Semitic world as the Mesopotamian texts of *Lugal-e* (late third millennium, preserved in Sumerian),¹¹¹ *Anzu* (early second

¹⁰⁸ Origen, *PP* 30.15-31.

¹⁰⁹ See *PP* 46-49.

¹¹⁰ See F. M. Cross, Jr., *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 91-111.

¹¹¹ "[I]n southern Iraq some 4,000 years ago" (cf. *The Literature of Ancient Sumer*, eds. and trans. J. Black, G. Cunningham, E. Robson, G. Zólyomi [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004], xix.). For other translations, see e.g. J. van Dijk, *Lugal ud me-lam-bi Nir-gal: Le récit épique et didactique des*

millennium, preserved in Acadian),¹¹² and *Enuma Elish* (18th century BC, preserved in old Babylonian),¹¹³ the Ugaritic Baal cycle (14th century B.C.E., preserved in the Ugaritic texts),¹¹⁴ the Hebrew biblical combat myth tradition,¹¹⁵ and is also present in Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature and rabbinic materials.¹¹⁶ In addition, various scholars have pointed out the occurrence of the myth in the writings of the New Testament.¹¹⁷ It is

Traveaux de Ninurta, du Déluge et de la nouvelle Création (Leiden: Brill, 1983); T. Jacobsen, *The Harps that Once ...: Sumerian Poetry in Translation* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1987), 233-72.

112 While the Old Babylonian version comes from the early second millennium, the Standard Babylonian version seems to date from the first millennium BC; cf. *Myths from Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and Others*, ed. and tr. S. Dalley (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1991) 203.

113 “[C]omposed some time during the First Babylonian Dynasty” (A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of Creation* [Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1951], 14), i.e., 1894-1595 BCE. Other scholars propose a later date of composition, namely the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I (1125-1104 B.C.E.); e.g., W. G. Lambert, “The Reign of Nebuchadnezzar I: A Turning Point in the History of Ancient Mesopotamian Religion,” in *The Seed of Wisdom: Essays in Honor of T. J. Meek*, ed. W. S. McCullough (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1964), 3-13; J. Bidmead, *The Akītu Festival: Religious Continuity and Royal Legitimation in Mesopotamia* (Gorgias Press, 2002), 65.

114 “It was during the first half of the fourteenth century that the extant form of the Baal Cycle, one of the classics of ancient literature, was committed to writing.” (M. S. Smith [ed. and tr.], *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, vol. 1 [Leiden; New York; Cologne: Brill, 1994], xxii).

115 See, e.g., W. R. Millar, *Isaiah 24-27 and the Origin of the Apocalyptic* (Missoula, Mont: Scholars Press, 1976); P. D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979); J. Day, *God’s Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); A. R. Angel, *Chaos and the Son of Man: The Hebrew Chaokampf Tradition in the Period 515 BCE to 200 CE* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2006).

116 See, e.g., R. J. Clifford, S.J., *Creation Accounts in the Ancient Near East and the Bible* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association, 1994); idem, “The Roots of Apocalypticism in Near Eastern Myth,” in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism* (ed. J. J. Collins; 3 vols.; New York: Continuum, 1998), 1:3-38; Hanson, *The Dawn*; Angel, *Chaos and the Son of Man*; M. Fishbane, *Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking* (Oxford: University Press, 2003).

117 E.g., H. C. Kee, “The Terminology of Mark’s Exorcism Stories,” *NTS* 14 (1968): 232-46; A. Y. Collins, *The Combat Myth in the Book of Revelation* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976); J. P. Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea: Meaning and Gospel Functions of Matt 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52 and John 6:15b-21* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1981); B. F. Batto, “The Sleeping God: An Ancient Near Eastern Motif of Divine Sovereignty,” *Bib* 68 (1987) 153-77; idem, *Slaying the Dragon: Mythmaking in the Biblical Tradition* (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1992); F. R. McCurley, *Ancient Myth and Biblical Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983); B. A. Stevens, “Jesus as the Divine Warrior,” *ExpTim* 94 (1983): 326-29; idem, “‘Why Must the Son of Man Suffer?’ The Divine Warrior in the Gospel of Mark,” *BZ* 31 (1987): 101-10; Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1988); G. C. Jenks, *The Origins and Early Development of the Antichrist Myth* (Berlin; New York: W. de Gruyter, 1991) 193-366; P. B. Duff, “The March of the Divine Warrior and the Advent of the Greco-Roman King: Mark’s Account of Jesus’ Entry into Jerusalem,” *JBL* 111 (1992): 55-71; T. R. Yoder Neufeld, *Put on the Armour of God: The Divine Warrior from Isaiah to Ephesians* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1997); D. Rudman, “The Crucifixion as Chaokampf: A New Reading of the Passion Narrative in the Synoptic Gospels,” *Bib* 84 (2003): 102-107; Angel, *Chaos and the Son of Man*, 125-48, where the author investigates the Chaokampf motif in Mark 13,24-27, Luke 21,25-28, Rev 12,1-17, and Rev 13,1-18.

therefore no surprise that the myth also comes into sight in two of the earliest Christian Paschal materials which form the primary focus of my present investigation, namely Pseudo-Hippolytus's *In sanctum Pascha* and Origen's *Peri Pascha*.¹¹⁸

From a methodological perspective, many scholars have debated the connection between the Jewish-Christian *Chaoskampf* motif and the Near Eastern myth of the divine warrior. On the one hand, Herman Gunkel argued "that the Israelite *Chaoskampf* traditions were ultimately dependent on the Babylonian creation account found in *Enūma Eliš*."¹¹⁹ On the other hand, a number of scholars who succeeded Gunkel (for instance W. G. Lambert and W. F. Saggs) denied any connection between the *Chaoskampf* motif and the creation account in Genesis, and hence the latter's dependence on *Enūma Eliš*. Similarly, Yehezkel Kaufmann, on the basis of 1929 discoveries at Ras Shamra, was the first to argue that the roots of the Israelite *Chaoskampf* tradition are to be found in Canaan rather than Mesopotamia.¹²⁰ Other scholars have also challenged this position by

118 Some glances of the combat myth may also be found in various other authors, for instance in Ephrem the Syrian (cf. *Éphrem de Nisibe: Hymnes pascales* [ed. F. Casingena-Trévedy; SC 502; Paris: Cerf, 2006]: Az. 1.11-13 [SC 502:46], 4.2;5;8;13 [Ib.:67-9], 20.5-10 [Ib.:172-73], *Cruc.* 6.6 [Ib.:220], 7.4 [Ib.:255], 8.14 [Ib.:266-67], *Res.* 1.8 [Ib.:282], 3.11 [Ib.:303], 4.2 [Ib.:309]), Chromatius of Aquileia (*Sérmons* [ed. J. Lemarié; SC 154; 164; Paris: Cerf, 1969;1971]: 16.2; [SC 154:264;266]; 17.1;2 [Ib.:268;270]; 19.1;5;6 [SC 164:20;26;28]), Romanos the Melodist (cf. *Romanos le Mélode: Hymnes*, ed. J.G. de Matons, vol. IV: *Hymns from the Palm Sunday to the Day of Pascha* [SC 128; Paris: Cerf, 1967]: 36.21 [SC 128:228]; 37.17 [Ib.:254]; 38.1;3 [Ib.:286;288-90]; 39.16 [Ib.:342-44]; 40.Proem 1;15;20 [Ib.:380;406;414]; 41.Proem;13-14;20 [Ib.:430;442-44;450]; 42.3 [Ib.:462]; 43.Proem;18;20-22;24-26;31 [Ib.:500;522;524-32;538]; 44.7 [Ib.:558]; 45.Proem;4;7;19 [Ib.:576;582;584;598] and the refrains of the hymns 43 and 44), Ps-Chrysostom (cf. *Homélies pascales II: Trois homélies dans la tradition d'Origène* [ed. P. Nautin; SC 36; Paris: Cerf, 2003]: *Hom.* 2.25 [Ib.:99]), or Hesychius of Jerusalem (cf. *Homélies pascales: Cinq homélies inédites* [ed. M. Aubineau; SC 187; Paris: Cerf, 1972]: *In s. Pascha* 1;3;5;6 [Ib.:62;64;66;68]). Nonetheless, I prefer the first two writings for their being the most ancient Paschal materials—after Melito's *Peri Pascha*, where the motif does not seem to occur—and for having the element of the noetic feast clearly expressed.

119 K. W. Whitney, *Two Strange Beasts: Leviathan and Behemoth in Second Temple and Early Rabbinic Judaism* (HSM 63; Winona Lake, 2006), 11. Gunkel concludes one of the chapters of his *Schöpfung und Chaos* with the following clear statement: "So ist also unser Resultat: der babylonische Tiāmat-Marduk-Mythus is von Israel übernommen und hier zu einem Jahve-Mythus geworden." *Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung über Gen 1 and Ap Joh 12* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1895), 114.

120 Cf. W. G. Lambert, "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," *JTS* 16 (1965):

pointing out the creation motifs present both in the Bible (for example, Psalm 74:12-17, Job 26) and the Ugaritic texts.¹²¹ As William Whitney states:

This has been recognized by a number of scholars who argue that the motifs of conflict, kingship, ordering of chaos, fertility, and temple building found in the [Baal] epic represent a concern for the establishment of order and stability at two levels, that of cosmos and that of human society.¹²²

Frank M. Cross regards the Ba'al cycle as a cosmogonic myth, a species of myth which is not concerned with the absolute origin of things, but rather with "events which constitute cosmos and hence, are properly timeless or cyclical or 'eschatological' in character."¹²³ Cross deems that a common archaic mythic pattern of oral nature underlies the Mesopotamian *Enūma Eliš*, the Ugaritic Ba'al cycle, and the biblical *Chaoskampf* texts. The wide distribution of this mythological pattern in the geographical area of the ancient Near East represents—according to him—an argument for its conveyance as oral tradition.¹²⁴ The rich variety of forms of the myth as it is preserved in the textual remains can be explained on the basis of the oral nature of this tradition, which conserves a certain level of continuity, but is also characterized by an extreme fluidity of forms.

Millar and Whitney have pointed out and explored a special feature of the combat myth, namely the "combat-banquet" sequence, in such materials as *Enuma Elish*, the Ba'al cycle, the biblical materials expressing the *Chaoskampf* tradition (especially Isa 24-

291; H. W. F. Saggs, *The Encounter of the Divine in Mesopotamia and Israel* (London: Athlone Press, 1978), 54-63. Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel from its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, tr. M. Greenberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 60-63. See also L. R. Fisher, "Creation at Ugarit and in the Old Testament," *VT* 15 (1965): 313-14 for other scholars who maintained similar opinions.

121 See for instance Day, *God's Conflict*, 2-3, 23 and J. D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988) 3-13.

122 Whitney, *Two Strange Beasts*, 14. See also Fisher, "Creation at Ugarit," 313-34; D.L. Petersen and M. Woodward, "Northwest Semitic Religion: A Study of Relational Structures," *UF* 9 (1977): 233-48; R. J. Clifford, "Cosmogonies in the Ugaritic Texts and in the Bible," *Or* 53 (1984): 183-201; M.S. Smith, "Interpreting the Baal Cycle," *UF* 18 (1986): 318-20; Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 39-43, 120.

123 Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 120.

124 Idem. "The Epic Traditions of Early Israel: Epic Narrative and the Reconstruction of Early Israelite Institutions," in *The Poet and the Historian: Essays in Literary and Historical Biblical Criticism*, ed. R. E. Friedman (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 14-19.

27), and Jewish apocalyptic and rabbinic texts.¹²⁵ Interesting enough, the idea of festivity or banquet follows the battle of *Lugal-e*:

My King: there is a hero who is devoted to you and to your offerings (*sa-dug*), he is as just as his reputation, he walks in your ways; since he has brilliantly accomplished all that is proper for you in your temple (*e*), since he has made your shrine (*eš*) rise from the dust for you, let him do everything magnificently for your festival (*ezen*). Let him accomplish perfectly for you your holy rites (*garza*). He has formulated a vow for his life. May he praise you in the Land.¹²⁶

The banquet also follows the combat in *Anzu*, in the standard version: “Come! Let him come to us, Let him rejoice, play, make merry. ... the gods his brothers and hear (their) secrets, ... the secrets of the gods. Let [Enlil (?)], the ... of the gods his brothers bestow on him the rites’.”¹²⁷ The feast also follows the war in *Enuma Elish*:

They [the Anunnaki] set in the elevated shrine which they had built as his [Marduk’s] dwelling. He had the gods his fathers sit down to a banquet. “Here is Babylon, your favorite dwelling place. Make music in [its] place (and) be seated on its square (?)” When the great gods had set down, The beer jug they set on, while they were seated at the banquet. After they had made music in it, They held a service of supplication in awe-inspiring (?) Esagila. The (laws pertaining to) portents were fixed, all the omens.¹²⁸

The same theme appears in the Baal cycle:

he [Radaman] put a cup in his [Baal] hands, a goblet in both his hands—a great chalice, mighty to behold, a drinking-vessel of the inhabitants of heaven, a holy cup, which women might not see, a goblet which (even) a wife could not look upon. A thousand measures it took from the winevat, ten thousand (draughts) it took from the barrel. He arose, intoned and sang, the cymbals in the minstrel’s hands; he sang, the chorister of beautiful voice, concerning Baal in the uttermost parts of Saphon.¹²⁹

125 See Millar, *Isaiah*; Whitney, *Two Strange Beasts*.

126 Cf. *Ninurta’s Exploits or Ninurta Lugal-e* 662-668: See Black, *The Literature of Ancient Sumer*, 178-79.

127 *Anzu* III, in Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia*, 218.

128 *Enuma Elish* Tablet 6,70-78, version preserved in Sumerian (12th BC); cf. Heidel, *The Babylonian*, 49. For the Akkadian (old Babylonian) form, with verses 21-139 unreadable, see Leonard W. King, *Enuma Elish: Volume 1: The Seven Tablets of Creation; The Babylonian and Assyrian Legends Concerning the Creation of the World and of Mankind* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007). See also Hanson’s comparative analyses in *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 300-322, 302.

129 *Baal’s Palace* (KTU 1.3-1.4, col. i 10-22), in *Religious Texts from Ugarit: The Words of Ilmilku and His Colleagues*, ed. N. Wyatt (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1998) 70-71. *Baal’s Palace* follows immediately after the narrative of Baal’s combat with and victory over Yam (KTU 1.1-1.2).

William R. Millar argued for the presence of a recurrent thematic pattern of the combat myth in one of the main important texts of the *Chaoskampf* tradition, Isaiah 24-27. It is the sequence “Threat-War-Victory-Feast,”¹³⁰ which Millar expressly connected with the myth of the Divine Warrior. The banquet is depicted in this way:

On this mountain the Lord of Hosts will prepare a banquet of rich fare for all the peoples, a banquet of wine well matured, richest fare and well-matured wines strained clear. On this mountain the Lord will destroy that veil shrouding all the peoples, the pall thrown over all the nations. He will destroy death for ever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from every faces, and throughout the world remove the indignities from his people. The Lord has spoken.¹³¹

The feature of victory is usually followed by the institution of the worship of the victorious deity and thus the banquet represents an aspect of the institution or foundation of a ritual observance. Hence, the sequence “combat-banquet” might be an aspect of a more general sequence, namely “combat-ritual institution.” As seen above, *Lugal-e* and *Enuma Elish* describe the combat as followed by the *ab initio* institution of the worship of Ninurta and Marduk. The sequence “combat-ritual institution” is also true for the Anzu myth, where the Old Version in itself depicts Anzum proud of taking away “every single rite,”¹³² and the new order Ningirsu established is presented as follows: “Then shall rites return for the father who begot you! [Then surely shall] shrines be created! Establish your cult centers all [over the four quarters!].”¹³³ Another passage from *Anzu* runs thus:

Let him (Ellil) in his powerfulness gaze upon wicked Anzu (in Ekur)./ Warrior, in your powerfulness, when you slew the mountain./ You captured Anzu, slew him in powerfulness,/ Slew soaring Anzu in his powerfulness./ Because you were so brave and slew the mountain,/ You made all foes kneel at the feet of Ellil your father./ Ninurta, because you were so brave and slew the mountain,/ You made all foes kneel at the feet of Ellil your father./ You have won complete dominion, every single rite./ Who was ever created like you? The mountain's rites/ Are proclaimed

130 Millar, *Isaiah*, 65-71. See also Hanson, *Dawn*, 305-307, 311-313 and Whitney, *Two Strange Beasts*, 156-161.

131 Isa. 25:6-8. For the Divine Warrior, see Millar, *Isaiah*, 71-82.

132 *Anzu* III (Old Babylonian Version), in Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia*, 225.

133 Ibid. 226.

(?), the shrines of the gods of fates granted to you./ They call upon Nissaba for your purification ceremony;/ They call your name in the furrow NINGIRSU.¹³⁴

Regarding the Ba'al cycle, one may see that the whole conflict between Baal and Yam begins with Yam's command to other gods not to obey and worship Baal (KTU 1,2, i,15-20 and i,35-40). A ritual context comes to light from this episode, as well as from the second book of the cycle (*Baal's Palace* [KTU 1,3-1,4]), which presents the epic of the construction of the Baal's house or palace, which Wyatt identifies with Baal's temple.¹³⁵ The *Baal's Palace* account points out once again the existence of a ritual observance and its centrality for the Baal cycle. It recurs in the context of the second book when the goddess Anat gives to El two arguments for the construction of Baal's palace-temple. While the first is that "we should all bring his cha[lice], we should all bri[ng] his cup," (a formula in which Wyatt sees "cultic language" and thus divulges the existence of rituals for Baal), the second is that Baal does not have a palace-temple like the other gods.¹³⁶

B. Yahweh and the Son of Man: Two Biblical Divine Warrior Figures

Some of the biblical *Chaoskampf* texts follow the same pattern as the famous Song of the Sea (Exod. 15,1b-21) which seems to end with a festival procession at Yahweh's temple:

'You will bring them in and plant them in the mount that is your possession, the dwelling-place, Lord of your own making (מכון לשבתך פעלת יהוה), the sanctuary (מכון), Lord, which your own hands established. The Lord will reign (ימלך) for ever and for ever.' When Pharaoh's horse, both chariots and cavalry, went into the sea (בים), the Lord brought back the waters (הים) over them; but Israel had passed through the sea on dry ground. The prophetess Miriam, Aaron's sister, took up her tambourine, and all the women followed her, dancing to the sound of tambourines; and Miriam

¹³⁴ Anzu III (Standard Babylonian Version), in Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia*, 219-20.

¹³⁵ Wyatt, *Religious Texts*, 37.

¹³⁶ Ibid. 100.

sang them this refrain: 'Sing to the Lord, for he has risen up in triumph (גָּאֵה גָּאֵה): horse and rider he has hurled into the sea.'¹³⁷

However, as John Day noticed, the biblical *Chaoskampf* texts changed the myth in various ways, which generally can be classified in three categories. According to the first, the primordial combat is sometimes depicted with clear resonances of the conflict with the chaos monster (for instance, Psalms 24; 65; 74; 89; 93; 104; Job 3; 7; 9; 38; 40), sometimes the victory is represented as a feature of Yahweh's lordship over creation, and sometimes—as in the case of the Genesis narrative—the waters are depersonalized and the combat myth demythologized, as the fight of the Divine Warrior (Yahweh in the biblical version) turns into a job of work, namely the control of the cosmic waters.¹³⁸

According to the second category, some texts reflect a historicization of the myth through transferring the combat from the primordial times to the history of Israel, and depict Yahweh as the Divine Warrior fighting the enemies of his people and saving her.¹³⁹ The third category initiates a new tradition, which transfers, as Herman Gunkel had already noticed, the combat myth from the primordial times to the eschaton.¹⁴⁰ This new paradigm occurs in such texts as Isaiah 24-27, apocalyptic literature, and rabbinic

¹³⁷ Exod. 15,17-21. See the parallel Cross draws between the Song of the Sea and Baal cycle in his *Canaanite Myth*, 112-44.

¹³⁸ See Day, *God's Conflict*, 18-49 for Yahweh's fight with the chaos (e.g. Pss. 24; 65; 74; 89; 93; 104; Job 3,8; 7;12; 9,5-14; 38,8-11), and Ib., 49-61 for the change of the combat into a control of the cosmic waters and the depersonalization of the waters (e.g., Gen. 1,2; 6-10; 26; Ps. 33,7-8; Prov. 8,24; 27-9; Jer. 5,22; 31,35); see Ib., 57-61 for the victory over sea as Yahweh's lordship over creation (Ps. 29; Nah. 1,4).

¹³⁹ See Day, *God's Conflict*, 88-140. Day observes that, while such biblical texts as those mentioned in the previous note preserve the combat in connection with the primordial times, other texts such as Exod. 15, Isa. 8; 17; 27; 30; 51; Jer. 51; Ezek. 29; 32, Hab. 3, Pss. 18; 44; 46; 68; 87 conceive of the combat as Yahweh's fight with the enemies of Israel. See also A. Weiser, *Glaube und Geschichte im Alten Testament* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1931), 22-43 and M. Noth, *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament*, 2. vols., ed. H. W. Wolff (Munich: C. Kaiser, 1969), 2:29-47.

¹⁴⁰ H. Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos*, 30-40 [cf. H. Gunkel, *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12*, tr. W.K. William, Jr. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 231-34. See as well Day's analysis of such texts as Isa. 24-27 and Dan 7 (Day, *God's Conflict*, 141-178).

writings.¹⁴¹ The transfer to the eschaton entailed as well a different consequence at the level of human beings. Instead of the ritual institution, which has to secure the connection of humanity with the divine during the course of history, the final combat will bring the heavenly bliss of eternity. Such texts as Isaiah 24-27, Daniel 7, Qumran texts, *1 Enoch* 60, Mark 13:24-27, Luke 21:25-28, Revelation 12:1-17, 13:1-18, *4 Ezra* 6:47-52, *2 Baruch* 29:3-4, and rabbinic writings seem to be part of this category.¹⁴² The two new elements added to the “combat-myth” sequence Whitney pointed out in his study—namely the couple Behemoth-Leviathan and the consummation of the vanquished

141 Day already describes Isa. 25,6-8 as the “first reference” to an “eschatological banquet in Judaism” (Day, *God’s Conflict*, 142-151, esp. 150); cf. C. L. Nakamura, *Monarch, Mountain, and Meal: The Eschatological Banquet of Isaiah 24:21-23; 25:6-10a* (unpublished PhD thesis, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1992, 209). Peter-Ben Smit, in his extensive study on the varieties of foods and banquets of the kingdom qualifies Isa 25:6-8 as an eschatological celebratory banquet. Moreover, “Isa. 25:6-8 is the only certain and therefore also the parade example of an eschatological banquet in the HB/OT. As a victory banquet, it is part of the myth of the divine warrior.” (P.-B. Smit, *Fellowship and Food in the Kingdom: Eschatological Meals and Scenes of Utopian Abundance in the New Testament* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008] 22).

142 E.g.: “Rabbah said R. Yohanan said, «The Holy One, blessed be He, is destined to make a banquet for the righteous out of the meat of Leviathan: ‘Companions (*hbrym*) will make a banquet (*ykrw*) of it’ (Job 40,30). The meaning of ‘banquet’ derives from the usage of the same word in the verse, ‘And he prepared (*wykrh*) for them a great banquet (*krh*) and they ate and drank’ (2 Kgs. 6,23). ‘Companions’ can refer only to disciples of sages, in line with this usage: ‘You that dwell in the gardens, the companions hearken for your voice, cause me to hear it’ (Song 8,13). The rest of the creature will be cut up and sold in the markets of Jerusalem: ‘They will part him among the Canaanites’ (Job 40,30), and ‘Canaanites’ must be merchants, in line with this usage: ‘As for the Canaanite, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loves to oppress’ (Hos. 12,8). If you prefer: ‘Whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honorable of the earth’ (Isa. 23,8).»” (b. B. Bat. 4,IV,28a-b(74b-75a), in *The Talmud of Babylonia: An Academic Commentary*, ed. and tr. J. Neusner, vol. XII: *Bavli Tractate Baba Batra*, part A [Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996], 223). A similar perspective of the eschatological banquet appears in *Pesiq. Rab. Kah.*, supplement 2 and describes how R. Naḥman, R. Hona the priest, and R. Judah the Levite b. R. Shallum engaged in a discussion about the participants at the feast, and the classes of participants they proposed are as follows: pilgrims, masters of Scripture, masters of Mishnah, masters of Talmud, masters of Haggadah, masters of Mišwôt, masters of Good Deeds and merchants. See also *Pesiq. R.* 16 for R. Joshua b. Levi, *Num. Rab.* 21,18 for R. Yohanan, or *Lev. Rab.* 22:10 for Resh Laqish; cf. *Midr. Lev. Rab.* 13,3 All these rabbinic documents span from the fifth to the eighth century CE (see e.g. Whitney, *Two Strange Beasts*, 139-40). Other remarkable instances introduce a new character, the gigantic bird Ziz; e.g., *Midr. Pss.* 23,7, *Nistārôt* 3, in *Bêt ha-Midrash* 3; L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, (6 vols.; trans. H. Szold; Philadelphia: JPS, 1928), 5:44-45. For scholarship on this topic, see also M. A. Fishbane, “Rabbinic Mythmaking and Tradition: The Great Dragon Drama in b. Baba Batra 74b-75a,” in *Tehillah le-Moshe: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg* (eds. M. Cogan et al.; Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 273-283; Idem, “The Great Dragon Battle and the Talmudic Redaction,” in M. A. Fishbane, *The Exegetical Imagination: On Jewish Thought and Theology* (Cambridge, Mass; London, UK: Harvard University Press, 1998), 41-55; J. Gutmann, “*Leviathan*, Behemoth and Ziz: Jewish Messianic Symbols in Art,” *HUCA* 39 (1968): 219-230.

monsters at the eschatological feast—in fact take place within some of the texts of this third category.¹⁴³ In addition to this, as Angel's book shows, the emergence of the Son of Man figure produces the transfer of the martial and also soteriological functions of Yahweh to the Son of Man. He comes riding the clouds and saving the people of the Ancient of Days.¹⁴⁴

The Christian paschal narrative seems to have developed within the confines of the second category where the combat and victory of Christ take place in history, somewhere between the *Urzeit* and *Endzeit*. The combat and victory are followed by the institution of the paschal Eucharist and of the Eucharistic celebration in general. It is emblematic that each of the narratives of *Lugal-e*, *Anzu*, the Baal cycle, and some of the texts representing the *Chaoskampf* motif link the combat and victory with the institution of the worship, rituals, or festivals of the victorious deity. On that account, the combat myth also represents an institution narrative which binds the social ritual to its transcendent and divine origin. Therefore, the narrative plays an apologetic and explanatory function for the ritual observance—instituted through divine authority—and involves a multifaceted context of religious, political, and social motivations and consequences.¹⁴⁵ The banquet is a feast of the gods, and festivals of antiquity consisted of sacrosanct strategies able to join the sacred and the profane, insofar as liturgical and ritual gestures were expected to entail divine intervention. Mircea Eliade observed that each religious community performs its foundational narrative in a rite which connects the

¹⁴³ Whitney, *Two Strange Beasts*, 169.

