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Scripture and Self in Origen of Alexandria's Exegetical Practice

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SCRIPTURE AND SELF IN ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA'S EXEGETICAL
PRACTICE

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A Dissertation

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by

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I examine the nature of scripture and the self as presented by

Origen of Alexandria. I argue that Christian scripture and the Christian self are

constructed by exegetical practice; furthermore, in the case of Origen, I will demonstrate

that Christian scripture and the Christian self are so closely related that it is best to speak

of a scripture-self complex emerging out of his exegetical practice. I use a theory of

structure as developed by William Sewell as a means to discuss both scripture and the

self. As "structures," scripture and the self are composed of "resources" and "schemas"

that are paired together into meaningful wholes. That whole is a structure, which in turn

structures other aspects of culture. However, resources and schemas are not automatically

paired together. Rather, they are paired together by practices of historical agents who

both shape structures and are shaped by them.

With this framework in mind, I discuss the ways in which exegetical practices

pair resources and schemas together into meaningful wholes. There are two initial

processes, the becoming scripture of biblical texts and the becoming the self of a human

person, which I trace in Heracleon, Irenaeus, and Origen. I then argue that in the case of

Origen, scripture and self mutually structure one another. I call these processes "the

anthropomorphizing of scripture" and "the scripturalizing of the self." These processes

result in what I call a scripture-self complex, by this term I mean that scripture cannot be

what scripture is without the self being what the self is and the self cannot be what the

self is without scripture being what scripture is. Key texts for my study of Origen's exegetical practices are his *Commentary on the Gospel according to John, On First Principles, Homilies on Jeremiah,* and finally, *Commentary on the Song of Songs.*

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Thesis

Origen of Alexandria (c. 185-254) was the most influential thinker in the

Christian tradition between Paul and Augustine. During his lifetime Origen was called

upon to settle significant theological debates, he traveled internationally to combat

various heresies, and, for better or worse, Origen's theological legacy was to have

significant influence on all sides of the theological debates of the fourth and fifth

centuries.[1] It would be difficult to overestimate his theological influence on the early

church. Yet, for all that, Origen is best known as the most prolific exegete in the early

Christian tradition. Indeed, most of modern scholarship that focuses its attention on

Origen does so in order to say something about his exegetical practice, this dissertation is

no exception. It is no surprise that the most commonly quoted lines from Origen's extant

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[1] For Origen's general influence see Joseph W. Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church* (London: SCM, 1985). For his theological legacy in the major debates of the fourth and fifth centuries see Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992). Origen's influence was felt soon after his death; even authors hostile to Christianity were aware of his influences. Eusebius records a fragment from Porphyry who says of Origen "But this kind of absurdity [allegorical interpretation of the Bible] must be traced to a man whom I met when I was still quite young, who had a great reputation, and still holds it, because of the writings he has left behind him, I mean Origen whose fame has been widespread among the teachers of this kind of learning." ὁ δὲ τρόπος τῆς ἀτοπίας ἐξ ἀνδρὸς ᾧ κἀγὼ κομιδῇ νέος ὢν ἔτι ἐντετύχηκα, σφόδρα εὐδοκιμήσαντος καὶ ἔτι δι᾽ ὧν καταλέλοιπεν συγγραμμάτων εὐδοκιμοῦντος, παρειλήφθω, Ὠριγένους, οὗ κλέος παρὰ τοῖς διδασκάλοις τούτων τῶν λόγων μέγα διαδέδοται. (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 6.19.5 [Oulton, LCL]).

corpus come from *On First Principles* where he discusses the theoretical background of his exegetical practice: "For just as man consists of body, soul, and spirit, so in the same way does the scripture, which has been prepared by God to be given for man's salvation."[2] Origen speaks of scripture in terms of a human person. Scripture is conceptualized anthropologically.

In a less-cited passage from a homily on Genesis, Origen likens a person's heart to a library; in other words he conceptualizes a person bibliographically.[3] There is a close connection between scripture and the human person, or better, the self in the theoretical background of Origen's exegetical practice that is directly related to his understanding of salvation.[4] However, Christian scripture and the Christian self are not "natural categories." In this dissertation I will argue that Christian scripture and the Christian self are constructed by exegetical practice; furthermore, in the case of Origen, I will demonstrate that Christian scripture and the Christian self are so closely related that it is

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[2] ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος συνέστηκεν ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς καὶ πνεύματος, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ἡ οἰκονομηθεῖσα ὑπὸ θεοῦ εἰς ἀνθρώπων σωτηρίαν δοθῆναι γραφή. (*Princ.* 4.2.4 [SC 268:312]) ET G. W. Butterworth, *Origen: On First Principles* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973), 276. The entirety of this dissertation could be construed as a commentary on this passage in so far as I am concerned with what it means to say that a self consists of body soul and spirit and what sort of thing is scripture that it can also consist of the same elements.

[3] *Si quis est...conuertere se potest a rebus fluxis ac pereuntibus et caducis et audire uerbum Dei ac praecepta caelestia, hic intra cor suum arcam alutis aedificat et bibliothecam, ut ita dicam, intra se diuini consercrat uerbi.* (*Hom. Gen.* 2.6 [SC 7:108]) ET Ronald E. Heine, *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 71 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982), 86.

[4] I prefer the term "self" over the term "person" because the former seems to me to be more general and therefore constrains interpretation less. Furthermore, "self" is widely used in secondary literature, which allows my project to be put in conversation with others.

best to speak of a scripture-self complex emerging out of his exegetical practice. Toward this end I will discuss four processes: (1) the becoming scripture of biblical texts, (2) the becoming self of a human person, (3) the anthropomorphizing of scripture, and (4) the scripturalizing of the self. I turn now to question the nature of scripture and self.

Questioning Scripture and the Self

The above claim that scripture and self are not natural categories needs clarification: I simply mean that there are no naturally occurring objects that can be identified as scripture or self. This may seem self-evident in the case of scripture but less so in the case of self. I am not denying the reality of biological entities that are called, for example, human beings. But what the human being may be—in addition to or exclusive of a biological entity—is entirely constructed by culture.[5] It may seem that what scripture and self finally are is obvious, but if so this is only because both have been constructed in generally homogenous ways in modern western communities. It is useful to question each of these categories, especially in the context of antiquity. I begin with scripture.

Scripture

For the sake of clarity I would like to make a distinction between "scripture" and two other terms with which it is closely associated: "text" and "canon." I use the term "text" to refer to a material written document. Important in this notion of text is that it is material and not conceptual. Texts are documents that can be produced, used, and

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[5] Catherine Belsey makes a helpful distinction using the terms "organisms" and "subjects." "We are born organisms (of course), and we become subjects. How? By internalizing our culture, which is inscribed in the signifying practices that surround us from the moment we come into the world." Catherine Belsey, *Poststructuralism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 57.

destroyed; they are bound up with the materials out of which they are composed.[6]

"Canon," as is well known, comes from the Greek term (κανών) that literally refers to a straight rod but has metaphorically come to mean a standard of measure or a standard of excellence.[7] Applied to a text or a set of texts the term means that a text or set of texts meets a particular standard, whatever that standard may be (i.e. religious or literary). When one speaks of a Christian canon, then, one is referring to a set of texts that have met a standard established by Christians that sets them apart from other texts.[8] Unlike texts, however, "canon" is conceptual, not material: it does not exist as an object occurring among other objects found in the world; rather, it exists in the mind of the person or group making a judgment whether or not a particular text or set of texts meet a particular standard. The term "scripture" is closely related to the term "canon" but they are certainly not coterminous. Canon presupposes scripture but scripture does not presuppose canon, or as David Kelsey puts it, "Although 'canon' is not necessarily part of the concept 'scripture,' 'scripture' is necessarily a part of the meaning of 'canon.'"[9]

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[6] For a discussion of the materiality of early Christian texts see Henry Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Eric G. Turner, *The Typology of the Early Codex* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977).

[7] "κανών," BDAG, 507.

[8] The canon question is as important as it is complicated. For the present I need not enter into that discussion to show that the term "canon" is distinct from the term "scripture."

[9] David H. Kelsey, *Proving Doctrine: The Uses of Scripture in Modern Theology* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 104. See also D. M. Smith, "When Did the Gospels Become Scripture?," *JBL* 119, no. 1 (2000): 4.

In recent years scholars of comparative religion have called for a reevaluation of the phenomenon of scripture. In particular, the concept needs to be "excavated" and expanded so that the Judeo-Christian concept is no longer the measure of the discussion.[10] W. Cantwell Smith has done much to open up the question "What is Scripture?" from the perspective of comparative religion.[11] He notes that the term "scripture" has been involved in a long process of transition from the plural (scriptures) to the singular (scripture) and then back again. In antiquity it was used in the plural to refer to an array of texts recognized by the early church that was thought to convey a revelation from God. The term was then used in the singular to denote "at least in part the empirical object containing those texts or more theoretically the conceptual entity of which they were part."[12] Finally, the term was used in the plural again in the 19th and 20th

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[10] The following paragraphs are indebted to the pioneering work of W.C. Smith, William Graham, Miriam Levering, and Vincent L. Wimbush. The term "excavating" comes from Wimbush, "This differently oriented interpretive practice has as its focus not the exegesis of texts but the fathoming of human striving and behaviors and orientations, with their fears, aspirations, low points and high marks, as they are represented in relationships to 'scriptures.' It has to do with excavating the work—and the consequences of such—that we make 'scriptures' do for us." Vincent Wimbush, "Introduction: Textures, Gestures, Power: Orientation to Radical Excavation," in *Theorizing Scriptures: New Critical Orientations to a Cultural Phenomenon*, ed. Vincent Wimbush (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 1.

[11] Important as W. C. Smith's work has been and remains, Vincent Wimbush criticizes Smith for not paying attention to the "political issues and power dynamics" that are involved in the communal relationships that give rise to scripture. Ibid., 11.

[12] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *What Is Scripture? A Comparative Approach* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 14. The relationship between scripture as both an "empirical object" and a "conceptual entity" will be explored more carefully throughout the dissertation. Before "scripture" could become a singular empirical object, book technology had to be able to accommodate the collection of scriptures into a single volume.

centuries to include the large corpus of the world's sacred texts "which one does not

venerate but notes that other people somehow do."[13] In tracing this basic terminological

development Smith shows that, at least in the western tradition, the term "scripture(s)"

signifies an ever-changing body of texts.

One might suggest that scripture is a text that is sacred. However, "sacredness" is

not a helpful element in a definition of scripture. William Graham notes "…from the

historian's perspective, the sacrality of a book is not an *a priori* attribute but one that is

realized historically in the life of communities who respond to it as something sacred or

holy."[14] A text that is thought to be sacred by a given community is *ascribed* sacredness

by the way that community interacts with or uses the text.[15] Since communities show the

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[13] Ibid. Friedrich Max Müller's publication of the Sacred Books of the East serves as an example of this expansion of scripture into scriptures; see Ivan Strenski, *Thinking About Religion: An Historical Introduction to Theories of Religion* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 63-68.

[14] *Encyclopedia of Religion* (Detriot: Macmillan Reference, 2005), s.v. "Scripture." Miriam Levering also argues that the category of "the holy" or "the sacred" is underdeveloped, "[T]he contemporary scholar is often aware that the 'sacred texts' of the tradition she or he is describing are not parallel to Western scriptures as commonly understood, but finds that the underdeveloped, catch-all category of 'sacred text' has given her or him few analytical tools with which to delineate the differences." Miriam Levering, "Introduction: Rethinking Scripture," in *Rethinking Scripture: Essays from a Comparative Perspective*, ed. Miriam Levering (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 4.

[15] Communities think of sacredness and its implications in very different ways. To take one example from the Rabbinic tradition: Mishna Yadayim 3:5 states, "All holy scriptures defile the hands." Once it is understood that this is a sacred contagion, it is clear that not all communities that have "scriptures" conceive of their sacredness in this way. For a discussion of Mishna Yadayim 3:5 see Timothy H. Lim, "The Defilement of the Hands as a Principle Determining the Holiness of Scriptures," *Journal of Theological Studies* 61, no. 2 (2010).

sacredness of their texts in different ways, sacredness is too fluid a concept to distinguish a scriptural text from a non-scriptural text.

Yet, the acknowledgement that the definition of scripture must make reference to a community that uses it is helpful. No text is inherently scripture. Smith puts it this way: "*There is no ontology of scripture*. The concept has no metaphysical, no logical reference; there is nothing that scripture finally is."[16] This accurate observation does not mean that one cannot talk meaningfully about scripture, but it does mean that the term "scripture" cannot be understood as either an easily identifiable empirical object or a concept; it is something of both. "Scripture" is an empty concept without a discussion of its relationship to the community that identifies a text as scripture.[17] The perspective of comparative religions cautions us from attributing to scripture an essence that can be identified apart from a religious community.[18]

Is the case of Christian scripture within the Christian community any different? Does Christian scripture have an ontology that Smith denied to scripture generally? In a study on the uses of scripture in twentieth-century theology, David Kelsey has thoroughly

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[16] Smith, *What Is Scripture?*, 237. Emphasis original.

[17] "Fundamental, we suggest, to a new understanding of scripture is the recognition that no text is a scripture in itself and as such. People—a given community—make a text into scripture, or keep it scripture: by treating it in a certain way." Ibid., 18. Notice that Smith points out that not only is a text made into scripture, it must be maintained as such. Miriam Levering comes to a similar conclusion, "It seems helpful to propose that 'scriptures' are a special class of true and powerful words, a class formed by the ways in which these particular words are received by persons and communities in their common life." Levering, 2. Emphasis mine.

