

Is there a life without a body?

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1. Early Christian views on the soul-body relation 2. Personal eschatology; Intermediate state, resurrection 3. Pseudo-Justin, Melito of Sardis, Hippolytus, Pseudo-Josephus/Origen, Aphrahat, Ephrem the Syrian

In Richard Attenborough's *Shadowlands* we can hear the following dialogue between Joy Gresham and "Christopher Riley", just introduced to each-other in the company of C. S. Lewis (Jack), at a Christmas reception in the senior common room of Magdalene College, Oxford:

PROF. Am I right in assuming that you are from the USA?

RILEY

JOY Yes, I am.

PROF. Then perhaps you can satisfy my curiosity in a related

RILEY matter. I have always understood Americans to be hard-writing, tough-talking, and one-sensed sort of people, yet Jack tells me, his children's stories sell very well there. Who can be buying them?

JOY Well, Prof. Riley, we are not all cowboys, you know. Have you read any of Jack's children's books?

PROF. Jack has read abstracts aloud to me. It is one of his tests of

RILEY friendship.

JOY Why, I think they are rather magical.

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- PROF. Congratulations, Jack, you seem to have found a soul-
RILEY mate.
- JACK I thought you believed we didn't have souls, Christopher?
- PROF. Well, yes, now I regard the soul as an essentially feminine
RILEY accessory, *anima*, quite different from *animus*, the male
variant. This is how I explain the otherwise puzzling
difference between the sexes; where men have intellect,
women have soul.
- JOY As you say Prof Riley, I'm from the US, and different
cultures have different modes of discourse. ... Are you
trying to be offensive or just merely stupid?¹

I have strong reasons to suppose that who stands behind the fictive character of Christopher Riley is nobody else than Lewis' colleague at Magdalene College, one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century, Gilbert Ryle². Here he represents a stance that has since become ubiquitous. As Mark Edwards has put it:

- 1 *Shadowland* (1993), film dir. by Sir Richard Attenborough 36'52" - 38'00" (based on a television film [Thames Television 1985] and a stage play [1989] by William Nicholson, original script by Brian Sibley and Norman Stone [*I Call It Joy*]). Cf. Brian Sibley, *Shadowlands: The True Story of C. S. Lewis and Joy Davidman*, London, 1998, where, however, the character of Riley does not appear.
- 2 "Dick Lucas' early years and what C.S. Lewis was like as a professor" [audio interview with transcript] (Part 1 of 5) <https://www.leadershipresources.org/dick-lucas-early-years-and-what-c-s-lewis-was-like-as-a-professor/>: "He then became very unpopular with the senior faculty at Magdalen College. Magdalen was a godless college and a very famous college, very atheistical. People like Gilbert Ryle the philosopher. So [Lewis] got a rough ride there. He never made professor at Oxford." Cf. also A. J. Barkman, "The Philosophical Christianity of C.S. Lewis: Its Sources, Content and Formation" PhD Diss. Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2009 (online at <https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/the-philosophical-christianity-of-cs-lewis-its-sources-content-an>) p. 5.n. 2; p. 58. n. 205; and p. 246 (a quote from Lewis' *De Descriptione*

One can seldom speak of the soul in modern English without being taken for either a Christian or a poet³.

Indeed, contemporary philosophers do not talk about soul – but they do talk about mind; but we must remind ourselves that when soul was introduced into the philosophical discussion, mainly⁴ by Plato⁵, it was but a synonym for the self and for the mind, the main function of it being cognition. In the scene above Prof. Riley also does talk about the mind (*animus*), as did the historical Ryle, too, in

Temporum). I did not have access either to the earlier film of the same title made for television by William Nicholson in 1985 or its stage play version from 1989.

- 3 Mark Julian Edwards, *Origen against Plato*, Aldershot, 2002, 87.
- 4 The word is attested in the Pythagorean theory of the transmigration of souls (Xenophanes fr. B7) and in the seemingly non-verbatim quotation of Anaximenes, fr. B2 (cf. Diogenes of Apollonia B5), and becomes a key concept for Heraclitus (fr. B13; 36; 45; 68; 77; 85; 98; 107; 115; 117; 118; 126) but all this does not amount to a philosophical discussion of the concept. K. Kerényi might be correct that the term did not play a role in Empedocles' anthropology and eschatology: Karl Kerényi, *Pythagoras und Orpheus. Präludien zu einer zukünftigen Geschichte der Orphik und des Pythagoreismus*, Zürich, 1950³; at least it is conspicuously missing in the verbatim fragments of Empedocles (the only occurrence would be fr. B138 where it can simply mean "life"). In Anaxagoras, ψυχή is a principle of life common to humans and animals (fr. B4; 12), while having νοῦς is a human privilege (fr. B12). For Plato, ψυχή can have either of these functions, with a definite emphasis on the latter (as the *true* nature of soul): see next note.
- 5 The main function of ψυχή is φρόνησις in the *Phaedo*, even is the soul remains here and there the principle of life/motion/change. Cf. *Alcibiades* 117b; 132d; 133c (on modern discussion of the authenticity of this dialogue see J. Annas, "Self-Knowledge in Early Plato", in *Platonic Investigations* (ed. Dominic J. O'Meara), Washington, DC, 1985, 112-115; Nicholas D. Smith, "Did Plato write the *Alcibiades I*?", in *Apeiron* 37 (2004), 93-108; Paulina Remes, "Reason to Care: The Object and Structure of Self-Knowledge in the *Alcibiades I*", in *Apeiron* 46 (2013), 274-277.

an influential monograph.⁶ But he did so only to tell that to speak about mind as something distinct from the body is like saying that one bought two gloves *and besides* also a pair (of gloves)⁷.

This is in striking contrast with Antiquity, especially Platonism-dominated Late Antiquity. Socrates, to start with, asks Alcibiades in Plato's dialogue entitled after the latter, which of the three the self is: soul, body, or a conjunction of the two⁸. They answer the last two options negatively and conclude that we are nothing but soul. This position has gradually become the dominant philosophical stance in Roman and Byzantine times⁹. The typical attitude towards the body is plastically expressed in Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*

Plotinus [...] seemed ashamed of being in the body. [...] And he objected so strongly to sitting to a painter or sculptor that he said [...] „Why [...] leave behind me a longer-lasting image of the image, as if it was something genuinely worth looking at?”¹⁰

Recent philosophers (and most people from scientists to common folk) have tended to choose the second option offered by Plato's Socrates, while the Platonist choice appears an outdated, old-fashioned, even impossible one. In this paper I ask the question where early Christian thinkers stood in this respect. Of course, I cannot give a comprehensive overview. Neither space, nor my competence would suffice for that. Indeed, there has lately been a vivid theological

6 Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, New York, 1949.