¹⁴⁴ Angel, *Chaos and the Son of Man*.

¹⁴⁵ See for example Bidmead's analysis of the *Akītu* festival in her *The Akītu Festival*, 67: "The recounting of the creation epic [i.e., *Enuma Elish*] functions within the rituals of the *akītu* to reconnect the worshiper with primordial power while offering a religious interpretation for the creation and cosmic order of the world, the hierarchy of the deities, and the supremacy of Marduk and his chosen earthly representative."

sacred and the profane, and has the capacity to re-enact the creation of the universe by divine powers, the only powers able to recreate it anew:

At Babylon during the course of the *akītu* ceremony, which was performed during the last days of the year that was ending and the first of the New Year, the *Poem of Creation*, the *Enuma elish*, was solemnly recited. This ritual recitation reactualized the combat between Marduk and the marine monster Tiamat, a combat that took place *ab origine* and put an end to chaos by the final victory of the god. ... That this commemoration of the Creation was in fact a *reactualization* of the cosmogonic act is shown both by the rituals and in the formulas recited during the ceremony. The combat between Tiamat and Marduk, that is, was mimed by a battle between two groups of actors, a ceremonial that we find again among the Hittites (again in the frame of the dramatic scenario of the New Year), among the Egyptians, and at Ras Shamra. The battle between two groups of actors *repeated the passage from chaos to cosmos*, actualized the cosmogony.¹⁴⁶

There is also a highly significant change in the motif present in Isaiah 25:6-8, a change preserved in both Christian Paschal writings and the rabbinic materials Whitney investigated, namely the translation of the banquet from the level of the divine (as in *Lugal-e*, *Anzu*, *Enuma Elish*, and the Ba'al cycle, where the festival or banquet represents a gods' party) to the level of humankind.¹⁴⁷ The change may be viewed as a mark of the high anthropological interests and dignity Judaism and Christianity ascribe to the nature and destiny of the human being both as individual and community.

I think, however, that there are two other new elements which the paschal narrative advanced within the limits of the second category of the combat myth. First, the paschal liturgy of the Christian writings becomes a ritual moment in which the banquet that follows the combat is translated to a noetic, invisible, and mystery realm. In terms of time, although Christ's battle with Death takes place in time and history, the victory of

146 Cf. Eliade, *The Sacred*, 77. Cf. M. Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (trans. W.R. Trask; New York: Pantheon Books, 1954).

147 Whitney also noticed this change at the level of the economy of salvation: while Ninurta and Marduk saved the gods, Yahweh saves his people: "The implication is that the people of God ... are the recipients of divine salvation. The language of v. 5 [i.e., Ps. 24,5] confirm this and the appearance of a 'Salvation of God's people' motif in a number of similar contexts (e.g., Pss. 46,8; 68,9-10; 22-23; Isa. 43,20-21) points to a particularly Israelite historicization of the events of salvation." (Whitney, *Two Strange Beasts*, 160).

resurrection established the *ab initio* moment when the true ritual was instituted and a new world commenced, thus still reflecting some echoes of the first category. The second innovation consists of the self-offering of the Divine Warrior (now the Victor-Christ) as sacrifice and sacred food at the noetic banquet.

2. A Plausible Conveyance of the Divine Warrior Myth through Pesach and Paschal Liturgical Materials?

The psalms, lessons, and hymns sung or read at the feast might have been a medium of conveyance of the myth of the Divine Warrior from the Passover feast of the Second Temple times to the Christian paschal celebrations. Tryggve Mettinger observed that the central narrative feature of the Jewish Passover consisted of the victory of Yahweh:¹⁴⁸

The era of Josiah and the subsequent Exile entailed four important consequences on the theological plane: 1. The center of gravity of the liturgical year became the Passover meal, that is, a festival which had obvious historical reference thanks to its new connection with the Exodus. 2. The Chaos battle, which originally depicted a primeval conflict, began to be used to describe God's salvific intervention during the Exodus....¹⁴⁹

The feast in itself represents either the celebration of Yahweh's enthronement, or of his being enthroned, as victorious over his enemies and as master of the whole creation. This latter feature will also become a central category of the Christian Pascha.¹⁵⁰ The Jewish Passover narrative employed the second category of the combat myth, namely the historicized one. The Christian Pascha took over the same category and adapted it to its own ontology.

¹⁴⁸ Mettinger, *The Dethronement*, 67-79.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 76.

¹⁵⁰ Christ is portrayed as the Lord of creation in Ps.-Hippolytus, *IP* 55 (V., 306-308).

Since the combat myth appears in all paschal homilies we investigate and also such early paschal literature as the Syriac one, it has to conjecture the existence of a liturgical tradition as the common background which nurtured all these liturgical documents regarding the paschal feast. I suppose that such liturgical hymns as the Hallel psalms, used probably without disruption in the Jewish Passover feast and mentioned in the earliest Christian liturgical documents, represent one of the main elements of continuity and vehicles of the combat myth.¹⁵¹ Gospels of Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26 connect these psalms with the feast of Passover and Christ's passion and, moreover, show that the apostles sung them for the feast: "And having sung the *Hallel* they left unto the Mount of Olives." Niek A. Schumann shows that the *Diary of a Pilgrimage* of Egeria and the *Armenian Lectionary of Jerusalem* prove the fact that psalms were used at the feast in Jerusalem from Palm Sunday to the Paschal vigil and the whole Paschal Week (the week after the Pascha).¹⁵² Schumann relates that especially Psalms 65 (read in connection with 1 Cor 15:1-11) and 30 (with Matt 28:1-20 and Jn

151 For their use in the Passover celebration, see *Mishna Pesahim* 9.3; 10.6.7; *Tosefta Sukkah* 3.2; *Yer. Sukkah* 4.8.54c; *B. Taanit* 28a; *Masseket Soferim* 20.7. For scholarship on Hallel psalms and their connection with the Passover celebration, see e.g. S. T. Lachs, "Midrash *Hallel* and Merkabah Mysticism," in *Gratz College Anniversary Volume: On the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Founding of the College 1895-1970*, eds. I. D. Passow, S. T. Lachs (Philadelphia: Gratz College, 1971), 193-203; G. T. M. Prinsloo, "Unit delimitation in the Egyptian *Hallel* (Psalms 113-118): An Evaluation of Different Traditions," in *Unit Delimitation in Biblical Hebrew and Northwest Semitic Literature*, eds. M. C. A. Korpel, J. M. Oesch (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 2003) 232-263; C. Bryan, "Shall We Sing *Hallel* in the Days of the Messiah: A Glance at John 2:1-3:21," *SLJT* 29, no. 1 (1985): 25-36; S. Zeitlin, "*Hallel*: A Historical Study of the Canonization of the Hebrew liturgy," *JQR* 53:1 (1962): 22-29; T. F. Torrance, "First of the *Hallel* Psalms," *EvQ* 27 (1955): 36-41; T. F. Torrance, "Last of the *Hallel* Psalms," *EvQ* 28 (1956): 101-108; L. Finkelstein, "The Origin of the *Hallel*," *HUCA* 23, no. 2 (1950-1951): 319-337.

152 The *Armenian Lectionary* was edited most likely between 417 and 439; cf. A. Renoux, *Le Codex Arménien Jérusalem 121* (PO 35/1;36/2; Turnhout: Brepols, 1969-70), 181. See J. Wilkinson (ed. and tr.), *Egeria's Travels* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1999), 184-88. See Renoux, *Le codex Arménien*, 119-87 (Pss.: 6; 15; 65; 41; 55; 23; 59; 88; 78; 109; 35; 22; 69; 113; 30; 148; 21; 99; 98; 93; 118; 150). Cf. N.A. Schumann, "Paschal Liturgy and Psalmody in Jerusalem 380-384: Some Observations and Implications," in *Psalms and Liturgy*, eds. D.J. Human, C.J.A. Vos (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 140-54. Egeria's travel seems to have taken place between 381-384 (Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels*, 169-71).

19:38-20,18) were used at the Paschal Vigil, along with Psalms 113 and 118, the first and last of the so-called Egyptian Hallel.¹⁵³

All these data prove the existence of a strong liturgical tradition: the Hallel psalms represented the main hymns of both Pesach and Pascha celebrations. The glorification of Yahweh as the savior Divine Warrior is present everywhere in the Hallel Psalms. The myth of the Divine Warrior is complete with all its elements (combat, salvation, glorification), for instance, in Psalm 118:

The nations all surrounded me (כל־גוֹיִם סָבְבוּנִי), but in the Lord's name I drove them off (אֲמִלֵּם). They surrounded me on every side, but in the Lord's name I drove them off. They swarmed round me like bees; they attacked (דָּעֲכוּ) me, as fire attacks brushwood, but in the Lord's name I drove them off. They thrust hard against me so that I nearly fell, but the Lord came to my help. The Lord is my refuge and defense, and he has become my deliverer (יִשׁוּעָה). Listen! Shouts of triumph in the camp of the victors: 'With his right hand the Lord does mighty deeds (עָשָׂה חֵיל); the right hand of the Lord raises up, with his right hand the Lord does mighty deeds.' I shall not die; I shall live to proclaim what the Lord has done. The Lord did indeed chasten me, but he did not surrender me to death. Open to me the gates of victory (שַׁעֲרֵי־צֶדֶק); I shall go in by them and praise the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the victors will enter through it. I shall praise you, for you have answered me and have become my deliverer (יִשׁוּעָה). The stone which the builders rejected has become the main corner-stone. This is the Lord's doing; it is wonderful in our eyes. This is the day on which the Lord has acted, a day for us to exult and rejoice. Lord, deliver us, we pray; Lord, grant us prosperity. Blessed is he who enters in the name of the Lord; we bless you from the house of the Lord (מִבֵּית יְהוָה). The Lord is God; he has given us light. Link the pilgrims with cords as far as the horns of the altar. You are my God and I shall praise you; my God, I shall exult you. It is good to give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures for ever.

Psalm 24 (23 LXX)—a representative *Chaoskampf* text reflecting the triumphal return of the victorious Yahweh¹⁵⁴—is also emblematic for both Pseudo-Hippolytus (*IP* 46 and 61) and Origen (*PP* 48), now interpreted as Christ's triumphal return to the heavens:

153 Schumann concludes in his "Paschal Liturgy," 151: "We know that in Jewish tradition the same group of psalms has been linked with the Pesach as well as with the feast of Leaves. In the light of everything, it seems to be a very interesting datum that the Armenian Lectionary of Jerusalem just relates these 'corner-psalms' of the 'Hallel' with the celebration of the Paschal Vigil."

154 See, for instance, Mettinger, *The Dethronement*, 70-71; Day, *God's Conflict*, 38-38. Martin Brenner finds tight connections between the Song of the Sea, Psalm 118 and Ps 24[23]:7-10 in terms of royal and martial terminologies used to describe Yahweh, his fight, triumphal entrance into the sanctuary and the final glorification, as well as in terms of responsorial or antiphonal structure, facts that make him to presuppose a common "origin from within the cult of the post-exile;" see Brenner, *The Song*, 67-78, 73.

Lift up the gates, you chieftains (ראשיכם), lift up the everlasting doors, that the king of glory (מלך הכבוד) may come in. Who is this king of glory? The Lord strong and mighty (יהוה עוז וגבור), the Lord mighty in battle (יהוה גבור מלחמה). Lift up the gates, you chieftains, lift up the everlasting doors, that the king of glory may come in. Who is he, this king of glory? The Lord of Hosts (יהוה צבאות), he is the king of glory.¹⁵⁵

3. Pseudo-Hippolytus and the Consumption of Christ's Noetic Body at the Paschal Liturgy

The myth of the Divine Warrior with its banquet feature occurs in a distinct form in two Christian paschal homilies, namely *In sanctum Pascha* and Origen's *Peri Pascha*. The two authors employ an allegorical method and articulate the myth through mystery terminology. While retaining the historicized character of the combat, the banquet acquires in its turn a salvific nature, since Pseudo-Hippolytus and Origen identify it with the consumption of Christ's Eucharistic body and blood. Furthermore, they place the process of consumption on a present, immaterial, noetic, and mystery-liturgical level.¹⁵⁶

Pseudo-Hippolytus divides his homily into two sections. The first one interprets Exodus 12 in a typological way, where the old mysteries the Logos worked in the Old Testament represent the types of the realities Christ revealed after his incarnation. The

¹⁵⁵ Ps 24:7-10. Ps-Hippolytus and Origen used Ps 24/23:7 in its LXX version: "Lift up the gates you, princes, lift up the everlasting doors (ἄρατε πύλας, οἱ ἄρχοντες ὑμῶν, καὶ ἐπάρθητε, πύλαι αἰώνιοι)."

¹⁵⁶ The idea may have connections with the various early Christian conceptions of heavenly food, such as bread or fish, as one can see in R. H. Hiers and C. A. Kennedy, "Bread and Fish Eucharist in the Gospels and Early Christian Art," *PRSt.* 3, no. 1 (1976): 21-48. See also Smit, *Fellowship and Food in the Kingdom*. However, to the extent that Eucharist is deifying and represents an actual participation in God's eternal life, the Paschal banquet in itself may be seen as (pre-) eschatological. One may also use such terminologies as "anticipated eschatology" or "inaugurated eschatology;" see G. Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Liden/ Boston: Brill, 2007) 8. The notion of mystery (*râzâ*) is also essential for the paschal hymns of Ephrem the Syrian, and he also talks about an invisible, hidden (*kâsyâ*) defeat of Satan in Christ's visible (*gâlyâ*) death (Az. 4.5 [SC 502:68]). Ephrem may have taken over the paschal mystery theology developed in Asia Minor. Stuart G. Hall already mentioned that "For the model [type] indeed existed, but then the reality appeared" (*PP* 4.31-32 [H. 4]) is also present in Ps-Hippolytus (cf. *IP* 2.2) and Ephrem (*Epiphany* III.17); see Hall, *Melito*, 5 n. 4. Moreover, the image of the cosmic cross occurs both in Ps-Hippolytus (cf. *IP* 51) and Ephrem (*Cruc.* VII). Likewise, the idea that Christ gave his spirit to the Father when he died appears in Ps-Hippolytus (cf. *IP*) and Ephrem (*Cruc.* VI.2). For the way Origen took over from Asia Minor the paschal mystery theology, see the chapter on Exegesis as Mystery Performance in the last part of this study.

second part constitutes a summary of Christ's divine economy, and it is in this part that Ps-Hippolytus describes the fight between the Logos and Death (θάνατος; *IP* 48.26; 49.2), also called the last Enemy (ἔσχατος ἐχθρὸς ... θάνατος; *IP* 48.25-26; cf. ἐχθρὸς; *IP* 55.4), or that between the Logos and the Dragon (δράκων; *IP* 53.5), Beast (θηρίον; *IP* 57.5), or principalities of the air (ἀέριαι ἀρχαί; *IP* 51.39-40). Christ, in his turn, receives such royal and military titles as the eternal King (βασιλεύς αἰώνιος; *IP* 46.19), the King of Glory (βασιλεύς τῆς δόξης; *IP* 46.27-31), the Lord of the Powers (κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων; *IP* 46.30;32), the General of the Great Power (ἀρχιστράτηγος τῆς μεγάλης δυνάμεως; *IP* 55.7-8), the Son of the Most High (υἱὸς ὑψίστου; *IP* 45.4) commissioned by his Father to rescue humankind:

From heaven he (the Logos) saw us tyrannized by death (ὑπὸ τοῦ θανάτου τυραννουμένους), bound and loosed at the same time in the chains of death (φθορᾶς), traversing the fatal road which has no point of return. He came and assumed the first man's nature according to the design of the Father (ἐν βουλῇς πατρικαῖς), and he did not entrust to his angels and archangels the charge of our souls, but he himself, the Word (λόγος), undertook the entire challenge (lit. "fight, battle, contest:" ὅλον τὸν ἀγῶνα) for us in obedience to his Father's orders (ταῖς πατρῷαῖς ἐντολαῖς).¹⁵⁷

The battle between Christ and the Beast also has its specificities, since Pseudo-Hippolytus describes Christ as putting off his divine garments and assuming the human one, but in this way fighting naked of power, in complete humility and self-emptying (*kenosis*): "And although he had permeated all things with himself, Christ stripped himself naked to war (γυμνὸς ἀνταπεδύσατο) against the powers of the air."¹⁵⁸ His fight was in fact his passion crowned with victory against death:

¹⁵⁷ Ps.-Hippolytus, *IP* 45.1-7 (V. 286; H. 61).

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 51.39-40 (V. 302; H. 65).

Since he ran to victory (τρέχων τὸν ἐπινίκιον) in the spiritual contest (τὸν ὑπὲρ ψυχῆς ἀγῶνα) he received on his sacred brow the crown of thorns, effacing the entire ancient curse of the race, and eradicating the thorny undergrowth of sin from the world with his divine head.¹⁵⁹

Another description of the battle and victory reflects cosmic resonances:

When the cosmic struggle (ὁ κοσμικός ἀγών) ended and Christ had struggled victoriously on all sides (πάντα πανταχόθεν διήθλησε νικήσας), neither elevated as God nor vanquished as man, but remaining solidly rooted in the confines of the universe, triumphantly (προπομπεύων καὶ θριαμβεύων) producing on his own person a trophy of victory (τρόπαιον ἐπινίκιον) over the enemy (κατὰ τοῦ ἐχθροῦ), then the world was in amazement at his long endurance; then the heavens leaped with joy; the Powers were moved, the heavenly thrones and laws were moved at seeing the General of the great powers (τὸν ἀρχιστράτηγον τῆς μεγάλης δυνάμεως) hanging on the cross.¹⁶⁰

The same heavenly hosts contemplate the triumphal return of their victorious king surrounded by his powers and saved humankind.¹⁶¹ When the heavenly hosts guarding the doors of heaven were commanded to open the gates for the king of glory, and they asked about the identity of the king of the heavens, the answer of the powers was: “The Lord of powers is the king of glory, strong (ἰσχυρός), mighty (κραταῖος), and powerful in war (δυνατὸς ἐν πολέμῳ) (Ps 24/23:8).”¹⁶²

The whole homily narrative ends with a description of the universal feast of the heavens and earth as chapter 62 presents the celebration in almost eschatological terms. The paschal Eucharist in which Christ offers himself to be sacrificed and consumed is represented as the fulfillment of history in general and of the sacred history in particular. The narrative starts with a creation story (*IP* 17), and understands the tenth of Nissan—the date when the lamb should be separated for Passover—as the Old Testament (which is centered on the Ten Commandments), a preparation for the coming of the true Lamb

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. 53.1-4 (V. 304; H. 65).

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. 55.1-8 (V. 306-8; H. 66).

¹⁶¹ Ibid. 61 (V. 314; H. 67).

¹⁶² Ibid. 61.13-16 (V. 314; H. 67).

from heaven (*IP* 19-20). Similarly, the first part of Ps-Hippolytus's homily describes the mystery of the Jewish Passover as a pre-figuration of the Christian Pascha. The account turns into a Eucharistic interpretation, since all the references to the sacrifice and eating of the lamb denote the sacrifice and eating of Christ in the Church. The lintel on which the Israelites put the blood of the lamb is the Church and the manna is the Eucharistic Bread (*IP* 25). The night on which the flesh should be eaten represents the fact that the light of Christ is not visible in the Eucharist: "This is *the night* on which the flesh is eaten, for the light of the world (τὸ τοῦ κόσμου φῶς) has set on the great body of Christ (ἐπὶ τῷ μεγάλῳ σώματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ): *Take and eat; this is my body*" (Matt. 26,26).¹⁶³ The fiery constitution of Christ's body appears again in *IP* 27 referring to the interpretation of the expression "flesh roasted with fire:" "The flesh is roasted with fire: for the spiritual body of Christ is on fire (ἐμπυρον γὰρ λογικὸν σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ)." ¹⁶⁴

These passages are important since they denote unambiguously the noetic and spiritual nature of Christ's body. Pseudo-Hippolytus continues by explaining that eating the head represents the understanding of the Father, the entrails the will of the Father, the feet human beings, etc. (*IP* 29). There are also passages offered as explanations for the ascetical preparations of eating the Pascha. While eating the Passover in haste refers to the liturgical practice of keeping vigil and fasting before taking communion (*IP* 32), the girded loins denote the withdrawal from pleasures and sexuality (*IP* 33). Similarly, the expression "[i]n one house shall it be eaten and you shall not carry any of the flesh out

¹⁶³ Ibid. 26 (V. 274; H. 58). *IP* 41.3-4 (V. 282; H. 60) specifically affirms that the "sacred body of Christ" (τὸ ἱερὸν σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ) can be eaten only within the Church.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. 27.1-2 (V. 274; H. 59).

from the house (Exod 12:46)” designates the Church.¹⁶⁵ The salvific consumption of Christ is placed, therefore, in a noetic liturgical present.

4. Origen and the Noetic Consumption of the Body of Christ

Similarly, the myth of the Divine Warrior and the eschatological banquet feature appear in Origen’s *Peri Pascha*.¹⁶⁶ As an opponent of any idea of divine body, the Alexandrian employed an allegorical method and articulated the myth through mystery terminology. While Christ defeats Death in history, the banquet is also a historical event—the consumption of the Eucharistic body and blood—but the entire process of consumption is placed on a present, mysteriological, liturgical, and noetic level.¹⁶⁷

According to Origen, the ἱερὰ ἱερογραφαὶ describe how God ordered ancient Israel to fulfill a sacred service (ἱερουργία) and a sacred sacrifice (ἱεροθυσία) in a mystical, or mystery, way (μυστηριωδῶς).¹⁶⁸ But this mystery was just a shadow of the future sacrifice of the Logos. Following the Asia Minor tradition of Melito of Sardis and possibly Pseudo-Hippolytus, Origen employs the distinction between the old and the new mystery series, most likely in the context of the Jewish-Christian polemics of the time, a context no doubt marked by accents of supersessionism. The Logos manifested himself in the old mysteries in the form of types, figures, and parables, which find their fullness in antitypes and truth.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. 41.1-2 (V.282; H. 60).

¹⁶⁶ Harald Buchinger has already talked about the presence of warfare metaphors (*Pascha*, 773-779) as well as the eating of the Pascha as metaphor for the participation in the Logos (*Pascha*, 838-866).

¹⁶⁷ Buchinger analyzes as well the mystery language of the Origenian *Peri Pascha* (*Pascha*, 868-888). He points out as well the strong connection between Origen’s Paschal and Eucharistic theologies (*Pascha*, 845-867).

¹⁶⁸ Origen, *PP* 39.9-29.

The eschatological battle between the Logos, the Divine Warrior, and Death happened at the time of Christ's passion and only this fight and Christ's victory over Death can make possible the banquet of Pascha. Origen describes the great war of Christ in the second part of the tractate, where he portrays Christ as a Divine Warrior commissioned by his Father to fight "Death," the "devil," and the "world ruler" who enslaved humankind. The first consequence of his victorious action is the salvation of humankind:

[A]nd this is what he did at the end of the age when he came to put away sin by his flesh in putting enmity to death (ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἐχθρὰν); and having come he proclaimed the good news to us who are far off and to us who are near, delivering us from the dominion of darkness (ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σκότους) and establishing his light (ἐν τῷ φωτὶ αὐτοῦ) (cf. Eph. 2,16-17; Col. 1,12-13; 1 Pet 2,9, etc). ... [T]he Lord who has blunted (ἀμβλύνας) the sting of death (1 Cor. 15,55) and suppressed its power (τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ καθαιρήσας), giving by his gospel preaching a mean of escape (ὑπερπήδησιν) to the spirits imprisoned in hell (1 Pet 3,19; 4,6) ... Since, therefore, the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death (διὰ τοῦ θανάτου καταργήσῃ τὸν τὸ κράτος ἔχοντα τοῦ θανάτου), that is, the devil (τὸν διάβολον), and deliver (ἀπαλλάξῃ) all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage (δουλείας) (Heb. 2,13-15). For they were freed (ἀπήλλαξεν) from the servitude of the world ruler (τῆς δουλείας τοῦ κοσμοκράτορος) of this present darkness (Eph. 6,12) by the true Lamb who is Christ Jesus.¹⁶⁹

The powers of hell hatch a plot against God ("For they [the powers of hell] were devising an *evil plot against him* [Jer. 11,19]"¹⁷⁰), and we are also informed about the victorious return of the divine warrior to his realm, a triumphal march reinterpreted in the Christian adaptation of the myth as Christ's ascension to heaven. Thus he

provided them with a means of ascent into heaven by means of His own ascent, after opening the gates and portals [of heaven] by means of His own entrance: Lift up your gates, O princes, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, and the King of glory will enter in (Ps. 24/23:7-9). And after this command was heard a second time by the powers (δυνάμεσιν) stationed at the gates, and when they asked who is there, they heard: The Lord strong and mighty in battle (Κύριος κραταιὸς καὶ δυνατὸς ἐν πολέμῳ), the Lord of hosts (Κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων), this is the King of glory (Ps.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 46.14-49.24.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 48.34.