[18] Indeed, Smith calls scripture a "bilateral" term. "By that we mean that it inherently implies, in fact names, a relationship." Smith, *What Is Scripture?*, 17. Here Smith is referring to the relationship between a text and a community.

explored the meaning of the term scripture. Kelsey shows that "[c]lose examination of

theologians' actual uses of scripture in the course of doing theology shows that they do

not appeal to some objective text-in-itself but rather to a text construed *as* a certain kind

of whole having a certain kind of logical force."[19] Kelsey's discussion reviews the use of

scripture by such notable modern theologians as Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, and Rudolf

Bultmann (among others). At the end of his early discussion Kelsey shows that if one

wants to define Christian scripture one must do so only approximately and in part. He

correctly realizes that the most one can do, in defining scripture, is to say, "Part of what it

means to call a text 'Christian scripture' is that it *functions* in certain ways or *does* certain

things when used in certain ways in the common life of the church…"[20] What are the

certain ways in which scripture functions? What are the certain things scripture does?

What are the certain ways scripture is used? All of these questions must be answered on a

case-by-case basis if one wants to speak meaningfully about "Christian scripture." Kelsey

goes on to point out that whatever these "certain ways and things" are, there is a "logical

relation between the concepts 'Christian scripture' and 'Christian church.'"[21] As in

Smith's and Graham's understanding of scripture from a comparative perspective, so also

in Kelsey's understanding of scripture from the perspective of Christian theology,

scripture lacks a fixed essence because it becomes what it is in the context of various

communities. Scripture, then, cannot be be defined once and for all; the question "what is

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[19] Kelsey, 14.

[20] Ibid., 90.

[21] Ibid.

scripture?" can only be answered with regard to particular communities, at particular times, and in particular contexts. This does not mean that scripture is a meaningless concept, but it does mean that a methodological tool is necessary in order understand how something becomes scripture.

<p align="center">The Self</p>

Since the publication of Michel Foucault's history of sexuality (especially *The Care of the Self*), scholars have had an increasing interest in the phenomenon of self in antiquity.[22] This interest has led not to consensus but to debates regarding a number of important issues. Key questions are: Can we use modern notions of the self, especially subjectivist ones, to understand the self in antiquity?[23] Can we reason from representations of ancient selves in literary and philosophical texts to the real selves of antiquity?[24] These kinds of questions are more easily asked than answered, but that does not mean that there is no helpful starting point. In the introduction to a volume of essays entitled *Religion and the Self in Antiquity* David Brakke begins by focusing on the self

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[22] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 3: The Care of the Self*, trans., Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1986).

[23] For a discussion of this question see Christopher Gill, *The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[24] This question is raised by David Brakke, "The 'self' may be a social construct, but surely real individual selves existed and acted in antiquity. Methodologically, the question is how the historian can recover an individual self accessible only through linguistic expressions and embodied in remote cultural settings." David Brakke, "Introduction," in *Religion and Self in Antiquity*, ed. David Brakke, Michael L. Satlow, and Steven Wietzman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 4.

"as a cultural construct fashioned through discursive practice."[25] If Brakke is correct, then the self has no essential nature but comes to be constructed in different ways at different times.

New Testament scholars Clare K. Rothschild and Trevor W. Thompson also acknowledge the difficulty of defining what is meant by "self." They point to two primary reasons for this difficulty. First, "knowledge and understanding of the objects and ideas represented by the terms self and an body are not static" and second, "as concepts, self and body are multivalent."[26] Rothschild and Thompson briefly consider the history of research regarding the self and the New Testament specifically by providing a sampling of both first and second-century Christian texts as well as a survey of literature beginning with the work of Rudolf Bultmann, Krister Stendahl, and extending to more recent considerations by Robert Jewett and Dale Martin (among others). After their sampling of primary texts they conclude:

> Depending upon the particular anthropological-philosophical paradigm of the interpreter (e.g. Platonic, Cartesian), Christian texts reflect any of a great number of pictures of self and body—often combining qualities—deliberately or accidentally—for new, unique formulations.[27]

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[25] Ibid., 1. Brakke notes that many psychologists and philosophers will not be comfortable with this formulation. But I would suggest that this discomfort is due to a commitment that a self is a naturally occurring object that can be presupposed. This kind of commitment goes to show how effectively the concept of self has been constructed in various traditions; it has been constructed so concretely that the evidence of its construction is almost erased.

[26] Clare K. Rothschild and Trevor Thompson, "Status Quaestionis: Christian Body, Christian Self," in *Christian Body, Christian Self: Concepts of Early Christian Personhood*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchliche Zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 4. Notice that in this quotation as well as in the title of the book the "self" and the "body" are distinguished from one another.

[27] Ibid., 5.

Troels Engberg-Pedersen has identified a few problems that may make one skeptical about discussing the concept of self in ancient texts. He notes that recent developments in Mediterranean anthropology may give the scholar pause in singling out the self from larger social relations.[28] The concern is that an ancient Mediterranean person would not have shared our notions of self and individual as distinct from larger groups.[29] Another problem according to Engberg-Pedersen is that the traditional view that claims that a new "subjectivity" was emerging during the Hellenistic-Roman Period (as opposed to the Classical Greek Period) has recently been challenged by some leading scholars.[30] The point I wish to make from Rothschild and Thompson and Engberg-Pedersen is that the study of the self in antiquity is not an easy task, precisely because the self is a changing and allusive phenomenon.

Perhaps one of the reasons that modern scholars of antiquity find it difficult to define the ancient self is that ancient scholars were in debate about what was meant by self. Two examples of how the self was understood in antiquity illustrate this point: the

[28] Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "A Stoic Concept of the Person in Paul? From Galatians 5:17 to Romans 7:14-15," in *Christian Body, Christian Self: Concepts of Early Christian Personhood*, ed. Claire K. Rothschild and Trevor Thompson, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 86.

[29] Here Engberg-Pedersen cites Bruce Malina, "Instead of individualism, what we find in the first-century Mediterranean world is what might be called 'dyadism'…A dyadic personality is one who simply needs another continually in order to know who he or she really is." Bruce Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 54-55.

[30] Engberg-Pedersen has in mind Gill. I will be considering Gill's work in more detail below.

Neoplatonic concept and the Stoic concept.[31] Origen's younger contemporary Plotinus asked the question in the third century CE, "But we—who are we?"[32] This kind of question belongs to a long history of philosophical reflection going back at least as far as the fourth century BCE as seen in the Platonic *Alcibiades 1*.[33] In this dialogue Socrates and Alcibiades are discussing the inscription "Know Thyself" that was inscribed at the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Socrates asks, "Tell me, how can we come to know the self itself? Maybe this is the way to find what we are selves are—maybe it's the only way."[34] One of the conclusions that Socrates and Alcibiades come to is that although the body is *used* by a human, a human is different from a body just like a shoemaker is different from his tools.[35] In other words, whatever the self is, the body is excluded.

This explanation had a great deal of staying power as exemplified by Plotinus's own answer to the question raised above. For Plotinus, reflecting the Platonic tradition in which he stands, the "we" is ultimately not body, nor for that matter is it personal

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[31] I do not suggest these concepts as formative for Origen. My point is that the self was a contested concept in antiquity. I will show later in the dissertation that Origen's concept of the self was neither Platonic nor Stoic, but a mix of Platonic and biblical notions.

[32] Plotinus, *Enn*. 6.4.14.16 (Armstrong, LCL).

[33] Although the majority of modern scholars now recognize that this dialogue was not written by Plato, for the ancients it was assumed that Plato was its author. This text was considered by many Neoplatonic teachers to be a propaedeutic to philosophy. See Pauliina Remes, *Neoplatonism*, Ancient Philosophies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 12.

[34] *Alcibiades 1*, 129a; ET D. S. Hutchinson, "Alicibiades," in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), 587.

[35] *Alcibiades 1*, 129d-130a.

identity.[36] Pauliina Remes has shown that for Plotinus the "we" is the rational and

intellectual aspect in us that is essentially the same in every human person.[37] This

intellectual aspect allows one to contemplate the higher principles of reality. As a way of

summarizing Plotinus's view of the self, Remes gives what she calls "four pedestals of

Neoplatonic anthropology."[38] The first of these is that human beings stand in relationship

to the Neoplatonic hypostases (One, Intellect, and Soul) and the hierarchy among them.

Second, human beings have both corporeal and incorporeal aspects (body and soul).

Third, an important part of Neoplatonic anthropology is the myth of the descent of the

soul from the incorporeal to the corporeal realms. Finally, and very importantly, is the

idea that each human person is a microcosm of the whole of reality.[39]

The second and fourth of these are important because in them we can see that for

Plotinus the concept of self is ambiguous and related to a larger conception of reality.

Ambiguous because while the human is both corporeal and incorporeal, it does not follow

that the *self* is as well. Plotinus, in accordance with the Platonic tradition before him,

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[36] I say that for Plotinus the "we" is not ultimately body because he claims, "So 'we' is used in two sense, either including the beast [by which he means bodily existence] or referring to that which even in our present life transcends it." Διττὸν οὖν τὸ ἡμεῖς, ἢ συναριθμουμένου τοῦ θηρίου, ἢ τὸ ὑπὲρ τοῦτο ἤδη. (*Enn*. 1.1.10.6-7 [Armstrong, LCL]).

[37] Remes, 128.

[38] For the following four "pedestals of Neoplatonic Anthropology" see Ibid., 100-101.

[39] For this last point see Plotinus, "For the soul is many things and all things, both the things above and the things below to the limits of all life, and we are each an intelligible universe…" Ἔστι γὰρ καὶ πολλὰ ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ πάντα καὶ τὰ ἄνω καὶ τὰ κάτω αὖ μέχρι πάσης ζωῆς, καὶ ἐσμὲν ἕκαστος κόσμος νοητός…(*Enn*. 3.4.3 [Armstrong, LCL])

wants to bracket the body as a part of the true self.[40] This conception of self, as not

ultimately including body, is expressed along the lines of a larger hierarchical

understanding of reality that posits a prime reality (the One) emanating

"downward"/"outward" into successively inferior realities (Intellect, Soul, and the

material world). Insofar as the One is "more real" than its emanations, so the incorporeal

aspect of human beings is more truly the self than is the body. This discussion does not

explain fully Neoplatonic anthropology and cosmology, but it shows that this tradition

answered the question of the self in a particular way (the body is not a part of the true

self) and that that answer is based on a larger conceptual framework about the nature of

reality.

By contrast, the Stoic tradition also asked the question of the self but gave a much

different answer. For the Stoic, as a materialist, the body is not excluded from the

boundaries of the self. Christopher Gill calls the Stoic conception of the self

"psychophysical holism."[41] To understand what Gill means by this term it must be

remembered that although Stoics were thoroughgoing materialists, they posited a

"lighter" and a "heavier" matter. Lighter matter provides humans with rationality and the

heaver matter provides humans with what one may think of as physical bodies (but

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[40] Plotinus's student Porphyry expresses the ambiguity in this way: "How, then, could body, when united with the soul, still remain body, or conversely, how could soul, being as it is incorporeal and truly real of itself, be united with body and become part of living being while preserving its own essence uncontaminated and uncorrupted?" Plotinus, *Inquiries into Various Topics* quoted from Remes, 107.

[41] Gill, 3-73. The term "structured" in the title of this book needs to be distinguished from how I am using the term structure. For Gill a "structured self" is one that is a unified whole of the rational and bodily as opposed to one where the body is an add-on to the true self.

rationality is no less physical). The self, then, is a unified combination of the two such that it is not really two "parts" but one whole. Gill intends this conception of self as psychophysical holism to stand in contrast to what he calls "core-centered" or "essence-centered" conceptions associated with Plato that reject the body as peripheral to the true self.[42] This Stoic self is based upon a thoroughly materialistic conception of the nature of reality. It is clear from the above survey that there was disagreement about what the self actually was. Like scripture, the self was constructed differently by different communities. Therefore a methodological tool is necessary in order understand how something becomes a self.

Methodological Tools: Structure, Discourse, and Practice

The preceding sections demonstrate that neither scripture nor the self are natural categories. On the contrary, they are culturally constructed. A set of methodological tools is necessary to understand what scripture and self are and how they are constructed. In the following pages I will articulate the methodological tools that I will employ throughout this dissertation to describe scripture and the self and how they are constructed. These tools are the concepts of structure, discourse, and practice.

Structure

Structure is one of the most important methodological tools informing my understanding of scripture and self. My understanding of structure draws upon concepts William Sewell Jr. developed in his article, "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and

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[42] Ibid., 5.

Transformation."[43] Sewell is a historian of pre-modern and modern Europe who has a

longstanding interest in the relationship between historiography and social theory. He

argues that historians and social scientists have much to learn from one another insofar as

historians often have a clear understanding of "the temporalities of social life" whereas

social theorists can contribute "structural thinking" to the historian's toolbox.[44] Structures

are fruitful ways of organizing the historian's data in such a way that can account for the

fact that patterns tend both to repeat and transform themselves over the course of history.

The very reason we identify these as structures is precisely because they "structure" some

aspect of social existence.[45] Sewell develops his notion of structure in conversation with

two other scholars: Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu.[46]

     Anthony Giddens understands structures to be composed of what he calls "rules

and resources." Rules are defined as "generalizable procedures applied in the

enactment/reproduction of social life."[47] Giddens does not provide specific examples

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[43] William H. Sewell, *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Tranformation*,
Chicago Studies in Practices of Meaning (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005),
124-151.

[44] By "structural thinking" Sewell means "explanations in terms of a relatively limited set
of enduring, entrenched, and causally powerful features of the social world." Ibid., 14.