7 Cf. *Ibid.* 22.

8 Plato, *Alcibiades I* 128e-130d.

9 On this, see the collective volume *A History of Mind and Body in Late Antiquity* (eds. Anna Marmodoro – Sophie Cartwright), Cambridge, 2017, 3-4.

10 Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* in Plotinus, *Enneads* (tr. A. H. Armstrong), I LCL 440, 1989, 3. On Plotinus see Lloyd P. Gerson, “Plotinus”, in *A History of Mind and Body*, 67-84 and Stephen R. L. Clark, “Plotinus: Body and soul”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus* (ed. Lloyd P. Gerson), Cambridge, 1996, 275-291.

and historical interest in the issue. Among others¹¹, a recent collective volume, a workshop at the last Oxford Patristic Conference¹², and our present symposium are also a witness to this. Thus, what I am able to do in this paper is that by musing on the problem, I believe, I shall shed some light on the early history of one of the positions early theologians took in the issue detailed above. Out of the three options offered by Socrates they choose neither the Platonic nor the modern physicalist view but the third one: we are body *and* soul.

Resurrection and Body as an Image of God

The doctrine of the resurrection is both a source and a test case for Christian anthropology as is the whole issue of death and afterlife, including the so-called middle-state. A thorough consideration of this question, however, has to take into account a philosophical-theological conundrum, including a reconsideration of all our anthropological and cosmological concepts, such as matter, body, soul, mind, spirit, person, time, space. We should, for example, refrain from naively operating with an absolute linear concept of time in both the empirical and the transcendent world, or to speak about

- 11 On the theological issue, see e.g. Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life* (trans. Michael Waldstein), Washington, DC, 1988, 104-161; Georges Florovsky, "The Anthropomorphites in the Egyptian Desert", in *Aspects of Church History*, Belmont, Mass., 1975, 89-96; "Theophilus of Alexandria and Apa Aphou of Pemdje", *Ibid.* 97-129; John D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church* (ed. Paul McPartlan), New York, 2006, 263-269; esp. 279-283; cf. also Christopher West, "Preface" and Michael Waldstein, "Introduction" in John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* (tr. Michael Waldstein), Boston, 2006, xxvii-xxx; 94-104.
- 12 E.g. the workshop "Bodily Resurrection vs Immortality: Philosophy, Medicine, Theology" at the last Oxford Patristic Conference (I refer to several papers below).

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embodiment or disembodiment without considering what exactly the distance of this body and resurrected body in the authors concerned is, or what they mean by a body in heaven.

We may begin with an assertion of St Paul in his autobiographical letter to the Galatians:

the life, which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God (Gal 2,20 KJV).

Now, is there also a life without the flesh? In the *First letter to the Corinthians*, roughly contemporary with that to the Galatians, arguing against those who deny that there is a resurrection of the body¹³, St Paul confirms that the afterlife is also a life in a body, although in a different body:

And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not *that body* that shall be [...] It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. (1Cor 15,37-8; 44 KJV)

In the following paper, however, I shall not dwell on this distinction between this-worldly and otherworldly bodies, but only on the permanence of the bodily aspect of our life. Neither shall I consider the possible difference between *flesh* (*sarx*) and *body* (*sōma*), since neither St Paul in the quotation above, nor the Patristic authors I shall examine make this distinction¹⁴.

Thus, keeping in mind all the philosophical issues hinted at above, but without entering the conceptual problems in detail, I now propose

¹³ 1Cor 15,12-58.

¹⁴ In other words, it is not Pauline interpretation that is at stake in this paper, neither in the sense of reconstructing the conceptual framework of St Paul, nor of modern theologies which use Pauline texts as a pretext to deploy their own key ideas. For all this, one can consult Vito Limone “The Christian Conception of the Body and Paul’s Use of the Term *Sōma* in 1 Corinthians”, in *A History of Mind and Body*, 191-206. Here I am concerned with the Pauline *dictum* only as a point of reference for the authors I am dealing with in the present paper.

to look first at a definite set of early fathers how they dealt with the body. First of all, we have to see how this group of Christian thinkers is different and from whom.

When interaction between Christians and the Graeco-Roman culture started, philosophy was ever growingly dominated by Platonism. Not the fashionable and widespread esoteric movements of the age and their Christian counterparts, the so-called Gnostics alone, but also the initiators of Christian theology, Aristides, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria and Origen made use of the Platonist weaponry and were even in their person to some extent or at some point attached to Platonic schools. Platonism seemed to be in many respects a natural ally to Christianity in its combat against contemporary Greco-Roman religion and the common way of life. Now, as we have seen, in the field of anthropology Platonism stood for a radical soul-body dualism, affirming the self-subsistent, independent and eternal existence of the soul as opposed to the lower and temporary body. Our real Self is identical with soul, to which body is only external, even an obstacle, something she had better get rid of for good. As far at least as anthropology is concerned, Origen was beyond doubt the most eloquent proponent of the Platonic view:

The Son of God [...] came not to bring peace on the earth, that is, to corporeal and sensible things, but a sword, and to cut through, if I may say so, the disastrous friendship of soul and body, so that the soul, committing herself to the spirit which was against the flesh, may enter into friendship with God¹⁵.

- 15 Origen, *Com. Jo* I 32(229); translation by Allan Menzies in ANF 9, 316. *Ibid.* II 6 Origen apparently degrades the significance of Incarnation as something base and of temporary value: "For He is also (called by Moses) true as opposed to shadow, token, and image, since this is indeed characteristic of the Word in the Open Heaven. For he is not the same on Earth as He is in heaven, inasmuch as He became flesh and spoke through shade, tokens, and images. However, the majority of those who are supposed to have believed are disciples

The religion of Incarnation, however, could not ignore the carnal side of human existence that was assumed and sanctified by God himself. Further, as Tertullian has observed, the doctrine of the incarnation and that of the resurrection of the flesh are closely interrelated¹⁶. From the beginning it should have been evident from the Athenian speech of St Paul as reported by St Luke that in spite of all common points with contemporary philosophy, a most central faith-fact of Christianity, the resurrection of the body is not one of them¹⁷, on the contrary, it is a dividing line between Christian theology and Hellenic Philosophy.