24/23:8-10), for He is the King of the Father's glory (βασιλεὺς δόξης πατρῶας) in which the Father is glorified.¹⁷¹

If these features recall the marks of the Divine Warrior myth, the last feature—the banquet—comes with the Christian change in which the Divine Warrior, unlike Marduk or Ba'al, offers himself as a sacrifice. Origen places the mystery of Pascha in a Eucharistic context and the whole process of eating the body and blood of Christ on a noetic level:

It is necessary for us to sacrifice the true lamb (πρόβατον)—if we have been ordained priests (ιερωθῶμεν), or like priests have offered sacrifice—and it is necessary for us to cook and eat its flesh. ... To show that the passover is something spiritual (νοητόν) and not this sensible (αἰσθητόν) passover, he himself says: *Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you* (Jn 6:53). Are we then to eat His flesh and drink His blood in a physical manner? But if this is said spiritually, then the passover is spiritual, not physical.¹⁷²

Origen, as an archenemy of any anthropomorphic tendency, develops a hermeneutical strategy in which the discourse about eating the divine body of Christ fluctuates between noetic representation and allegory. According to him, the Pascha is an internalized spiritual process in which the human being has to become a new being, a perfect man, through a new birth.¹⁷³ The ancient expression the “first of the months” (ἀρχὴ μηνῶν)¹⁷⁴ is interpreted as the necessary beginning of a “perfect state of life and a perfect love (τελείας δὲ πολιτείας καὶ τελείας ἀγάπης ἐντὸς γενέσθαι δεῖ),”¹⁷⁵ and

¹⁷¹ Ibid. 48.6-22.

¹⁷² Ibid. 13.3-35. In passage 26, he explains how the flesh, i.e., the Scripture, does not have to be eaten “green” (an expression which denotes literal interpretation), but cooked on the fire of the Holy Spirit (which is the spiritual interpretation of the Bible).

¹⁷³ Origen, *PP* 3.37-7,14.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Exod. 12:1-2: “The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt: This month is to be for you the first of the months.”

¹⁷⁵ Origen, *PP* 4.36-5.1.

“the perfect man has the beginning of another birth (ὁ τέλειος ἑτέρας γενέσεως ἀρχὴν ἔχει).”¹⁷⁶

This perfection is not only of an ethical nature, namely the actualization of all possible virtues, and generally Origen’s *Peri Pascha* does not display a virtue vocabulary; it is also a sacerdotal and mystical one, as chapter 13 demonstrates. Furthermore, the ability to sacrifice and eat the lamb and thus to come out of the darkness of Egypt entails two processes. While the first is “taking Christ,” which involves for Origen hearing and believing in Christ, the second represents a cathartic process. The sacrifice cannot be done without the overcoming of the five days between the tenth and fourteenth of Nissan, which the Alexandrian interprets as the five senses.¹⁷⁷ Initiation into mystery, therefore, has to follow a process of praxis and purification. In addition to these two conditions, Origen also mentions the demand of illumination, in which the light of Christ illumines the human intellect: “And for our part, unless the perfect, true light (Jn 1:9) rises over us and we see how it perfectly illumines our guiding intellect (πεφώτισται ἡμῶν τελείως τὸ ἡγεμονικόν), we will not be able to sacrifice and eat the true Lamb.”¹⁷⁸

Inserting the idea of eating the divine body in the paschal Eucharistic context, he maintains—in a passage which thus goes beyond simple metaphor—that the consumption of the sacred body brings life and protection from the angel of death; here he follows the terminology of the Epistle to the Hebrews 11:28, ὁ ὀλοθρεύων (“the destroyer”).¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. 6.14-16. Origen also explains that the “the perfect person becomes other than what he was (ὁ τέλειος ἕτερος παρ’ ὃ ἦν γενόμενος; *PP* 6 [29-30]),” and “those who have been made perfect (τοὺς τελειωθέντας)” are no longer the same (*PP* 7 [11]).

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. 18.10-12.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. 21.2-7.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. 14.9-10; 14.13.

Accordingly, the heavenly life-giving element, the body of Christ, has to be sacrificed and eaten in a banquet which takes place here, on earth, as a protecting element against the agent of death.

5. Pseudo-Chrysostom: Eating the Paschal Body of Christ

As already mentioned by Nautin, Origen's paschal text inspired the author of three homilies ascribed to John Chrysostom.¹⁸⁰ A spiritual master, the author teaches that death enters through two doors, through passion (τὸ πάθος) and through thought (ὁ λογισμός).¹⁸¹ And those thoughts according to Christ may be described as an unction and a garment of wisdom, of which presence in the human being produces the climactic change from the intellect of flesh (ὁ σαρκικὸς νοῦς) to the spiritual one (ὁ πνευματικός).¹⁸²

After the mystery of unction, the author mentions the idea of consumption (μετὰ δὲ τὴν χρίσιν ἔστιν ἡ βρώσις) of the divine body which makes its dwelling in us (εἰσοικίζουσα τὸ σῶμα τὸ θεῖον εἰς ἡμᾶς).¹⁸³ He further discusses the meaning of the elements of the Jewish paschal meal: the fire is zeal, azymes denote sympathy (ἀπλότης), bitter herbs tribulations (αἱ θλίψεις).¹⁸⁴ Of course, the holy or divine body is certainly the Eucharist, and Pseudo-Chrysostom cautions that carelessness, lack of good deeds, and pleasure impede the consumption of the divine food (θεῖα τροφή).¹⁸⁵ Another

¹⁸⁰ SC 36:33-41. Nautin deems that the text was produced at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century, before the emergence of Nestorian controversy (Ib.:26-30). As mentioned above, Enrico Cattaneo ascribes the homilies to Apollinarius of Laodicea; cf. Cattaneo, *Trois homélies*.

¹⁸¹ *Hom.* 2.8 (SC 36:83).

¹⁸² *Hom.* 2.10 (SC 36:85).

¹⁸³ *Hom.* 2.11 (SC 36:85).

¹⁸⁴ *Hom.* 2.12 (SC 36:85-87).

¹⁸⁵ *Hom.* 2.15-16 (SC 36:89). The whole meal is even called by name (εὐχαριστία) in *Hom.* 2.17 (SC 36:89).

important component of the meal the author emphasizes is the Holy Spirit, the spiritual power (πνευματικὴ δύναμις) which is the fire that has to cook the flesh of the lamb.¹⁸⁶ Likewise, every participant to the Eucharist has to prepare himself and approach it in a saintly way (ἁγίως) and with an appropriate body (ἐπιτήδειον σῶμα), since he mixes his body with the body of Christ (ἀνάκρασις τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ).¹⁸⁷ And this mingling is followed by the one with the Holy Spirit (πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἀνακινώμεθα).¹⁸⁸ The consequence is that participants become copies of Christ (ὁμοιώματα Χριστοῦ).¹⁸⁹

Similarly, eating the head and feet of the lamb signifies the beginning and the end of Christ's epiphany, that is the first and humble parousia and the glorious second one.¹⁹⁰ But eating the entrails represents the actual culmination of contemplation, as it denotes the contemplation of the Logos in Jesus, therefore of the divine beyond his humanity.¹⁹¹ This type of vision is a spiritual knowledge (γινῶτε πνευματικῶς) and a vision within (ἐντὸς ὀφθαλμοῦ), therefore beyond the veil of materiality.¹⁹²

In conclusion, the consumption of the divine body represents a combination of an allegorical interpretation and Eucharistic communion where the author urges his audience to the contemplation of and participation in the glorious Christ of the second parousia.

Summary

As John Day shows, the combat myth undergoes three different developments in the biblical tradition: one which keeps the combat myth in the primordial times and

¹⁸⁶ *Hom.* 2.16-17 (SC 36:89).

¹⁸⁷ *Hom.* 2.17-18 (SC 36:91).

¹⁸⁸ *Hom.* 2.18 (SC 36:91).

¹⁸⁹ *Hom.* 2.18 (SC 36:91).

¹⁹⁰ *Hom.* 2.19-21 (SC 36:93-95).

¹⁹¹ *Hom.* 2.21-22 (SC 36:95).

¹⁹² *Hom.* 2.21-22 (SC 36:95).

sometimes demythologizes it into Yahweh's control over the cosmic waters; a second which historicizes the combat and represents Yahweh fighting Israel's enemies; and a third which eschatologizes the combat. Christian Paschal theology took over the historicized version of the myth from the Jewish Passover narrative and reworked it at certain cardinal points. For Pseudo-Hippolytus and Origen, the combat is placed on a more abstract, metaphysical level rather than the social one: the divine warrior now fights Death and saves humankind from slavery. In addition to this, the paschal narrative locates the banquet in a mystery, liturgical, and noetic present. The banquet is identified with the [paschal] Eucharistic communion and understood as a noetic ingestion of the divine body and blood of the Logos who offers himself to be sacrificed and consumed. The economy of the Logos is now read as a martial campaign, and resurrection as the victory over Death. However, although the whole combat economy takes place between the *Urzeit* and the *Endzeit*, the victory over Death is also seen as a new beginning and a new creation, this time a spiritual and noetic one. The victory represents the privileged moment of origins when the ritual of the Paschal Eucharist is instituted, and also encompasses a pre-figuration of the eschaton since it saves and deifies the human being, thus bringing it into an ontological status closer to the eschatological one.

PART FOUR

ENCOUNTERING THE MYSTERY ANTHROPOS:
MYSTERY LANGUAGE AND PASCHA

The intention of this part of my dissertation is to emphasize a second essential terminological turn in the Pesah/Paschal discourse, namely that to mystery language. The way the divine Anthropos is described through the frame of this language is one of a spiritual figure residing in the mysterious realm where the ordinary eye cannot intrude. As the Pascha becomes a mystery rite, paschal discourse develops into a new theology which makes use of such terms as “mystery,” “pneumatic,” “noetic,” “invisible,” and “immateriality.” Early paschal writings confer to biblical anthropomorphisms a treatment through mystery terminologies and internalize the processes of accessing the divine Anthropos. The phenomenon has roots in Philo and Melito, and can be better observed in Pseudo-Hippolytus and Origen. My own hypothesis is that the main factor that caused this turning point was the socio-cultural pressure of mystery rites at the turn of the era and the Greek philosophical conception of an immaterial God. As the Jewish and Christian Hellenistic response to the conception of an immaterial God can be observed in the strong philosophical anti-anthropomorphic polemics of Philo, Irenaeus, or Origen mentioned in the second part of this study, the liturgical context offered more flexible borders between anthropomorphism and anti-anthropomorphism. In this context, the old biblical anthropomorphic terms still play an important role, but they entail a conception of a divine Anthropos with a noetico-luminous nature.

X. DECODING HEAVENLY CONUNDRUMS: PASCHAL MYSTERY EPISTEMOLOGY

This chapter proposes a new understanding for Melito of Sardis's typological method, which may be regarded as a method of disclosing divine mysteries. Perhaps surprisingly, a comparable method is the interpretation of the heavenly mysteries Daniel conveys to his audience and Enoch to his son Methuselah, to his inheritance, to the watchers, and to all of humanity. Previous scholars have observed that the revelation of heavenly mysteries represents an essential feature of Jewish apocalyptic literature.¹ Benjamin Gladd even argues that this paradigm of thought starts with Daniel. He further notices that mystery language in apocalyptic literature is frequently connected with three epistemic capacities specialized in perceiving the heavenly and eschatological mysteries of God, namely the true eye, ear and heart, in opposition to the ordinary eye, ear and heart.²

In addition to this, and also originated in the paradigmatic Danielic figure, apocalyptic epistemology involves another essential element, namely, the hermeneutical technique of interpreting parables.³ Certainly echoing Daniel's figure of prophet and

¹ See G. Bornkamm, "Μυστήριον κτλ," *TWNT* 4 (1942): 809-834, esp. 821; Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 14; Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mysteries*, 31-32; B. Gladd, *Revealing the Mysterion: The Use of Mystery in Daniel and Second Temple Judaism with Its Bearing on First Corinthians* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008). They make extensive investigations on the concepts of *raz*, *sar*, and *mysterion* in Daniel, sapiential literature, apocalyptic and Qumran texts, Aristobulus, Artapanus, the *Orphica*, Pseudo-Phocylides, Philo, Josephus, and early rabbinic literature. While the origins of these terms are Babylonian and Greek, they denote—in almost all these Jewish sources—a divine or heavenly secret revealed to human knowledge. Bockmuehl, for instance, defines "mystery" in the following terms: "By 'Mystery' is meant any reality of divine or heavenly origin specifically characterized as hidden, secret, or otherwise inaccessible to human knowledge." (*Revelation and Mystery*, 2).

² Gladd, *Revealing the Mysterion*, 274-277. There are also some biblical references where this type of epistemic sensory language is also used in connection with the knowledge of God, e.g., Deut 29:4; 28:45; Isa 6:9-10; Jer 5:21; Ezek 12:2 (ibid.). They are directly connected with the idea of mystery of the kingdom, for instance in Matt 13:9-13.

³ Cf. Priscilla Patten, "The Form and Function of Parable in Select Apocalyptic Literature and Their Significance for Parables in the Gospel of Mark," *NTS* 29:2 (1983): 246-258. The author investigates

interpreter of divine signs, Enoch and Melito decipher parables as a method of unveiling divine mysteries, God's most secret things regarding salvation and particularly the mystery of the Son of Man.⁴ It is in this epistemological context that I intend to introduce the concept of typology. In general terms, Christian typology denotes the method of interpretation in which the events narrated in the Old Testament represent pre-figurations of Christ's economy.⁵ The typological framework of Melito's message, however, encapsulates an epistemological structure similar to the one present in the Jewish tradition of the divine scribe or mediator who reveals heavenly mysteries. This epistemological paradigm in its entire complexity occurs for the first time in the Ethiopic Enochic corpus, especially in the *Book of Parables*, a text produced around first century B.C.E.-first century C.E. Melito may be envisioned, like Enoch, as a receptacle and revealer of divine information, and as a divine scribe and interpreter of the most elevated knowledge which concerns the deepest secrets of God, the universe, and the human being. Interpreting parables reveals divine mysteries.

4 *Ezra*, 1 *Enoch*, and 2 *Baruch*.

⁴ The idea possibly interprets Dan 7:13, the passage about the enigmatic figure of the "One like the son of man."

⁵ For a detailed analysis of the central biblical themes which received a typological interpretation in early Christianity (e.g., Adam, Noah, the flood, Abraham sacrificing Isaac, the exodus or the fall of Jericho), see Jean Daniélou's classic *Sacramentum Futuri: Études sur les origines de la typologie biblique* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1950). According to his perspective, allegory was of Philonean inspiration and essentially Greek. However, for Henri de Lubac, on the basis of Gal 2:24, allegory was as Christian as typology. Moreover, for de Lubac "Origen's allegorism is typological" and the distinction between typology and allegory seems to be analogous to that between theory and practice ("Typologie et allégorisme," *RevScRel* 34 [1947]: 220-221). Other researchers such as Henri Crouzel, while seeing in allegory the method through which various terrestrial realities symbolize celestial entities, envision typology as the method through which one historical reality denotes another historical reality (especially an event from the New Testament or having Christ as subject); see Crouzel, *Origen* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989) 80-81. However, Frances M. Young's position, according to which typology is a form of allegory, has to be also underlined (see *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* [Cambridge: University Press, 1997], 198). Leonhard Goppelt's study *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) should also be mentioned for its investigation of the usage of the typological method in the Old and New Testaments, and the connection between typology and apocalypticism. See also Jean Pépin for the origins of allegory: *Mythe et allégorie: Les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1976) and *La tradition de l'allégorie de Philon d'Alexandrie à Dante* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1987).

Comparable to Enoch, Melito plays the role of messenger, mediator, scribe, and translator of parables, those linguistic conundrums encapsulating divine mysteries.⁶ As a distinctive mark, Melito emphasizes the mystery of economy and salvation through Christ's Incarnation. Christ is also portrayed as descended heavenly Wisdom and revealer of the deepest mysteries of God, an element that marks a significant turning point in the paradigm that probably starts with *I Enoch*. While divine mysteries are now to be encountered on earth, ascension is preserved for the eschatological journey in which Christ raises the whole of humankind to the Father. Where Enoch needed ascension to reach the heavenly realm of divine mysteries, Melito needs primarily an initiation into divine mysteries now located on earth. Thus, Melito construes an epistemology of the divine in the hermeneutical context of Exodus 12 by employing apocalyptic, sapiential, and mystery schemes.

⁶ This kind of epistemology may be associated with the "charismatic exegesis" practiced in early Judaism and early Christianity, a term coined by H. L. Ginsberg, and analyzed for instance by Martin Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 A.D.* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989), 234-5, Gerhard Dautzenberg, *Urchristliche Prophetie: Ihre Erforschung, ihre Voraussetzungen im Judentum und ihre Struktur im ersten Korintherbrief* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1975), 43-121, or David Aune, "Charismatic Exegesis in Early Judaism and Early Christianity," in *The Pseudepigrapha and Early Biblical Interpretation*, eds. J. H. Charlesworth and C. A. Evans (Sheffield: University Press, 1993), 126-150. For synonymous terms, see "inspired eschatological exposition" (E. E. Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1978], 26), or "spiritual exegesis," "exégèse spirituelle" (L. Cerfaux, "L'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament par le Nouveau Testament," in *L'Ancien Testament et les Chrétiens* [ed. P. Auvrey; Paris: Cerf, 1951], 138). Aune even points out four key notes of the charismatic exegesis: "(1) it is a *commentary*, (2) it is *inspired*, (3) it has an *eschatological* orientation, and (4) it was a prevalent type of *prophecy* during the Second Temple period (Aune, "Charismatic Exegesis," 127)." However, Aune also emphasizes some weak points of the phrase "charismatic exegesis:" it is vague and an "infelicitous umbrella term used to designate a wide variety of claims that share the common conviction that the interpretation of sacred or revealed texts carries divine authority" (Aune, "Charismatic Exegesis," 126). Keeping in mind the detailed differences, these ideas are incarnated in such inspired persons as Enoch, Daniel, Ezra, ben Sira, the Teacher of Righteousness, Paul, and Melito.

1. Daniel as Interpreter of Divine Mysteries

We have to start from Rowland's and Himmelfarb's aforementioned observations about the main distinctions between prophetic and apocalyptic visions in terms of geography of the sacred and methods of accessing the sacred center. Since the temple where God lives is in heaven, apocalyptic visionaries have to ascend to the heavenly temple. From an epistemological perspective, scholars have also noticed that the specific difference between apocalyptic and prophetic writings lies in the emphasis on the revelation of divine mysteries. Rowland, for instance, affirms: "To speak of apocalyptic, therefore, is to concentrate on the theme of the direct communication of the heavenly mysteries in all their diversity."⁷ Likewise, Markus Bockmuehl pointed out the

extraordinary apocalyptic interest in divine "mysteries" and their revelation. For these writers mysteries" subsist in heaven at present but a glimpse of their reality and relevance can be disclosed to select visionaries who pass on this information to the faithful few (the "wise," i.e., the righteous) to encourage them in waiting for the impending deliverance (*1 En* 1:1-9, 37:1-5, etc). At present the divine wisdom is known only through such revealed mysteries, since her abode is in heaven (*1 En* 42:1-3; 48:1; 49:1f). Old Testament antecedents notwithstanding, this notion of heavenly mysteries appears to have become popular only in the wake of early apocalyptic documents like Daniel and *1 Enoch*.⁸

George W. E. Nickelsburg should also be mentioned here, particularly with the following sentence:

Moreover, the content of what is actually revealed is what is otherwise hidden, either because it describes the inaccessible parts of the cosmos and heaven, or because it lies in the future. Thus, on all counts, *1 Enoch* presents information, identifies it as revealing or unveiling of secrets, and emphasizes the process of revelation. Although there are many parallels between this process and the biblical prophetic corpus, I believe that the pervasive emphasis on not simply making known, but on the previous hiddenness of what is now uncovered warrants the use of the term "apocalyptic" or revelatory as a means of distinguishing it from early prophecy.⁹

⁷ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 14. See also C. Rowland, *Christian Origins* (London: SPCK, 1985), 64.

⁸ Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery*, 31.

⁹ G. W. E. Nickelsburg, "'Enoch' as Scientist, Sage, and Prophet: Content, Function, and Authorship in *1 Enoch*," *SBLSP* 38 (1999): 203-230, esp. 221. Nickelsburg, while criticizing Handson's appreciation that Third Isaiah should be viewed as an "apocalyptic eschatology" (P. D. Handson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975]), also affirms on page 214: "Here is one of the problems of describing Third Isaiah as 'apocalyptic eschatology.' What Third Isaiah's eschatology lacks is precisely the

A key figure which makes the passage from prophesy and apocalypticism is Daniel, prophet, wise man, and interpreter. Like apocalyptic seers, he is an interpreter of heavenly mysteries. Unlike them, he does not ascend to heaven. David Aune makes the following observation regarding the connection between revelation of mysteries and interpretation in Daniel 2:30:

Three important terms, רז (“mystery”), גלה (“disclose”, “reveal”) and פשר (“interpretation”) occur together in Dan 2:30, where Daniel, after telling the king that the future has been revealed to him in a dream by “the revealer of mysteries [MT: גִּלְיָא רִזְיָא; LXX: ὁ ἀνακαλύπτων μυστήρια]”, that is, God, explains (NRSV):

But as for me, this mystery (MT: רִזְיָא; LXX: τὸ μυστήριον) has not been revealed (MT: גִּלְיָא; LXX: ἐξέφάνθη) to me because of any wisdom that I have more than any other living being, but in order that the interpretation (MT: פִּשְׁרָא; LXX: τοῦ δηλωθῆναι) may be known to the king and that you may understand thoughts of your mind.¹⁰

In addition, Aune observes that Daniel, unlike Joseph (Gen 40-41, where the patriarch asks the receivers to relate the dream in order to offer them his interpretation), “knows *both* the dream and its interpretation (Dan 2:17-45), a feature that suggests the close connection between charismatic exegesis and prophecy.”¹¹ Aune also extends his observations to the Qumran method of interpretation:

The terms רז ('mystery') and פשר ('interpretation') are used in similar ways in both Daniel and the Qumran pesharim, and it appears that there is more similarity between the methods of exegesis in Daniel and the pesharim than between the pesharim and later rabbinical midrashim.¹²

apocalypse, the revealed and interpreted vision that is the literary essence of Enoch's account.” For further bibliography on the Enoch tradition, some good starting points are, for example, J. VanderKam, *Enoch, a Man for All Generations* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1995); G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *I Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of I Enoch* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001); A. Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2005); L. T. Stuckenbruck, *I Enoch 91-108* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007).

¹⁰ Aune, “Charismatic Exegesis,” 132.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

As Aune points out, the Teacher of Righteousness is also portrayed as a scribe who interprets the mysteries of the prophets. He is “the Priest [in whose heart] God set [understanding] that he might interpret (לפִּשׁוֹר) all the words of His servants the prophets.”¹³ Likewise, “as for that which He said, *That he who reads may read it speedily*: interpreted (פִּשְׁרוֹ) this concerns the Teacher of Righteousness, to whom God made known (הוֹדִיעָו) all the mysteries (רִזִּי) of His servants the Prophets.”¹⁴

2. Enoch as Divine Scribe and Revealer of Heavenly Mysteries

In addition, Nickelsburg indicates another distinction between the apocalyptic visionary and the prophet. The apocalyptic visionary is not only a prophet, he/she is at the same time prophet, scribe, and sage. He/she is a character that accumulates the highest virtues ever mentioned in the prophetic and sapiential literature. Enoch, for example, concentrates in one individual the highest titles of the inspired person, prophet, scribe, and sage.

“Enoch” is three times called a “scribe” (12:4 [cf. 13:4-7]; 15:1; 92:1). Three times the Epistle refers to the religious leaders as “the wise” (98:9; 99:10; 104:12-105:1) reflecting the term *hakkim* of *maškil*. ... Consonant with this observation is the frequent occurrence in 1 Enoch of literary forms typical of the prophets: an oracle, chaps. 1-5; a commissioning, chaps. 14-16; woes and descriptions of the future in the Epistle, *passim*. This evidence indicates an interesting mixture of roles.¹⁵

¹³ 1QpHab 2:8-9, in Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin Books, 1997), 497.

¹⁴ 1QpHab 7:1-5 [Vermes, 481].

¹⁵ Nickelsburg, “Enoch’ as Scientist,” 225. See also John Collins’s consonant affirmation: “the figures to whom the major apocalypses are ascribed, Enoch, Daniel, Ezra, Baruch, are sages or scribes” (“The Sage in the Apocalyptic and Pseudepigraphic Literature,” *Seers, Sybils and Sages in Hellenistic-Roman Judaism* [Leiden: Brill, 1997], 339-50). There are contemporary scholars who do not agree with a sharp distinction between prophecy and apocalyptic, such as Lester L. Grabbe. As Grabbe states: “From a form critical perspective many of the old prophetic forms do tend to change or die out, and a new genre of apocalypses arises; however, apocalyptic is not by any means confined to formal apocalypses. In my opinion the sharp distinction between prophesy and apocalyptic is unjustified. For example, there is no reason why the prophetic book of Zechariah 1-8 cannot also be classified as an apocalypse. Indeed, I would rather see apocalyptic as a sub-genre of prophecy than a separate entity.” See L. L. Grabbe, “Poets, Scribes, or Preachers? The Reality of Prophecy in the Second Temple Period,” *SBLSP* 37 (1998): 524-45.

The content of the mysteries revealed to Enoch is varied, spanning from the mysteries of the temple to the mysteries of creation, and from the mysteries of history to those of human destiny. According to this book, all human knowledge is the product of a series of revelations. One of the earliest parts of *1 Enoch*, the *Astronomical Book* (sometimes titled the *Book of the Luminaries*, namely, *1 Enoch* 72-82), presents the following series of revelations: the angel Uriel reveals the secrets to Enoch, Enoch to his son Methuselah, and Methuselah to his brothers and descendants.