[45] Ibid., 125.

[46] It is not my intent to comment about whether Sewell has adequately understood and
therefore correctly critiqued Giddens and Bourdieu. I am simply describing how he
develops his theory of structure, a theory I will demonstrate to be helpful in
understanding the development of the structures of scripture and self in Origen's
exegetical practice.

[47] Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*
(Berkerley: University of California Press, 1984), 21.

about what he means by this definition. I take him to mean the guidelines by which we organize our social lives; I suggest that speed limits or how marriages are understood and arranged may be examples of what Giddens means by rules. Rules in this sense are virtual, that is, they cannot be reduced to their specific applications. Resources, by contrast, may be understood as material realities, both human and nonhuman. Thus resources are things like factories, crude oil, clothes, property, or a workforce. In this sense, resources are actual (as opposed to virtual). The importance of Giddens's theory of structure is not only that structures are composed of rules and resources, but more important "is that the rules and resources drawn upon in the production and reproduction of social action are at the same time the means of system reproduction."[48] This characteristic of structure is called "the duality of structure"; duality here means that structures are "both the medium and the outcome of the practices which constitute social systems."[49] Sewell finds this theory of structure helpful because it acknowledges that structures are the means by which practices are carried out and given meaning, but that they are also the result of those very practices.[50] This is what is meant by the duality of structure: it both shapes social practice and is shaped by that practice.

Sewell criticizes certain aspects of Giddens's theory, namely that Giddens has claimed *both* that structures are composed of rules that are virtual and resources that are

[48] Anthony Giddens, "The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration: Elements of the Theory of Structuration" in Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn (ed. Gabrielle Spiegel; Rewriting History Series; New York: Routledge, 2005), 130.

[49] Giddens, "A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism," quoted in Sewell, 127.

[50] Sewell, 127.

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actual *and* that structures are virtual. Both of these claims simply cannot hold together.

By contrast, Sewell maintains that rules are virtual and resources are actual, but that

structures are actual (that is, they are resources organized by rules existing in time and

space). As a part of this critique Sewell suggests that what Giddens calls "rules" are

better understood as "schemas" because the former term suggests a list of officially

articulated prescriptions whereas the latter term gets at the underlying presuppositions.[51]

Sewell then prefers the terminology of "schemas and resources" to describe the

components of a structure. It is not just any combination of schemas and resources that

constitute a structure, rather "sets of schemas and resources may properly be said to

constitute *structures* only when they mutually imply and sustain each other over time."[52]

  The theory of structure that Sewell develops in conversation with Giddens shares

many similarities with Pierre Bourdieu's notion of habitus. Bourdieu's habitus is made up

of:

> systems of durable, transposable dispositions, *structured structures* predisposed to
> function as *structuring structures*, that is, as principles which generate and
> organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their
> outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery
> of the operations necessary in order to obtain them.[53]

This explanation is certainly technical if not opaque, but salient points can be identified.

When Bourdieu speaks of "durable, transposable dispositions" he means that the habitus

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[51] "Indeed, the term 'rules' is probably not quite the right word, since it tends to imply
something like formally stated prescriptions…What I mean to get at is not formally stated
prescriptions but the informal and not always conscious schemas, metaphors, or
assumptions presupposed by such formal statements." Ibid., 131.

[52] Ibid., 137. Emphasis original.

[53] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 52. Emphasis mine.

has both longevity and the ability to be applied in new and different situations. More

important is that the habitus is both "structured" and "structuring." Here Bourdieu is

close to Giddens's claim about the duality of structures, that they are both means and

outcome. It is for this reason that they have such longevity. Finally, Bourdieu says that

the operation of habitus, which generates and organizes practice, occurs without either

consciousness or mastery on the part of the historical agent. It is at this last point that

Sewell thinks that Bourdieu's habitus goes wrong.

Sewell credits Bourdieu for elaborating how sets of schemas and resources

(Bourdieu's equivalent terms are "mental structures" and "the world of objects") both

generate and organize various practices, but he criticizes Bourdieu's notion of habitus

because, according to Sewell, it is unable to account sufficiently for change over time.

After all, if habitus does its work without the consciousness of human agents and is itself

a structured structure, the habitus can only maintain stasis; change, if it comes, must

come from the outside.[54]

Sewell is committed to an understanding of structure that not only avoids causal

determinism, but that also can account for change and transformation. Sewell offers five

axioms that may help explain how the operations of structures can generate change and

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[54] Sewell, 139. There may be some debate if Sewell's claim that Bourdieu's habitus can only account for stasis is accurate. For his part Sewell quotes Bourdieu, "As an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted, the habitus engenders all the thoughts, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions and not others." (Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 95). The implication Sewell draws is that if the habitus is responsible for all thoughts, perceptions, and actions, then there is little responsibility for the historical agent to act independently of the habitus, let alone change it.

transformation.[55] I will mention each of these briefly here, but they will be further explained and utilized throughout the rest of the dissertation.

First is the "multiplicity of structures." By this Sewell means that there are a wide variety of structures available to "knowledgeable social actors" in contrast to Bourdieu's "universally homologous habitus."[56] There may be a number of similar or not-so-similar structures available to historical agents in the shaping of their practices and activities. Second is the "transposability of schemas." Since Sewell presupposes that historical actors are at least somewhat knowledgeable of the schemas available to them, they may apply schemas from one schema-resource set to a completely different resource. This is possible in a number of unpredictable ways.[57] Third, we can speak of what Sewell calls the "unpredictability of resource accumulation."[58] Resources are accrued in often unpredictable and nearly always unequal ways. Fourth, Sewell speaks of the "polysemy of resources." Here he specifically mentions historical agency, "Agency, to put it differently, is the actor's capacity to reinterpret and mobilize an array of resources of cultural schemas other than those that initially constituted the array."[59] This point is related to the "transposability of schemas." Resources are not wedded to the schemas that were first applied to them in the production of meaning; when a new schema is paired

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[55] Ibid., 139-143.

[56] Ibid., 140.

[57] Ibid., 141.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid., 142-143.

with a resource in the production of cultural meaning, that resource will be seen and used in a whole new light. Sewell's final axiom is what he calls the "intersection of structures." This is related to the first axiom. Since structures are multiple, various structures can interact and alter one another in highly complex ways.[60] All of these axioms are mentioned as a way to counter the idea that a structural approach to history cannot account for changes within structures and hence the cultural meaning produced by them. These axioms will be important with regard to Origen's exegetical practice at various points throughout this dissertation.

I would now like to offer some examples to illustrate a few aspects of Sewell's theory of structure as I have described it here. Perhaps the most basic example to be offered is that of a tile mosaic.[61] A mosaic is a collection of small tiles or pieces of glass that are arranged together in a specific way to portray an image that is not inherent to the tiles themselves. Though this is an overly simplistic example of a structure, it illustrates the components well. The tiles are an example of what Sewell calls resources and their organizational pattern is an example of what Sewell calls a schema. The schema is virtual in that it cannot be reduced to its material instantiation, whereas the tiles are actual in that they are present in space and time. The tiles become an image (a structure) only when arranged in a certain way, but there is nothing in the tiles themselves that dictates *how* they are to be arranged.

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[60] Ibid., 143.

[61] This example is by no means arbitrary, simple though it may be. Irenaeus will use this metaphor as a way of explaining why his interpretations of scripture are correct but those of his exegetical competitors are incorrect. See chapter two.

A more complex example of a structure is the Pauline corpus that circulated in the early second century. The resources for this corpus were the individual (copies of) epistles that Paul wrote to various communities. Each of these was initially composed with a specific individual and specific problems in mind. However, by the early second century a particular schema universalized these individual epistles. It was noted that Paul wrote to seven churches and the number seven was symbolic of completeness or universality. Paul's formerly specific epistles were now conceived as having a universal significance because the symbolic nature of the number seven. Thus, the Pauline corpus of the second century was a structure composed of resources (specific epistles) paired with a schema (universal address). After the Pauline corpus became a structure in this way, other texts (resources) were added because they too were thought to have universal address (schema). This unpredictable resource accumulation eventually structured how other texts were understood and used by early Christian communities.[62]

Sewell points out that his theory of structure has a broad application in our understanding of how structures constrain and develop practices ranging from "world military power" to "joking practices of a group of Sunday fishing buddies" to "the erotic practices of a single couple."[63] It can also be applied, as a methodological tool, to scripture and self. To call scripture or the self a structure is to say that it contains a

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[62] See Gamble, 95-101. Gamble does not use the language of "resource" or "schema," but he does point out that second-century collections of Paul's epistles "were shaped by ideas about the number of letters or addressees…" Gamble, 100.

[63] Sewell, 145-146.

number of actual resources organized by a virtual schema (or schemas) in such a way that the pairing seems "natural."

In this dissertation both scripture and the self will be analyzed as structures. Each is a combination of a set of resources and schemas that forms a coherent whole. Neither can be reduced to its component parts. An analysis of scripture must include not only what texts (resources) are involved, but also how those texts are organized and understood (schema). The same is true regarding the self; an analysis of the self must include its parts (resources) but also how those parts are organized and understood (schema). With this understanding of structure in mind, I will now discuss the concepts of discourse and practice as they play a role in the construction of structures.

Discourse

Sewell stresses the role played by historical agents in the pairing of resources and schemas into structures. The concepts of discourse and practice shed light on how historical agents go about the construction of structures. The term discourse has a long and ambiguous history in critical theory. More than anything else it refers to a specific view of language associated with the linguistic turn. The view of language implied by the linguistic turn is that language is not a neutral system used to represent reality. By contrast, language is itself subject to rules and regulations; furthermore, language does not describe reality; it constructs it.[64] Michel Foucault treats discourse "sometimes as the

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[64] Sara Mills, a commentator on Foucault puts it this way, "Rather than seeing language as simply expressive, as transparent, as a vehicle of communication, as a form of representation, structuralist theorists and in turn post-structuralists saw language as a system with its own rules and constraints, and with its own determining effect on the way that individuals think and express themselves. The use of the term discourse, perhaps more than any other term, signals this break with past views of language." Sara Mills,

general domain of all statements, and sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements."[65] The latter two treatments of discourse, as groups of statements and as a regulated practice, will provide a template for the following discussion of discourse.[66]

But first a few comments are necessary to show what is meant by a "statement." For Foucault a statement is the basic building block of a discourse.[67] It is more than simply a sentence or a proposition (whether written or spoken). Foucault identifies something as a statement, "not because one day someone happened to speak [it] or put [it] into some concrete form of writing," but *because the position of the subject can be assigned*."[68] By referring to "the position of the subject" Foucault means that something receives status as a statement because it can be linked to a legitimating authority.

Discourse, ed. John Drakakis, The New Critical Idiom (New York: Routledge, 2004), 7. "Discourse" in this sense is a shorthand way for expressing the constructive nature of language.

[65] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans., A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 80. In all of these formulations it is apparent that for Foucault discourse is related to the statement as its basic building block. For more on this see Foucault, *Archaeology*, 79-117.

[66] The same distinction is often made by differentiating between the terms discourse (in the singular) and discourses (in the plural). When appearing in the singular the term can mean "the set of rules and procedures for the production of particular discourses" and when appearing in the plural the term refers to "groups of statements themselves." Mills, 55. Although distinguishing the two in this way can lead to confusion, it is necessary to understand that particular discourses, such as exegetical discourse, are produced by regulations that are other than them.

[67] "A statement belongs to a discursive formation as a sentence belongs to a text, and a proposition to a deductive whole." Foucault, *Archaeology*, 116.

[68] Ibid., 95. Emphasis mine.

"Statements are for [Foucault] those utterances that have some *institutional force* and which are thus validated by some *form of authority*—those utterances which for him would be classified as 'in the true.'"[69] Foucault's technical use of the term "statement" is useful because it acknowledges that only those utterances that have been legitimated by a particular authority are effective in the pairing of resources and schemas together into a structure.

Statements are grouped together into discourses not on the basis of what they are about, but on the basis of what discursive objects they form. Foucault argues that discourses actually *produce* the things they appear to describe.[70] It is very easy to misunderstand the claim that Foucault is making here. He is not denying the existence of reality outside of language. What he is trying to show is that it is only *through* language that one experiences reality. Therefore reality as it is experienced *is* constructed by language. Sara Mills defends Foucault against this misunderstanding, "Foucault is not denying that there is a reality which pre-exists humans, nor is he denying the materiality of events and experience…it is simply that the only way we have to apprehend reality is through discourse and discursive structures."[71] The point to stress for the purpose of this dissertation is that discursive objects such as scripture or even self are the *product* of particular discourses, rather than their unifying feature.

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[69] Mills, 55. I will consider the institutional legitimation of statements below that allows them to be "in the true."

[70] "What we in short wish to do is to dispense with 'things'…To substitute for the enigmatic treasure of 'things' anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse." Foucault, *Archaeology*, 47.

[71] Mills, 49.

I turn now from particular discourses to discourse as a regulated practice. When

Foucault speaks of discourse as a regulated practice he means that for a given utterance to

count as knowledge it must conform to a set of discursive rules and regulations. These

rules and regulations—whatever they turn out to be—are not the structuralist's timeless

and unchanging structures. "[Discursive practice] is a body of anonymous, historical

rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a

given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, the conditions of operation of the

ennunciative function."[72] Ennunciative function is Foucault's shorthand way of speaking

about the criteria that makes an utterance into a statement; it is the legitimizing practices

and rules that elevate one utterance as "in the true" while denying to other utterances the

very same privilege.[73] The point that Foucault is making is that without the rules and

procedures of discursive practice, utterances do not gain the status of a statement and

particular discourses are not possible. Without discursive practice there is no production

of knowledge. According to Foucault it is discursive practices that determine what will

count as truth.[74] This point is stated most powerfully by Foucault in his "Discourse on

Language" where he says:

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[72] Foucault, *Archaeology*, 117.