It is no surprise then that the fathers I shall consider expounded their theology of the body mainly in their apology for the carnal resurrection, like Hippolytus¹⁸, Pseudo-Justin¹⁹. (I leave aside the related texts of Tertullian, who has been a subject of a distinct paper²⁰.)

of the shade of the Word, and not of the true Word of God in the Open Heaven. Thus Jeremiah says: Christ the Lord is the spirit of our face, about whom we have said: «we shall live in his shadow among the nations».

16 Tertullian, *De carne Christi* 1; 25; *De resurrectione* 2.

17 AA 17,18; 32.

18 See CPG 1900-1901.

19 See Bernard Poderon, “Le contexte polémique du De Resurrectione attribué à Justin: destinataires et adversaires”, in *Studia Patristica* 31 (1997), 143-166; the work is attributed to Athenagoras by Martin Heimgartner, *Pseudo-Justin: Über die Auferstehung* PTS 54 Berlin, 2001, 193-233 (with a critical edition *Ibid.* 97-131); to Hippolytus believed to be identical with the author of the *Refutatio*: Alice Whealey, “Pseudo-Justin’s De resurrectione: Athenagoras or Hippolytus?”, in *Vigiliae Christianae* 60 (2006), 420-430. However, the author’s innovative hypothetical and neutral use of Greek philosophical theories is very distinct from that of the Roman author of the *Refutatio* or that of Athenagoras and is unparalleled in the works of Hippolytus (including the fragments of his work on the resurrection), and, for that matter, that of Tatian.

20 Tertullian, *De resurrectione* (CPL 19). On Tertullian further see Jonathan Barnes, “Anima Christiana”, in *Body and Soul in Ancient Philosophy* (eds. Dorothea Frede – Burkhard Reis), Berlin, 2009, 451-464.

Now let us see how their fourfold message concerning the question of the body is evolving in the polemical context.

First, these authors, like St Irenaeus²¹, maintain that human beings are composed of two indispensable aspects, soul and body, and only the two together make a (wo)man. The most lucid statement of this comes from a *De resurrectione* falsely attributed to Justin martyr:

What is a human being? What else than a rational animal composed of soul and body? Is the soul somehow in itself a human being? By no means, but it is the soul *of* a human being. Would you call the body a human being? By no means; you call it a body *of* a human being. None of these in itself makes a human being, but the composite out of the two [...]²²

Of course, maintaining the composite nature of humanity does not automatically mean that the unity of soul and body is *essential* for being human. Origen, for example, in a record of a debate also declares that we are body and soul²³, but it is well known that whether

21 Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* V 6,1; cf. e.g. Tertullianus, *De resurrectione* 5-7.

22 Pseudo-Justin, *De resurrectione* 8,8-10: 593d (120 ed. Heimgartner); English translation is available also in *ANF* I 297. Gregory of Nyssa asks the question above in the manner of the Platonic *Alcibiades* and answers it in the terms of Pseudo-Justin: *In sanctum Pascha* GNO IX.1, 266-7, quoted in Nicholas Conostas, “To Sleep, Perchance to Dream: The Middle State of Souls in Patristic and Byzantine Literature”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001), 91-124; Gregory in fact uses Epiphanius’ parable mentioned below (n. 81).

23 – and spirit: *Dialogus cum Heraclide* 6,20-29 (SC 67) Σύνθετον εἶναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον | μεμαθήκαμεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν γραφῶν. Φησὶν γὰρ ὁ | ἀπόστολος: ‘Ὁ δὲ Θεὸς ἀγιάσαι ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ | ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα’ τὸ δὲ ‘Ἀγιάσαι ὑμᾶς ὀλοτελεῖς, | καὶ ὀλόκληρον ὑμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ | σῶμα ἀμέπτως ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν | Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τηρηθεῖ’, – τοῦτο τὸ πνεῦμα οὐκ | ἔστιν τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, ἀλλὰ μέρος τῆς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου | συστάσεως, ὡς διδάσκων ὁ αὐτὸς ἀπόστολος λέγει | ‘Τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν.’ Later, however, he makes it clear that as in *De principiis* that humans were originally made an immaterial substance and as such they are in the image of God. In §23 the image is found in the ψυχή.

he holds the same in the eschatological perspective is at least highly questionable and certainly a crux for his interpreters²⁴. Thus, for example, even later Nemesius of Emesa, an author indebted to Origen, to middle and late Platonism, can, for example, open his discussion on human nature by emphasising the perfect unity of soul and body in humans and *at the same time* maintain that body is only a temporary vehicle of the soul²⁵. In Ps-Justin and the texts related, however, we are in the context of arguing for the resurrection of the body, which makes the claim on our double nature a permanent truth. Further, to be more accurate, Origen states that humans are *composed of* soul and body, which is far from identical to saying that we *are* soul and body²⁶. The former claim can be naturally interpreted as a form of substance dualism, while the latter as a sort of attribute-dualism.

Secondly, as a consequence of this, the early defenders of resurrection maintain that since humans were made in the image of God²⁷ and are made up of soul and body, both these aspects of our being must exhibit the image of God. As stated by the very same author:

24 Even the keynote speaker on the subject at the ultimate Oxford Patristic Conference, Anders Christian Jacobssen, “Origen on Body and Freedom in Origen” paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 21st August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*) did not attempt at a solution of the conundrum. another paper on the subject proposed by Samuel Fernández seems to have been withdrawn.

25 Nemesius of Emesa, *De natura hominis [henceforth NH]* 1: p. 1,1-3; contrast e.g. *Ibid.* p 2. I agree with Anna Usacheva, “The Human Brain, Consciousness and a Quest for Immortality in Nemesius of Emesa” paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 21st August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*) that here Nemesius is under the double and incongruent influence of Plato and Galen.

26 The difference is not always palpable as far as the expression is concerned, although Pseudo-Justin has συνεστός and συμπλοκή, whereas Origen σύνθετον, which is somewhat more indicative of a nonessential unity.

27 Gen 1,27.

Does not the Word say ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness’? What sort of human being? Obviously a carnal one, since it says ‘humankind’. For thus speaks the Word: *then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground (Gen 2,7)*. It is palpable that the human being formed according to the image of God was carnal²⁸.