At that time Uriel the angel responded to me: “Enoch, I have now shown you everything, and I have revealed everything to you so that you may see this sun and this moon and those who lead the stars of the sky and all those who turn them—their work, their times, and their emergences.” ... He said to me: “Enoch, look at the heavenly tablets, read what is written on them, and understand each and every item.” I looked at all the heavenly tablets, read everything that was written, and understood everything. I read the book of all the actions of people and of all humans who will be on the earth for the generations of the world.¹⁶

Enoch transmitted afterwards the mysteries to his son:

Now my son Methuselah, I am telling you all these things and am writing (them) down. I have revealed all of them to you and have given you the books about all these things, My son, keep the book written by your father so that you may give (it) to the generations of the world.¹⁷

In his turn, Methuselah conveys the revealed things to the other sons of Enoch and to all the other generations. The process of revelation in all its steps is accompanied by a process of reading and writing, which clearly emphasizes Enoch's scribal status and mission. It appears that Enoch's scribal character constituted an important tradition of

Nonetheless, Grabbe does not offer any other criteria than social ones (e.g., theological, doctrinal, symbolic, cultural, or of any other nature), and confines the whole discussion on the border between prophetic and apocalyptic writings to “a social context and to social reality” (Grabbe, “Poets,” 528). He even advances the following principle: “This is enormously significant for purposes of our discussion: *the prophetic writings and the apocalyptic and relating writings are all scribal works in their present form* and thus present a similar problem when it comes to relating them to their social context” (Grabbe, “Poets,” 529).

¹⁶ See *1 En* 80:1 and 81:1-2. Trans. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, 110-111.

¹⁷ See *1 En* 82:1. Trans. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, 113.

ancient Judaism, for *Jubilees* 4:17-24, the recension B of the *Testament of Abraham* 10-11, and *2 Enoch* 22 portray him as a scribe.¹⁸ Moreover, Enoch's mission is angelic in nature, since *1 Enoch* 33-34 depicts the protagonist writing down all the things revealed to him and interchanging this mission with the angel Uriel, as in *1 Enoch* 72:1 and 81:1-2. Likewise, *1 Enoch* 10:8 presents the angel Raphael performing divine writing. As Leslie Baynes observes, in ancient Judaism, heavenly writing was the attribute of Yahweh or of his angels.¹⁹

However, the entire content of the heavenly books is a matter of divine secret, mystery, and wisdom. As Nickelsburg points out, the verb used for “revelation” in *1 Enoch* 82 is *kašatku* = ἀποκαλύπτω = נָלַל.²⁰ Nickelsburg further links the expressions “to give books” and “to give wisdom,” where the latter is a technical term for the transmission of eschatological revelation, as one may observe in *1 Enoch* 5:8-9: “wisdom will be given to all the chosen; and they will all live.”²¹

¹⁸ See, for example, L. Baynes, “Enoch, the Angels, and Heavenly Books,” *SBLSP* 45 (2006) 1. For the scribal contexts of ancient Israel, see also M. Bar-Ilan, “Writing in Ancient Israel and Early Judaism: Scribes and Books in the Late Second Commonwealth and Rabbinic Period,” in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (eds. M. J. Mulder and H. Sysling; CRINT 2.1; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989), 21-38; J. Blenkinsopp, “The Sage, the Scribe, and Scribalism in the Chronicler's Work,” in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, 307-315; J. J. Collins, “The Sage in Apocalyptic and Pseudepigraphic Literature,” in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, 343-354; L. R. Mack-Fisher, “The Scribe (and Sage) in the Royal Court at Ugarit,” in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, 109-115; D. E. Orton, *The Understanding Scribe: Matthew and the Apocalyptic Ideal* (JSNTSup 25; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989); A. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989); C. Schams, *Jewish Scribes in the Second-Temple Period* (JSOTSS 291; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); E. E. Urbach, *The Halakha, Its Sources and Development* (Yad La-Talmud; Jerusalem: Massada, 1906).

¹⁹ Baynes, “Enoch,” 4: “As we progress from a survey of the earliest to the later examples of heavenly writing, however, we observe that it moves into the hands of angels or other heavenly beings [from the hands of Yahweh, e.g., Exod 32:32-33, Ps 69:28, Ps 139:16, Zach 5:1-5] particularly but not exclusively in apocalypses. This is not a surprising development since, as a rule, the figure of God recedes in this genre, and angels emerge as God's primary agents.”

²⁰ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 342.

²¹ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 342.

Another important element of the entire narrative structure consists of the degree or quality of the secrets or mysteries into which Enoch has been allowed to participate; the mysteries revealed to Enoch are among the highest.²² The author of the *Book of the Watchers*, again one of the most ancient books of the first Enochic corpus, emphatically portrays Enoch as a divine messenger to the fallen watchers. He conveys the following message about the quality of the mysteries they know: “You were in heaven, and no mystery was revealed to you; but a stolen mystery you learned.”²³ Regarding the phrase “stolen mystery,” Nickelsburg hypothesizes that the original Greek translation from the Hebrew was μυστήριον ἐξουθενημένον, a “worthless or despised mystery,” which agrees with the Ethiopic version: *menuna meštira*. The latest book of the corpus—the *Book of Parables*—offers a comprehensive list of the mysteries Enoch had access to: the division of the heavenly kingdom and the knowledge of the eschatological places of judgment (*1 Enoch* 41:1); the secrets of lightning, thunder, winds, clouds, dew, sun, and moon (*1 Enoch* 41:3-8); luminaries and their laws (*1 Enoch* 49); and the hidden things about the Son of Man (*1 Enoch* 46).²⁴

Besides the visionary dimension, Enoch's scribal characteristic remains emblematic. As will be shown, he is a heavenly scribe and a revealer of truth through the method of interpreting the intricate and obscure parables and signs God reveals to the human being. In this context, sacred text plays a central role and the mediator is an inspired interpreter. One may observe that the emergence of apocalyptic literature

²² For a refined analysis of the various degrees of mysteries in *1 Enoch*, see L. T. Stuckenbruck, “4QInstruction and the Possible Influence of Early Enochic Traditions: An Evaluation,” in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought* (eds. C. Hempel, A. Lange, and H. Lichtenberger; Leuven: University Press, 2002), 245-61, esp. 260.

²³ *1 En* 16:3. Trans. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, 37.

²⁴ For analysis, see D. W. Suter, *Tradition and Composition in the Parables of Enoch* (SBLDS 47; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979); cf. G. Boccaccini, ed., *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2007).

involved a change in epistemological paradigm and the conception of the inspired mediator. The mediator first of all needs to be initiated into divine mysteries, and second he is primarily a revealer of divine mysteries and a sacred interpreter.

3. Melito as Revealer of Divine and Heavenly Mysteries

I would like to begin my analysis of the common elements between *I Enoch* and *Peri Pascha* by pointing out some common features of the figures of the Son of Man in the *Book of Similitudes* and Melito's Logos-Christ. First, while Enoch and Melito are human interpreters, the Son of Man and the Logos are divine figures and sources of revelation and wisdom: "All the treasures of what is hidden he [i.e., the Son of Man] will reveal."²⁵ Second, Enoch and Melito play the mediatorial roles of receptacles of revelation, decoders of encrypted messages, and thus illumined interpreters and scribes. Third, there is a connection between mystery and revealed truth. These two terms, whether identical or not, are revealed through deciphering parables. Fourth, the Son of Man and the Logos are soteriological figures; they have soteriological powers and the power of judgment.²⁶

According to Melito's vision, every mystery is a mystery of the Lord (τὸ τοῦ κυρίου μυστήριον), since the Lord is all things (ὅς ἐστιν τὰ πάντα): Law, Word, grace,

²⁵ *I En.* 46:3. Trans. Nickelsburg and Vanderkam, 60.

²⁶ According to James VanderKam, the two major sources of this theme in *I Enoch* are Second Isaiah (Isa 41:8, 9; 42:1; 43:10, 20; 44:1, 2; 45:41; 49:7) and Daniel 7, while the title "the anointed one" from *I En* 48:10 derives from Ps 2:2. Regarding the function of eschatological judge, VanderKam supposes that this is the innovation of *I Enoch*, since "neither the servant nor the son of man has that function in Scripture," although he agrees that the author of *I Enoch* has taken from Daniel 7 the image of the judgment scene present in *I En* 55:1-4; see J. VanderKam, "Biblical Interpretation in *I Enoch* and Jubilees," in *The Pseudepigrapha and Early Biblical Interpretation*, ed. J. H. Charlesworth and C. A. Evans (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1993), 96-125, esp. 116.

Father, Son, sheep, man, God, Pascha.²⁷ Unlike Enoch, Melito does not disclose cosmological and astronomical mysteries, but the mystery of divine economy, the mystery of the incarnated Lord. The centrality of the mystery of Incarnation organizes the whole history of humankind and the history of salvation as well. The history of humankind and the history of salvation are essential theological categories not only for Melito's *Peri Pascha*, but for the entire Jewish tradition of the Son of Man (of course, excluding the idea of Incarnation). In the *Book of Similitudes*, the highest mystery revealed to Enoch is not that of a cosmic element and of its heavenly sources, but that of the vision of the Head of Days and of his chosen one, the Son of Man.²⁸ Bockmuehl emphasizes a key attribute of the Son of Man: "*I Enoch* frequently features the conviction that the Messiah/Son of Man is already present and hidden with God since the beginning of the world, in order to be revealed in the eschaton (*I En.* 38:2, 48:2-7, 62:6f., 69:26-29)."²⁹ Similar descriptions of the Son of Man or a savior hidden from eternity may also be encountered in *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch* and other documents.³⁰ Bockmuehl notes the presence of the same idea in Col 1:24-2:5, where Jesus is portrayed or identified with the Messiah, the hidden secret from all the ages and the one who encapsulates all mysteries:

[T]hat secret purpose hidden for long ages (τὸ μυστήριον τὸ ἀποκεκρυμμένον ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων) and through many generations, but now disclosed (νῦν δὲ ἐφανερώθη) to God's people. To them he chose to make known what a wealth of glory is offered to the Gentiles in this secret purpose: Christ in you, the hope of glory.³¹

²⁷ *Peri Pascha* [PP] 9 [54-65].

²⁸ *I En* 46, 48, 61-62, and 68-70; cf. J. C. VanderKam, "Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in *I Enoch* 37-71," in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 169-91.

²⁹ Bockmuehl, *Revelation*, 37. See, for example, *I En.* 48:6: "For this reason he was chosen and hidden in his presence before the world was created and forever. And the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits has revealed him to the holy and the righteous"

³⁰ Bockmuehl, *Revelation*, 38.

³¹ Col 1:26-27.

My aim is to keep them [Laodiceans] in good heart and united in love, so that they may come to the full wealth of conviction which understanding brings, and grasp God's secret, which is Christ himself (τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ, Χριστοῦ), in whom lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (ἐν ᾧ εἰσιν πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοι).³²

This idea, which of course follows the emergence of the Son of Man figure, should be dated after the production of the *Book of Similitudes*, therefore the turn of the era.

For Melito, Christ the Logos is the divine agent who planned the mystery of his sacrifice *in illo tempore*, manifested it as a pre-figuration in the Law and prophets, and revealed its truth in his own sacrifice:

Understand therefore, beloved, how it is new and old, eternal and temporary, perishable and imperishable, mortal and immortal, this mystery of the Pascha (τὸ τοῦ πάσχα μυστήριον): old as regards the word; temporary as regards the model, eternal because of the grace ...³³

[T]he mystery of the Lord, having prefigured well in advance (ἐκ μακροῦ προτυπωθέν) and having been seen through a model (διὰ τύπον ὁραθέν), is today believed in now that it is fulfilled (σήμερον πίστεως τυγχάνει τετελεσμένον).³⁴

It is worth noting that Daniel, Enoch, ben Sira, Ezra, Baruch, Paul, and Melito as mediatorial characters, have similar functions in the process of revelation. They are not the source of revelation, the source encapsulating a mystery ready to be revealed, but mediators of such a mystery to a certain human community. There are, however, some differences in the way they access the divine mystery. Although Enoch and Paul can be compared in terms of ascension—as the particular apocalyptic method of acquiring the divine revelation—Melito does not emphasize ascension, but describes it as the eschatological event in which Christ himself will raise all humankind, for ever, to the presence of the heavenly Father. In spite of the fact that the bishop of Sardis shares the mystery-scribal epistemology with Enoch, he remains primarily a sage/scribe initiated in

³² Col 2:2-3. Cf. Bockmuehl, *Revelation*, 178-93.

³³ *PP* 2-3 (6-19).

³⁴ *PP* 58 (405-8).

Christ's mysteries revealed on earth rather than a visionary transported to heaven. In this way, Melito resembles more the inspired scribe ben Sira than Enoch or Ezra of the Greek apocalypse, who experience ascension, or Ezra of the Syriac version and Baruch of the Second Book, who receive visions in their dreams.

Furthermore, the highest mystery which most of these revealers disclose is that of the hidden Messiah, the Christ, the Son of Man, and of his salvific manifestation, whether it be conceived of in the future, in the past, or in the present. There is, however, a significant distinction in the logic of this mystery. While for the authors of *1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, and *2 Baruch*, the mystery still remains eschatological and the expectation of a future manifestation, for Paul and Melito the mystery primarily belongs to history, it is the history of salvation, and their first aim is to describe it properly and persuade their audience to discover its meaning and reality.³⁵ Although revealed on earth through the Incarnation, the mystery still remains heavenly:

As then with the perishable examples (*παραδείγματα*, i.e., the types of the Old Testament) so also with the imperishable things [their fulfillment in Christ]; as with the earthly things, so also with the heavenly. For the very salvation and reality (*ἀλήθεια*) of the Lord were prefigured in the people, and the decrees of the gospel were proclaimed in advance by the law.³⁶

Consequently, Paul and Melito are new Enochs, new mediators of divine mysteries.

Perhaps inspired by Paul's typological exegesis, Melito extends this hermeneutical method to the mystery of Pascha, sees the whole history of salvation through the mystery of Pascha, and describes it through mystery terminology and the method of typology.

³⁵ Cf. e.g., *1 En* 1:4-5: "The Great Holy One will come forth from his dwelling, and the eternal God will tread from thence upon Mount Sinai. He will appear with his army, he will appear with his mighty host from the heaven of heavens."

³⁶ *PP* 39.

4. Melito as Sage/Scribe and Prophet

One of the distinctive features of the scribe and sage is the correct or accurate interpretation of the holy texts. Here Nickelsburg, based on Baumgartner, makes a parallel between Enoch and ben Sira, claiming that they have “somewhat the same roles.”³⁷ And he is most likely right since ben Sira, along with the roles of scribe and sage, assumes a prophetic role.

As a sage, he [ben Sirah] is an interpreter of the heavenly wisdom embodied in the Torah. ... Thus it is not by accident that he describes himself as a channel for wisdom's life-giving water, as one who “pours forth teaching like prophecy” (24:33).³⁸

Nickelsburg concludes by adding this new insight: “[T]he figure of the sage or scribe emerges in both texts [*1 Enoch* and ben Sirah] as a teacher of Torah who speaks with the inspiration of the prophets.”³⁹

The figure of the sage full of wisdom, scribe, and prophet matches Melito, as well. It is well known, on the one hand, that some of ancient writers described Melito as a prophet and inspired person. Jerome testifies that Tertullian, although obviously envying Melito’s elegant style and rhetorical talent, showed that many non-Montanists viewed the Sardisian as a prophet: “Tertullian, in the seven books which he wrote against the church in favor of Montanus, derides his [Melito’s] elegant and declamatory style, saying that he was thought of as a prophet by most of us Christians.”⁴⁰ Similarly, Eusebius lists Melito among the “great luminaries” of Asia, and portrays him as “the eunuch, who lived

³⁷ Nickelsburg, “Enoch’ as Scientist,” 226. For W. Baumgarten, see “Die literarischen Gattungen in der Weisheit des Jesus Sirach,” ZAW 34 (1914): 165-198.

³⁸ Nickelsburg, “Enoch’ as Scientist,” 226.

³⁹ Ibid., 227.

⁴⁰ Jerome, *De viris illustribus* 24.3, in *Saint Jerome: On Illustrious Men*, tr. T. P. Halton (Washington DC: The CUA Press, 1999), 46-47.

entirely in the Holy Spirit, who lies in Sardis, waiting for the visitation from heaven when he shall rise from the dead.”⁴¹

It is also true that Melito's text often betrays prophetic tones, especially in his anti-Jewish polemics, where the reproaches he addresses to Israel are set in the form of a direct dialog between him and the people of Israel, in a way similar to the classic prophetic oracles:

What strange crime, Israel, have you committed? You dishonored him that honored you.... What have you done, Israel? ... And you killed your Lord at the great feast. ... O lawless Israel, what is this unprecedented crime you committed, thrusting your Lord among unprecedented sufferings, your Sovereign, who formed you, who made you... who tinted the light, who lit up the day, who divided off the darkness, who fixed the first marker, who hung the earth, who controlled the deep, who spread out the firmament, who arrayed the world, who fitted the stars in heaven, who lit up the luminaries, who made the angels in heaven, who established the thrones there, who formed man upon earth. It was he who chose you and guided you from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to Isaac and Jacob and the twelve patriarchs. It was he who guided you into Egypt, and watched over you and there sustained you. It was he who lit your way with a pillar and sheltered you with a cloud, who cut the Red Sea and led you through and destroyed your enemy....⁴²

This rhetorical form echoes, for example, well-known passages in Amos (“Listen, Israelites, to these words that the Lord addresses to you, to the whole nation which he brought up from Egypt” [3:1]; “Listen, Israel, to these words, the dirge I raise over you” [5:1]) or Micah (“But I am full of strength, of justice and power, to declare to Jacob his crime, to Israel his sin. Listen to this leaders of Jacob, you rulers of Israel, who abhor what is right and pervert what is straight, building Zion with bloodshed, Jerusalem with iniquity” [3:8-10]).

⁴¹ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiae* 5.24.5, in *The Ecclesiastical History*, 2 vols., tr. K. Lake (LCL; Cambridge, MA; London: William Heinemann, 1965), 1:507.

⁴² See PP 73-93. The passage was most likely part of the Jewish-Christian polemic of the time; see also some of the apologists who wrote treatises usually entitled *Against the Jews*, such as Appolinaris and Miltiades. See, for instance, R. S. MacLennan, “Christian Self-Definition in the *Adversus Judaeos* Preachers in the Second Century,” in *Diaspora, Jews, and Judaism: Essays in Honor of, and in Dialogue with, A. Thomas Kraabel* (eds. J. A. Overman and R. S. MacLennan; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992) 209-24.

One should recall as well Melito's aforementioned claim to reveal the deepest mysteries of history and divine economy, namely the works of Christ through the Old and New Testaments.⁴³ In fact, in his discursive scenario, Melito plays the role of the revealer of mysteries. At the same time, he is a revealer who undertakes this task through interpreting Scripture. Thus, Melito assumes the scribal role of inspired interpreter.

5. Enoch and Melito as Interpreters, Decoders of Parables, and Revealers of the Truth

The method of revealing divine mysteries is undertaken through the exegetical process in which Melito decodes the parables and hidden meanings of the ancient scriptures. He is the inspired scribe in the process of a divine exegesis that takes place in the liturgical context of the Paschal celebration and follows immediately after the reading of Exodus 12. The homily begins with this clear statement: "The scripture from the Hebrew Exodus has been read and the words of the mystery have been plainly stated."⁴⁴ At first sight, the passage which follows this affirmation appears to be a short summary of the story of exodus. Instead of this, Melito expounds, from *Peri Pascha* 1-10, the thesis that the whole story is a mystery old and new, in which Christ was and still remains present, and concludes in *Peri Pascha* 11 with the words: "This is the mystery of the Pascha just as it is written in the law, as it has just now been read." Melito continues afterwards, as he announced, by relating (διηγῆσομαι) the words of scripture and its mystery in which he emphasizes the presence of the Lord:

⁴³ B. G. Bucur phrases Melito's exegesis as "rewritten Bible" and "Christological typology;" cf. "Exegesis of Biblical Theophanies in Byzantine Hymnography: Rewritten Bible?" *TS* 68 (2007): 92–112. See also next chapter.

⁴⁴ *PP* 1.1.

It is clear that your respect [the angel of death who slaughtered the first-born of Egypt] was won (δυσωπηθείς) when you saw the mystery of the Lord occurring in the sheep, the life of the Lord in the slaughter of the lamb, the model (τύπον) of the Lord in the death of the sheep.⁴⁵

At this point, in *Peri Pascha* 35, he introduces technical exegetical terminology such as τύπος (type), τὸ λεγόμενον (that what is said/the text), τὸ γινόμενον (that what is done/the event), παραβολή (parable/comparison), προκέντημα (project/preliminary sketch), and the following exegetical theory:

What is said (τὸ λεγόμενον) and done (γινόμενον) is nothing, beloved, without a comparison (παραβολῇ) and preliminary sketch (προκέντημα). Whatever is said and done finds its comparison—what is said a comparison, what is done a prefiguration (προτυπώσεως)—in order that, just as what is done is demonstrated through the prefiguration, so also what is spoken (τὸ λαλούμενου) may be elucidated through the comparison.

Consequently, one may affirm that, according to Melito, the Old Testament is a set of things said and done which express mysteries.⁴⁶ They have to be interpreted and their interpretation represents the linguistic expression of the mysterious, hidden things. These mysteries may either refer to already existing realities, such as the Son of Man hidden from the ages, or denote such future things as the end of the world and the reality of the world to come. Consequently, there are three levels of discussion: first, mysteries (τὰ μυστήρια), the things done; second, parables, the things said; and third, the interpretation (ἐρμηνεία) of parables, an enterprise which discloses the hidden sense of mysteries. Interpretation illumines both mysteries and parables, the old events and spoken

⁴⁵ *PP* 33 (207-210).

⁴⁶ See also *PP* 40 (262): “the law was the writing of a parable” (ὁ νόμος γραφὴ παραβολῆς). Yet, Clement of Alexandria will maintain (see *Str.* V.25.1) that the entire Scripture has been written in parables. Melito’s technique of typology may be seen as an important example and witness of the Christian theology of typological interpretation, the roots of which may be traced back to the Pauline letters, Justin, and Irenaeus. But Melito elaborates it in a methodical exegetical strategy and uses it in the context of a theory of mystery, which includes at least the following three key elements: (1) the exegetical structure type (prefiguration)-archetype (revealed truth); 2) the Logos performs mysteries in both testaments, and the relationship between these mysteries is that between type and archetype; 3) Melito reveals these mysteries, the hidden works of the Logos.

words, which are the primary levels of reality where God manifested his divine actions and messages. In addition, God continues his manifestation while inspiring the interpreter in the hermeneutical process.

Accordingly, elucidating the parables and the intricate and obscure places of scripture defines the key preoccupation of the scribe. Since Melito's primary activity consists of elucidating parables, his main function can be associated with scribal activity.⁴⁷ Unlike Enoch, Ezra, and Baruch (who receive the interpretation through the mediation of an angel), ben Sira, the Teacher of Righteousness, Paul, and Melito give their own interpretations as inspired sages. Their connection with the divine Wisdom, therefore, is unmediated.

Parable terminology is already present in Proverbs 1:6, Ben Sira 39:2, and the *Book of Parables* from the Ethiopic Book of Enoch. As Nickelsburg observes, parables are deeply linked in *1 Enoch* with the ideas of vision and transmission of divine, heavenly wisdom:

[T]he end of the first journey and much of the second journey focuses on what Enoch sees and how, upon his request for information, the visions are interpreted to him. The Book of Parables (chaps. 37-71), which as a whole recasts some of the traditions in chapters 1-36, also begins with repeated emphasis on Enoch's receipt of wisdom and his present transmission of what he has learned through the words and parables he speaks.⁴⁸

Moreover, one of the most important things of the parable theory consists of the spiritual purpose of the exegetical enterprise, namely, the display and manifestation of the "truth" (תמא or ἀλήθεια). The concept is already connected in the Hebrew Bible with another

⁴⁷ See, for example, Sir 39:1-3: "How different it is with one who devotes himself to reflecting on the law of the Most High, who explores all the wisdom of the past and occupies himself with the study of prophecies! He preserves the sayings of the famous and penetrates the subtleties of parables. He explores the hidden meaning of proverbs and knows his way among enigmatic parables."

⁴⁸ Nickelsburg, "Enoch as Scientist," 220.

term of major importance for both Enochic and Melitonian corpora, namely “righteousness” (דִּקְיָה or δικαιοσύνη). The two terms seem to be strongly connected with Yahweh. In Genesis 24:27, for instance, Isaac gives thanks to Yahweh for not taking away from him Yahweh’s דִּקְיָה and אֱמֶת. Many other passages such as Genesis 32:10 or Psalms 85:10, 86:15, 98:3, link the two terms together, and Exodus 34:6 even states that Yahweh is bountiful in righteousness and truth. In other passages, Yahweh makes them manifest (2 Sam 2:6, 15:20). To a certain extent, the meanings of the two terms overlap, as one can see in the case of Exodus 18:21, where the Hebrew אֲנָשֵׁי אֱמֶת (literally “men of truth”) was rendered into Greek through ἄνδρες δίκαιους (“righteous men”). They are also frequently used in such expressions as “to walk in truth” (1 Kings 2:4; 3:6; 2 Kings 20:3) and “to walk in righteousness” (1 Kings 3:6). While Psalm 89:14 places truth along with mercy (דִּסְחָ or ἔλεος) before the face (פָּנִים or προσώπον) of Yahweh, Psalm 119:142 identifies the Torah and the truth, and Psalm 119:151 the Ten Commandments and the truth. Daniel 10:21 concocts the expression “in the Book of Truth” (בְּכֵתַב אֱמֶת or ἐν ἀπογραφῇ ἀληθείας).