[73] According to Mills, Foucault's concern in speaking of discursive practice is in describing "the systems of support which govern the production and the ordering of these statements" and "the systems whereby other utterances are excluded from the position of being 'in the true' and therefore being classified as statements." Mills, 55.

[74] Foucault specifically says, "…but there is no knowledge without a particular discursive practice; and any discursive practice may be defined by the knowledge it forms." Foucault, *Archaeology*, 183. See also Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Second ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 31.

It is always possible one could speak the truth in a void; one would only be *in the true*, however, if one obeyed the rules of some discursive 'policy' which would have to be reactivated every time one spoke…Disciplines constitute a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits through the action of an identity taking form of a permanent reactivation of rules.[75]

This is perhaps Foucault's most succinct articulation of what he means by discourse. It is discursive practice that elevates an utterance to the level of a statement and thus to knowledge. One may utter truth outside of a discursive practice, but Foucault's point is that it will never be recognized as such until the utterance conforms to "discursive policy."[76]

Discourse as a set of rules and regularities has an important connection to extra-discursive reality. Without institutions and other support mechanisms, discourse could not function to produce particular discourses. Mills suggests that the purpose of Foucault's analysis of discourse is not to find out whether a given statement is true, "but to discover the support mechanisms which allow it to be said and keep it in place"; she

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[75] Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language," in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 224. Emphasis mine.

[76] A recent discovery in the world of particle physics illustrates this point rather well. On July 4, 2012 physicists working at CERN discovered proof for an elementary particle that up until that date had only been theorized. The details of this discovery are not important here but an article written a few months later on September 10, 2012 by Sebastian Anthony for extremetech.com is. This article leads with the headline "CERN's Higgs boson discovery passes peer review, becomes actual science." Notice that while the Higgs boson particle exists or does not, it is not a part of "actual science," i.e. legitimate knowledge, until it goes through the process of peer review. A scientist could have claimed that this particle exists years ago (in fact some did), but such claims were not "in the true" ("actual science") until they conformed to a particular discursive policy ("peer review"). For the article see Sebastian Anthony, "CERN's Higgs boson discovery passes peer review, becomes actual science," n.p. [cited 27 February 2013. Online: http: // www. extremetech .com/extreme/135756-cerns-higgs-boson-discovery-passes-peer-review-becomes-actual-science.

goes on to say that "These support systems are both intrinsic to discourse itself *and also extra-discursive*, in the sense that they are socio-cultural."[77] Particular discourses are not only the product of discursive practice but are also the product of extra-discursive practices.

Practice

This brings us to a final methodological tool that will be used to consider scripture and the self as structures: Practice theory. Practice theory is a particular perspective within cultural history that focuses on the production of meaning through the activities of agents *and* structures. Practice theory emphasizes that the production of meaning is located at the "intersection of language and material practice."[78] The basic insight of the linguistic turn is correct, but incomplete: language alone is not responsible for the production of cultural reality; practice has a role to play as well. Andreas Reckwitz, a German sociologist, has exploited the differences between the German terms *Praxis* and *Praktik* (both of which are translated as "practice" in English) to explain what is meant by "practice" in practice theory. *Praxis* is "merely an emphatic term to describe the whole of human action (in contrast to 'theory' and mere thinking)," while *Praktik* is:

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[77] Mills, 44-45. Emphasis mine. Dreyfus and Rabinow are correct to see a development in Foucault's thought when he begins to include extra-discursive factors in his analysis. "As we saw in The Archaeology of Knowledge Foucault already had this notion of space or clearing in which subjects and objects occur. But then he thought of the space as governed by a system of rules which emerge discontinuously and without any further intelligibility. Now this field or clearing is understood as the result of long term practices and as the field in which those practices operate." Dreyfus and Rabinow, 109.

[78] Gabrielle Spiegel, introduction to "Language and the Shift from Signs to Practices in Cultural Inquiry," by Richard Biernacki, in Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn (ed. Gabrielle Spiegel; New York: Routledge, 2005), 228.

a routinized type of behavior which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion, and motivational knowledge.[79]

Note that ideas are not excluded from this definition of *Praktik*: an entire complex of diverse elements (bodily activities, mental activities, objects, and their use) are rolled up into a single whole called *Praktik*. This is the sense in which I will be using the English term "practice." Reckwitz goes on to explain that a practice "necessarily depends on the existence and specific interconnectedness of these elements, and cannot be reduced to any one of these single elements."[80] In Reckwitz's formulation practices are complexes in which agents participate and it is practices that give rise to what he calls the social, or what I understand in a more limited way as structures.[81]

In this dissertation I will be using the term "exegetical practice" as a specific kind of practice. Traditionally, exegesis is the interpretation of texts based upon an articulated set of rules; the exegete discovers the meaning inherent in the text. This construal of exegesis is too narrow. First, the difference between exegesis and its much-maligned counter-part "eisegesis" is not as clear as one may first suppose. The very rules used to discover the text's meaning are liable to import a legion of "outside" meanings into the text. Second, exegesis is not limited to the interpretation of texts; rather, anything can be

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[79] Andreas Reckwitz, "Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A Development in Culturalist Theorizing," in *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*, ed. Gabrielle Spiegel, Rewriting History Series (New York: Routledge, 2005), 251.

[80] Ibid., 252.

[81] Ibid.

interpreted by ascribing meaning to it and/or contextualizing it among other objects in the construal of meaningful wholes. Exegetical practice, then, is any routinized behavior that aims at the construction of meaning.

Method

The methodological tools discussed above will be used in this dissertation to analyze how Origen's exegetical practice paired one set of resources and schemas together into a structure of scripture and another set of resources and schemas together into a structure of the self. This process involves four main steps: First, the relevant resources must be identified. This means asking, "What texts are resources in Origen's structure of scripture?" and "What aspects of a human count as resources in the structure of the self?" Second, the relevant schemas must be identified. This means asking, "What schema organizes and makes sense of the resources in Origen's structure of scripture?" and "What schema organizes and makes sense of the resources in Origen's structure of the self?" Each of these steps requires a careful reading of passages where he discusses these issues. In general he discusses the resources of both scripture and self explicitly, however, the schemas can be a little more difficult to discover for the reason that they are often less explicit.

Third, the exegetical practices used to pair resources and schemas together must be identified and described. This means asking, "By what exegetical practice is Origen pairing this set of resources and that schema?" and "How is it that this practice goes about doing so?" It needs to be remembered that I understand exegetical practices rather broadly, I do not only mean those practices that make meaning out of texts, but also those practices that make meaning out of a whole host of objects. I freely include practices such

as baptism and eucharist as exegetical practices because whatever else they may do, they certainly construe meaningful wholes. One may object that this meaning of exegetical practice is too broad because all activities may be construed as exegetical practices in this sense. However, when I label something as an exegetical practice I mean that *I*, the interpreter of that activity am interested in how it constructs meaning. Thus baptism may not be an exegetical practice from the perspective of the one being baptized (though it may be). Yet, when one asks how this activity is constructing meaning, the baptism is now being considered as an exegetical practice.

These three steps will discover how scripture and self are *structured*. However, in a fourth step I will consider what scripture and self in turn *structure*. As it turns out, in the case of Origen, scripture and self mutually structure one another: *Scripture cannot be what scripture is without the self being what the self is and the self cannot be what the self is without scripture being what scripture is*. By proceeding in this way I will uncover four general processes that occur as scripture and self are constructed by Origen's exegetical practice: (1) the becoming scripture of biblical texts, (2) the becoming self of a human person, (3) the anthropomorphizing of scripture, and (4) the scripturalizing of the self. In these latter two process scripture and self mutually structure one another in such a way that I will ultimately conclude that for Origen scripture and self cannot be conceived separately, rather they emerge together as a scripture-self complex.

Sources

Only a small fraction of Origen's original corpus has survived the malice and accidents of history, and of that small fraction even fewer have survived in Origen's Greek as opposed to Latin translations. Key texts have been lost that would otherwise

have clarified puzzling aspects of Origen's theology. Origen's *On the Resurrection* is one such text; if it were still extant, it would be useful to modern scholars in understanding Origen's theology of the post-resurrection body. Other key texts have only survived in the Latin translations of Rufinus and Jerome. These translators were interested in either defending (Rufinus) or attacking (Jerome) Origen based on later doctrinal standards. This means that one must be careful in using these translations to re-construct Origen's theology. This methodological difficulty is relevant for this dissertation because Origen's *On First Principles* and *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, both translated by Rufinus, form a part of my discussion of Origen's structures of scripture and the self.

Rufinus's Latin translations of Origen's works would not pass as word for word translations by modern standards. Scholars vary in their estimations, then, of how reliable Rufinus is. Most critical is De Faye who argues that Rufinus cannot be relied upon to provide an accurate rendering of Origen's original ideas.[82] R. P. Lawson, who has provided an English translation of Rufinus's Latin translation of Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, is generally uncertain about the reliability of Rufinus.[83] Jean Daniélou and Henri Crouzel are more positive about Rufinus as a translator; Crouzel acknowledges that Rufinus generally gives a paraphrase rather than a translation but apart

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[82] See discussion in Jean Daniélou, *Origen*, trans., Walter Mitchell (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955), xvi.

[83] R. P. Lawson, *Origen: The Song of Songs, Commentary and Homilies*, Ancient Christian Writers (New York: Paulist Press, 1956), 5. In any case, Lawson is sure that Jerome is generally more reliable. Lawson, 19.

from occasional omission the paraphrases "render the ideas close enough."[84] In general I

agree with Crouzel's assessment: Origen's technical vocabulary and even some nuance of

his thought is obscured by Rufinus, but his translations are sufficient for conveying

Origen's ideas.[85] Unless otherwise noted, Rufinus's translations of *On First Principles*

and *Commentary on the Song of Songs* are relied upon in this dissertation to give a

sufficient picture of Origen's meaning.

Although I will be making reference to a wide range of Origen's surviving works,

the most important are his *On First Principles*, *Commentary on the Gospel according to

John*, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, and *Commentary on the Song of Songs*. I will introduce

each of these in more detail in the later chapters but a brief sketch will be offered here.

The first of these is one of Origen's earliest works that was written while he was living in

Alexandria. In *On First Principles,* Origen provides what can be considered

Christianity's first systematic theology. Origen begins with a general statement of what

he calls "apostolic teaching" and then precedes to a wide-ranging exploration of other

theological topics. Most of this text survives only in Rufinus's Latin translation, but

significant sections have been preserved in Greek. I will be using *On First Principles* to

demonstrate Origen's theological anthropology as well as his views on how to interpret

scripture.

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[84] Henri Crouzel, *Origen*, trans., A. S. Worrall (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989), 42;
Daniélou, x.

[85] There are certainly instances where Rufinus has deliberately altered Origen's Greek to
conform it to later theological standards. This is especially true concerning passages
dealing with Christological or eschatological issues. The former are not relevant for this
dissertation but the latter are. I will provide the necessary evaluation of particular
passages as they occur in later chapters.

The *Commentary on the Gospel according to John* will be examined to discover Origen's exegetical practices in action as they construct his structure of scripture. Origen started this commentary while he was living in Alexandria but it was not finished until after he had moved to Caesarea. A substantial portion of this commentary is extant in Greek and therefore provides better access to Origen's exegesis on the Fourth Gospel than would be the case in a Latin translation.

The *Homilies on Jeremiah* is a collection of homilies that Origen preached while living in Caesarea. These homilies will be used to discover how Origen's exegetical practices were used to construct the structure of the self. Like the commentary on John most of these homilies have survived in Greek. They allow an insight into Origen's activity among the "simple faithful." I will consider these homilies in the ecclesial context that includes elements such as the eucharist and baptism.

Origen wrote his *Commentary on the Song of Songs* later in his life beginning with a brief stay in Athens, but he finished it while living in Caesarea. A reading of select passages from this commentary will show how scripture and self structure one another in the context of a divine pedagogy that culminates in salvation. This commentary is extant only in Rufinus's Latin. However, while the language may not be Origen's the important concepts are.

Key Studies

The road of Origen scholarship is a road—rather a highway—that is well-traveled. A survey of recent scholarship on Origen would add unnecessary bulk to this first chapter. I have made it clear in the footnotes the scholars who have influenced my thinking and what discussions I have found the most helpful. However, there are two

recent and admirable studies that I would like to mention here: Peter Martens' *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life* and Karen Jo Torjesen's *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis*.[86]

Martens's study is similar to mine in that he focuses on both Origen's exegesis and what I am calling the "self." The self that Martens is interested in, however, is not the Christian self generally, but the self as an interpreter of scripture. This self, Martens argues, "was someone who embarked not simply upon a scholarly journey, but more ambitiously, upon a way of life, indeed a way of salvation, that culminated in the vision of God."[87] There are many sections in this dissertation where my discussion parallels that of Martens's or is influenced by him, but our ultimate concerns are different. Martens demonstrates what Origen's ideal interpreter of scripture looked like, I demonstrate how scripture and self are constructed by exegetical practice.

Torjesen's study is also similar to mine in that she has focused on the procedure of Origen's exegesis and shown that a divine pedagogy underlies Origen's efforts as an exegete. Torjesen argues that the progress of the soul is the general principle or foundation of Origen's exegesis. This progress is marked by three stages: purification, knowledge, and perfection.[88] Origen often uses these three stages as an organizing

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[86] Peter W. Martens, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life*, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). Karen Jo Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Proceedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis* (New York: de Gruyter, 1985).