In opposition to this, a well-known and influential Alexandrian Jewish and Christian tradition insisted that human mind alone is the image of God²⁹, an idea followed also by contemporary writings like Pseudo-Athenagoras’ *De resurrectione*³⁰, or an *Apology* attributed to a certain “Melito Philosopher”³¹. Some 60 years ago G. B. Ladner in an influential article stated that this latter was the standard interpretation of the divine image in Genesis and remarked that Irenaeus and

28 Ps-Justin, *De resurrectione* 7,3-5; 592d; here I have followed Otto’s text, which is only slightly different form that of Heimgartner but corrects obvious scribal errors: Io. Car. Th. de Otto, *Corpus apologetarum christianorum saeculi secundi: Iustinus philosophus et martyr*, 3rd edn III, Jena, 1879, 234.

29 See Philo of Alexandria, *De opificio mundi* 69; *Legum Allegoriae* I,31-32; Clement of Alexandria, *Protrepticus* X 98,1-4; *Stromata* V,14,94,5; Origen, *Hom. Gen* I 15.

30 For the work in general with the most convincing arguments advanced thus far against the attribution to Athenagoras, see Attila Petrovits, “Athénagoras vagy Pseudo-Athénagoras? A »De resurrectione« szerzőségének kérdéséhez”, in *Irodalom, teológia, művészet: Válogatás a Magyar Patrisztikai Társaság VII-XI. konferenciáin elhangzott előadások szerkesztett változataiból* (ed. by Judit Tóth and György Heidl), *Studia Patrum* 5, Budapest, 2014, 33-73. For its image-concept see *ibid.*, 56.

31 Cf. István M. Bugár, “Melitón filozófus beszédének eszmetörténeti kontextusa” [The place of the *Oration* of ‘Melito the Philosopher’ in the History of Ideas], in *Orpheus Noster* 7/1 (2015), 20-43 (English summary on p. 43), repeated in, *A teológia kezdetei – a jánosi tradícióban: A Melitón- és a Hippolytosz-dossier* [The Formation of Christian Theology and the Asiatic Tradition: The Dossiers of Melito and Hippolytus (in Hungarian with an English summary on pp. 432-436)], Caténa monográfiák 16, Budapest, 2016, 130-150.

Methodius are somewhat rare exceptions to this general rule³². The truth is that the Alexandrians had only a better press in modern scholarship. The opposite tradition, however, is also a consistent and continuous line of exegesis, first³³ expressed clearly by the eloquent bishop Melito of Sardis around 160 AD – as intimated by G. Florovsky and proven recently through the gradual uncovering of another key homily of Melito³⁴. He is then followed, besides Pseudo-Justin, by Irenaeus³⁵, Hippolytus³⁶, and Tertullian³⁷ in the second, Methodius,

- 32 Gerhart B. Ladner, “The Concept of the Image in the Greek Fathers and the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy”, in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 7 (1953), 1-34, 10-11 with notes 45-47.
- 33 A paper at the Oxford Workshop “Bodily Resurrection vs Immortality: Philosophy, Medicine, Theology”, however, argued for a prominent place for Clement of Rome and Justin martyr in the list constructed above: Jörg Ulrich, “The Peculiar Merit of the Human Body. Exegesis of Gen 1,27f. and Gen 2,7 in 1Clem, Justin and (Ps?)Justin”, paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 20th August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*).
- 34 An intuition of Georges Florovsky, “The Anthropomorphites in the Egyptian Desert”, in *Aspects of Church History*, Belmont, Mass., 1975), 89-96, esp. 94 later evidenced by the gradual uncover of a Melitonian homily: see István M. Bugár, “Melito and the Body”, in *Studia Patristica* 91 (2017), 303-314. (Against the criticism of Róbert Somos – for which I am grateful – I still maintain that whatever “bodiless” meant for Melito – and Irenaeus –, Origen’s reference cannot be but to Melito’s homily *On Soul, Body, and Incarnation*, the subject of which is in no ways the corporeal nature of God.) On the homily *De anima, corpore et incarnatione* [henceforth *ACI*] see “Melito and the Body”, 304-307.
- 35 G. Florovsky, “The Anthropomorphites”, 94-95; Adlin Rousseau “Image et ressemblance de Dieu chez Irénée”, in Irénée de Lyon, *Démonstration de la prédication apostolique* (ed. Adlin Rousseau), SC 406 (1995), 365-371; ill. Heidl György, “Irenaeus és a test teológiája”, in *Vigília* 78 (2013), 812-819 (with further literature).
- 36 See Hippolytus, *In Genesisin fr 3: Hippolytus Werke I. Exegetische und homiletische Schriften* edd. G. Nat. Bonwetsch & Hans Achelis, GCS 1, 1897, II 52.
- 37 Tertullianus, *De resurrectione* 5-7.

Peter of Alexandria³⁸, and perhaps his successor, Alexander of Alexandria³⁹ in the late third / early fourth⁴⁰, by Ephrem the Syrian⁴¹, Gregory of Nyssa⁴² and by Epiphanius of Salamis together with the monastic authors nicknamed anthropomorphite in the late fourth / early fifth century⁴³. We may also see a precursor of this thought in the so-called *Second letter of Clement*, where the incorrupt flesh is said to be the image of the spirit⁴⁴.