I Enoch 91:4 also uses the expression to “walk in truth” and to “walk in righteousness,” while *I Enoch* 92:4 connects the concepts of “righteousness,” “truth,” and “light.” One of the most ancient parts of the Enochic corpus, the *Book of the Watchers*, associates with Enoch such titles as “scribe” (12:3; cf. 92:1), “scribe of righteousness” (12:4), and “scribe of truth” (15:1). Nickelsburg offers the following comments on the last title:

Enoch is addressed here as ἄνθρωπος ἀληθινὸς καὶ γραμματεὺς τῆς ἀληθείας. The parallel formulation in 12:4 is ὁ γραμματεὺς τῆς δικαιοσύνης. ... The text in 12:4 almost certainly

translates סופר די קושטא. The Aram. noun קושטא can mean either uprightness/righteousness or truth ... and could therefore be legitimately translated in Greek either as δικαιοσύνη or ἀλήθεια.⁴⁹

Having emphasized the similarity of meaning between truth and righteousness, Nickelsburg proceeds to underline the theological significance of this title: “Enoch's righteousness is relevant here because by virtue of it he was permitted to enter the divine presence.”⁵⁰

Similarly, the concept of truth (ἀλήθεια) is emblematic in Melito's writing. In opposition to the concept of τύπος (the prefiguration or the preliminary sketch pertaining to the pre-incarnational period), the truth represents the full manifestation of the divine mystery pertaining, according to Melito, to the post-incarnational times:

For to each belongs a proper season (or moment: καιρός): a proper time for the model (τοῦ τύπου), a proper time for the material (τῆς ὕλης), a proper time for the reality (τῆς ἀληθείας).⁵¹ ... For the very salvation and reality (ἀλήθεια) of the Lord were prefigured in the people (ἐν τῷ λαῷ), and the decrees of the gospel were proclaimed in advance by the law. The people (λαός) then was a model (τύπος) by way of preliminary sketch, and the law (νόμος) was the writing of a parable (γραφὴ παραβολῆς); the gospel is the recounting and fulfillment of the law, and the church is the repository of the reality (τῆς ἀληθείας). The model then was precious before the reality (πρὸ τῆς ἀληθείας), and the parable (παραβολή) was marvelous before the interpretation (πρὸ τῆς ἐρμηνείας).⁵²

Melito's type of interpretation appears to be an intellectual phenomenon belonging to the period of history which begins with the highest manifestation of the truth, the event of Incarnation.

The Incarnation plays, consequently, an important role in the Melitonian epistemological scheme. It indicates the disclosure of the highest mysteries of heaven (“the Christ above” [τὸν ἄνω Χριστόν],⁵³ or “the Jerusalem above” [τὴν ἄνω

⁴⁹ Nickelsburg, *I Enoch*, 270. Cf. Nickelsburg, *I Enoch*, 411: “The nouns ‘truth’ (*ret*) and ‘righteousness’ (*sedq*) may well translate the same Aramaic word (סופר).”

⁵⁰ Nickelsburg, *I Enoch*, 270.

⁵¹ *PP* 38 (241-4).

⁵² *PP* 39 (259)-41 (266).

⁵³ *PP* 44 (289).

Ιερουσαλήμ]⁵⁴). The Incarnation changes the location or the geography where the divine mysteries (at least the pre-eschatological ones) are revealed. Instead of heaven, their location is the earth. Moreover, the change in location of the divine mysteries entails a change in the method of accessing them. In the post-incarnational context, human beings do not have to ascend, but to become initiated into Christ's mysteries.

Melito, therefore, though employing an epistemic scheme similar to the apocalyptic one, places it in a context of mystery terminology. He is the initiated interpreter able to discern the mysteries, extract the interpretation, and make manifest the truth from the ancient parables:

[T]he model was made void, conceding its power to the reality (τῇ ἀληθείᾳ), and the law was fulfilled, conceding its power to the gospel. In the same way as the model was made void, conceding the image to the truly real (τῷ φύσει ἀληθεῖ τὴν εἰκόνα παραδούς), and the parable was fulfilled, being elucidated by the interpretation (ὑπὸ τῆς ἐρμηνείας φωτισθεῖσα).⁵⁵

Accessing the truth and the mystery actually leads to the encounter with God, though this time not in an apocalyptic-ascensional way, but in an internalized and mystery manner.⁵⁶ The exercise of typology, therefore, represents the enterprise of revealing the highest mysteries of God, and leads as well to the encounter with the real, active, and mysterious divine presence on earth. Furthermore, through this encounter, Christ carries “man to the heights of heaven,” and shows him the Father.⁵⁷ In Melito's text, the Logos or the Word utters his divine call in the following way:

Come then, all you families of men who are compounded with sins, and get forgiveness of sins. For I am your forgiveness, I am the Pascha of salvation, I am the lamb slain for you; I am your

⁵⁴ PP 45 (291).

⁵⁵ PP 42 (271)-43 (274).

⁵⁶ Cf. D. A. Giulea, “Pseudo-Hippolytus's *In Sanctum Pascha: A Mystery Apocalypse*,” in *Apocalyptic Thought in Early Christianity* (ed. R. J. Daly; Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academics, 2009), 127-142.

⁵⁷ PP 102 (764).

ransom, I am your life, I am your light, I am your salvation, I am your resurrection, I am your king. I will raise you up by my right hand; I am leading you up to the heights of heaven; there I will show you the Father from ages past.⁵⁸

Melito reserves the apocalyptic method of ascension for the eschatological time. Unlike Enoch and other apocalyptic works, *ascensio* and *visio Dei* are not fragmentary moments of the earthly life of a human being followed by the return to the earth, but represent the promised, eschatological, final, and definitive ascension and vision of God.

6. Conclusion

Although sharing an epistemic paradigm similar to *I Enoch* and other apocalyptic books, Melito's standpoint reflects a special development of this paradigm in Early Christianity. While the truth is to be found through the scribal exegetical process of interpreting parables and revealing the divine and heavenly mysteries, the access to those mysteries is no longer performed exclusively through ascension, but, as we will see in the next chapters, through a complex process of initiation into Christ's mysteries with the expectation of the eschatological ascension and vision of the Father. The event of Christ's Incarnation represents the descent of the source of revelation and wisdom, while ascension remains a process particular to the eschaton. The process of internalization is, therefore, inserted in the general scenario of the history of salvation, namely the economic activity of Christ who descended to earth in order to raise again human beings to heaven. Typology, in this context, represents a method of interpreting the parables of scripture, revealing and generally mediating the hidden truth and divine mysteries. Thus, the Christian interpreter is the scribe of a new type of mysteries.

⁵⁸ *PP* 103.

XI. PASCHAL EXEGESIS AS MYSTERY PERFORMANCE

The intent of this chapter is to investigate the manner in which Christians of the second and third centuries in Asia Minor and Alexandria approached the reading of Scripture in, or in connection with, the liturgical context of the Paschal feast. I will attempt to show how such reading, within that context, was primarily a performance similar to those of the Greek mysteries, rather than merely an intellectual exercise.⁵⁹ According to the paschal writings of Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Origen, scriptural hermeneutics does not seem to imply the solving of an enigma, but rather constitutes an actual participation in, or encounter with, a reality imperceptible to the senses: the manifestation of the Logos-Christ. Correspondingly, at the end of the exegetic performance and throughout its course, the exegete is not only a collector of new information; on the contrary, as the ancient Greek used to become the subject of an actual meeting with the manifestations of a god/goddess in the mystery cults, so the ancient Christian was the participant in a transforming encounter, mediated by Scripture, with the various manifestations of the Logos-Christ. Most likely, this kind of exegesis was the reflection of a Christian polemical attitude towards the mystery religions.

Cumulative evidence will lead to the hypothesis that this type of mystery exegesis was connected with, or part of, the complex liturgical feast of Pascha which probably emerged in second-century Asia Minor. Melito is the first witness to, if not the inventor of, this way of reading Scriptures. Pseudo-Hippolytus developed it, and Origen took over

⁵⁹ Putting it into Aristotle's words, it was a matter of *pathein* rather than *mathein*, of "experiencing" rather than "learning" (*Fr.* 15 from Synesius *Dion* 48, in N. Turchi, *Fontes Historiae Mysteriorum Aevi Hellenistici* [Rome: Libreria di scienze e lettere del G. Bardi, 1930]). Cf. Plutarch *Isis* 382de and Clement *Str.* 5.71.1.

this kind of exegesis either from Melito, from Clement, or from an ongoing tradition.

1. Jewish Precedents of Exegesis as Mystery Rite

The Jewish conception of reading the Torah as an experience that leads to the knowledge of divine mysteries seems to constitute a precedent for early Christian mystery exegesis.⁶⁰ Although various Jewish Diaspora writers such as Aristobulus, Artapanus, the *Orphica* author, Pseudo-Phocylides, or Josephus employed the terminology of the pagan rites, Philo associated the exegetical practice as religious experience with mystery terminology and Greek techniques of allegorical interpretation.⁶¹ In *De cherubim* 42-43, for example, one can find early roots of interpreting Scripture as a mystery rite.⁶² The Alexandrian theologian, as an initiated mystagogue, develops, metaphorically or not, his hermeneutic exercise as a mystery performance and invites the reader to take part in this exercise in order to become an initiate in the divine knowledge. Moreover, in his commentary on Exodus, Philo develops an allegorical exegesis in connection with the Passover narrative.

It might be suggested that Melito's, Pseudo-Hippolytus's, and Origen's innovation consists in connecting the old method of reading Scripture as a religious experience with the Christian typological interpretation, Greek mystery terminology, Jewish terms and images, and the Paschal liturgical celebration. Within this complex context of the Paschal feast, viewed as a central Christian mystery, biblical exegesis

⁶⁰ For the idea of Jewish mystery and its connection with biblical interpretation, see bibliography at the beginning of the second part on the discussion of Philo.

⁶¹ Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery*, 78.

⁶² See Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery*, 76-81. Allegory, for Philo, is a mystical quest (*Som* 1:164).

acquired the character of a special mystery performance or drama.⁶³

2. Melito of Sardis's Mystery Exegesis

Peri Pascha starts with a succession of paradoxical pairs of terms: the mystery of the Pascha (τὸ τοῦ πάσχα μυστήριον) is old and new, eternal and temporary, perishable and imperishable, mortal and immortal.⁶⁴ Melito, however, does not contradict himself for the reason that he does not predicate these attributes at the same time, but all the first attributes are associated with the old Passover, the Jewish Pesach, while all the second ones refer to the mystery of the new, i.e., Christian, Pascha.⁶⁵ This distinction appears to be pivotal for the Melitenean vision.

A. The Old Mystery of Pesach Performed by Moses

As the passages *Peri Pascha* 11-14 illustrate, God is the source and agent of the old mystery. Although he uses the term μυστήριον in the singular and not the plural (τὰ μυστήρια), Melito's use of the term is not a philosophical abstraction, but a genuine

⁶³ While emphasizing mystery terminology, the present chapter does not deny the existence of Jewish vocabulary and themes in the writings of the above-mentioned Christian theologians. On the contrary, scholars have much emphasized this vocabulary, too.

⁶⁴ Melito, *PP* 2 [6-10]. For the nature and character of Christian mysteries, see, for instance: A. Loisy, *Les mystères païens et le mystère chrétien* (Paris: Nourry, 1919); S. Angus, *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity: A Study in the Religious Background of Early Christianity* (New York: Scribner, 1925); R. Eisler, *Orphisch-dionysische mysteriengedanken in der christlichen Antike* (Leipzig; Berlin: Teubner, 1925/1966); O. Casel, *Das Christliche Kultmysterium* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1932); H. Rahner, *Griechische Mythen in christlicher Deutung: Gesammelte Aufsätze von Hugo Rahner* (Zürich: Rhein Verlag, 1945); J. D. B. Hamilton, "The Church and the Language of Mystery: The First Four Centuries," *ETL* 53(1977): 479-94; D. H. Wiens, "Mystery Concepts in Primitive Christianity and Its Environment," *ANRW*, Vol.2.23.2 (1980): 1248-84; L. Bouyer, *Mysterion: Du mystère à la mystique*, (Paris 1986); W. Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge: University Press, 1987); C. Riedweg, *Mysterienterminologie bei Platon, Philon und Klemens von Alexandrien* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1987); J. Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); C. A. P. Ruck, B. D. Staples, C. Heinrich, eds., *The Apples of Apollo: Pagan and Christian Mysteries of the Eucharist* (Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic Press, 2001).

⁶⁵ *PP* 3(11-18): "Old is the law, but new the word; temporary the model, but eternal the grace; perishable the sheep, imperishable the Lord" (Hall, 3).

action performed by human beings and in which God is also active. It was a rite or mystery performance, not an abstraction. God teaches Moses how to perform during the night the mystery of Israel's salvation and how the angel of death will bind Pharaoh and punish the Egyptian people. Melito further in *Peri Pascha* 15-17 portrays Moses as hierophant officiating at a mystery for the initiated people of Israel:

Then Moses, when he had slain the sheep, and at night (νύκτωρ) performed the mystery (διατελέσας τὸ μυστήριον) with the sons of Israel, marked (ἐσφράγισεν) the doors of the houses to protect the people and win the angel's respect.⁶⁶

The account further relates how the Israelites, unlike the Egyptians, sacrificed the sheep, ate the Pascha, performed the mystery (τὸ μυστήριον τελείται), and became marked with a sign able to gain the respect of the angel of death.⁶⁷ In contrast, the Egyptians remained uninitiated into the mystery (ἀμύητοι τοῦ μυστηρίου), not taking part in the Pascha (ἄμοιροι τοῦ πάσχα), without the seal of blood (ἄσφράγιστοι τοῦ αἵματος), and thus without the protection of the spirit. Consequently, they easily fall prey to the angel that, in one night, "made them childless."⁶⁸ While in *Peri Pascha* 18-30 Melito describes the calamity and mourning that the angel of death spread over the whole land of Egypt, in 31-33 he explains that the Lord Christ as life, type, and spirit worked within the old mystery.

⁶⁶ Melito, *PP* 15(88-91). S. G. Hall comments: "Melito regards the Pascha as an initiatory rite with apotropaic effect, and insinuates into 14-16 the language of Christian baptism an unction [implying much mystery language], especially σφραγίζειν, χρίειν, πνεῦμα, ἁμύετος" (Hall, *Melito*, 9, n.5). Another scholar, A. Stewart-Sykes, argues that *Peri Pascha* might be an early liturgy; see *The Lamb's High Feast: Melito, Peri Pascha, and the Quartodeciman Paschal Liturgy at Sardis* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

⁶⁷ The seal of blood may have a function similar to that of the protective mystery charm (amulet or talisman) against natural calamity or plague (Cf. P. Kingsley, *Ancient Philosophy, Mystery, and Magic: Empedocles and Pythagorean Tradition* [Oxford: University Press, 1995], 307-312).

⁶⁸ *PP* 16(92)-17(104). Criticizing the Egyptians for not being initiated in the mystery of the Pascha might be seen as a general polemic against the pagans. Melito in many pages describes Egypt's punishment in terms of mourning, death, and darkness of Hades. For the connection between children and mystery, see P. Lambrechts, "L'importance de l'enfant dans les religions à mystères," *Hommages W. Deonna* (Bruxelles: Latomus, Revue d'études latines, 1957), 322-33.

B. The Theory of Types as Connection between Two Mystery Series

Pseudo-Hippolytus and Origen organize their discourses following the same bipartite Melitonian structure: the first part is an exposition of the paschal figures and types of the old mystery from Exodus¹², while the second part becomes an illustration of the true or prefigured realities. First comes the type or the Pesach, second the antitype or the Pascha.

Melito describes the relationship between the old and new mystery of Pascha through typological exegesis, a method that the author took over from previous Christian exegetical tradition. The old sacred Scriptures of the Jewish people (Scriptures accepted by the Christians as well) express ideas and depict Old Testament events that came to be associated with the events of the divine economy after the Incarnation. For instance, in 1 Corinthians 10:1-11 and Galatians 4:21-31, Paul associates the crossing of the Red Sea with Christian Baptism, and in this way the crossing of the sea is a figure or type (ὁ τύπος) for the Christian sacrament (τὸ ἀντίτυπον). Following the same logic, the manna of the desert was the figure of the Eucharist, while the pillar of cloud/fire was the figure of Christ himself. Scholars have called this type of exegesis *typology*, and it was common to the majority of Christian writers of the first three centuries. This fact prompted Jean Daniélou to view typology as the Christian exegesis *par excellence*.

Nevertheless, at least for Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Origen, typology seems to play the function of connecting the two mystery series of the Logos by relating an old figure/type with its corresponding antitype. Typology reveals, in this way, the unique source and agent of the two mystery series, the Logos-Christ. There is, in conclusion, only one mystery developed in different grades and stages.

C. Melito's Term μυστήριον: From "Secret" to "Performance"

Justin and Irenaeus, the main Christian exegetes of Melito's time, maintain the method of typology found in the Pauline writings, especially because of the theological polemics in which they were involved. Within this polemical context, the Jewish readers who do not see in the Scriptures those Christological meanings described, for instance, by Justin, become major opponents. Likewise, the Marcionite theologians, not very lenient towards obscure scriptural passages, should be also added along with the ironies of Hellenistic philosophically educated people, such as Celsus.⁶⁹ The idea of obscure words was not new, since as early as the book of Proverbs 1:6 testifies to an early reflection on the concepts of parable (παραβολή), obscure word (σκοτεινὸς λόγος), or enigma (ἀίνιγμα). Later, Justin would call these obscure passages mystery (μυστήριον) or symbol (σύμβολον), and Christian theologians would interpret them mainly typologically.

Although the term μυστήριον appears in the Pauline corpus, a development of exegesis as mystery performance or rite does not seem to materialize in Christian context before Melito.⁷⁰ In Justin, for instance, the term can be encountered when the writer claims that prophecies describe future events through parables, mysteries, and symbols of events (ἐν παραβολαῖς ἢ μυστηρίοις ἢ ἐν συμβόλοις ἔργων),⁷¹ because, in general,

⁶⁹ Cf. M. Harl, "Origène et les interprétations patristiques grecques de l'«obscurité» biblique," *Le déchiffrement du sens: Études sur l'herméneutique chrétienne d'Origène à Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris : Études augustiniennes, 1993), 89-126.

⁷⁰ For Paul, see Rom 11:25; 16:25; 1 Cor 2:1; 2:7; 4:1; 13:2; 14:2; 15:51; Eph 1:9; 3:3-4; 3:9; 5:32; 6:19; Col 1:26-27; 2:2; 4:3; 2 Thess 2:7; 1 Tim 3:9; 3:16. Several times the term clearly appears as the mystery of God as in 1 Cor 4:1; Eph 3:3; 9; Col 2:2. However, it preserves the ancient Jewish meaning of *râz*, as Bockmuehl showed in *Revelation and Mystery*.

⁷¹ *Dial.* 68.6. J.D.B. Hamilton noticed that "Justin's use of *mysterion* is non-cultic" and Clement was the first to contrast the mysteries of Dionysios with the 'holy mysteries' [in the plural] of Christ (e.g. *Protrep.* XII.118.4). See Hamilton's "The Church and the Language of Mystery: The First Four Centuries," *ETL* 53, no. 4 (1977): 479-94, esp. 484-85.

the Holy Spirit manifests itself through parable and in a hidden way (ἐν παραβολῇ δὲ καὶ παρακεκαλυμμένως).⁷²

It seems Justin and Irenaeus envisioned Christ's coming as an event which entailed major exegetical consequences. Christ reveals the obscure words of the ancient holy writings.⁷³ Irenaeus claims that message of the good news about Christ was hidden (κεκρυμμένος) in prophecies and symbolized through types and parables (διὰ τύπων καὶ παραβολῶν ἐσημαίνετο) which could be understood only at the time of their fulfillment.⁷⁴

Melito will develop the sense of performance or rite of the term μυστήριον. With Melito, hermeneutical enterprise will become a mystery performance. His *Sitz im Leben* was affected by the rise of allegorical techniques of interpretation in the first century CE with the Middle Platonists, Neo-Pythagorians, Herakleitos, and Cornutus.⁷⁵ Philo and other Jewish writers took them over immediately and develop them coherently in reference with various mystical themes. Bockmuehl observes that, "The mystical technique appears not to have been practiced before Plutarch (c. A.D. 45-120), but it went on to find rich development in the second and third centuries, e.g. in Numenius and Porphyry."⁷⁶

⁷² *Dial.* 52.1. Clement of Alexandria will maintain, in his turn (*Str.* V.25.1), the idea that the entire Scripture has been written in parables.

⁷³ The following fragment is illustrative for this theological vision: "And when Isaiah calls Him [Christ] the Angel of mighty counsel, did he not foretell Him to be the Teacher of those truths which He did teach when He came [to earth]? [...] For if the prophets declared obscurely (παρακεκαλυμμένως) that Christ would suffer, and thereafter be Lord of all, yet that [declaration] could not be understood by any man until He Himself persuaded the apostles that such statements were expressly related in the Scriptures" (*Dial.* 76, ANF 1).

⁷⁴ *Adv. Haer.* 4.26.1.

⁷⁵ Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery*, 79-80.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 80.

As we have noted, Melito applies it in connecting the two (old and new) dimensions of the paschal mystery. It is plausible, therefore, to suppose that the Sardisean Christian bishop adopted this strategy as a polemical reaction to the mystery context of the Asia Minor of the second century. Another cultural element that should not be overlooked is the fact that “Ephesians’ Artemis” had been celebrated in festivals at least until 262 C.E. when Goths destroyed the Artemesion. At the same time, Cybele, the other mother goddess, if not identical to Artemis, was celebrated in the northeastern Anatolian regions and the worship of Cybele was spread from there all over the Roman Empire.⁷⁷ Attis was also venerated in connection with Cybele, while Sebazios had his special mysteries, which in time had become a sort of Asia Minor version of the Dionysian ones.⁷⁸ The most important cities of Asia Minor may be then encountered in the stories about Apollonius of Tyana, a famous Neo-Pythagorean prophet and philosopher. His biography, written and often mythologized by Philostratos around 240 CE, offers an emblematic picture for the mentalities of the first three CE centuries. Another case, not less famous, was that of Alexander of Abonuteichos, the second-century prophet satirized by Lucian of Samosata, the satire in itself being a testimony of his celebrity. Asia Minor of the second century was, therefore, the center of a significant bloom of mysteries and mystery mentalities. Within this context, the Christian polemical reaction, and particularly that of a bishop such as Melito, cannot be a surprise.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ For the large extent of Cybele worship in Asia Minor, see for instance M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus Cultus Cybelae Attidisque (CCCA)*, Vol.I: *Asia Minor* (Leiden/New York: Brill, 1987). For festivals of Cybele and Attis, see M. J. Vermaseren’s *Cybele and Attis: The Myth and the Cult* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), esp. 21-3, 110-2. For Jupiter’s worship in Asia Minor, see also M. Hörig and E. Schwerheim, *Corpus Cultus Iovis Dolicheni (CCID)* (Leiden: Brill, 1987) 3-16.

⁷⁸ R. Follet, K.Prümm, “Mystères,” *DBSup* 6 (1960): 1-225.

⁷⁹ This attitude is not unique in Melito’s works. *Fr.* 8b from his *On Baptism*, might be a polemic with the myth of Isis (the earth) which bathes in rains and river (Osiris, cf. Plutarch, *Isis* 364a; 367a; Sallustius 4.3) and the myth of Helios (either Apollo or Attis), who descends into the Ocean. Melito

Moreover, it appears to exist even some similarities between the role of the reading of Exodus 12 and its commentary or homily in the Paschal celebration, on the one hand, and the transmission (παράδοσις) of the ἱεροὶ λόγοι in the context of mystery cults, on the other hand.⁸⁰ Placed between the stage of purification (καθαρμός) and that of the highest revelation (ἐποπτεία), the stage of παράδοσις was one of transmission of sacred knowledge and a preparation for the vision of the mysteries.⁸¹ Melito, too, invites his initiands to understand and contemplate the mystery of the Lord. The sensorial modality of the discovery is vision, in fact the goal of any Mystery cult: “to see the mystery of the Lord (τὸ τοῦ κυρίου μυστήριον ἰδέσθαι).”⁸² During the stage of the “Christian” *paradosis*, the Christian initiand has to reconstruct and try to see the series of manifestations of the economic mystery in its traces in Scripture.⁸³ This hermeneutical

compares them with Christ as the Sun (ἥλιος) of dawn and king of heaven (Hall, *Melito*, 71-3). Compare this title with Apollo’s title of king (ἄναξ) in *Orphica* 34. Moreover, in his *Apology* to Marcus Aurelius, Melito clearly states: “We are not devotees of stones [probably the statues of the gods] which have no sensation, but we are worshippers of the only God who is before all and over all” (Hall, *Melito*, Fr. 2.65).

⁸⁰ Burkert argues that books were used and played an important role in the mysteries especially in the second part, the παράδοσις, when the hierophant used to transmit the ἱεροὶ λόγοι and explain them. See W. Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press, 1987), 69-78.

⁸¹ Burkert shows that the mysteries of Dionysus implied three degrees. First, in Plato’s *Symposium*: 1. ἔλεγχος = purification (201d-202c); 2. instruction, including the myth of origin (203b-e); 3. ἐποπτικά (210a). Then Clement *Str.* 5.11.71 (καθαρμός, διδασκαλία, ἐποπτεία) and Theon of Smyrna 14: καθαρμός, παράδοσις, ἐποπτεία (Burkert, *Ancient mystery cults*, 153-154).