[87] Martens, 6.

[88] Torjesen, 77.

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principle for his exegesis, especially in the context of homilies.[89] I agree with Torjesen's

general description of Origen's exegetical procedure as well has her emphasis on

Origen's pedagogical goals. However, as I will argue, Torjesen's focus on the "soul" is

too narrow to account for the complexity of Origen's understanding of the self.

Outline of Chapters

The next chapter, "Scripture and Self before Origen," examines the work of two

second-century Christian theologians—Heracleon and Irenaeus of Lyons—to see how

their respective exegetical practices construct structures of scripture and the self. This

will involve discovering what resources and schemas are used in the construction of such

structures as well as discovering how practices are used to construct those structures. The

historical context provided in this chapter will situate Origen's own exegetical practice in

the chapters to come. The differences between Heracleon and Irenaeus on the one hand

and the differences between these two and Origen on the other hand will show what is

unique to Origen's own structures of scripture and self.

Chapter three, "Structuring Scripture in Origen," will begin the core of the

dissertation. Here I will focus on the structure of scripture as it emerges in Origen's

exegetical practice. This is the process of becoming scripture of the biblical text. In

particular, his *Commentary on John* will serve as a case study for how scripture is

constructed by exegetical practice. This will involve locating the genre of commentary in

a network of exegetical practices that can be grouped under the rubrics of the Greco-

Roman school and ancient bibliographic practices.

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[89] Ibid., 89.

The fourth chapter, "Structuring the Self in Origen," will shift attention from the structure of scripture to the construction of the structure of self in Origen's exegetical practice. This is the process of becoming self of the human person. Central to this construction are the practices of baptism and eucharist that were central to the life of Origen's church in Caesarea. Origen's *Homilies on Jeremiah* will provide a case study for how the Christian self is constructed by exegetical practice. This will involve locating the homily in a network of exegetical practices, which can be grouped under the rubric of the Christian church.

In a fifth chapter, "The Self Structures Scripture and Scripture Structures the Self: Origen's Scripture-Self Complex," the discussion of the way Origen's exegetical practice constructs the structures of scripture and self will come to a climax as I demonstrate that for Origen these are correlative structures: Scripture structures the self and self structures scripture. The relevant case study here will be Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*. I will demonstrate both the anthropomorphizing of scripture and the scripturalizing of the self that result in what I call Origen's scripture-self complex. This marks a distinction between Origen's structures of scripture and self from those of both Heracleon and Irenaeus. I turn now to these two Christian theologians in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO: SCRIPTURE AND SELF BEFORE ORIGEN

Neither scripture nor self are natural categories that move unchanged throughout history; on the contrary they are each constructed in specific ways by specific people and communities, often in competition with other people or communities. In the case of second-century Christianity the processes of the becoming scripture of biblical texts and the becoming self of a human person can be detected in the exegetical practice of influential theologians. But these theologians, although working with similar materials and in a similar time frame did not necessarily construct scripture and self in homogenous ways, it is best to speak of Christian structures of scripture, and Christian structures of the self in order to avoid imposing a monolithic understanding of either scripture or the self on this early stage of development.

In this chapter I will establish the historical background against which Origen's exegetical practice is to be understood. I will provide a detailed discussion of how scripture, and also the self, are constructed by the exegetical practices of two second-century Christian theologians: Irenaeus and Heracleon.[90] The purpose of discussing these theologians is to provide examples of how exegetical practice constructs the structures of

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[90] There is no problem identifying Irenaeus as a Christian theologian; the case of Heracleon may be more complex. For now it is enough to say that from the perspective of the second century it was not yet clear which competing group would control the definition of "Christian." Indeed, this very dissertation is, in many ways, about that struggle.

scripture and self in order to provide points of comparison with Origen's structures of scripture and self which I will develop later. I have chosen Irenaeus and Heracleon as examples for a few reasons. First, Origen draws in one way or another upon these two theologians. Therefore an understanding of their constructions of scripture and self will contextualize Origen's own. Second, Heracleon's *Commentary on John* is not only the earliest known commentary on a text that would later become a part of the New Testament, but also it was in response to this commentary that Origen wrote his own magisterial commentary.[91] Third, Irenaeus's discussion of the Rule of Faith provides an illuminating example about how discourse functions in the construction of scripture and self. Finally, that Irenaeus's and Heracleon's discourses are in conflict with one another provides opportunity to examine how certain discourses, and the practices that sustain them, compete to be "in the true."[92] Later in the dissertation I will discuss points of similarity and difference between Heracleon, Irenaeus, and Origen, but at the most basic level they are all constructing scripture and self by exegetical practice.

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[91] Simonetti calls Heracleon's Commentary on John "the first specifically exegetical Christian text of which we have knowledge." M. Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, trans., J.A. Hughes (Edinburgh: Clark, 1994), 18. However, it is also important to remember that this commentary only exists in fragments quoted in Origen's work. Frances Young cautions, "No commentaries or works of a scholarly kind from the second century are extant among Christian literature. Formal exegetical material emerges in the first part of the third century in the West with Hippolytus and in the East with Origen." Frances M. Young, *Biblcial Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 82.

[92] See chapter one for an explanation of this phrase.

Heracleon

Very little is known about Heracleon's life. Although he is mentioned by a handful of heresiologists, they give few details of his biography.[93] Instead, these sources are interested in condemning Heracleon by pairing him with well-known heresiarchs.[94] All that can be gathered from these sources—other than his association with Ptolemaeus and Valentinus—is that Heracleon lived and wrote during the second century at Alexandria.[95] Any study of Heracleon is met with two related methodological difficulties: the fragmentary nature of his sources and his place within the school of Valentinus.[96]

There are fifty-one fragments of Heracleon that have been preserved in the texts of other authors: forty-eight are found in Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, two are found in Clement of Alexandria's corpus, and one is found in Photius's *Epistles*.[97] Since a fragment is by definition incomplete, it is difficult to know the full

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[93] Irenaeus, *Haer*. 2.4.1; Tertullian, *Val*. 4.2; Hippolytus, *Haer*. 6.2-4; Ps-Tertullian 4.4.8; Epiphanius, *Pan*. 36; Clement, *Strom* 4.8.73 and *Ecl*. 25.

[94] Bently Layton puts it well when he says that their "ultimate goal is not to describe but to destroy." B. Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1987), xxiv.

[95] Ronald E. Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 49.

[96] For a discussion of the Valentinian School see David Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge Harvard Univeristy Press, 2010), 115-119; Ismo Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism: Myth, Lifestyle, and Society in the School of Valentinus* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 53-54; Layton, 267-353.

[97] Clement, *Ecl*. 25, *Strom*. 4.9; Photius, *Ep*. 134. For a collection of the fragments see A. E. Brooke, ed. *The Fragments of Heracleon*, ed. J. Armitage Robinson, Texts and Studies: Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univeristy Press, 1896). In the following pages I will be using Brooke's edition for fragments from Clement and Photius and the the *Sources Chrétienes* critical edition for

extent of Heracleon's exegesis on a given passage of scripture. When it comes to

Heracleon's interpretation of John, modern scholars are at the mercy Origen's quotations

(to say nothing of the fact that Origen's own commentary has not survived the

vicissitudes of history in its entirety). In addition to the incompleteness of the fragments

it is necessary to remember that they are being preserved in *hostile* sources. Both

Clement of Alexandria and Origen took it for granted that Heracleon had a heretical

pedigree.[98] This does not mean that the fragments found in Clement and Origen must be

excluded, but they must be handled carefully. The only way to help insure an accurate

interpretation of Heracleon's fragments is to understand the intellectual background

informing them; this brings us to the second methodological problem.

To what intellectual background does Heracleon's commentary on the Gospel of

John belong? Nearly all the ancient sources that mention Heracleon associate him with

the school of Valentinus by either connecting him with Valentinus himself or connecting

him with Ptolemaeus who was a famous disciple within the school.[99] Clement of

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fragments from Origen. English translations come from Ronald E. Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel according to John* (FOTC 80, 89; Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1989-1993). Fragment numbers come from Brooke's text whereas references to Origen's commentary follow Heine's translation.

[98] Clement, *Strom*. 4.8.73; Origen, *Comm. Jo*. 2.100. In the case of the fragments found in Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel according to John* one must be careful to distinguish Heracleon's exegesis from Origen's discussion of it.

[99] Michael Kaler and Marie-Pierre Bussières have recently argued that these sources reveal an uncertainty of Heracleon's relationship to Valentinus and Ptolemaeus. Marie-Pierre Bussières and Michael Kaler, "Was Heracleon a Valentinian? A New Look at Old Sources," *Harvard Theological Review* 99, no. 3 (2006). In particular, Kaler and Bussières point out that Origen only associates Heracleon with Valentinus via hearsay. Furthermore, Origen does not use the category "Valentinianism" rhetorically against Heracleon as he used "Epicureanism" rhetorically against Celsus in *Contra Celsum*.

Alexandria calls him "the most respected of the Valentinian school."[100] Origen identifies

him as an associate of Valentinus.[101] But to what degree can other Valentinian texts be

used to fill in the gaps in Heracleon's fragments? There is good reason to believe that

Heracleon's commentary on the Gospel of John shares a worldview with a larger group

of Valentinian literature.[102] The similarity between Heracleon's exegesis of the Johannine

prologue and that found in Ptolemaeus' *Letter to Flora* and the one found in the *Excerpts*

of Theodotus have led some scholars to speak of "a traditional *topos* of Valentinian

exegesis."[103] This *topos* has some variation among Valentinian exegetes, but its common

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Kaler's and Bussières' thesis has not been accepted by most scholars, but one point they raise—that Heracleon should be understood in his own right—is methodologically prudent. For a critique of Kaler and Bussières see Dunderberg, 5; Einar Thomassen, "Heracleon," in *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel*, ed. Tuomas Raismus (Boston: Brill, 2010), 172 n.7.

[100] ὁ τῆς Οὐαλεντίνυ σχολῆς δοκιμώτατος (frg. 50 in Clement, *Strom.* 4.9) Notice that Clement speaks of a Valentinian school.

[101] τὸν Οὐαλεντίνου λεγόμενον εἶναι γνώριμον Ἡρακλέωνα (*Comm. Jo.* 2.100). Heine translates γνώριμον as "disciple" but it has a more general sense of "acquainted with" (BDAG, 203). If Origen had desired to express the idea of disciple as in a former school setting one would expect ἀκροατῆς, μαθητής, or perhaps ὁμιλητής. It seems to me that Origen, writing a generation after Heracleon, was not sure of the exact nature of Heracleon's relationship to Valentinus. Rather, he was echoing traditional information.

[102] Dunderberg identifies the following texts from Nag Hammadi as Valentinain: *The Prayer of the Apostle Paul*, *The Gospel of Truth*, *The Tripartite Tractate*, *The Treatise on the Resurrection*, *The Gospel of Philip*, *The Apocalypse of James*, *The Interpretation of Knowledge*, and *A Valentinian Exposition*. Dunderberg, 10. To this list one may add Ptolemaeus's *Letter to Flora* and the *Excerpts from Theodotus*. Thomassen, 178.

[103] Thomassen, "Heracleon," 178. Elaine Pagels has observed differences between Heracleon, Ptolemaeus (in his prologue commentary recorded in Irenaeus *Haer.* 1.8.5), and Theodotus. Rather than seeing them as actual differences she has suggested that each exegete is employing a different "level of interpretation" that is not mutually exclusive to the others. Elaine H. Pagels, *The Johannine Gospel in Gnostic Exegesis: Heracleon's*

core is an appeal to a hierarchical cosmological myth as a frame of reference for exegesis. Furthermore, certain parallels between the *Tripartite Tractate* from Nag Hammadi and Heracleon's exegesis have also been observed.[104] Finally, *The Gospel of Philip* sheds light on some of the liturgical rituals that may have been practiced by many Valentinians. These latter two texts, *The Tripartite Tractate* and *The Gospel of Philip* are especially important in reconstructing rituals that may have been practiced by the Valentinian school.

The *topos* of Valentinian exegesis makes reference to a myth that is found in different versions in Valentinian authors. While versions of this myth are often assumed rather than explained in Valentinian texts, Irenaeus records two versions of this myth, one which he identifies with Valentinus and the other which he associates with Ptolemaeus.[105] The general scheme of these myths is that an ultimate divine principle (sometimes simply called the Pre-existent Father) has unfolded itself in successive male-female pairs (often called *syzygies*). The totality of these "aeons" is often called the Pleroma. Eventually, one

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Commentary on John, ed. Robert A. Kraft, Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973), 26.

[104] See Ronald E. Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 80 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 23-26.The most striking parallel to be noted is that for both Heracleon and the author of the Tripartite Tractate the logos is higher than the creator of the world. We will have opportunity to observe other parallels below.