- 38 Peter of Alexandria, *De anima* (CPG 1637) fr. 1: *Synodus Constantinopolitana et Hierosolymitana anno 536* (ed. E. Schwartz) *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* III, Berlin, 1940, 197; Karl Holl, *Fragmente vornicänischer Kirchenväter aus den Sacra Parallella*, TU 20/2, Leipzig, 1899, 210: fr. 460, and Wolfgang Bienert, “Neue Fragmente des Dionysius und des Petrus von Alexandrien aus Cod. Vatop. 236”, in *Κληρονομιά 5* (1973), 308-311; cf. Hippolytus, *De resurrectione* (CPG 1638) fr. C ed. J- B. Pitra, *Analecta Sacra* IV, Tusculum, 1883, 190 (Syriac) 427 (Latin translation).
- 39 Supposing that he is indeed the author of a reworking of Melito’s *ACI* that survives in Syriac.
- 40 Lactantius’ insistence on the divine character of human face, *De opificio Dei* 8 (PL 7,34A): *Hominis itaque solius ... vultus Deo patrii communis ac Proximus* – although I have been warned by my colleague Gábor Kendeffy that otherwise Lactantius did not share the above concept of the divine image.
- 41 Ephrem the Syrian, *Carmina Nisibena* 46,8 (resurrection is the revival of the entire divine image, that is to say, of soul and body).
- 42 Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio* 5-6; see. N. Constatas, “To Sleep, Perchance to Dream”, 97-8, with a synopsis of literature on Gregory’s anthropology in n. 21; to which one may add now, e.g. Morwenna Ludlow, “Christian Formation and the Body–Soul Relationship in Gregory of Nyssa”, c. 9. in *Exploring Gregory of Nyssa: Philosophical, Theological, and Historical Studies* (eds. Anna Marmodoro – Neil B. McLynn), Oxford, 2018.
- 43 G. Florovsky, “Anthropomorphites”, 96; *Id.*, “Theophilus of Alexandria and Apa Aphou of Pemdje”, in *Aspects of Church History*, Belmont, Mass., 1975, 97-129, 112-127; on Epiphanius, see *Ibid.* 119-122. The Coptic adaptation of Melito’s *ACI* preserved under the name of Athanasius is placed within this current by Dmitrij Bumazhnov, *Der Mensch als Gottes Bild im christlichen Ägypten*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 34, Tübingen, 2006.
- 44 2*Clem* 14,3. The same homily also envisages the eschatological unity of body and soul (*Ibid.* 12,2-4) and emphasises the identity of *this* body with

Thirdly, within this tradition early authors, like Melito⁴⁵, Tertullian⁴⁶, and Theophilus of Antioch⁴⁷ emphasize that what makes humans unique in creation is the fact that everything else was created by the Word of God alone, but Adam by both the Word and the Hand of God. In Melito⁴⁸ (who seems to have used the word ‘deed’ rather than ‘hand’ in this context), it is obvious that what is meant is the formation of the body, as is clear also from the words of the Genesis. Melito alone also intimates the distinction between the formation of man from the earth by the Hand and animation by the Spirit of God⁴⁹.

the eschatological one (9,1-5). However, while maintaining also that the opportunity for repentance is restricted to our present life, it does not explicitly make carnal existence a prerequisite of repentance, unlike Tatian (*Or* 15,10) and later Nemesius of Emesa (*NH* p 9-10 ed. Morani). The connection of the opportunity for repentance with having a body has been analysed by David Bradshaw, “Patristic Views on Why There Is No Repentance after Death” paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 21st August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*).

45 Melito, *ACI I* (Alex; AthC) reconstruction in Bugár M. I. *A teológiai kezdetei*, 447-457; for the testimonies used and their abbreviation see I. M. Bugár “Melito and the Body”, 304-307.

46 Tertullian, *De resurrectione* 5.

47 Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolyicum* II,18.

48 In Theophilus and Irenaeus God’s Hands generally refer to the *Logos* and *Sophia*, which, in their turn, are generally understood to mean the Son and the Spirit, respectively. A doubt is cast on this traditional interpretation by Daniel Buda, “Sophia in Theophilus of Antioch”, in *Sophia. The Wisdom of God - Die Weisheit Gottes. Forscher aus dem Osten und Westen Europas an den Quellen des gemeinsamen Glaubens* (ed. by T. Hainthaler, F. Mali, G. Emmenegger, & M. L. Ostermann), Innsbruck – Wien, 2017, 95-99 and *Id.*, “Holy Spirit in Theophilus of Antioch”, paper presented at the XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford 22nd August 2019 (expected to appear in *Studia Patristica*). However, in the passage referred to it seems that the surplus in the formation of humans is the participation of the Holy Spirit, since the Word is active in all the days of the creation.

49 The thought is echoed also in Ephrem the Syrian, *In Gen* 2,7, and *Carmina Nisibena* 44,1.

Is there a life without a body?

Fourthly, while our first author, Melito of Sardis unfolded his anthropology in a homily entitled *On Soul, Body, and Incarnation*, thus emphasising the role of the body in creation and salvation, this leads to the eschatological perspective. While sin resulted in the separation of soul and body, through the Incarnation the unification of the two is made possible and in the eschaton will be fulfilled. This is guaranteed by the fact that in the ascension Christ took the human body into heaven⁵⁰ where there has been no body before. St Hippolytus within the same tradition also emphasizes this ontological change of the status of the body after the Easter events⁵¹.

Soul, Body, and the Middle State

After considering body in the resurrection, I shall turn to ideas about the Middle State, the supposed interval between death and the eschaton. As I have said before, a thoughtful theologian or philosopher would beware of an inconsiderate use of notions of time⁵², space, perception, mind, soul, body, person in this context. But at present, I am interested in the historical quest alone, that is to say, how the above delineated tradition envisaged such an intermediary stage and what the consequences are for the soul-body relationship

In Melito's reconstructed homily on *Soul and Body*, the soul, after having been separated from the body, is bound and lies inert,

50 Melito, *ACI* II 17 (AthG; Ep/Chrys; Alex; AthC).

51 Hippolytus, in *Danielem* IV 11,5; *Contra Haeresin Noeti* 4,10-11; cf. *In odam magnam* fr. 1 (GCS I,2 = Theodoretus, *Eranistes* 155,29-156,9); in *Psalmos* intr. 17.

52 This aspect of the problem is mentioned also by N. Conostas, "To Sleep, Perchance to Dream", 91.

“immovable”⁵³, “is capable of nothing”⁵⁴. We shall see that bondage is one of the common pictures used to describe the Middle State and appears also in such a different genre as the *Apophthegmata Patrum*⁵⁵. What is significant in Melito, however, is that he describes this soul as powerless similarly to the Platonist Nemesius’ characterization of the body after death. In Nemesius, this state of the dead body is in contrast with the activity of the soul. In Melito, there is a kind of parallelism instead: the body is dissolved *because* the soul is bound and thus cannot control it. She is in a state of contempt, possessed by death. This description is very much in accordance with that of Tatian, and later, with Aphrahat, and anticipates St Ephrem’s characterization of the faculties of the soul as impossible without the body, which will be discussed below.