⁸² *PP* 59. See also *PP* 58: “the mystery of the Lord [...] seen through a model (διὰ τύπον ὁραθέν).” Cf. Burkert’s mentions of the mystery cults: “Moreover, it is certain that this transformation [from anxiety to the joy of finding Kore] went hand in hand with the transition from night to light. The hierophant completed the initiation in the Telesterion ‘amid a great fire [Hippol. *Ref.* 5.8.40; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 12.33; Eur. *Phaethon* 59, *Phoen.* 687; Himer. *Or.* 60.4, 8; Plut. *De prof. virt.* 10.81d-e]” (W. Burkert, *Homo necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983], 276). Also: “And the mystai then saw him ‘emerge from the Anaktoron, in the shining nights of the mysteries [Plut. *De prof. virt.* 81e]’. A ‘great light’ would become visible ‘when the Anaktoron was opened [Ibid.]” (Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 277). The vision of light also represents a common feature of Jewish mysticism. For an analysis of the Paschal phenomenon from the mentality of Second Temple Judaism, see my “Seeking to See Him at the Festival of Pascha: The Expectation of the Divine Glory in Early Christian Paschal Materials and Rabbinic Literature,” in G. Lurie and A. Orlov, *The Theophaneia School: Jewish Roots of Eastern Christian Mysticism (Scrinium II)*; St. Petersburg: Byzantinorossica, 2007; Gorgias Press, 2009), 30-48.

⁸³ “Therefore if you wish to see the mystery of the Lord, look at Abel who is similarly murdered, at Isaac who is similarly bound, at Joseph who is similarly sold, at Moses who is similarly exposed, at David who is similarly persecuted, at the prophets, etc.” (*PP* 59-60: Hall, 33).

process transformed into a mystical experience represents a key moment of the paschal mystery.

D. The New Mystery: Christ the Pascha

Starting with *Peri Pascha* 66, Melito describes the series of manifestations of the mystery Christ performed in the new times, after his Incarnation. The emblematic thing is that Christ performs both series of the paschal mystery. While in the old times he suffered mysteriously *in* Abel, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses or David, in a new series the same Christ takes flesh in the virgin and suffers passions, death, burial, resurrection, and thus causes humans' salvation from death. We have, therefore, with Melito, a high Christology, a Yahweh Christology, and a Logos Christology. Seen from the perspective of this high Christology, Melito's paschal theology is not merely a theology of passion and death opposed to the Alexandrian allegorical understanding of the Pascha as "passage."⁸⁴ The whole history of salvation is envisioned as the mystery of Christ's economy and the passage from passions to Spirit and Christ's mystery:

coming forth a man, accepted the passions of the suffering one (τὰ τοῦ πάσχοντος πάθη) through the body which was able to suffer, and dissolved the passions of the flesh (κατέλυσεν τὰ τῆς σάρκος πάθη); and by the Spirit which could not die he killed death the killer of men.⁸⁵

The passage from Egypt to the Holy Land interpreted as the passage from sin and death to Spirit, life, and light, usually associated with Alexandrian paschal hermeneutics, is also present in Melito's *Peri Pascha*:

⁸⁴ See a few pages later my discussion on Origen and Alexandrian paschal tradition. For so many times previous scholars have interpreted Melito's paschal theology through this unfortunate distinction; e.g., Thomas J. Talley, "Pascha the Center of the Liturgical Year," in *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 1-70.

⁸⁵ *PP* 66 (453-458).

[H]e ransomed us from the world's service as from the land of Egypt, and freed us from the devil's slavery as from the hand of Pharaoh; and he marked our souls with his own Spirit and the members of our body with his own blood. ... It is he that delivered us from slavery to liberty, from darkness to light, from death to light, from tyranny to eternal royalty, and made us a new priesthood and an eternal people personal to him (περιούσιον).⁸⁶

As Hall remarks, the passage recalls *Mishnah Pesachim* 10.5 and *Exodus Rabbah* 12.2.⁸⁷

The new human being, therefore, is a priestly and royal one, a people which, from that moment on, will dwell in the very proximity (see περιούσιον) of the King of Heaven.

Moreover, the text even suggests an identification of the saved humanity with Christ, because his Spirit marks their souls and his blood their bodies.

A double dynamic in the connection between the figure (τύπος) of the old mystery and Christ can be identified in *Peri Pascha*. On the one hand, though in a hidden way, the Christ manifests himself through or within the type and the new is in the old. At the end of an imaginary dialogue with the angel of death, Melito exclaims:

It is clear that your respect was won when you saw the mystery of the Lord occurring in the sheep, the life of the Lord in the slaughter of the lamb, the model of the Lord in the death of the sheep; that is why you did not strike Israel, but made only Egypt childless.⁸⁸

On the other hand, a reverse dynamic emerges from the type. The mystery of the type is fulfilled its antitype, and the old obscure words of the sacred text find their meaning in the light of the new revelation. The bishop of Sardis explains to his church fellows:

“What is said and what is done is nothing, beloved, without a comparison and preliminary sketch. (Οὐδέν ἐστιν, ἀγαπητοί, τὸ λεγόμενον καὶ γινόμενον δίχα

⁸⁶ *PP* 67 (461) – 68 (478).

⁸⁷ Hall, “Melito in the Light of the Passover Haggadah,” 29-32.

⁸⁸ *PP* 32(203) – 33(212). For the pre-incarnational economy of Christ, see also Pseudo-Hippolytus, *IP* 81-88, or 96, in which Christ is depicted as the one who created the world and man, saved Israel from Egypt, and gave him the Law.

παραβολῆς καὶ προκεντήματος).”⁸⁹ He further explains that every important construction needs a preliminary sketch (τὸ προκέντημα) made out of wax, clay or wood. In the process of the divine economy, the preliminary sketch is the divine salvific intention, already present (though still hidden in mystery) in the Old Testament and read by the prophets. Melito does not conceive of the sketch as the completed work (ἔργον), but what is going to happen (after the Incarnation) may be seen in the image of the type (τὸ μέλλον διὰ τῆς τυπικῆς εἰκόνης ὁρᾶται).⁹⁰

The old mystery is then revealed in the dynamism of its being changed into its antitype, as expressed in the following lines: “For indeed the law has become word, and the old new [...], and the commandment grace, and the model (τύπος) reality (ἀλήθεια), and the lamb a Son, and the sheep a Man, and the Man God.”⁹¹ According to a different expression, the type is not changed into antitype but only transfers its power: “The model was made void, conceding its power (ἡ δύναμις) to the reality, and the law was fulfilled, conceding its power to the gospel.”⁹²

While the typical series is fulfilled in the mystery of the Pascha, the level of initiation remains opened, and the fulfilled mystery always new in its being rediscovered.⁹³

The mystery of the Lord having been prefigured well in advance and having been seen through a model (διὰ τύπου ὁραθέν), is today believed in now that it is fulfilled (τετελεσμένον), though considered new by men. For the mystery of the Lord is new and old.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ *PP* 35(217-218).

⁹⁰ *PP* 36(225-226). Cf. *PP* 38(245-247).

⁹¹ *PP* 7(41-9).

⁹² *PP* 42(271-272).

⁹³ “[T]he mystery of the Pascha has been fulfilled in the body of the Lord (τὸ τοῦ πάσχα μυστήριον τετέλεσται ἐν τῷ τοῦ κυρίου σώματι) [*PP* 56(396-397)].”

⁹⁴ *PP* 58(405-412).

This sentence assumes that the mystery of economy is one, though manifested in various ways. Hidden in the letters of the ancient Scriptures and within the divine economy, it remains forever new in every process of rediscovery.

3. Pseudo-Hippolytus's Paschal Mystery Exegesis

In general, Pseudo-Hippolytus is indebted to Melito both in terms of homily structure and theological perspective. For him, biblical exegesis is mystery performance as well. Declaimed within the liturgical context of the paschal night after the reading from Exodus 12, the homily becomes the explanation of the ἱεροὶ λόγοι (now in the Christian version of *θεία γραφή*) of the mystery:

While the divine Scripture (*θεία γραφή*) has mystically (*μυστικῶς*) pre-announced this sacred feast (*ἱερὰ ἑορτή*)⁹⁵ [of Pascha], we will now investigate the revealed things in minute detail and search for the hidden mysteries of Scripture in response to your prayers. We will not suppress the truth in what is written, but contemplate through the figures the accuracy of the mysteries (*τὴν δὲ ἀκρίβειαν τῶν μυστηρίων διὰ τῶν τύπων θεωροῦντες*).⁹⁶

For the author, while the types (*οἱ τύποι*), symbols (*τὰ σύμβολα*), and mysteries (*τὰ μυστήρια*) have occurred in Israel in a visible way (*ὁρατῶς*), they reach their completion in the Christian Pascha in a spiritual modality (*πνευματικῶς τελεσιουργούμενα*).⁹⁷

⁹⁵ For *ἱερὰ ἑορτή*, see especially Od. 21.258; Hdt. 1.31; 147, Th. 2.15; 4.5, and A.Eu. 191, where *ἑορτή* (used nine times in the homily) denotes a religious feast. Melito employed the noun especially in the expression *μεγάλη ἑορτή* [PP 79(565); 92(677)].

⁹⁶ Pseudo-Hippolytus, *IP* 6.1-6. Cf. *IP* 5(5-7). Cf. Melito's *PP* 36(225-226: τὸ μέλλον διὰ τῆς τυπικῆς εἰκόνης ὁρᾶται) and 38(245-247: τοῦ μέλλοντος ἐν αὐτῷ τὴν εἰκόνα βλέπεις). See also Clement, *Str.* I.13.4. Contemplation (*θεωρία*) and to contemplate (*θεωρέω*) a feast (*πανήγυρις* or *ἑορτή*), as well as associated verbs such as *ὁράω* and *νοέω* reflect a mystery terminology which recalls a basic fact of mystery cults, namely that of seeing what is manifested in the ceremony. The so-called *θεωροί* were ambassadors or spectators at the oracles or games. See, for instance, Pl. *Phd* 58b; Pl. *Lg* 650a; D. 21.115; X. *Mem* 4.8.2; Decr.Byz. ap. D. 18.91; Plb. 28.19.4; S.OT 1491.

⁹⁷ *IP* 7(1-3). The verb *τελεσιουργέω*, especially in its participial forms as *τελεσιουργόν*, as well as the noun *τελεσιουργία* often occurs, for instance, in Iamblichus' treatise *De Mysteriis*, most likely written in the same period. See *Iamblichus: De mysteriis*, eds. and trs. E.C. Clarke, J.M. Dillon, and J.P. Hershbell

The new Paschal mystery is the common celebration of all (κοινὴ τῶν ὅλων πανήγυρις),⁹⁸ eternal feast of angels and archangels, life for the entire world, wound of death, food for humans, sacred ritual (ἱερὰ τελετή)⁹⁹ of heaven and earth, and prophesizes old and new mysteries which can be scrutinized in a visible way (ὁρατῶς βλεπόμενα) on earth and perceived through the mind (νοούμενα) in heaven.¹⁰⁰

Pseudo-Hippolytus, as a mystagogue knowing the mysteries of Scripture, guides his new initiates along the traces of the scriptural mysteries, namely the types, connecting them with their antitypes. In this way, he remakes the history of divine economy in its double aspect: in Law and Incarnation. Egypt pre-announced (προαναγγέλλω) the truth (ἀλήθεια) in figures (οἱ τύποι) and the Law pre-interpreted (προερμηνεύω) it in images/copies (εἰκόνες), bringing into being only the shadow of the things to come (τῶν μελλόντων σκιά). But the Christian initiate can discover the models of those copies (τῶν εἰκόνων τὰ μορφώματα) and the completions of the figures (τῶν τύπων τὰ πληρώματα), and, instead of shadow, the accuracy and confirmation of the truth (ἡ ἀκρίβεια καὶ βεβαίωσις τῆς ἀληθείας).¹⁰¹

Akin to Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus divides paschal mystery into old and new series and envisages the divine economy developed over two stages, the boundary

(Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2004).

⁹⁸ For the religious character of πανήγυρις, see Archil. 120; Pi.O. 9.96; Hdt. 2.59, 58; Th.220. For its connection with the verb (θεωρέω) see Ar.Pax 342 and Decr.ap.D. 18.91.

⁹⁹ IP 3(28). Liddell-Scott's *A Greek-English Lexicon* translates τελετή as *rite*, esp. *initiation* in the mysteries (Hdt. 2.171; And. 1.111; Pl.Euthd 277d; Hdt. 4.79), *mystic rites practiced at initiation* (E.Ba 22, 73 (l.r.), Ar.V. 121; Pax 413, 419; Id.Ra 1032; D.25.11; Pl. Phdr 244e; Id. R.365a, Prt. 316d; Isoc 4.28), *a making magically potent* (PMagPar 1.1596, PMagLond 46.159, 121.872) *a festival accompanied by mystic rites or sacred office*, Decr. ap. D. 59.104, or *theological doctrines* (in a plural form in Chrysipp. Stoic. 2.17). Τελετή means 'rite' as early as the Orphic tradition from at least the fifth century B.C., as one can see in G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield, eds., *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) 221.

¹⁰⁰ IP 3(30-31).

¹⁰¹ IP 2(9-10).

between them being the event of the Incarnation. While in the first part of his homily, the author follows the pre-figurations of the future antitypes, in the second part he describes the mysteries of the truth (τὰ τῆς ἀληθείας μυστήρια):¹⁰² Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension. Taking over a Pauline idea from Col 2:9, the homilist expresses the Incarnation in this way: “compressing in himself all the greatness of the divinity ... without diminishing the glory.”¹⁰³

An important dimension of mystery ceremony is the real participation in a sacred or consecrated substance, i.e., the process of eating the consecrated offerings (τὰ ἱερά). For the Israelites, in Pseudo-Hippolytus’s view, the consecrated offerings eaten in a mystery rite consisted of the paschal lamb. But for Christians, the paschal lamb is just the figure of the Christian Pascha and Eucharist. Yet, the mystery substance Christians eat with spiritual knowledge brings death’s defeat.¹⁰⁴ The author does not speak metaphorically in either case, but concretely. Another main element of mystery celebrations consists in the preservation of the secrets performed and contemplated in the ceremony within the group of initiated people. Now, the group is the ecclesia and the central secret is eating the Pascha or the sacred body of Christ.¹⁰⁵

Pursuing this intelligible or noetic itinerary of contemplating the divine manifestations of the Logos in figures and truth, Christians turn out to be initiated into old and new things with a sacred knowledge (οἱ τὰ καινὰ καὶ παλαιὰ μετὰ γνώσεως ἱερᾶς μεμνημένοι) of the old and new manifestations of the divine economy.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² *IP* 7(5).

¹⁰³ *IP* 45(10-13): πᾶν τῆς θεότητος εἰς ἑαυτὸν συναθροΐσας καὶ συναγαγὼν [...] οὐ [...] τῇ δόξῃ δαπανούμενος.

¹⁰⁴ *IP* 50(5-6).

¹⁰⁵ *IP* 40 and 41.

¹⁰⁶ *IP* 4(1-2).

4. Mystery Exegesis in Origen's Paschal Tractate

Mystery exegesis may be also encountered in Origen's *Peri Pascha*. According to extant vestiges, there were a few other paschal documents at the time Origen wrote his treatise.¹⁰⁷ Among them, those belonging to Apollinarius of Hierapolis and Clement of Alexandria are fragmentarily preserved in the Byzantine document entitled the *Chronicon pascale*. In spite of a reduced quantity of preserved material, one can identify two new central ideas that emerged within these documents and both are preserved in the Origenian treatise.

First, while Melito's and Pseudo-Hippolytus's homilies were Quartodeciman, Apollinarius and Clement were anti-Quartodeciman.¹⁰⁸ Second, while Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus developed the etymology of the Greek word πάσχα from the Greek verb πάσχω (*to suffer, to be affected*), Clement had access to Philo's writings and for Philo the word πάσχα does not have its origins in the Greek πάσχω, but in the Hebrew) פסח *pesach*).¹⁰⁹ In his turn, Origen perhaps inherited these two ideas from Clement, namely the anti-Quartodeciman position and the idea that πάσχα means "crossing," or "passage."

It seems that the conception of Pascha as passage was a Jewish commonplace:

Josephus translated it by ὑπερβασία,¹¹⁰ Philo by διάβασις and διαβατήρια,¹¹¹ while

¹⁰⁷ I.e., the Paschal writings of Apollinarius of Hierapolis, Irenaeus of Lyon, Victor of Rome, Clement of Alexandria, and Hippolytus of Rome. See G. Visona, "Pasqua quartodecimana e cronologia evangelica della passione," *Eph. Lit.* 102 (1988): 266.

¹⁰⁸ *Chronicon pascale*, PG 92.80c-81a.

¹⁰⁹ Philo, *Congr.* 100-106. For Clement, see *Chronicon pascale*, PG 92.81a-c. Moreover, according to Eusebius' testimony (*HE*, IV, 26, 4; VI, 13, 9), Clement also wrote a text entitled *Peri Pascha* and used, for its redaction, Melito's treatise with the same title, *Peri Pascha*. For פסח, see L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamentis* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1958), 769: nif.: *grow lame*; qal: 1. *be lame, limp*; 2. *limp over at, pass over, spare* (as in Ex 12:13, 23, 27); nif. impf.: *be lamed*; pi. impf.: *limp (worshipping) around* (1 Kg 18:26).

¹¹⁰ *Ant* II, 313.

Aquila rendered it with ὑπέρβασις.¹¹² Either from Clement or directly from Philo, Origen took over the term of διάβασις.¹¹³ In fact, the Greek word πάσχα represents a transcription of the Aramaic פסחא (*pashā*).¹¹⁴ Again, through the same Clement or from the original source, Origen took over the Philonian idea that πάσχα refers allegorically to the passage from the sensible to the intelligible world.¹¹⁵ In spite of these terminological differences, I would like to point out that the tradition of interpreting Pascha as the passage from slavery and death to light and spiritual life is already present in Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus (for instance, *IP* 3:30-31; 7:1-3), as we saw in the previous subchapters.

Scholars have emphasized Clement's mystery exegesis in *Protrepticos* and *Stromateis*, and most likely the Alexandrian mystery tradition from Philo to Clement inspired Origen.¹¹⁶ K. J. Torjensen's article "The Alexandrian Tradition of the Inspired

¹¹¹ *Leg* iii, 94,154,165; *Sacrif* 63; *Migr* 25; *Her* 192; *Congr* 106; *Spec* ii,147. See also that Aristobulus already used in the second century B.C.E. the term τὰ διαβατήρια to refer to the festival of Pascha, as Jean Riaud shows in "Pâque et Sabbat dans les fragments I et V d'Aristobule," in Christian Grappe and Jean-Claude Ingelaere, ed., *Le temps et les temps dans les littératures juives et chrétiennes au tournant de notre ère* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006), 108-23. However, Samuel Loewenstamm interestingly argues for the thesis that the Pesach was originally an apotropaic ritual eventually incorporated within the Exodus narrative; see Samuel E. Loewenstamm, *The Evolution of the Exodus Tradition* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1992), 184ff; 207. He prefers to understand the meaning of the verb *pāsaḥ* (and its root *psh*) as "shield, protect," rather than "pass over" (*ibid.*, 219-221), and considers, therefore, the whole Alexandrian Hellenistic tradition of the Pesach terminology of passage as a "theologically tendentious interpolation" (*ibid.*, 219; cf. 198-206).

¹¹² F. Field, *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt*, I (Oxford, 1875) 100.

¹¹³ Clement, *Str.* II, XI, 51,2. The link between the meaning of Pascha and passage can be seen in the rabbinic traditions, for instance, in *Mishnah Pesahim* 10.5 and *Exodus Rabbah* 12.2, and also in Melito's *PP* 68(472-476). For a detailed discussion on this Alexandrian terminology of passage present in Origen, see Buchinger, *Pascha*, 397-412. As Buchinger astutely remarks, Origen connects this terminology of passage with mystery terminology (*Pascha*, 867-892). By doing so, Origen makes of the Pascha, as previously Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus, a passage from the sensible to the noetic and mystery realm of reality; see also next chapter on Pseudo-Hippolytus.

¹¹⁴ O. Guéraud and P. Nautin, *Origène*, 114. Cf. M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, II (New York 1950), 1194. In these writings, פסח means Passover festival, Passover sacrifice or Passover meal. The form in discussion, פסחא, can be found in *Targ.O. Ex* 12:11; *Targ. II Chr.* 30:18; *Y.Sabb.* 8; *Targ. I Sam.* 15:4.

¹¹⁵ Philo, *Spec.* 2.145-147; *Mos.* 2.224; *Her.* 192; *Migr.* 25; *QE* 4-19.

¹¹⁶ Bouyer, *The Christian Mystery*, 138-148.

Interpreter”¹¹⁷ is of considerable help for the present investigation. The Alexandrian interpreter, in fact, had a prophetic function. Through the study of Scripture, the interpreter becomes a visionary of the things divine and able to mediate or disclose divine knowledge. As Torjensen explains that mentality:

Origen, as exegete, has penetrated the divine mysteries of Scripture, because he has lived the life of a prophet, the holy life. Like the prophets he has undergone, experienced and exemplified the transformative process created by knowledge of the divine.¹¹⁸

A. Paschal Mystery Exegesis and Eucharistic Sacrifice

Scholars have also shown that Origen is indebted to the bishop of Sardis for different aspects of his hermeneutics.¹¹⁹ Exegesis as a mystery performance at the Paschal feast might also be inspired by the Asia Minor approach. According to Origen, the ἱεραὶ γραφαὶ describe how God ordered the ancient Israelites to fulfill a sacred service (ἱερουργία) and a sacred sacrifice (ἱεροθυσία) in a mystical way (μυστηριωδῶς).¹²⁰

As for the New Testament, the Alexandrian preserves the traditional distinction between type/figure and antitype/truth and makes the following Eucharistic statement:

We have to sacrifice the true lamb (πρόβατον) in order to be sanctified/consecrated priests (ἱεροθῶμεν) or to come closer to the priestly status and have to *burn* and *eat* his flesh. [...] He

¹¹⁷ See K. J. Torjensen, “The Alexandrian Tradition of the Inspired Interpreter,” *Origeniana Octava* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003) 287-99.

¹¹⁸ Torjensen, “The Alexandrian Tradition,” 295.

¹¹⁹ Campbell Bonner emphasized the Melitonian inspiration of the Origenian passage *HLv* X.1, where Origen describes the relation between the Old and New Testament through the image of the preliminary sketch. See Bonner, *The Homily*, 56-72. In a similar way, Jean Daniélou proved that Origen quoted the Sardisian a few times, e.g., in *Comm.Pss.* 3.1, *Comm. Gen.* 1.26, or *Comm. Mat.* 10.9-11 (“Figure et événement chez Meliton”, in *Neotestamentica et patristica: Eine Freundesgabe, Herrn Professor Dr. Oscar Cullmann zu seinem 60. Geburtstag überreicht* [SNT 6; Leiden: Brill, 1962] 290-292). The large amount of Melitonian themes, and especially their diversity, and that of the Origenian treatises in which they have been taken over, may constitute an argument for the idea that the bishop of Sardis was an important theological authority for the great Alexandrian.

¹²⁰ Origen, *Peri Pascha* 39(9-29).

Himself says that this Pascha is not sensible (αἰσθητόν) but intelligible (νοητόν): *If you do not eat my flesh and drink my blood, you will not have life in yourself* (Jn 6:53). Should we eat His flesh and drink His blood in a sensible way? But if He speaks in an intelligible way, then Pascha is not sensible, but intelligible.¹²¹

In this fragment, Pascha is identified with the Eucharist, and the Jewish Pesach thus becomes the type of the Christian Eucharist. Origen inserts his exegetical vision in this liturgical or ritualistic context. Taking a look at the goal of the Paschal ritual, modern reader can notice that the participants in this ritual (expressed in the plural first person) have to become consecrated priests or sanctified, or at least closer to the priestly status. The verb exploited in this context is ἱερώω, which means, in the active voice, “to make holy/ to consecrate to the gods”, while in the passive voice, as in the present passage, has the meaning of “being a consecrated priest.”¹²² The conception most likely recalls the idea of a universal or general priesthood of Christians (see 1 Pt 2:5), because every partaker of the Eucharist actually sacrifices (θύω) and eats Christ’s body. Origen’s exegesis is complex because it implies at the same time a concrete socio-cultural meaning doubled by a spiritual one.

However, perhaps the most interesting idea in this hermeneutical context is the activity of eating the divine noetic body of Christ. Origen, the archenemy of anthropomorphism, develops a hermeneutical strategy in which the discourse about eating the divine body of Christ fluctuates between a noetic representation and allegory. Moreover, Origen inserts the idea of eating the divine body in a context in which he joins this Eucharistic theme to the Paschal context: Those who eat the sacred body will have

¹²¹ *PP* 13(3-35). In passage 26, he explains how the flesh, i.e. the Scripture, does not have to be eaten green, which means literally interpreted, but cooked on the fire of the Holy Spirit, and in this way spiritually read.

¹²² Liddell-Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1:823. For textual references, see *Pl.Lg.* 771b; *Inscriptiones Graecae, Voluminum ii et iii*, ed. J. Kirchner, 1126.16; *Berl.Sitzb.* 1927.8; Aeschin. I.19.

life, while those who do not eat will not have any defense before the angel of death, which is called here with a term from the Epistle to the Hebrews 11:28, “the destroyer” (ὁ λοθρεύων).¹²³ Origen further operates with a new distinction among those who will survive the destroyer, putting forward the degrees of advancement in mysteries. First are the perfect ones, those who fight for their purity and eat from the lambs’ flock and wheat bread. This food is purer and more appropriate to those who live spiritually (more precisely, are akin to the Logos: λογικῶς). They are followed by those still under sin and eating from the kids’ flock and barley bread.¹²⁴

B. Mystery Exegesis and Paschal Liturgical Context

Origen also adjoins an exegesis focused on Scripture: “If the lamb is Christ and Christ is the Logos, what is the flesh of the divine words in that case if not the divine Scriptures?”¹²⁵ A few pages later, he states: “we participate in Christ’s flesh, this is the divine Scriptures.”¹²⁶ For the Alexandrian theologian, the exegetical process was not one of accumulating new data, but one of participating in a mystery wherein the initiand becomes capable of eating the intelligible flesh of God.¹²⁷ Moreover, he further develops this idea by making a parallel with the mystery idea of the dismembered deity.¹²⁸

According to him, only those who struggle towards eating the ‘entrails’ (τὰ ἐντοσθίδια)

¹²³ *PP* 14 (10, 13).

¹²⁴ *PP* 23.

¹²⁵ *PP* 26(5-8).

¹²⁶ *PP* 33(1-3).