[105] See *Haer.* 1.11.1 and *Haer.* 1.1.1-8.5 respectively. Since Irenaeus is a hostile source toward the Valentinian school he must be read with caution. However, a comparison of Irenaeus's *Against Heresies* with texts from Nag Hammadi has revealed that Irenaeus is generally trustworthy in the description (but perhaps not the evaluation) of his opponents. See Nicola Denzey Lewis, "*Apolytrosis* as Ritual and Sacrament: Determining a Ritual Context for Death in Second-Century Marcosian Valentinianism," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17, no. 4 (2009): 527.

of the lowest members of the Pleroma created a lesser being outside the Pleroma.[106] This

lesser being is called the Demiurge in many Valentinian sources (including Heracleon)

The Demiurge is responsible for the creation of the material world. The Demiurge is also

partly responsible for the creation of humanity itself, or at least certain aspects of

humanity. Yet, there is general agreement among versions of this myth that some aspects

of humanity have their origin in the Pleroma and are, therefore, foreign to the world of

the Demiurge's making. The versions of this myth goes on to explain that a member of

the Pleroma, often called the Savior (as in Heracleon), has come to retrieve those aspects

of humanity that belong to the Pleroma. The various versions of this myth are much more

complicated than what has been presented here, but the common theme of the divine

unfolding itself in the Pleroma and the theme of some aspects of humanity returning to

the Pleroma are what will be called here the Valentinian myth.[107] It is easy for moderns to

view this myth as foolish speculation, but this myth was not for intellectual speculation

for its own sake. David Brakke claims that such myths "[explain] how, despite our life in

the body and opposition by demonic powers, our intellect still provides us with the

opportunity to contemplate God."[108] The myth is meant to explain human experience.

As far as can be known from the surviving fragments, Heracleon does not

explicitly state the Valentinian myth or claim that it is formative for his exegesis.

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[106] There are a variety of versions of this event, but although Heracleon does not give us the version he follows, it is clear that this lesser being is not evil, just inferior.

[107] For more details concerning this myth see Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 52-74; Dunderberg, 77-118.

[108] Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 53.

However, there are a number of points in his commentary on the Gospel of John where elements form this myth inform his exegesis. He discusses the Demiurge throughout the fragments; at one point he claims that John the Baptist is symbolic of the Demiurge and at another point he claims that the royal official of John 6 is symbolic of the Demiurge.[109] Heracleon also speaks of the Savior's descent into the material world as well as his return to the Pleroma.[110] However original Heracleon's exegesis may be, it is set within the context of a Valentinian school which had its own body of literature gathered around various expressions of a common Valentinian myth.

<div align="center">The Structure of Scripture in Heracleon</div>

My examination of the structure of scripture in Heracleon asks three questions: what are the resources of scripture according to Heracleon's construction? What are the schemas by which those resources are organized? How are those resources and schemas paired in Heracleon's exegetical practice? Nowhere in Heracleon's extant fragments does he provide a list of texts that he considers scripture, or a rationale for what makes something scripture, but the end of frg. 40 sheds some light on the resources of scripture in Heracleon. Since he understood the royal official's household as the angels and men of the Demiurge, John 4:53 raised the question about whether those angels were to be saved as well. Heracleon related this question with the story from Genesis of angels who had sex with humans. Origen writes that Heracleon:

> says that *there is a question as to whether certain angels who descended to the daughters of men will be saved* [Gen. 6:2]. And he thinks *the destruction of the men of the Demiurge is revealed in the statement, "The sons of the kingdom will*

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[109] frg. 8 in *Comm. Jo.* 6.199; frg. 40 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.416.

[110] frg. 11 in *Comm. Jo.* 10.48; frg. 13 in *Comm. Jo.* 10.21.

go out into outer darkness" [Matt. 8:2]. Isaias also prophesied of these as follows, "I have begotten sons, and exulted them, but they have rejected me" [Isa. 1:2]. He calls them *alien sons*, *wicked and lawless seed* [Isa. 1:4], *and a vineyard that produced thorns* [Isa. 5:2].[111]

Heracleon's exegesis of John 4:53 brought to his mind an exegetical difficulty from an entirely different text, namely Genesis. This suggests that the text of Genesis was important for Heracleon; after all, there are a number of different classical texts that speak of sexual encounters between divine entities and human beings, the fact that Heracleon comments on Genesis says something about the relationship between Genesis and the Gospel of John in Heracleon's view. Whether the Fourth Gospel was intended to shed light on Genesis or *vice versa,* it is clear that for Heracleon these two texts belonged in the same interpretive arena. Heracleon attempts an interpretation by an appeal to two other texts: Matthew and Isaiah. Matthew 8:2 is interpreted to mean that "the men of the Demiurge" will be destroyed because, as Isaiah 1:2 is intended to show, "they have rejected me." It appears that for Heracleon the Fourth Gospel, Genesis, Matthew, and Isaiah all contain symbolic reference to the same event: the destruction of the Demiurge's angels and men.

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[111] Ζητεῖσθαι δέ φησι περί τινων ἀγγέλων εἰ σωθήσονται, τῶν κατελθόντων ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων θυγατέρας. Καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων δὲ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὴν ἀπώλειαν δηλοῦσθαι νομίζει ἐν τῷ· Οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐξελεύσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον. Καὶ περὶ τούτων τὸν Ἡσαΐαν προφητεύειν τὸ Υἱοὺς ἐγέννησα καὶ ὕψωσα, αὐτοὶ δὲ μὲ ἠθέτησαν, οὕστινας υἱοὺς ἀλλοτρίους, καὶ σπέρμα πονηρὸν καὶ ἄνομον καλεῖ, καὶ ἀμπελῶνα ἀκάνθας ποιήσαντα. (*Comm. Jo.* 13.425-426 [SC 222:266]) ET Ronald E. Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32,* The Fathers of the Church, vol. 89 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1993), 158-159. The italics are original to Heine's translation and are intended to distinguish between Heracleon's and Origen's comments.

Fragment 40 also contains a reference to Pauline literature in order to address another interpretative issue. Heracleon takes the phrase "for he was at the point of death" (John 4:47 NRSV) as indicating "the teachings of those who say that the soul is immortal are overthrown."[112] He goes on to argue that while the soul itself is not immortal, it is capable of immortality if something is added to it; to support this argument Heracleon appeals to 1 Corinthians 15:53-54. To summarize, fragment 40, which is itself an interpretation of John, draws support from Genesis, Isaiah, Matthew, and 1 Corinthians.

Throughout the other fragments a number of additional texts are either quoted or alluded to: Psalms (frgs. 5, 10), Jeremiah (frg. 13), Ezekiel (frg. 23), Luke (frgs. 5, 10, 23, 25, 50), Romans (frgs. 17, 22, 40, 48), Galatians (frg. 36), 2 Timothy (frg. 50), and Hebrews (frg. 13).[113] In addition to these texts that would later become canonized, Heracleon also quotes from a text called *The Preaching of Peter*.[114] Heracleon does so to help explain the meaning of worship in regard to John 4:22; his point is that true worship is neither that of the gentiles (idolatry) nor that of the Jews who "are ignorant of [God]

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[112] ἀνατρέπεσθαι τὰ δόγματα τῶν ὑποτιθεμένων ἀθάνατον εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν (*Comm. Jo.* 13.417 [SC 222:262]) ET Ibid., 157-158.

[113] This list is based upon the index provided by A.E. Brooke of "passages of scripture quoted, explained, or referred to by Heracleon." Brooke, ed., 108. Brooke is doubtful about some the allusions I have listed above, but at the most basic one may conclude that Heracleon drew on texts from both the LXX and what is now called the New Testament.

[114] Clement of Alexandria also used *The Preaching of Peter* and considered it to be apostolic. See Thomassen, 194.

and serve angels, the month, and the moon".[115] It appears that Heracleon viewed *The Preaching of Peter* as authoritative for right conduct in the practice of worship.

By what schema does Heracleon organize these resources in his construction of scripture? I have not found the term γραφή or any of its cognates in Heracleon's fragments.[116] This does not mean that Heracleon has no concept of scripture. Rather, I would suggest the opposite is true. Origen says that Heracleon considered *The Preaching of Peter* "as though [it was] Peter's teaching;"[117] this suggests that Heracleon viewed the text as authoritative because it was associated with Peter. There is nothing unique to Heracleon about this understanding of a text's authority; after all, apostolic authorship was a common trope used to establish a text as scripture in the early centuries of Christianity. It would not be too much to assume that the same notion of apostolic authority underlies Heracleon's use of Matthew, Luke, John, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Galatians, 2 Timothy, and Hebrews.[118]

The texts that Heracleon appeals to which are not apostolic in origin (Genesis, Psalms, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) must be considered scripture for an entirely different

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[115] θεὸν ἀγνοοῦσιν αὐτόν, λατρεύοντες ἀγγέλοις καὶ μηνὶ καὶ σελήνῃ (*Comm. Jo.* 13.104 [SC 222:86]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 89.

[116] Nor does Brooke list any cognates in his "Index of Greek Words in the Fragments of Heracleon" Brooke, ed., 109-112.

[117] ὡς Πέτρου διδάξαντος (*Comm. Jo.* 13.104 [SC 222:86]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 89.

[118] In this sense Heracleon is no different from many of his proto-orthodox contemporaries. Brooke, ed., 38; Thomassen, 197. Although the connection of Hebrews to an apostle was a topic for debate already in antiquity, there is no reason to think that Heracleon rejected its apostolic origin.

reason. Heracleon's use of these texts from Jewish scripture is ambiguous. On the one hand, at times he uses such texts authoritatively as in fragment 40. But on the other hand, Heracleon can be dismissive of the prophetic tradition. In fragment 5 he appears to dismiss the prophetic order, "The Word (λόγος) is the Savior, the voice (φωνὴ) in the wilderness is that signified by John, and the whole prophetic order is a noise (ἦχος)."[119] Heracleon is constructing a relative hierarchy of word, voice, and noise where the Savior as word is superior to John the Baptist as a voice, who in turn is superior to the prophetic tradition as a noise. Although Heracleon is placing the prophetic tradition third behind John the Baptist and the Savior, he is not dismissing it outright. Einar Thomassen has argued that Heracleon views the prophetic tradition as inspired not by the Logos, but by the Demiurge.[120] This would explain Heracleon's ambivalence about Jewish scripture. Insofar as the Demiurge is an inferior, though not evil, divine being, so too Jewish scripture is inferior to that written by apostles. This approach to the inspired nature of the prophetic tradition presupposes the Valentinian myth and the Demiurge's role therein. Scriptural resources are for Heracleon gathered together and ordered based on the details of the Valentinian myth.

The final thing to consider about the structure of scripture in Heracleon is the question of how his scriptural resources and scriptural schema are paired together by exegetical practice. Here, the fragmentary nature of Heracleon's surviving work is a

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[119] Ὁ λόγος μὲν ὁ σωτήρ ἐστιν, φωνὴ δὲ ἡ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἡ διὰ Ἰωάννου διανοουμένη, ἦχος δὲ πᾶσα προφητικὴ τάξις. (*Comm. Jo.* 6.108 [SC 157:210]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 199.

[120] Thomassen, 194. Note that similar ideas are found in the *Tripartite Tractate* 97.21-23; 100.33-35; and 111-114.

difficulty. However, Origen provides a clue about the nature of Heracleon's exegetical

practice when he identifies Heracleon's work on the gospel of John as ὑπομνημα

(commentary) in *Comm. Jo.* 6. There will be opportunity later in the dissertation to

discuss the nature and function of ancient commentaries in more detail, but a few

observations will be helpful here to understand how the writing of commentaries serves

in the construction of the structure of scripture. At its most general, a commentary may

be understood following a definition from Gregory Snyder who says that a commentary

is a text where "the lemmata to be explained are explicitly stated in the text itself."[121]

This definition of a commentary states that the base text is reproduced in the writing and

reading of the commentary. The exegetical practice of writing a commentary guarantees

that the base text itself will continue in circulation so long as the commentary does. Sara

Mills, in her work on discourse, singles out the biblical commentary as a type of

discourse that ensures "that [the bible] keeps in circulation as legitimate knowledge."[122]

Heracleon's selection of the Gospel of John from among the many texts available to him

singles it out as significant and worthy of comment. By this act alone, the Gospel of

John—or at least the lemmata used by Heracleon—is treated as significant anytime

Heracleon's commentary is used, whether that commentary is used by supporters or

antagonists.[123]

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[121] H. Gregory Snyder, *Teachers and Texts in the Ancient World: Philosophers, Jews and Christians*, ed. Deborah Sawyer and John Sawyer, Religion in the First Christian Centuries (New York: Routledge, 2000), 75.

[122] Mills, 60-61.

[123] The fate of Aristotle's library in antiquity may serve as an anecdote to support the point I am making here. Ancient sources suggest that Aristotle's library fell into a state of

Beyond keeping the base text in circulation, a commentary like Heracleon's also shapes the base text in context specific ways by how it arranges resources and schemas. The lemmata drawn from the base text are at the mercy of the author of the commentary to be arranged and rearranged as the commentator sees fit. Even if Heracleon used the organization of the base text as the "spine" of his own commentary, he was able to interpret the text according his own schema.[124] The division between lemmata and interpretation, no matter how clearly distinguished by their physical presentation, was porous. Heracleon uses commentary to place the text of the Gospel of John in a symbiotic relationship with his own interpretation of the Valentinian Myth. That myth gains legitimation by association with the gospel, but the gospel also gains legitimation by its association with the myth. The genre of the commentary, by pairing lemmata and interpretation together within the same text makes this relationship not only possible, but explicit.

The commentary is not the only part of Heracleon's exegetical practice that pairs together scriptural resources and a scriptural schema. Another part of that same practice is the school setting and the authority implied therein. There is general agreement among scholars that Valentinians formed small study groups or schools in addition to

deterioration and did not circulate widely in the last few centuries before the Common Era precisely because very few scholars (if any) were commenting or even using the texts. On the fate of Aristotle's library see Snyder, 66-69.