By contrast, a Roman Christian writer loosely connected to the chain of fathers discussed above, an author of a discourse on Hades preserved under the name of Josephus (and probably also of the famous *Refutatio* transmitted as a work of Origen) while describing

53 ⲛⲁⲙⲓⲗⲉⲛⲁ ⲛ Melito, *ACI I* = Alexander of Alexandria, *De anima, corpore et de incarnatione* in *Coptic Homilies in the Dialect of Upper Egypt Edited from the Papyrus Codex Oriental 5001 in the British Museum* (ed. E. A. Wallis Budge), London, 1910, 409 (= British Library [BL] add. 17,192 fol. 279a); *Nova Patrum Bibliotheca* II (ed. Angelo Mai), Roma, 1844, 533, l.20 (=Vat. Syr. 368, repr. PG 18,592B). The idea is missing in the later Coptic reworking.

54 *Ibid.*

- ⲛⲁⲙⲓⲗⲉⲛⲁ ⲛ p. 533 l.7 ed. Mai (=Vat. Syr. 368, repr. in. PG 18,589D). In Mai’s Latin rendering: *cessat eius actio*; p. 409 ed. Wallis Budge, 8 (= BL add. 17,192 fol. 279a). Missing in the Coptic reworking.

- ⲛⲁⲙⲓⲗⲉⲛⲁ ⲛ: p. 534, l.2 ed. Mai (=Vat. Syr. 368 repr. PG 18,592D); ⲛⲁⲙⲓⲗⲉⲛⲁ ⲛ „sic” (ed. Wallis Budge p 410 = BL add. 17,192 fol. 279b). The expression is present also in the Coptic version (fol 146aII: ed. Wallis Budge 118; translation on p. 261).

55 *Apophthegmata patrum: Collectio alphabetica* Macarius 38: PG 65,280.

the Middle State of the soul similarly as in a bondage in a prison⁵⁶, maintains, however, that souls do have a perception, a perception which, unusually, has as its object the future, their future fate. The just watch a kind of ‘trailer’ of the heavenly life; the unjust, however, while facing the place of the future punishment, perceive also the revenger angels and the blissful place of the just. They do not yet have the body in which they will be tormented, but still they do feel the bodily punishment of fire. The idea of such a temporary punishment is present already in Justin martyr⁵⁷, and Pseudo-Josephus’ fragment shows numerous parallels also with Tertullian, including the comparison with a prison, a state of detention awaiting trial⁵⁸. This prison has a spatial, even geographical location under the earth. This, then, entails an idea of a spatial dimension of the soul. Indeed, a different fragment of the same work reveals that the author believed that soul has a spatial form identical with her body, a view again shared by Tertullian⁵⁹, and probably professed already by Irenaeus⁶⁰.

- 56 Pseudo-Josephus, *De universo* F 6: *Fragmente vornizänischer Kirchenväter aus den Sacra Parallela* (ed. Karl Holl), TU 20/2, Leipzig, 1899, 139; for further codices of the fragment see I. M. Bugár, *A teológia kezdetei*, 349-350. In Pseudo-Josephus, however, only the unjust are bound in chains.
- 57 Justin martyr, *Dialoguscum Tryphone* 5,3. Cf. Charles E. Hill, “Hades of Hippolytus or Tartarus of Tertullian? The Authorship of the Fragment *De Universo*”, in *Vigiliae Christianae* 43 (1989), 116.
- 58 Tertullianus, *De anima* 7; 35,3; 53,5-6; 55-8: C. E. Hill, “Hades or Tartarus”, 117; cf. Carl Schmidt, “Excurs II”, in *Gespräche Jesu mit seinen Jüngern nach der Auferstehung: Ein katholisch-apostolisches Sendschreiben des 2. Jahrhunderts nach einem koptischen Papyrus des Institut de la Mission Archeol. Française au Caire* TU 43, Leipzig, 1919, 512.
- 59 See e.g. the close parallel of Pseudo-Josephus, *de universo* F 3 (= Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 48: 11B14-12A18) with Tertullian, *an* 9,7 on the shape of the soul identical with that of the body: C. E. Hill, “Hades or Tartarus”, 119.
- 60 Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* II,19,6.

This latter idea is in accordance with the Stoic doctrine on the soul⁶¹. In fact, the entire argument appears in a polemical treatise against Plato and contemporary Platonism. However, this, of course, does not mean that it is not influenced by Plato. Indeed, the author reveals a moderate sympathy towards Plato⁶², and in fact the pictures he uses to describe the fate of the souls after death are deeply reminiscent of the Tartarus of the *Phaedo*⁶³ and even more of the cave-prison of the *Republic*⁶⁴.

As opposed to Ps-Josephus, Hippolytus – whom we have seen to belong largely to the same theological tradition – does not envisage a temporary state for the soul of the deceased, at least not for the just⁶⁵. For him, personal eschatology and historical eschatology coincide⁶⁶, as if he was operating with a non-homogenous time-concept, and thus escapes the problem involved in positing souls living without a body.

- 61 Cf. *SVF* II 879 (A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Cambridge, 1987, N053G).
- 62 Pseudo-Josephus, *De universo* FI (=Emanuele Castelli, “Il Prologo del Peri tou pantos”, in *Vetera Christianorum* 42/1 (2005), 37-54.
- 63 Plato, *Phd.* 112a–4c. For views on the underworld in Plato’s dialogues see also *Ap.* 41a; *Cri.* 54; *Phd.* 68–71; 83–5; 107–8; *Grg.* 525; *Resp.* I 330d; II 363cd; 386b; X 619a (Tertullian explicitly refers to the passage in the *Phd.* in *De anima* 54,4, but mentions also [another feature of] the story of Er from the *Republic* in the same work [51,2]; cf. J. H. Waszink, *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani De Anima*, Amsterdam, 1947/ Leiden, 2010, 41’).
- 64 Plato, *Resp.* VII 514a–7a.
- 65 C. E. Hill, “Hades or Tartarus”, 105–7. Similar views are expressed also by Origen in *Dialogus cum Heraclide* 23: ὁ [δ]ίκαιος καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ψυχῇ ζῆ μετ[ὰ] Χριστοῦ. [...] ἡ ἀπολυθεῖσα τοῦ σώματος ... μετὰ Χριστοῦ ἀναπαύεται.
- 66 Most importantly, Hippolytus, in *Danielem* IV 18,7; 39,7 (on the just); cf. *De Benedictione Moysis*, PO 27,155,4–9 (on the condemned). These passages that do not occur in Hill’s list of evidences on immediate recompense (see previous note), with which these two passages can be completed.