¹²⁷ For the Dionysian ritual of eating raw flesh, distributed in many parts, see Clement’s *Protreptikos* II. 12.2. Cf. Pseudo-Hippolytus, *IP* 23-28.

¹²⁸ As Burkert affirms: “The basic idea of an initiation ritual is generally taken to be that of death and rebirth” (Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 99). He further gives examples from various mystery cults such as Isis and Osiris, Dionysius and Persephone. The Mithraic monuments also “indicate that the day of the initiation ritual was a new birthday; the *mystes* was *natus et renatus*.” Burkert, 100). Cf. M. Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth* (New York: Harper, 1975, 1st ed. 1958).

of the divine body will be able to see (ὄψονται) the depths of God (τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ).¹²⁹ He further clearly specifies the idea that the one who eats the entrails of the divine body becomes an initiate in the mysteries (ὁ ἐν μυστηρίοις μυσούμενος).¹³⁰

Of course, Origen employs mystery terminology and thus sets his discourse in a Greek mystery framework. At the same time, he places it in a Christian context, as do Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Clement, and in spite of the mystery terminology, the content is a Christian liturgical one. Nevertheless, by expressing Christian cult in mystery terminology, Origen wants to say, at the same time, that the Christian cult is also a mystery and moreover, a superior mystery. Most likely, Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Clement, and Origen had the same strategy as in the case of taking over the Greek philosophical terminology, namely polemicizing against the Greek communities that constituted their environment at the time. Consequently, their narrative strategy towards Greek philosophy and mysteries was one of borrowing terminology and claiming both that Christianity is the true philosophy and that here one can find the highest mysteries.

In his text, Origen assumes that Christians take part in Christ's body in varying degrees: part of them in the head, others in the hands, feet, chest, entrails or viscera.¹³¹ There are, therefore, different degrees of initiation and those who eat the viscera reach the highest level, becoming initiated in the meaning (λόγος) of the mystery of Incarnation, which is central.¹³² Thus Origen can conceive of a hierarchy among paschal mysteries. While the Old Testament paschal mysteries (*mysteria paschae* [in Lat.]) have been changed at the coming of the New Testament, the New Testament mysteries (*mysteria*

¹²⁹ Origen, *PP* 31(17-19). Cf. Ps.-Hippolytus, *IP* 29.

¹³⁰ Origen, *PP* 31(23-24).

¹³¹ Origen, *PP* 30 and 31.

¹³² Origen, *PP* 31(25-27).

[Lat.]) will be removed, in their turn, at the time of resurrection.¹³³

The Origenian exegetical itinerary, as well as the Melitonian one, displays and makes discernible Christ's manifestations in Scripture. It is a way by which the words of the sacred text turn into transparent enigmas and mirrors of the things to come. (Here the Alexandrian recalls the famous 1 Cor 13:12.) In Origen's view, the flesh, blood, and bones, which have to be eaten, represent symbolically the elements of the sacred text through which the heavenly realities may be envisioned. While "bones" refer to the words (αἱ λέξεις) of Scripture and "flesh" to their meanings (τὰ νοήματα), "blood" is the faith which saves from the "destroyer."¹³⁴ The parallel to the myth of the dismembered deity carries on with the idea of a new birth (παλιγγενεσία). For Origen, the true Pascha has to refer, in a spiritual way, to the passage from darkness to light, which is a new birth (γένεσις).¹³⁵ The meaning of a new birth cannot be different from the passage to a perfect behavior (τέλεια πολιτεία) and a perfect love (τέλεια ἀγάπη), which may start from this earthly existence.¹³⁶

C. Typology vs. Allegory in Paschal Mystery Exegesis?

The goal of this study does not justify any further detailing of the Origenian exegesis, which has been explored by so many previous scholars.¹³⁷ However, an important issue that requires further attention regards the relationship between mystery

¹³³ Origen, *PP* 32(20-28). As de Lubac noticed in his *Histoire et Esprit: L'intelligence de l'Écriture d'après Origène* (Paris: Cerf, 2002), 219, the idea of the threefold Pascha (Jewish, Christian, and heavenly) comes forth in other Origenian writings, too, such as *HNm* XI.4, *CMt* 80, or *Clo* X.16.18.

¹³⁴ Origen, *PP* 33(20)-34(2).

¹³⁵ Origen, *PP* 3 and 4.

¹³⁶ Origen, *PP* 4(36)-5(2).

¹³⁷ For a thorough presentation and a very comprehensive bibliography on Origen's exegesis, see, for example, C. Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis*, 2 vols. (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004), 1:536-574.

exegesis and Origen's general exegetical view.¹³⁸ According to his theory of the triple sense, he distinguished between the literary/historical, then moral/psychological, and finally allegorical/spiritual/mystical exegesis.¹³⁹ The last of these is the most important for the present investigation. The concept that Scripture is abundant in mysteries inserted by the Holy Spirit, and that exegesis produces a change within the initiated interpreter occurs also in Clement,¹⁴⁰ from whom Origen most likely took it.¹⁴¹

Could one qualify the typological exegesis of *Peri Pascha* (wherein the word “allegory” does not occur, nor in Melito and Ps-Hippolytus) as different from allegory, as in Daniélou's solution, or identical, as in Lubac's position? Or, finally, could one make a distinction between the horizontal and the vertical dimensions, as Crouzel proposes? In Origen's view, the end of mystical initiation is not obvious in terms of horizontal or vertical spatiality. There are passages in which Christ is encountered on earth and his body is consumed, similar to the texts of the two Asia Minor theologians, and fragments in which the vertical dimension is obvious, as well as the implied allegory. Consequently, on the one hand, Origen preserves the mystery exegesis developed by the Asia Minor

¹³⁸ Origen did not write his *Peri Pascha* in his youth, but the work represents a mature undertaking, done during his stay in Caesarea between 235-248; i.e., between the writing of his commentaries on John and those on Matthew, most likely around 245 (Guéraud and Nautin, *Origène*, 109).

¹³⁹ Cf. Origen, *Prin* IV. 2.4-6; *HGn* II.6 etc. For contemporary scholarship, see for example H. Crouzel, *Origen*, 111-140; B. de Margerie, *Introduction à l'histoire de l'exégèse: Tome I, Les Pères grecs et orientaux* (Paris: Cerf, 1980) 115-126; R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event* (Richmont: John Knox Press, 1959).

¹⁴⁰ Cf. B. de Margerie, *Introduction*, 95-112. Analyzing Clement's exegesis, de Margerie states: “Pour dégager la signification et la vie cachée sous cette parole [Christ's word], le croyant doit s'assimiler à ces vérités, se purifier par la pratique des commandements pour participer à la sainteté de Dieu.” (B. de Margerie, *Introduction*, 97). For textual data in Clement, see *Str* V. 24.1; 25.1; 56.2-57.2; 93.4; VI. 124.4-6; 126.1-4; 127.4; 131.3-5.

¹⁴¹ As Crouzel formulates it, using categories of Platonic origins, 2 Cor 3 :18 “is for the Alexandrian the origin of the theme of transforming contemplation [of the Logos in Scriptures], that is the shaping of the contemplator to the image of the contemplated by a kind of spiritual mimesis (*Origen*, 68).” See also Crouzel's *Origène et la “connaissance mystique,”* 324-70, 400-9, and H. von Balthasar's “Le Mysterion d'Origène,” *RSR* 26 (1936) 513-62 and 27 (1937) 38-64. Cf. V.-M. Niculescu, *Origen's Mystagogic Paideia* (PhD Thesis; CUA, 2004).

theologians. On the other hand, he emphasizes more powerfully the Platonic distinction between the sensible realities and their intelligible models.¹⁴²

The vertical dimension cannot be found in the Pauline passage about allegory, where the two wives of Abraham refer to the Old and New Testament (Gal 4:20-24). Because of its very large original sense (“speaking about something else”), the notion of “allegory” has a broader extension than that of “typology.” Perhaps a distinction more suitable to the textual data is the one that Frances M. Young employs, namely typology is a form of allegory.¹⁴³ For this reason, allegory can incorporate typology as a genus incorporates a species. From a historical perspective, the extensive Alexandrian use of allegory brought a larger hermeneutical freedom than the Asia Minor theologians had. But this freedom at times brought speculative constructions lacking a sound connection with the biblical text. According to one of Burkert’s illuminating insights, any allegory in a religious context is mystical, as Demetrius and Macrobius illustrate.¹⁴⁴ In this way, the typology used in a mystery context, including those of the three Christian authors analyzed in this chapter, might also be considered an allegory.

5. Conclusion

The chain of argument of the present chapter leads to the tentative conclusion that

¹⁴² E.g., *CC* 2, *Clo* I.24. Certain Platonic distinctions (especially that between paradigm and copy) also occur in Melito (e.g., *PP* 37-39) and Pseudo-Hippolytus (e.g., *IP* 2[1-8]; 6[8-10]). Moreover, the last one also discloses the idea that mystery exegesis translates the exegete from the sensible to the intelligible world (*IP* 3[30-31]; 6[8-10]).

¹⁴³ Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of the Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 198. On page 201, Young also underlines certain species of typology: exemplary (biographical), prophetic (historical), spatial, and recapitulative.

¹⁴⁴ Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 78-82. Demetrius, in his *On Style* 101 (300 BCE-100 CE), states that “the mysteries too are expressed in the form of allegory, in order to arouse consternation and dread, just as they are performed in darkness and night.” Macrobius, in *S. Sc* 1.2.17f, concurs: “Thus the mysteries themselves are hidden in the tunnels of figurative expression.” See Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 79.

biblical exegesis in the Paschal context of the first three centuries in Asia Minor and Alexandria was part of a complex liturgical-exegetical system. Within that context, it was not a mere pious reading or an intellectual exercise but rather a cultic investigation through which the one who does the hermeneutical task undergoes transformation and encounters the concrete manifestations of the Logos. It seems that paschal exegesis played a role in the liturgy similar to the transmission and explication of the ἱεροὶ λόγοι in the mystery cults. Moreover, the Asia Minor theologians developed the hermeneutical practice of distinguishing two series of manifestations of the paschal mystery where typology had the function of connecting the two series. On the basis of Burkert's understanding of allegory, one may also affirm that the typology used in a mystery context is a form of allegory.

Origen, in his turn, probably took over the mystery exegesis of Pascha from diverse media, such as Philo, Clement, and Asia Minor theologians and developed it in connection with, if not even within the context of, the Paschal feast. The Alexandrian theologian also employed the two mysteries theory together with the theory of types in his *Peri Pascha*. In addition, Pseudo-Hippolytus and Origen elaborated Eucharistic features in connection with the feast of Pascha.

Generally speaking, it might be suggested that Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Origen associated the Paschal liturgical event with an exegetical moment in which, as in a dramatic performance, the audience was asked to discover and contemplate God's manifested mysteries in Abel's, Isaac's, Jacob's, or Joseph's sufferings, in the sacrificed lamb and the salvation from Egypt, as well as in Christ's Incarnation, salvific Passions, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension. Paschal exegesis was therefore not an abstract

ratiocination, but a cultic activity, which should involve the contemplation of Christ.

XII. THE DESCENT OF THE HEAVENLY ANTHROPOS AND PSEUDO-HIPPOLYTUS'S NEW TYPE OF APOCALYPSE

Scholars have noticed the presence of mystery terminology and imagery in

Pseudo-Hippolytus's *Εἰς τὸ ἅγιον Πάσχα*. In this respect, the following passage from chapter 62 may be one of the most significant:¹⁴⁵

O mystical choir (ὃ τῆς χορηγίας τῆς μυστικῆς)! O feast of the Spirit (ὃ τῆς πνευματικῆς ἐορτῆς)! O Pasch of God, who hast come down from heaven to earth, and from earth ascended again to the heavens. O feast common to all (τῶν ὅλων ἐότασμα), O universal joy, and honor of the universe, its nurture and its luxury, by whom the darkness of death has been dissolved and life extended to all, by whom the gates of heaven have been opened (ἀνεώχθησαν) as God has become man and man has become God. ... An antiphonal choir has been formed on earth to respond to the choir above. O Pasch of God, no longer confined to the heavens and now united to us in spirit; through him the great marriage chamber has been filled. ... O Pasch, illumination (φῶτισμα) of the new bright day [literally, "torch procession:" λαμπαδουχία] – the brightness (ἀγλαΐσμα) of the torches of the virgins, through which the lamps of the soul are no longer extinguished, but the divine fire of charity [literally, "the fire of grace:" τῆς χάριτος ... τὸ πῦρ] burns divinely and spiritually in all

Cantalamessa regards the presence of mystery language in the Paschal celebration as part of the general Christian polemical response to mystery religions, also manifest in Melito or Clement of Alexandria.¹⁴⁶

In addition to mystery terminology, this passage contains biblical imagery and language such as "Pascha," "spirit," "angelic choir," "virgins," and "marriage chamber," and references to God's "descent" and "ascension." Nonetheless, in the present chapter I would like to direct investigation towards a reading of the text under a different hermeneutical key, namely the Jewish apocalyptic traditions, and in this way

¹⁴⁵ *IP* 62. Trans. Halton, 68. For mystery language, see Cantalamessa, *L'Omelia*, 104-108 and Visonà, *Pseudo Ippolito*, 345-347.

¹⁴⁶ Cantalamessa, *L'Omelia*, 104.

to draw the conclusions which the presence of such traditions entails. Another pivotal passage of the text may be helpful for the opening of this new angle of investigation.

Now is it the time when the blessed light of Christ sheds its rays; the pure rays (φωστήρες) of the pure Spirit rise and the heavenly treasures of divine glory (δόξα) are opened up. Night's darkness and obscurity have been swallowed up, and the dense blackness dispersed in this light of day; crabbed death has been totally eclipsed. Life has been extended (ἐφηπλώθη) to every creature and all things are diffused in brightness (φῶς). The dawn of dawn ascends over the earth (ἀνατολαὶ ἀνατολῶν ἐπέχουσι τὸ πᾶν)¹⁴⁷ and he who was before the morning star and before the other stars, the mighty (μέγας) Christ, immortal and mighty (πολύς), sheds light brighter than the sun on the universe.¹⁴⁸

Anticipating some of the key conclusions of the present study, one may affirm that *In sanctum Pascha* might be envisaged as a special sort of apocalypse, which I would call “mystery apocalypse.” Since the divine temple extends its presence to the terrestrial world and the celestial king descends to earth, ascension becomes useless and the visionary’s ascent sensibly changes into a mystagogy. Instead of ascension, the visionary needs to cross from the visible to the invisible, from the phanic to mystery, and from the sensible realm to the intelligible one. Pertaining to the same Asiatic tradition as Melito’s *Peri Pascha*, Pseudo-Hippolytus’s homily witnesses to a pivotal synthesis of two traditions in the Christian mindset, namely mystery and apocalyptic, more visibly than does Melito. The application of this synthesis to one of the central Christian celebrations—the festival of Pascha—was so profound, that it would remain normative for Christian liturgical life to the present day.

¹⁴⁷ Nautin translated the Greek word τὸ πᾶν as “l’univers” (*Homélie*, 116), while Visonà rendered it as “l’universo” (*Pseudo Ippolito*, 231).

¹⁴⁸ *IP* 1.1-12.

1. The Cosmic Extension of the Heavenly Temple

While being aware of the historical and contingent character of Collins's definition of apocalypse, I will use it as a helpful guideline whose features do not have to be considered necessary and complete, but delineating some of the most frequent characteristics of the Jewish apocalyptic traditions.¹⁴⁹ All Collins's features of an apocalypse (narrative framework, revelation, mediatorial heavenly being, human recipient, and transcendent knowledge) can be identified in the Pseudo-Hippolytan work, with some changes I will mention. First of all, regarding the role of a narrative framework, the homily encompasses an obvious two-step history of salvation which implies a divine economy developed in two stages: the era that precedes the Incarnation, a time of figures, types, and symbols, and the era of truth, when the divine king with his temple and light descend to earth. Nautin and Visonà, for instance, divided the whole text following this broad two-step framework.

Nautin: vv. 1-3 Exordium; vv. 4-8 Subject and plan; vv. 9-42 First part: The Figures (9-10: The Law; 11-42: The Pascha; 11-15 The first Pascha; 16-42: The solemnity); vv. 43-61 Second part: The Truth (43-48: Christ's coming; 48-61 The Passion); vv. 62-63 Peroration.

Visonà: vv. 1-3: Hymn of opening; vv. 4-7: The plan of the homily plus the reproduction of the text of Ex 12; vv. 8-42: The Pascha of the Law and its accomplishment / perfection [in Christ] (9-15: The Paschal mystery in the light of the economy of the Law; 16-42: [Typological] Exegesis on Ex 12); vv. 43-61: The Pascha of the Logos in its actualization / realization (43-48: The Incarnation; 49-58: The passion and death; 59-61: The glorification); vv. 62-63: Final aretology and peroration.¹⁵⁰

The passage 1.1-12 appears to depict the common apocalyptic image of the opened heavens, which recalls for example Ezekiel 1:1, especially if one observes the usage of the same verb which renders the English verb "to open": פתח, ἀνοίγω (in

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Collins, "Toward the Morphology," 9.

¹⁵⁰ See Nautin, *Homélies*, 67 and Visonà, *Pseudo Ippolito*, 49. Melito's *Peri Pascha* follows the same framework; cf. A. Stewart-Sykes, *The Lamb's High Feast: Melito, Peri Pascha, and the Quartodeciman Paschal Liturgy at Sardis* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1998).

LXX and *I.P.*). Thus the expression “the heaven opened” and other similar ones seem to be *termini technici* in biblical and apocalyptic literature, announcing a celestial vision.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, the picture that describes the consequences that the opening of the heavens implies appears to enclose a special element: the heavenly light floods the universe and its source—Christ—is envisaged as having huge dimensions, as the ancient theophanies of the Bible and pseudepigraphic apocalypses.

Pseudo-Hippolytus does not spend much time expounding on the earthly temple, the church, being instead more interested in the divine and mystical one, while the earthly and visible temple seem to represent the mere entrance or the lintel to the celestial Jerusalem. As shown in different studies, the heavenly temple represents a frequent aspect in apocalyptic literature.¹⁵² The visionary experiences rapture by being translated into the celestial temple where he is allowed to contemplate the heavenly king, the throne, and the myriads of angels glorifying the king.¹⁵³

Pseudo-Hippolytus’s writing seems to be part of a different paradigm, since the heavenly glory descends to earth. Here, Christ’s coming (ἐπιδημία) turns out to be the moment when the border between the celestial temple and the earth disappears, and the earth becomes flooded by the presence of the divine light. The homilist states in the opening phrase of the hymn: “the heavenly treasures of the divine glory (δόξα) are opened up.”¹⁵⁴ It should be also noticed that the tradition of the divine light/glory stored

151 See also Gen 7:11, Ps 78:23, Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10 (σχιζω); 7:34 (διανοίγω); Lk 3:21; Acts 7:56; 10:11; Rev 4:1; 19:11.

152 For an extended bibliography, see for instance R. Elior, *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism* (Oxford; Portland, Ore: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization: 2004).

153 See, e.g., *1 Enoch* 14, *Daniel* 7:9-14, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* 8, 4 *Baruch* 10, 2 *Enoch* 3; 22, *Revelation* 4, *Ascen. Isa.* 7-10.

154 *IP* 1.3: οὐράνιοι δὲ δόξης καὶ θεότητος ἀνεψῶσι θεσσυροί. The word “glory” represents a well-known apocalyptic concept: כבוד, God’s glory; see, for instance, J. Fossum, “Glory,” in *DDD*, 348-52.

beyond the heavens has ancient biblical origins. Psalm 8:1, for example, reads “you have set your glory above the heavens.”

The idea of a descended or extended celestial temple seems to manifest similarities with biblical and extra-biblical literature. 2 Chronicles 7:1-3 probably represents one of the most ancient witnesses to this paradigm.

When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven (τὸ πῦρ κατέβη ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ) ... and the glory of the Lord filled the temple (δόξα κυρίου ἐπλησεν τὸν οἶκον). ... When the children of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord upon the temple (πάντες οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ ἑώραν καταβαῖνον τὸ πῦρ, καὶ ἡ δόξα κυρίου ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον), they bowed down with their faces to the earth on the pavement...”

Psalm 148 is also emblematic, since it depicts a cosmic glorification of Yahweh where both the heavenly realm (angels, hosts, sun and moon, stars, the highest heavens, and the waters above the heavens) and the terrestrial one (sea monsters and ocean depths, fire, hail, and snow, smoke, storm, mountains and hills, trees, beasts, kings, and peoples) offer their particular praise. The thirteenth line (“Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is exalted; his glory [ἡ δόξα] is above earth and heaven”) is especially significant for disclosing the idea that the divine glory is stored beyond the heavens, although it is not obvious whether the glory or the heavenly temple descends.

Furthermore, the theme of the descended glory or king of glory is also present in the New Testament writings and pseudepigraphic materials. The Gospels for example depict Christ’s incarnation as the moment when the heavenly light descended to earth, as in the visions of Matthew (4:16-17) and Luke (1:78-9). In Luke 2:13-14, the angelic armies descend to earth and sing for their newborn king. In addition, the eschaton, as described in Matthew 24:27 and Luke 17:24, seems to be the moment when the Son of Man will appear as lightning [ἡστραπή, used in both cases] filling the whole world. For

John, too, Christ was light (e.g., John 1:7-9; 1 John 1:1-3; 5; 7; 2:8-10), and his disciples have seen his glory (δόξα: John 1:14).¹⁵⁵ Another argument for the deep Johannine influence on Pseudo-Hippolytus might be that the passage parallels in its emblematic images the prologue of the Gospel of John: Christ, who is the “light” and “life” came into the world. “Darkness” has been swallowed up, and the life has been “extended to every creature.” The author is also indebted to John for other Christological titles such as “manna” or “bread” that came down from heaven (*IP* 8.4; 25.11-12). Perhaps the most explicit text appears in Rev 21:10-11:

And in the spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city of Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. It has the glory (δόξα) of God and a radiance (φωστήρ) like a very rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal.

An internalized version of the theme of descended glory we encounter in 1 Corinthians 6:19 where the idea of a third temple emerges, namely the temple of the human body (σῶμα) deemed as the “temple of the Holy Spirit.” Several writings pertaining to the Second Temple, such as Daniel 7, 4 Ezra, *Joseph and Aseneth*, and the *Testament of Abraham* are significant for the idea of the descent of the heavenly temple or hekhal.¹⁵⁶ As for the New Testament pseudepigraphic materials, the *Gospel of Nazarenes* or the *Epistle of the Apostles* may constitute good examples. In *sanctum Pascha* and the *Epistle of the Apostles* display more common elements: (1) the descent of *light* and *life*, which are identical (*IP* 1; *EpApost* 39); (2) Christ’s coming is at the

155 For the idea that Jesus was conceived as Temple in the writings of the New Testament, see for instance B. Salier, “The Temple in the Gospel According to John,” 121-34 and S. Walton’s “A Tale of Two Perspectives? The Place of the Temple in Acts?” in *Heaven on Earth: The Temple in Biblical Theology* (eds. T. D. Alexander and S. Gathercole; Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 2004), 135-149.

156 See F. Flannery-Dailey, “Calling Down Heaven: Descent of the Hekhal in Second Temple Judaism as a Window onto Ritual Experience” (paper presented at the SBL national conference, Washington, November 2006).

same time a descent (*EpApost* 13.2; 39.11) followed by an ascension (*EpApost* 13.8; 14.8; 18.4; 29.7), and also compared with the rising of the sun with the same verb ἀνατέλλω (*IP* 1.2; *EpApost* 16.3); (3) the two sources connect Christ's coming with the Pascha (*EpApost* 16); (4) the two sources had strong Johannine influence.

The theme of the descended heavenly temple emerges in other important early Christian writings such as Melito's *Peri Pascha*, where, in 44(289) for instance, Christ comes from above in opposition to the earthly Temple. In 45(290-300), comparing the Jerusalem from above with the terrestrial one, Melito reckons that the glory (δόξα) of God sits down, is established (καθίσταται) not in a single place (ἐφ' ἐνὶ τόπῳ), but his grace (χάρις) overflows unto all the boundaries of the inhabited world (ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ πέρατα τῆς οἰκουμένης). The pivotal idea of the descended glory will also appear in Cyprian's *On Lord's Prayer* 4, Clement's *Protreptikos* 11.114.1-2, and Origen's first *Homily on Ezekiel* 1.6-8. According to David J. Halperin, Origen's source of inspiration seemed to be the *Sinai Haggadot*.¹⁵⁷ However, all these sources and probably *In sanctum Pascha* (if a pre-Origenian writing) give witness to a more ancient tradition.

2. Pascha and Celestial Liturgy

At the same time, following Hebrews 8:1 ("we have such a high priest (ἀρχιερεύς), who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens"), *In sanctum Pascha* becomes more complex through portraying Christ as a divine high priest. Pseudo-Hippolytus depicts Christ with certain apocalyptic liturgical

¹⁵⁷ See D. J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot. Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1988), esp. 327-35.

titles such as the “eternal high priest” (ἀρχιερεὺς αἰώνιος; 46.33; 36), “the true high priest of the heavens” (55.16-17), and also with several titles the Bible ascribes to Yahweh Sabaoth: the “King of the powers” (46.36), the “King of glory” (46.29-31; 61:9-14), the “eternal King” (46.3; 19), the “great King” (9.28), and the “Lord of the powers” (46.26; 30; 36).¹⁵⁸

As for the visionary, one of the noticeable elements of the *In sanctum Pascha* consists in the “democratization” of the accessibility to the hidden realm of heavens. Every human person can be initiated and become a visionary of the highest mystery of the universe, namely the luminous theophany of the Lord of powers. Angels, human beings, stars, waters, and the whole earth are all present contemplating the King of glory in his various manifestations. In one of the central scenes (*IP* 55.5-25), they are terrified spectators at the divine passions of the King of the universe:

Then the world was in amazement at his long endurance. The heavens were shocked, the powers were moved, the heavenly thrones and laws were moved at seeing the General of the great powers hanging on the cross; for a short time the stars of heaven were falling when they viewed stretched on the cross him who was before the morning star. For a time the sun’s fire was extinguished, the great Light of the world suffered eclipse. Then the earth’s rocks were rent ... the veil of the temple was rent in sympathy, bearing witness to the High priest of the heavens, and the world would have been dissolved in confusion and fear at the passion if the great Jesus had not expired saying: Father, into your hands I commit my spirit (Luke 23:46). The whole universe trembled and quaked with fear, and everything was in a state of agitation, but when the Divine Spirit rose again the universe returned to life and regained its vitality.