[124] Snyder suggests that there are two ways to organize a commentary: In "Type I" the author follows the order of the base text in his commentary, but in "Type II" the author may organize his commentary topically and draw from the base text according to that arrangement. Ibid., 75. For more on this see chapter three below. The fragmentary nature of Heracleon's commentary prevents us from knowing which type of commentary he employed.

participating in local proto-orthodox communities.[125] If Heracleon was a teacher in one

such school, it stands to reason that his commentary on John was produced either in the

service of school activity, perhaps based on his lecture notes, or as a result of that school

activity, perhaps as a further aid to his students.[126] In either case, Heracleon would have

functioned as a pedagogical authority in such a school, and as such the particular way in

which he paired scriptural resources and schemas would have been impressed upon his

students and so reproduced in their own thinking about scripture. His authority as a

teacher, which was grounded in both his display of erudition regarding texts and in the

succession of Valentinian teachers,[127] legitimated the statements he made regarding the

lemmata in his commentary. "Statements" in the previous sentence is intended to be

understood in the technical sense described in chapter one above: having an "institutional

force" because the "position of the subject is assigned" to a legitimating authority.[128]

Heracleon's commentary embodies a series of relationships between the base text in the

lemmata, the Valentinian myth, and the authorizing agent who places them together in a

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[125] "The Valentinian movement, then, had a complex relationship with other Christian groups. It featured independent study circles that worked like philosophical schools and supplemented worship and participation in non-Valentinain churches." Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 119. See also Dunderberg, 4; Layton, 267.

[126] Snyder has made a convincing case that Peripatetic commentaries on Aristotle's works were often tied to the pedagogical context of the school. See Snyder, 75-82. I will show in chapter three that is is also the situation with Origen's commentaries on scripture.

[127] For the relation of erudition and teaching authority see Ibid., 193. For the succession of Valentinian teachers see Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 120. Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 7.17.

[128] Foucault, *Archaeology*, 32.

particular combination. The result of this is a particular structure of scripture that is reproduced as the commentary is received based on Heracleon's authority as a teacher.

The Structure of the Self in Heracleon

One of the most debated topics in scholarship on Heracleon is his view of the self. It is clear from the fragments that Heracleon uses a Valentinian tripartite categorization of humanity that divides humanity into three classes: pneumatics, psychics, and hylics.[129] There is debate, however, about the fluidity or fixity of these categories and to what they actually apply. Origen thought that Heracleon was teaching a doctrine of fixed natures such that the pneumatics were elected to return to their divine origin in the Pleroma, the psychics were elected to a lesser salvation, and the hylics were elected to destruction. The debate among modern scholars takes a more nuanced view focusing on how these categories are actually applied in Heracleon's fragments. The disagreement between Elaine Pagels and Ismo Dunderberg on this topic is instructive regarding Heracleon's understanding of the self. The important passages to consider are those where Heracleon exegetes the story of the Samaritan woman (frgs. 17-39), the story of the healing of the

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[129] While Heracleon uses the adjectives πνευματικός and ψυχικός throughout the fragments to refer to different categories of humanity he does not use ὑλικος to describe humans. Rather he uses the adjective χοϊκος (frg. 46= *Comm. Jo*. 20.211-219) or describes them as having the same essence of the devil. This tripartite division is expressed most explicitly in Origen's interpretation of Heracleon "But now it is clear that [Heracleon] means that some men are of the same essence, being of a different essence than those whom they [Valentinians?] calls psychics or pneumatics, as [Heracleon's] followers maintain." Νυνὶ δὲ δῆλός ἐστιν ὁμοουσίους τινὰς τῷ διαβόλῳ λέγων ἀνθρώπους, ἑτέρας, ὡς οἴονται οἱ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, οὐσίας τυγχάνοντας παρ' οὓς καλοῦσι ψυχικοὺς ἢ πνευματικούς. (*Comm. Jo*. 20.170 [SC 290:240]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 241.

royal official's son (frg. 40), and Jesus's accusation to "the Jews" in John 8:44 that they are "of your father the devil"(frgs. 45-46).

Pagels grants that for Heracleon the labels pneumatic, psychic, and hylic refer to fixed categories. However, she argues that while pneumatics and hylics are elected to salvation and destruction respectively, the psychics "stand provisionally 'in the middle' between the two alternative elections of grace and reprobation, having received a capacity for attaining salvation even through their limited faith and through works."[130] In this interpretation of Heracleon, the categories of pneumatic and psychic can refer to two kinds of Christians: pneumatic Christians are those who are such based on their very nature, whereas psychics become Christians based on how they live their lives. By contrast, Dunderberg argues that there is no distinction here between kinds of Christians or how they become Christians, but that the distinction in Heracleon is an ethnic distinction: the pneumatics are Christians, the psychics are Jews, and the hylics are pagans.[131]

This disagreement between Pagels and Dunderberg is based on two different approaches to Heracleon's interpretation of the story of the Samaritan woman in John 4 and the healing of the royal official's son in John 6. Pagels argues that Heracleon is juxtaposing these two stories to demonstrate that they are each symbolic of "qualitatively different" process of salvation, one for pneumatics (Samaritan woman) and one for

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[130] Pagels, 113. See also Brooke, ed., 45.

[131] Dunderberg, 141-144. It may be best to say that these are religio-ethnic categories as Dunderberg basis these categories on types of worship associate with different people groups.

psychics (the royal official's son).[132] Key to this interpretation is Heracleon's comment that the Samaritan woman "demonstrated a faith that was unhesitating and appropriate to her nature…"[133] Furthermore, according to Heracleon, the Samaritan woman is symbolic of "the spiritual church (πνευματικῆς ἐκκλησίας)" and "the incorruptible nature of the elect" (τὴν ἄφθαρτον τῆς ἐκλογῆς φύσιν).[134] The royal official's son however, is symbolic of the Demiurge's "own man" (ὁ ἴδος…ἄνθρωπος)[135] who has a kind of nature that is liable to be "permanently put to death (θανατωθῆναι) through sins."[136]

Dunderberg does not grant that these contrasts are enough to suggest that the Samaritan woman and the royal official's son represent different natures, and therefore different salvation experiences. Rather, he takes a clue from Heracleon's interpretation of the interaction between the Samaritan woman and Jesus about worship to suggest that the categories Heracleon uses are ethnic designations. It was pointed out above that Heracleon relies on *The Preaching of Peter* to explain what kind of worship Jesus is talking about in John 4:22.[137] *The Preaching of Peter* condemns Gentile and Jewish

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[132] Pagels, 83.

[133] ἐνδειξαμένην τὴν ἀδιάκριτον καὶ κατάλληλον τῇ φύσει ἑαυτῆς πίστιν (frg. 17 in *Comm. Jo*. 13.63 [SC 222:64]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 82.

[134] frg. 37 in *Comm. Jo*. 13.341 (SC 222:222) ET Ibid., 141.

[135] frg. 40 in *Comm. Jo*. 13.416 (SC 222:262) ET Ibid., 157.

[136] frg. 40 in *Comm. Jo*. 13.420 (SC 222:264) ET Ibid., 158.

[137] frg. 21 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.104 (SC 222:86)

forms of worship because they are ignorant of the true God.[138] By contrast, Christians—

all Christians—participate in "spiritual worship," that is, worship of the true God and so

are distinguished from pagans and Jews.[139] Dunderberg also argues that the "nature"

implied by the royal official's son is nowhere described by Heracleon as "psychic" and so

should not be distinguished from the pneumatic nature symbolized by the Samaritan

woman.[140]

While Dunderberg is correct to show that Heracleon uses *The Preaching of Peter*

and the story of the Samaritan woman to criticize pagan and Jewish forms of worship,

there is not enough evidence that links the categories of pneumatic, psychic, and hylic to

the worship practice of Christians, Jews, and pagans respectively. It is true that *The*

Preaching of Peter uses the phrase "material things" (τὰ τῆς ὕλης πράγματα) in reference

to pagan worship, but Heracleon does not categorize Jewish worship as psychic. So while

Heracleon does distinguish three kinds of worship in the fragments, and he does

distinguish three kinds of humanity, these categorizations are not mapped onto one

another.

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[138] Heracleon appears to quote *The Preaching of Peter* as follows "We must not worship as the Gentiles do, for they accept material things and serve wood and stones, nor must we worship God as the Jews do, since they too, although they think that they alone know God, are ignorant of him and serve angels, the month, and the moon." μὴ δεῖν καθ' Ἕλληνας προσκυνεῖν, τὰ τῆς ὕλης πράγματα ἀποδεχομένους καὶ λατρεύοντας ξύλοις καὶ λίθοις, μήτε κατὰ Ἰουδαίους σέβειν τὸ θεῖον, ἐπείπερ καὶ αὐτοὶ μόνοι οἰόμενοι ἐπίστασθαι θεὸν ἀγνοοῦσιν αὐτόν, λατρεύοντες ἀγγέλοις καὶ μηνὶ καὶ σελήνῃ. (frg. 21 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.104 [SC 222:86]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 89.

[139] Dunderberg, 142.

[140] Ibid., 144.

Another problem with Dunderberg's interpretation is that he does not take the contrasts between the Samaritan woman and the royal official's son seriously enough. In addition to the contrast between the Samaritan woman as symbolic of an "incorruptible" (ἄφθαρτον) nature and the royal official's son having a nature that may be put to death (θανατωθῆναι), Heracleon also characterizes the *means* of their salvation differently.[141] It is true that both the Samaritan woman and the royal official's son were in some way ignorant (ἄγνοια).[142] However, the Samaritan woman has a nature that moves beyond ignorance simply by an unhesitating faith, whereas the royal official's son has a nature "that is determined by works and who is persuaded by sense perception and does not believe the word."[143] Furthermore, Heracleon characterizes the healing of the royal official's son by ethical overtones that are not present in the discussion of the Samaritan woman. The continued life of the royal official's son is understood to mean that he is "behaving properly and fittingly."[144] There is sufficient contrast in Heracleon's exegesis of these two stories to grant Pagels's claim, contra Dunderberg, that Heracleon's distinction between pneumatics and psychics is in fact a distinction between two kinds of people; the former are by nature elected to salvation and the latter attains salvation based on something other than their nature.

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[141] frg. 37 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.341 (SC 222: 222); frg. 40 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.420 (SC 222:264).

[142] frg. 19 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.92 (SC 222:78); frg. 40 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.416 (SC 222:262).

[143] δι' ἔργων φύσιν ἔχον καὶ δι' αἰσθήσεως πείθεσθαι καὶ οὐχὶ λόγῳ πιστεύειν. (frg. 40 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.419 [SC 222:264]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 158.

[144] οἰκείως καὶ κατὰ τρόπον ἔχει. (frg. 40 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.423 [SC 222:266]) ET Ibid.

Following Pagels's reading of Heracleon, Heracleon's structure of the self involves hylic, psychic, and pneumatic resources. Yet, these resources do not apply to all "selves." The hylics are apparently without psychic or pneumatic natures, the psychics are apparently without a pneumatic nature, and the psychics and pneumatics apparently do not have a hylic nature as a part of their true self. [145] In other words, humanity contains hylic, psychic, and pneumatic resources, but an individual self has only a hylic, psychic, or pneumatic nature. What schema organizes these resources in Heracleon's exegetical practice?

The schema organizing the resources of the self in Heracleon's exegesis is a schema of diverse origins. Take the pneumatic and psychic natures as examples. When Heracleon discusses the nature of the pneumatic, he is concerned to show that their origin is "above" the origin of the Demiurge. The origin of the pneumatics in the Pleroma accounts for their ontological distinction from the psychics (and the hylics for that matter.) Heracleon interprets John 1:4 in light of the Valentinian myth to suggest that the Logos "furnished their first form at their origin."[146] Because the pneumatics have their origin in the Logos, rather than the Demiurge, Heracleon claims that they are of the same essence (ὁμοούσιος) as the Father because they, like the Father, are spirit.[147]

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[145] This is not to say that Heracleon believed the pneumatics and psychics to be disembodied souls and spirits floating about the earth, but that their bodies were not apart of what he would have understood as their true selves.

[146] τὴν πρώτην μόρφωσιν τὴν κατὰ τὴν γένεσιν αὐτοῖς παρέσχε. (frg. 2 in Comm. Jo. 2.137) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 131. The antecedent of the pronoun in this citation is in the previous line: τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς πνευματικούς.

[147] frg. 24 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.148 (SC 222:110, 112)

The psychics, by contrast, do not have their origin in the Logos but take their nature from the Demiurge.[148] For this reason the salvation of the psychics is not a result of what they are by their nature. In fragment 46 Heracleon explains the way that the psychics attain salvation. He begins by pointing out that Jesus's words in John 8:44 ("You are of your father the devil") are not addressed to "earthly people" (χοικοὺς), but to psychics "who become (γινοένοους) sons of the devil by adoption (θέσει)."[149] The verb here implies a dynamic process that Heracleon describes as adoption. This process of becoming a child of the devil by adoption involves becoming a "son" by choice. To become a son by choice means that one does "the will of another by his own choice."[150] Heracleon concludes, "These are now children of the devil…because they became like the devil by doing his works."[151] The implication is that psychics may become children of the Father of the Savior by doing *his* works. The pneumatics are poised between two adoptions: one to become a child of the devil, the other to become a child of the Father of the Savior. In either case adoption is achieved by doing different kinds of works.

[148] Recall that in fragment 40 the royal official was interpreted as the Demiurge and his son as a psychic Christian. Pagels summarizes Heracleon's use of the generation metaphor in his commentary on John 8 with regard to the three classes of humanity, "Heracleon refers each type of response to the generation of the respondents from three different 'fathers'—the devil (cf Jn 8:44), the demiurge ('Abraham,' in Jn 8:33 f) and the 'Father of the Savior' (Jn 8:18 f)." Pagels, 100.