Early Syriac Fathers on the relationship of body and cognitive faculties

In the Early Syriac Fathers, we find a different solution for the same problem, which is conceptually close to that of Melito. The condition of the soul in death is described as an inert⁶⁷, insensitive state, a (largely) unconscious sleep⁶⁸. K. Jaehyun, following F. Gavin⁶⁹, finds the forerunner of this idea in another early author, Tatian, not without a foundation⁷⁰. In Aphrahat, the dead soul is incapable of

67 We find expressions to this effect, as we have seen (notes 53-54), in our close testimony of the Melitonian text. One may, of course, note that our source, (Pseudo-)Alexander of Alexandria's sermon, survives in Syriac, that is to say, translated in a milieu where the concept of the inert, sleeping soul in death was common and thus might be considered as an addition of the translator. To this we may object that, as we can see in the second part of *ACI*, the Alexandrian reworking of Melito's homily stays very close to the ideas and expressions, while changing the form to a less poetic prose. The soul in bondage forms the spine of the homily, as the second part of the homily, which answers the first, emphasises that Christ in His descent has set free the souls bound in the Hades. Further, in this special case, at least in the second occasion, the (free but independent) Coptic reworking of the Melitonian text also contains the expression in question.

68 On this issue see N. Conostas, "To Sleep, Perchance to Dream", 110-111 with further literature in n. 69; Brian E. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology*, Cambridge, 1991, 73-77 with important (further) studies in n. 3; and Kim Jaehyun, "Body and Soul in Ephrem the Syrian", in *Korean Journal of Religious Study* 21 (2000), 79-117, esp. 85-89; 101-9. The last of the three contains by far the most complete collection of evidence concerning the subject not only of the sleep of the soul but also of the general issue discussed below. One can only regret that the study as printed remained incomplete in respect of conceptual analysis, (accurate) references to sources, and English idiom. I am very grateful to Levan Gigineishvili for drawing my attention to this paper.

69 F. Gavin, "The Sleep of the Soul in the Early Syriac Church", in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 40 (1920), 103-120; esp. 110-111.

70 K. Jaehyun, "Body and Soul", 84-85 quotes Tatian, *Oratio ad Graecos* 13,1, which is, however, a puzzling passage. At face value, it rather says that the

sensation⁷¹, of memory⁷², and of discerning good from bad⁷³. Since, however, this sleep is interrupted by dreams either good or bad⁷⁴ foretelling the future fate of the dead, Aphrahat's picture is not all that different from that of Pseudo-Josephus either; the Syriac author offers a kind of rational explanation of the metaphorical-mythical picture of the latter.

We must, however, make a small but important digression here. Unlike Melito, but similar to – at least some key passages of – Irenaeus, Hippolytus⁷⁵, and to the statement of Origen quoted above⁷⁶, Aphrahat thinks in a tripartite anthropology, where humans in the full sense comprise body, soul, *and* spirit; or, in Aphrahat's own terminology, body, psychic spirit, and holy spirit. The unjust lose the latter, while the holy spirit of the just returns to God where she intercedes for her body (and, conceivably, soul)⁷⁷. Tatian, arguably, is of the same

soul of the sinner dies with the body, but that of the just lives – a view that is not very distant from that of Hippolytus described above. Aphrahat also says something to the same effect, but he distinguishes the psychical spirit from the spirit of holiness (*sic!*) which lives after death with God, as we shall see in the next paragraph.

71 Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 6,14 (referred to in *Demonstration* 8,23).

72 Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 22,6; 11 (in the resurrection only the memory of good, of knowledge, of the divine is restored: *Ibid.* 12).

73 *Ibid.* 7.

74 Cf. Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 8,19.

75 Hippolytus, in *Psalmos* intr. 17; *In Daniele* II,38,5.

76 See n. 23 above.

77 Like in the case of Christ's death in Origen's passage (*Dialogus cum Heraclide* 7) and in Pseudo-Hippolytus, *In sanctum Pascham* 56,1. I should remark that here I would hesitate whether „holy spirit” should be capitalised; in other words, how far we can speak of holy spirits of persons and what their relation to the Holy Spirit is. I'm afraid that this question was not even clearly asked in Irenaeus of Aphrahat, but in her intimate relationship with her dwelling place, the body, the “spirit of holiness” has definitely a human personal character. I wish I could have consulted Giulio Maspero, *Dio trino perché vivo: lo spirito di Dio e lo spirito dell'uomo nella patristica greca*, Brescia, 2018, to which I had

conviction⁷⁸. In Ephrem, this threefold division is occasionally very emphatic⁷⁹, but is not connected, as far as I can see, to the problem of the intermediary state. Further, in Ephrem human spirit tends to be assimilated to *nous*⁸⁰, like in Origen, in which case our basic question on the relationship of cognitive faculties to the body remains whether we speak of soul or spirit. This is why I dare not to treat this aspect of the problem here thoroughly, although in the case of the intermediary state the threefold division opens up a philosophically/theologically plausible solution of the difficulty.

In the second half of the fourth century several developments led to a reevaluation of the soul-body problem in the footsteps of the authors discussed above. One of these triggering circumstances was the Origenist controversy of the late fourth, early fifth century. One of the main actors of the debate, St Epiphanius of Cyprus dwells on the relation of the two factors in humans in this context. Very much like Melito in his *On Soul, Body, and Incarnation*, he maintains that neither component can achieve anything without the other. He borrows an earlier simile saying that body and soul are like the alliance of a blind and a lame man, who are inert separately but can achieve anything together⁸¹. It is also conceivable, that the same context led to the revival and reworking of Melito's homily *On Soul, Body, and Incarnation* under the name of Athanasius of Alexandria⁸².

no access but the reader may be able to look up for a proper treatment of the subject.

78 K. Jaehyun, "Body and Soul", 83-4; F. Gavin, "The Sleep of the Soul", 111.

79 See Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Paradise* 9,19-21; cf. *Ibid.* 13;16; 18; *Carmina Nisibena* 47,7-10.

80 *Ibid.* 19-20, where "spirit" (ܝܘܨܪܐ) is freely replaced by "thought" (ܕܡܝܘܬܐ).

81 Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* 64,70: GCS 31,516 (for the possible apocryphal source of the edifying tale told by Epiphanius, see K. Holl's notes in the edition; for further literature on the parable see N. Constat, "T Sleep, Perchance to Dream", 98 n. 22).