The next scene (*IP* 3.1-15) depicts the whole creation glorifying the victory and resurrection of the King of glory:

¹⁵⁸ The divine priest represents a central apocalyptic theme as the following articles can prove: P. G. Davis, “Divine Agents, Mediators, and New Testament Christology,” *JTS* 45 (1994): 479-503; J. R. Davila, “Melchizedek, Michael, and War in Heaven,” in *SBLSP* (1996): 259-72; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, “The High Priest as Divine Mediator in the Hebrew Bible: Dan 7:13 as a Test Case,” *SBLSP* (1997): 161-193; J. R. Davila, “Melchizedek: King, Priest, and God,” in *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth: Challenge or Response?* (ed. S. D. Breslauer; Albany, NY: SUNY, 1997), 217-34; M. Barker, “Beyond the Veil of the Temple. The High Priestly Origin of the Apocalypses,” *SJT* 51.1 (1998); R. Elior, *The Three Temples*; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, “God’s Image, His Cosmic Temple and the High Priest,” in *Heaven on Earth*, 78-99.

Exult, ye heavens of heavens, which as the Spirit exclaims, *proclaim the glory of God* (Ps 18:1) in that they are first to receive the paternal light of the Divine Spirit. Exult, angels and archangels of the heavens, and all you people, and the whole heavenly host as you look upon your heavenly King come down in bodily form to earth. Exult, you choir of stars pointing out him who rises *before the morning star*. Exult, air, which extends over the abysses and interminable spaces. Exult, bring water of the sea, honored by the sacred traces of his footsteps. Exult, earth washed by the divine blood. Exult, every soul of man, reanimated by the resurrection to a new birth.¹⁵⁹

The repetitive expression “exult, celebrate” (ἐορταζέτωσαν) reflects the cadence of a hymn very similar to those present in Psalms 29, 103, and 148. They are hymns in which the community joins the cosmic praise of God, and, even more, the community commands the universe to eulogize God.¹⁶⁰ The last three chapters of the booklet, in particular, depict a mystic choral chanting (χορηγία ἡ μυστική], a spiritual feast, and an antiphonal choir where angels and humans sing and respond to each other.¹⁶¹ There are also images associated with liturgical experience such as the marriage chamber, the wedding garments, certain interior lamps of the human souls, and “the divine fire of grace (χάρις) that burns divinely and spiritually in all, in soul and body, nurtured by the oil of Christ (ἐνθέως δὴ καὶ πνευματικῶς ἐν πᾶσι τῆς χάριτος δαδουχεῖται τὸ πῦρ, σώματι καὶ πνεύματι, καὶ ἐλαίῳ Χριστοῦ χορηγούμενον).”¹⁶²

3. Mystery Language and *Visio Dei*

While the Paschal event seems to convert into a visionary moment—into an

159 Cf. *IP* 62. See also the following paschal Byzantine hymn in the tone one: “All creation was changed by fear when it saw you hanging on the Cross, O Christ; the sun was darkened and the foundations of the earth were shaken; all things were suffering with you, the Creator of them all. You endured willingly for us. Lord, glory to you!”

160 Visonà, *Pseudo Ippolito*, 149-57.

161 *IP* 62.16-19. A similar depiction of the paschal night as universal liturgy of heaven and earth can be encountered in John Chrysostom, *De resurrectione Christi et contra ebriosos* 3 (PG 50:433) and Chromatius of Aquileia, in his first sermon on the Great Night, *Ser.* 16.2-3 (SC 154:262-264): *Unde hanc vigiliam Domini et angeli in caelo et homines in terra et animae fidelium in inferno celebrant.*

162 *IP* 62.30-32.

apocalyptic mise-en-scène—the anonymous author does not offer a traditional apocalyptic treatment in terms of preparation for access to this luminous vision through ascension, but develops a mystagogy instead. The fact that Christ, the king of angels, descends himself to the initiand and gradually reveals himself—from the stage of the human form which he put on to the final epiphany of the huge incandescent divine body (later analyzed in my study)—also adds a new element to the mystery dimension of the homily.

Pseudo-Hippolytus manifestly affirms in a short methodological exposition in chapters 4-7 that the divine temple and its light are not visible in the way we see the sensible things, but they are rather hidden and mysterious and part of the veiled side of the world, where the mysteries of the Truth can be found.¹⁶³ Similar to Philo's *Questions and Answers on Exodus* and Melito's *Peri Pascha*, the homilist connects this mystagogy with a typological exegesis of Exodus 12.¹⁶⁴ While the types or figures (τύποι) of the book of Exodus could be seen through the bodily eyes, the prototypes or paradigms (πρωτότυποι καὶ παραδέγματα) are not visible, but hidden (μυστικά), and able to be seen only through intellection or intuition (νοῦς) (*IP* 6.10). Since the glory is not located exclusively within the upper realm but present everywhere on earth, the heavenly ascension becomes utterly meaningless. For this reason the author logically changed the *ascension* into a *mystagogy*, a penetration into the mystery realm, which exists on the earth as well, not solely in heaven. Therefore the visionary, namely the Christian initiand, has to seek to acquire a mystical knowledge (*IP* 4.2; 50.5) by pursuing the itinerary of contemplating with accuracy the mysteries hidden within the

¹⁶³ *IP* 7.5: τὰ τῆς ἀληθείας μυστήρια.

¹⁶⁴ It seems that a hermeneutical tradition of interpreting Exod 12 within the Paschal context may be traced from Philo's *QE* to Melito, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Origen.

types.¹⁶⁵ Since the light of Christ and the Spirit spread in the universe cannot be seen with the bare eye, the participants in the liturgy need to be initiated (*IP* 4.2). Within this context, the Paschal celebration does not take place within the visible world, it is not so much *cosmic*, but rather *mystical*, or a *mystery*.

Carrying on the same logic, Pseudo-Hippolytus claims that the sacrifice and even the Lamb that “has come down from the heaven” (*IP* 2.15) are mystical.¹⁶⁶ The Lamb is then a “sacred sacrifice” (τὸ θύμα τὸ ἱερόν; 18.1), and “perfect” (τέλειον; 19.1), while the Pascha is also mystical (1.15). Thus the same combination of mystery and apocalypticism emerges here again. It is a well-known aspect that Pascha is connected with the apocalyptic theme of resurrection and the heavenly Lamb represents an apocalyptic image which appears in the Book of Revelation, first as the slaughtered or sacrificed Lamb, then as the Lamb sitting on the heavenly throne among the angels who glorify him.¹⁶⁷ The mystery adjective ἱερός (sacred) qualifies in *In sanctum Pascha* everything connected with Christ and his temple: rays (1.1), church (63.3), Pascha (16.4), feast (6.1; 8.1), solemnity (3.28), knowledge (4.2), victim (18.1), lamb (23.2), body (41.4; 49.6), head (53.2), rib (53.9), blood and water (53.9-10), spirit (47.6-7), word (59.4), and resurrection (60.1-2).

¹⁶⁵ *IP* 6.5-6: τὴν δὲ ἀκρίβειαν τῶν μυστηρίων διὰ τῶν τυπῶν θεωροῦντες. Perhaps because of its special connection with the Book of Revelation and the Johanne tradition, Asia Minor seems to have a particular tendency toward apocalyptic literature. See for instance, A. Y. Collins, “The Revelation of John: An Apocalyptic Response to a Social Crisis,” *CurTM* 8 (1981): 4-12; L. V. Crutchfield, “The Apostle John and Asia Minor as a Source of Premillennialism in the Early Church Fathers,” *JETS* 31 (1988): 411-427; T. B. Slater, “On the Social Setting of the Revelation to John,” *NTS* 44 (1998): 232-256; R. H. Worth, *The Seven Cities of the Apocalypse and Greco-Asian Culture* (Paulist Press, 1999); P. A. Harland, “Honouring the Emperor or Assailing the Beast: Participation in Civic Life among Associations (Jewish, Christian and Other) in Asia Minor and the Apocalypse of John,” *JSNT* 77 (2000): 99-121; C. J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting* (The Biblical Resource Series; Eerdmans, 2001).

¹⁶⁶ *IP* 20.4-5: τὸ πρόβατον ἔρχεται τὸ μυστικὸν τὸ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν.

¹⁶⁷ Rev 5:6; 9; 12-3. Cf. Jn 1:29,36; Acts 8:32; 1 Cor 5:7; 1 Pt 1:19; 2:24. For the roots of this image, see Gen 22:7-8, 13; Ex: 12:21; Lev 4:35; 5:6; 9:3. For the image of the suffering righteous connected to the lamb, see Isa. 52,13-53:7 Jer 11:19 etc.

The recurring usage of such terms as ἱερός, μυστικός, πνευματικός, θεῖος, μέγας might not be the “mania for hyperbole of a mediocre orator,”¹⁶⁸ but rather the effort of suggesting that those realities of the temple and especially its king—the pre-existing Christ—do not belong to the sensible realm, but to the invisible, noetic, or mysterious one. It can be also noticed that the attribute μέγας is used as well particularly in connection to the divine temple and Christ’s body: consequently, rather than being a note of grandiloquence,¹⁶⁹ it might be the Jewish biblical and pseudepigraphical theme of divine body, as I will illustrate a little below. In this way, all these adjectives might constitute the linguistic instrumentarium of a theologian expressing old apocalyptic ideas pertaining to the early Jewish-Christian mindset rather than the rhetorical artifices of a fourth or fifth century orator.

4. The Pneumatic Nature of Christ’s Luminous Body

The initiatory process of revealing mysteries reaches its completion with the highest revelation, which is the light that fills the whole creation or the huge luminous body of Christ. A significant aspect of the nature of this light is that of its being manifested as a body not of material, but of pneumatic or spiritual nature. The allusion to a humanlike form or body of God echoes a central Jewish theme, both scriptural and apocryphal, namely that of the divine luminous humanlike form contemplated by the prophets and apocalyptic visionaries alike. Some of the most famous passages are Exodus 24:9-11, Ezekiel 1:26 (where on the throne sits a “figure [דמות] with the appearance [מראה] of a man [אדם];” cf. LXX: ὁμοίωμα ὡς εἶδος ἀνθρώπου), Daniel 7,

¹⁶⁸ Nautin, *Homélies*, 46. See for instance the repeated adjective μέγας in Ezekiel the Tragedian.

¹⁶⁹ Nautin, *Homélies*, 43.

or Philippians 2:6 (“in the form of God” [ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ]). While there is no textual evidence, it is plausible that Pseudo-Hippolytus could have taken over this theme from a Jewish context, given the considerable Jewish presence in Asia Minor at the time, the author’s Quartodeciman position, and his mention of a “secret” Hebrew tradition about creation.¹⁷⁰ At the same time, it is also plausible that he acquired the tradition of God’s form through the mediation of his Christian community where the theme was popular in the second century. The idea of the image or form of glory, or of the huge body of Christ also appears for example in Philippians 3:21, 1 Corinthians 11:7, *Acta Pauli*, 2 *Clement*, *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* 17:7, or in Herakleon of Alexandria who, in his commentary to John 1:27—as Origen testifies in *Commentary on John* 6.39—reads: “The whole world is the shoe of Jesus.”

Pseudo-Hippolytus speaks about a body that touches the heavens and makes the earth fast by its feet, while the huge hands embrace the winds between the heaven and earth.¹⁷¹ At the same time, this body is identical with the celestial tree, the tree of paradise, the pillar of the universe, the Spirit that permeates all things, and the “ladder of Jacob, the way of angels, at the summit of which the Lord is truly established.”¹⁷² However, one should also observe that none of these realities is visible and sensible, but all are mystical and pneumatic. For Pseudo-Hippolytus, such titles as “divine” (θεῖος), “pneumatic/spiritual” (πνευματικός), perfect (τέλειος), or “separated/inaccessible” (ἀπρόσιτος) refer to something completely different from the visible universe, namely

¹⁷⁰ *IP* 17.4.

¹⁷¹ *IP* 51. Cf. *IP* 63, for the hands of God.

¹⁷² *IP* 51.

to the noetic one. Being separated, the effusions or emanations (ἐμβολαί) of the Spirit/Christ remain unmixed (ἄκρατος, ἀμιγές) with sensible things.¹⁷³

It is noteworthy that among the expressions related to the huge body of Christ, scattered among different parts of the text, some regard the fiery constitution of his body.¹⁷⁴ Passage 1.1-12 avers that the mighty (μέγας) Christ, immortal and immense (πολύς), sheds light brighter than that of the sun. In 55.11, the Johannine Christological title “the light of the world” also receives the attribute of “mighty” (τὸ μέγα τοῦ κόσμου φωτός). Furthermore, commenting on Exodus 12:8 (“They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire”) the author makes the following cryptic affirmation: “This is the night on which the flesh is eaten, for the light of the world has set on the great body of Christ: *Take and eat; this is my body.*”¹⁷⁵ Since the liturgical or Eucharistic context is noticeable here, the interpretation needs to be done from a liturgical perspective. My reading would be that Pseudo-Hippolytus refers to the Christian Eucharist, which is taken or received without the vision of Christ’s glory; in translation, it is taken “in the night.” This night does not refer to the incapacity of seeing the visible light, but to the incapacity of perceiving the invisible, mystical, or pneumatic glory.

173 *IP* 45.7-9. Cf. 1 Tim 6:16, where God is called φῶς ἀπρόσιτος. The same title also appears in Athenagoras’s *Legatio* 16.3, along with πνεῦμα, δύναμις, and λόγος.

174 For the idea of Christ’s gigantic body, see *IP* 1.11: μέγας Χριστός; 2.3: μεγάλη μεγάλου βασιλέως επιδημία; 9.28: μεγάλου βασιλέως; 32.3: τῷ μεγάλῳ σώματι; 45.10: τὸ μέγεθος πᾶν τῆς θεότητος (cf. Col 2:9: πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος); 15.14: τῶν ἐκταθεισῶν χειρῶν Ἰησοῦ; 38.3-4: χεῖρας ἐξέτεινας πατρικάς, ἐκάλυψας ἡμᾶς ἐντὸς τῶν πτερύγων σου τῶν πατρικῶν; 63.2-3: τὰς χεῖρας τὰς μεγάλας. For the huge dimensions of the cosmic tree and body, see also *IP* 51.

175 *IP* 26.1: Ἐν νυκτὶ δὲ τὰ κρέα ἐσθίεται.

The Eucharist is identified then with the “great body of Christ” on which the “light of the world” is set (ἔδν). A series of analogies may provide a better understanding of these expressions:

The visible sun – parallels the *light of the world* (a comparison frequently used in the Christian literature; see *IP* 1.12), which is the real nature of Christ.

The night – parallels the *mystery* of the visible elements of the Eucharist which covers the divine light of Jesus’ glorious body.

The earth – parallels the *bread of the Eucharist*, the visible realm which veils the divine light.

One chapter later (*IP* 27.1-2), he straightforwardly affirms that the “flesh is roasted with fire, for the spiritual or rational body of Christ is on fire” (τὰ δὲ κρέα ὁπτὰ πυρί: ἔμπυρον γὰρ λογικὸν σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ; “Πῦρ ἦλθον βαλεῖν εἰς τὴν γῆν;”).

This Christological conception also implies a particular understanding of the incarnation. Pseudo-Hippolytus does not employ such verbs as σαρκόω, ἐνσωματόω, or ἐνανθρωπέω, but renders various aspects of the mystery of the incarnation through different words. He uses for instance ἀποστολή (sending; *IP* 3.21) to underline the fact that the Father sent the Son into the world. A correlative term for “sending” is ἐπιδημία (2.3; 7.6; 21.3; 43.2-3; 44.1; 47.10; 56.9)—“arriving,” “coming” (on—ἐπι)—either on earth (43.2) or into the body (σῶμα; 47.10). Another noun—ἀνατολή (Dawn, Orient; 3.4; 17.14; 45.23)—renders the light of Christ that fills the universe (cf. Matthew 3:16 and Luke 1:78).¹⁷⁶ This Dawn or Orient is also spiritual (πνευματική; 45.23] and,

¹⁷⁶ I am grateful to Fr. Alexander Golitzin who indicated me that ἀνατολή is already a divine name

therefore, mystical, not visible. The huge light, according to the author, set (ἔδω), contracted (συστείλας), collected (συναθροίσας), and compressed (συναγαγών)¹⁷⁷ in Christ's body, while the immensity of his whole divinity (τὸ μέγεθος πᾶν τῆς θεότητος) remained unchanged:

He willingly confined himself to himself and collecting and, compressing in himself all the greatness of the divinity, came in the dimensions of his own choice in no way diminished or lessened in himself, nor inferior in glory" (οὐ μειούμενος ἐν ἑαυτῷ οὐδὲ ἐλαττούμενος οὐδὲ τῇ δόξῃ δαπανούμενος).¹⁷⁸

In order to discover the divine body of light veiled and enveloped by Christ's visible body, namely the visible elements of the Eucharist, Christians need to be initiated and cross the boundary between sensible and noetic. However, this heavenly anthropomorphic figure is the divine Anthropos in Pseudo-Hippolytus's understanding and its noetic features recalls Irenaeus's noetic Anthropos, as we will see in the next chapter.

5. Conclusion

Coming back to Collins's definition, one might state that the homily displays [1] a large framework, which is the history of salvation, where [2] the paschal celebration inserts itself as a privileged opportunity of accessing the divine temple extended into the whole universe, and of seeing [5] the divine king in a mystical way. This transcendent reality is not especially placed in an upper realm, but present in a deeper, hidden *here*.

in Zech 6:12 (LXX): Τάδε λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ Ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος, ὁ ἀνατολή ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

¹⁷⁷ For ἔδω, see *IP* 26.1; for the other three attributes see *IP* 45.10-11. The idea is not new in Christian context; cf. Phil. 2:6; *Odes of Solomon* 7:3-6; *Acts of Thomas* 15 and 80.

¹⁷⁸ *IP* 45.10-13. Cf. Melito of Sardis, *Frg.* 14. For a more detailed analysis in the context of the second century, see Cantalamessa, *L'Omelia*, 187-273. Also, cf. Philo, *De Gig.* VI, 27: "the good spirit, the spirit which is everywhere diffused, so as to fill the universe, which, while it benefits others, it not injured by having a participation in it given to another, and if added to something else, either as to its understanding, or its knowledge, or its wisdom."

[4] Participants are human initiands in a mystery rite, while [3] the homilist represents the initiated mystagogue divulging one by one the sacred mysteries. *In sanctum Pascha*, therefore, seems to reflect similar features with some of the most representative categories of the apocalyptic literature; it is a revelation of the heavenly and divine king, of his throne, glory, and angelic choirs, but it is an apocalypse of a different nature, namely a mystery apocalypse.

The preceding discussion uncovers three elements: Paschal celebration, apocalyptic language, and mystery language. The three elements appear to be a common idea in first century Christian writings, but while the last element is slightly suggested in Melito, it is clearly developed by Pseudo-Hippolytus in a mystery apocalypse.¹⁷⁹ One can thus suppose that all these ideas were present within the intellectual atmosphere of the Christian communities in second and third century Asia Minor, and Pseudo-Hippolytus articulated them in more unitary way, adding as well the theme of Christ's divine body, which does not occur in Melito. With no doubt, Pseudo-Hippolytus's writing testifies to the noetic turn in Christian mysticism and in general in the conception about the noetic divine Anthropos, an innovation now inserted within the theology of the Pascha.

The Asia Minor of the second to fourth centuries was consequently the place of a decisive synthesis of two traditions—apocalypse and mystery—a synthesis that would come to dominate Christian liturgical life until today. Pseudo-Hippolytus's *In sanctum Pascha* witnesses to the application of this synthesis in the Paschal celebration, or,

¹⁷⁹ See, for instance, Massey Shepherd's research on the existence of a paschal liturgy in John's apocalypse: *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1960). Cf. P. Prigent, *Apocalypse et liturgie* (Neuchâtel, Suisse: Éditions Delachaux et Niestlé, 1964). For the similar eschatological expectation the glorious coming of the Messiah on the Paschal night in Christian and rabbinic traditions, see my "Seeking to See Him at the Festival of Pascha."

putting it differently, to a development of the Paschal language towards this mystery-apocalyptic vocabulary. In addition, the homily may put in a new light such writings as Philo's *Questions and Answers on Exodus* and Melito's *Peri Pascha*, writings that can be envisaged as the roots of this application. Pseudo-Hippolytus's homily is consequently important as a pool of testimonies; it displays an affluent terminological and ideological treasury for the Christian theology of the second, third, or perhaps even the early fourth century. The synthesis of Jewish apocalyptic images and Greek mystery terminology definitely witnesses to a period of syncretism, as well as to a Christian community in search for the language to express, and give shape to, its own identity.

Summary

The fourth part has investigated a different language through which early Christians and particularly the authors of paschal homilies expressed the idea of noetic Anthropos. In fact mystery language has the same intention with the noetic one and frequently both languages work together. They try to express something more subtle and refined, imperceptible by the ordinary senses, namely those realities pertaining to the noetic, spiritual, and mystery realm. Thus, the noetic Anthropos is also a mystery Anthropos, a heavenly Man who manifests in mysterious ways in reality and invites humanity to know him in a mysterious way. Early Christian theologians developed mystery language in connection with God and his Image in the liturgical context of paschal celebration. Mystery language involves a more complex setting, the liturgical context, than simple theorization since the rite involves gesture, speech, vision, and theology to fulfill all these with secret meanings. While apocalyptic literature developed

the idea of ascension, paschal writings, highly influenced by mystery terminologies, changed dramatically the method from ascension to mystery initiation. As the divine Anthropos is no longer a sensible entity but a noetic one, the method of accessing the heavenly Man presupposes initiation into a spiritual and noetic perception able to cross the visible and contemplate the invisible, noetic world. Finally, the goal remains the same, the encounter with Christ, the heavenly the Anthropos and transformation into his image.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

My study has investigated a dimension of paschal theology which is not emphasized in contemporary paschal investigations, a dimension which opened an unexpected field of research. Instead of talking about Christ as the Paschal Lamb, I preferred to stress those imageries and terminologies referring to his humanlike aspect. Certainly the central categories involved are Divine Image and Adam, and the study uncovered a highly interesting discourse I called eikonic soteriology, whose roots can be traced back to the Pauline tradition. Christ as Divine Image and heavenly Anthropos takes the form of the fallen Adam in order to help him recover the ancient luminous form of glory. From here I investigated in more detail his Anthropos dimension, an investigation which led to the discovery of the Hellenistic idea that the Anthropos had a noetic nature. Thus, the noetic paschal Anthropos entails the following theological presuppositions which my study pointed out and analyzed:

1. The figure of the noetic paschal Anthropos primarily involves the Divine Image tradition synthesizing *kabod* and Adam traditions. It comprehends the development of these two traditions into the hypostasization of the Divine Image and the exaltation of Adam, respectively.
2. This figure equally involves the eikonic soteriology developed first by Paul, elaborated as a synthesis of the two developments, namely the hypostatization plus exaltation. Now Christ is the heavenly Anthropos and Image which descends in order to help the fallen Adam to become a new exalted anthropos.

3. Eikonic soteriology involves two versions: salvation of the image of the Divine Image, in Melito and Pseudo-Hippolytus, and re-creation in Paul. Nonetheless, in both cases the Pascha can be redefined, from the perspective eikonic soteriology opens, as the eikonic passage from the form of the servant to the form of God, from the form of the fallen Adam to the form of the Divine Image and heavenly Anthropos.
4. Two other types of paschal soteriologies are discovered in connection with Christ's depiction as Anthropos. While his classical paschal depiction as lamb involves a sacrificial-liturgical soteriology, the new depiction involves two new soteriologies: Divine Warrior soteriology and glory soteriology. While the first one envisions the human being as enslaved to death and Christ the Saviour as a Divine Warrior who saves humankind at the end of a military campaign where he defeats death, the second conceives of salvation as presence within God's light and Christ as the light within which salvation is possible.
5. My thesis develops the hypothesis that between anthropomorphism and anti-anthropomorphism there is an unexplored field of research. Hellenistic theologians from Philo to Irenaeus, to Tertullian, to Clement, to Origen, instead of a pure rejection of anthropomorphism, proposed a distinction between God's unseen essence and his manifestation in visions under various forms. Moreover, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement talk about a divine form of God.
6. The nature of the divine Anthropos, however, according to Hellenistic theologians, is noetic. It is not part of a unitary universe covered beyond the firmament and visible with the bodily eye when the firmament is taken out. It is

rather of a more subtle nature perceptible only through the noetic capacity of the mind. Starting at least with Origen, the noetic Anthropos fluctuates between noetic reality and metaphor.

7. From a more general perspective, my thesis argues for what I would call the noetic turn in apocalyptic literature. This turn represents the translation of the general ontological and epistemological categories of the apocalyptic literature from the everyday language of sense-perception to the noetic level. My thesis on the heavenly Anthropos can be regarded as a study case of the noetic turn, a study which investigates the the noetic turn for probably the central figure of apocalyptic imagery: the glorious anthropomorphic character of the heavenly realm. While ontologically transferred to the noetic level, the Anthropos requires new epistemic capacities—the noetic perception—to be contemplated.
8. Mystery language reflects a new terminology as well inserted within early paschal discourse in connection with the noetic turn. Paschal mystery, unlike the previous concepts of mystery analyzed in the remarkable monograph of Markus Bockmuehl, this is part of the noetic universe and usually its discovery presupposes initiation instead of ascension, the essential method of accessing the divine for apocalyptic literature.

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