82 See above n. 43.

The author, however, who expounded most clearly the anthropology of this tradition, was St Ephrem the Syrian. He has, in his turn, been also motivated by controversy with the heritage of Bardaisan and Marcion and with Manicheism, as can be seen from his *Prose Refutations*⁸³. Here he insists against any form of substance-dualism that neither body nor soul can exist separately⁸⁴, there is neither sensation, nor speech, nor discernment in thought without the active contribution from the body⁸⁵. Not even dream is possible without the body⁸⁶, which entails that in the intermediary state the soul cannot even dream.

Although confined within the form of poetry, in his 8th *Hymn on the Paradise*⁸⁷ Ephrem expresses clearly and even furthers the same ideas, again not just stating but providing detailed reasons for the inseparability of body and soul. Firstly, psychical and cognitive

83 Ephrem the Syrian, *Prose Refutations* 5 (discussed in K. Jaehyun, “Body and Soul”, 97-101) is the most relevant for the present issue.

84 Saint Ephraim, *Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion, and Bardaisan* ed. by C. W. Mitchell, London, 1912, 5: I civ ed. They belong together as object and its shadow *Ibid.* cii.

85 *Ibid.* civ. On thought (ܐܘܪܘܚܐ) see *Ibid.* cv; it is less clear to me how we should understand that while for the soul mind (ܐܘܪܘܚܐ) is sufficient, but mind needs also the body besides the soul. On communication see *Ibid.* cviii. The problem of thought and sensation is discussed in Ute Possekel, *Evidence of Greek Philosophical Concepts in the Writings of Ephrem the Syrian* (CSCO 580, Subs. 102), Peeters, Leuven, 1999, 192-196; 207-210.

86 *Ibid.* 106.

87 *Ephraem des Syers Hymnen De paradiso und Contra Julianum* (ed. E. von Beck), CSCO 174 Syr 78, Louvain, 1957, 33-35; with German translation in CSCO 175 Syr 79, Louvain, 1957, 30-33; English translation: Saint Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise* (intr. and tr. Sebastian Brock), Crestwood, New York, 1990, 131-135. The importance of the hymn in our present perspective is highlighted by D. Bumazhnov, *Der Mensch als Gottes Bild*, 81-84; K. Jaehyun, “Body and Soul”, 81-83; 96-97; 106. Besides this poem, and the prose work mentioned in the previous note, *Carmina Nisibena* 47 is the most telling, besides 44, the eloquent apology on the value of body.

activities, he argues, are body-bound; even cognition is anchored in physical language⁸⁸. Secondly, the affections of soul and body are common – as later maintained by St Gregory of Palamas following Aristotle's psychology⁸⁹. In sum, according to St Ephrem, soul has but an embryonic existence without the body and can achieve nothing. His argument is in striking contrast with Nemesius' description of perception, thinking, remembering, who maintains that soul *uses* different parts of the brain for each process – but nevertheless the intelligent soul is independent of the body⁹⁰. Then, one may ask, why would she use it?

Ephrem's hymn is a member in the cycle of a lyrical commentary on the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Genesis, but also has in view Paradise regained, that is to say, the eschatological perspective, thus maintaining that no salvation is possible without the body. He, however, also hints at the difference between the present and the eschatological body⁹¹. This is manifested in their relation to space; in the eschaton a lot of good people will find enough room even in a small place.

Conclusion

As is the case with the teaching on resurrection, we should also remember that the gradual unfolding of a Christian anthropology of the flesh, too, was motivated by apology against various systems of thought informed by or akin to Platonism. For the earliest theologians,

88 For thought see the last lines of Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise* 8,5; and 8,8; cf. also *Carmina Nisibena* 47,3.

89 St. Gregory of Palamas, *Triads* I,ii 1-3; 9; I,iii 31; II,ii. 12-14 cf. Aristotle, *De anima* I,1: 403a16-b19.

90 Nemesius, *NH* 11-13 discussed also by Usacheva (see n. 25. above).

91 The same idea is not only hinted but clearly expressed in *Prose Refutations* 5: p. cv; and in *Hymns on Paradise* 9, where, however, it is stressed that not only human body, but also soul and spirit/mind have to be transformed in the eschaton.

like Melito, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Tertullian, Pseudo-Athenagoras, the inspiring opponent was Christian “Gnosticism”; for Methodius, Epiphanius and their contemporaries it was (a peculiar reception of) Origen. In the further theological development, the doctrinal counterpart was Manichaeism, Marcion, and probably Bardaisan⁹² for St Ephrem the Syrian, early iconoclasm for St John of Damascus⁹³, and finally, Barlaam of Calabria’s Christian Platonism for St Gregory of Palamas⁹⁴. No doubt, in the western world Augustine also had a word in this development, which is, however, a different story⁹⁵. Of course, the above list of names as stages in a development could give the deceitful impression that there is a monotonic evolution of Christian theology. Of course, all of us know that the story is much more complicated. However, I still maintain that there is a clear – even if not continuous – line in Christian tradition that refuses radical soul-body dualism (without, at the same time, embracing a strict monism). And this thread of thought appears appealing for our own anthropological horizon.

92 I. Ramelli highlights the closeness of the metaphysical and anthropological aspects of Origen’s and Bardaisan’s thought: Ilaria Ramelli, *Bardaisan of Edessa: A Reassessment of the Evidence and a New Interpretation*, Piscataway, NJ, 2009, 18-19; esp. 170-171 (the three aspects of humanhood – body, soul, spirit/intellect – derive from the descent of the last).

93 In his first apology, he eloquently stresses the role of matter in salvation and deification in a passage that nearly amounts to a hymn: John Damascene, *De imaginibus* I 16.

94 The body also participates in divine grace and is divinised; it becomes “psychic” in the sense as the soul can also become “carnal” Gregory of Palamas, *Triads* I,ii 1-3; 9; I,iii 31; II,ii. 12-14. The process then culminates in Cabasilas’ sacramental realism in his *Life in Christ*, which is clearly expressed in his description of the Eucharist as “the only mystery by which we are flesh from his flesh”: Nikolaos Kabasilas, *De vita in Christo* IV,30 (SC 355, 290; PG 150,593D) [my translation]. The passage is highlighted by John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, New York, 1983, 108-109.

95 Here I left aside the issue of Augustine. For him, see Giovanni Catapano, “Augustine”, in *A History of Mind and Body*, 343-363.