[149] frg. 46 in *Comm. Jo*. 20.213 (SC 290:260, 262) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 250.

[150] τὸ θέλημά τις ποιῶν τινος διὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γνώμην (frg. 46 in *Comm. Jo*. 20.215 [SC 290:262]) ET Ibid., 250-251.

[151] τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου νῦν…ὅτι τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου ποιοῦντες ὡμοιώθησαν αὐτῷ ⸤frg. 46 in *Comm. Jo*. 20.218 [SC 290:264]) ET Ibid.

Heracleon's structure of the self is composed of hylic, psychic, and pneumatic natures as resources organized by a schema of diverse origins based in the Valentinian myth. This structure of the self was reproduced in the practice of the Valentinian school. In the first chapter of this dissertation, practice was defined as "a routinized type of behavior,"[152] and I mentioned above that Valentinians formed separate study groups to supplement their activity in larger church meetings. This practice in itself would contribute to one's experience as a pneumatic self as distinct from a psychic self by being set apart from a larger community. Those participating in such study groups would begin to forge common identities around their activities together that set them apart form those who did not participate.

In addition to the practice of forming study groups, there is a ritual that Valentinians may have practiced called *apolytrosis*. This ritual is not mentioned by Heracleon, but it is discussed by Irenaeus as well as other Valentinian sources.[153] Although Irenaeus discusses this ritual in the context of Marcosian Valentinianism, Pagels—and more recently Nicola Denzey Lewis—have argued that some version of this ritual was practiced widely in Valentinian schools.[154]According to Irenaeus's account this

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[152] Reckwitz, 80.

[153] Irenaeus *Haer*. 1.21.5; *Tripartite Tractate* 117.23-25 and 123.4-125.25; *Gospel of Philip*. Lewis has shown that Irenaeus's account contains a number of identical formulae with The Apocalypse of James suggesting that each of these were drawing on a common source, and, more importantly, that Irenaeus has not distorted that source to his own ends. Lewis: 544-545.

[154] Ibid.: 527; Pagels, 60-65.For both Pagels and Lewis the fixed form of formulae related to this ritual found in diverse texts is evidence that the ritual was wide spread among Valentinians. This fact may help explain why Epiphanius erroneously attributes one of these formulae to Heracleon in *Pan*. 36.2-6.

ritual was practiced when one was near death. Before dying, the ritual participant was anointed with water (another baptism?) and oil (chrism) before repeating a formula that was whispered into his ear by an officiant.[155] Key elements of this formula are sonship, a distinction between what is alien and what is one's own, and a return to one's source. All of these are themes found in Heracleon's fragments. According to Irenaeus this ritual practice was intended to let the participant's true self, the pneumatic nature, escape the realm of the cosmos and return to its origin in the Pleroma. The *Tripartite Tractate* also describes *apolytrosis* as "an assent [to] the degrees which are in the Pleroma…"[156] The *Gospel of Philip* also contains references to a ritual called *apolytrosis* among other sacraments. It does not give a lot of details, but it does suggest that a ritual such as that described by Irenaeus was practiced more widely than just among the Marcosian Valentinians.

Clifford Geertz famously observed that "in a ritual, the world as lived and the world as imagined, fused under the agency of a single set of symbolic forms, turn out to

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[155] According to Irenaeus, the first part of the liturgy was as follows: "I am a son (υἱὸς) from the Father—the pre-existing father and a son in him who is pre-existent. I have come to see all things, both those things which are alien (τὰ ἀλλότρια) and those which are my own (τὰ ἴδια)… for I myself derive from the race (τὸ γένος) of the pre-existent, and I venture again to my own (τὰ ἴδια) [place] when I came." *Haer.* 1.21.5; ET Lewis: 529.

[156] *Tri. Trac.* 124.13-15 ET Harold W. Attridge and Dieter Mueller trans., Tripartite Tractate pp. 60-103 in The Nag Hammadi Library (ed. James M. Robinson; San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990), 97. It is possible that *apolytorsis* here simply means redemption generically and not a ritual specifically, but Lewis has pointed out that in the Tripartite Tractate the term is used in a ritual context and concludes, "The reference to baptism as *apolytrosis*, as well as the language of *apolytrosis* as an ascent and return to the Pleroma, indicate that for the author of the *Tri. Trac.*, redemption may have found concrete ritual expression in his community." Ibid.: 547.

be the same world."[157] In this case the world as lived is fused with a world where the

Valentinian's true self, the pneumatic nature, comes from and returns to the divine

Pleroma. The practice of this ritual among Valentinians was a concrete expression of the

origin and anticipated return of the pneumatic nature to the Pleroma, or as Lewis puts it,

"Deathbed baptism and chrism together made sense as a ritual practice, since the act

brought direct benefits to the eternal components of the human being."[158] Heracleon's

structure of the self would have found specific expression and reproduction anytime one

participated or observed this particular ritual. There is a structure of the self that informs

and is constructed by Heracleon's exegetical practice and in the practices of the

Valentinian school. This structure has the pneumatic, psychic, and hylic as its resources

that are organized according to a mental schema of origin deriving from the Valentinian

myth.

Irenaeus

A number of Irenaeus's texts are still extant and Eusebius has preserved several

traditions about him; therefore more is known about Irenaeus than most other Christian

figures in the second century.[159] Irenaeus began his life in Asia Minor where he was

acquainted with the aging Polycarp of Smyrna. This relationship was important to

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[157] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 112.

[158] Lewis: 555.

[159] The two major texts that have survived are *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching* and *Against Heresies*. The former has survived in an Armenian version while the latter has survived primarily in the Latin with a few Greek fragments. Eusebius has also preserved two of Irenaeus's letters: *epistula ad Florinum* (*Hist. eccl*. 5.20.4-8) and *epistula ad Victorem* (*Hist. eccl*. 5.24.12-17).

Irenaeus because it shaped the way he understood Christianity. Upon leaving Asia Minor,

Irenaeus became active in Christian communities in Rome and Lyons. He was made

bishop of Lyons c. 177 CE after his predecessor and many Christians in that region were

martyred in a gruesome persecution. Irenaeus involved himself in the Quartodeciman

controversy by asking Victor, the bishop of Rome, to be open to the alternative liturgical

calendar that was practiced in the east. It appears from Irenaeus's writings that he had

some formal training in rhetoric, but not philosophy.[160] This level of education suggests

that Irenaeus would have been familiar with the Greek literary tradition as well as the

methods used to interpret that tradition.[161]

Irenaeus's magnum opus is known by the title of its Latin translation *Adversus*

haeresis, but its original Greek title was ἔλεγχος καὶ ἀνατροπή τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνῶσεως

(Exposure and Refutation of False Knowledge).[162] This title reveals the purpose of this

work: Irenaeus attacks what he considers illegitimate knowledge.[163] *Against Heresies*

intends to legitimize one particular discourse by placing it "in the true" and to

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[160] Eric Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 8;
Jared Secord, "The Cultural Geography of a Greek Christian," in *Irenaeus: Life,
Scripture, Legacy*, ed. Sara Parvis and Paul Foster (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012),
29.

[161] Irenaeus demonstrates a basic working knowledge of Thales, Homer, Anaximander,
Anaxagoras, Democritus, Epicurus, Plato, Empedocles, Hesiod, Aristotle, and Pythagoras
in *Haer*. 2.14 where he attempts to show that the Valentinians derived their system from
pagan authors.

[162] Eusebius provides the Greek title of this work in *Hist. eccl.* 5.7.1. This title contains a
reference to 1 Tim. 6:20.

[163] I use the adjective "illegitimate" here because it captures the meaning of Irenaeus's
intention. As we will see, the problem with the knowledge that he attacks in this treatise
is that it has the "wrong parents" so to speak.

delegitimize another particular discourse by placing it "outside of the true." When

Irenaeus speaks of "false knowledge" he is primarily referring to the Valentinians.[164] But

it is not the Valentinians who are Irenaeus's intended audience; rather, Irenaeus is writing

to those who may be interested in Valentinianism or those who wish to argue against the

Valentinians. Irenaeus did not view this as just a local audience, instead he intended this

treatise to circulate beyond Lyons. Robert Grant suggests that had Irenaeus intended

Against Heresies to circulate locally he would not have needed to list the bishops of

Rome in *Against Heresies* 3.3.3.[165] With these basic observations in mind, in the

following pages I will describe Irenaeus's structure of scripture by outlining its resources

and schema. Then I will discuss some the practices evident in *Against Heresies* that are

employed to bring those resources and that schema together as a structure. After the

discussion of Irenaeus's structure of scripture is complete I will discuss his structure of

self in the same way: outlining resources and its schema and discussing the practices used

to bring those elements together into a structure.

<p align="center">The Structure of Scripture in Irenaeus's Against Heresies</p>

The examination of Irenaeus's structure of scripture, just like the examination of

Heracleon's, asks three questions: What are the resources of scripture according to

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[164] Elaine Pagels, "Irenaeus, the 'Canon of Truth,' and the Gospel of John: 'Making a Difference' through Hermeneutics and Ritual," *Vigiliae Christianae* 56, no. 4 (2002): 346. It can become easy to lose focus of this fact because Irenaeus often refers to many different individuals and groups. Irenaeus highlights the diversity of his opponents as a way to discredit their teachings. He contrasts the unity of belief found among what he believes to be the true church with the diversity of belief found outside of that church.

[165] Robert M. Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (London: Routledge, 1997), 6.

Irenaeus? What schema organizes those resources? How are these resources and schemas paired together in Irenaeus's exegetical practice?

From the perspective of the modern scholar familiar with the Christian bible, Irenaeus's scriptural resources appear traditional. Irenaeus often uses the term γραφή or its Latin equivalent (*scriptura*) in reference to the LXX, the gospels, Paul's epistles, Revelation and even *The Shepherd of Hermas* and *I Clement.*[166] Irenaeus makes constant use of the LXX against his opponents. For example, Irenaeus quotes Psalm 32 [33]:6 to support his point that God created all things through his Word. He introduces the quotation with the phrase *quemadmodum scriptura dicit.*[167] The LXX is a scriptural resource not just in virtue of the texts it contained but also in virtue of the fact that it was written in the Greek language.[168] When Irenaeus discusses Isaiah 7:14 he gives a defense of the LXX against the Hebrew and other Greek versions of the same text. This passage

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[166] For a listing of the passages in *Against Heresies* where Irenaeus uses γραφή or equivalent terms see M.C. Steenberg, "Irenaeus on Scripture, *Graphe*, and the Status of *Hermas*," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (2009). Steenberg concludes, "It is clear from the above that Irenaeus's use of the term γραφή is overwhelmingly as a reference to scripture or texts that he considers of scriptural merit. He occasionally refers to scriptural passages by other means (τὰ εἰρημενα, τὸ λεγόμενον, dicta), but these are most often in reference to particular phrases or sayings (e.g. "the sayings of the apostles"), as the terms themselves suggest." Steenberg: 51.

[167] *Haer.*1.22.1 This example could be multiplied. Irenaeus also identifies the following texts from the LXX as scripture: Genesis (*Haer.* 2.2.5; 3.6.1; 4.16.1; 4.40.3; 5.5.1; 5.15.4; 5.16.1; 5.20.2), Exodus (*Haer.* 4.30.2), Deuteronomy (*Haer.* 4.16.4), Jonah (*Haer.* 3.20.1), and Daniel (*Haer.* 5.5.2). The disproportionate amount of references to Genesis is probably due to Irenaeus's polemic against the Valentinians for whom Genesis was an important proof text. The references here by no means exhaust Irenaeus's use of the LXX, but these are instances where texts from the LXX are explicitly called γραφή or *scriptura*.

[168] Grant goes so far as to say that "The idea that the canon should be confined to Hebrew books never occurred to [Irenaeus]." Grant, 52.

was, of course, a famous proof text for Christians because the LXX contains the word

παρθένος. Irenaeus believed that this was a prophecy of Christ's virgin birth as recorded

in Matthew and Luke.[169]

The gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are also an important part of

Irenaeus's scriptural resources. He calls the gospels scripture and links each of them with

a particular apostle.[170] But equally important is Irenaeus's instance that there must be *four*

gospels, no more, no less:

> It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they
> are. For, since there are four zones of the world in which we live, and four
> principle winds, while the Church is scattered throughout all the world, and the
> pillar and ground of the Church is the Gospel and the spirit of life; it is fitting that
> she should have four pillars, breathing out immortality one every side, and
> vivifying men afresh.[171]

Irenaeus's understanding of a four-fold gospel tradition reveals a connection in his mind

between scriptural resources and the fabric of the cosmos. Scripture and the natural world

are both part of a greater whole. A connection to ecclesiology is also explicit in the above

quotation: four gospels provide the firmest foundation for the church.[172]

Irenaeus also included the Pauline epistles among his scriptural resources. *Against*

Heresies. 3.7 is indicative of Irenaeus's view of these epistles as scripture. In this passage

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[169] *Haer.* 3.21

[170] *Haer.* 3.1.1

[171] *Haer.* 3.11.8 (ANF 1:428)

[172] Irenaeus's insistence on a fourfold gospel tradition is a polemic against two fronts. On
the one hand, he resists the tendency of some Valentinians and others who had additional
gospels such as *The Gospel of Truth*. On the other hand, he resists the tendency of other
Christian groups to only use one of the gospels or a harmony of the gospels such as
Tatian's *Diatessaron*.

Irenaeus does not call Paul's epistles γραφή, but he does claim that Paul was inspired by

God by mentioning "the impetus of the Spirit which is in him."[173] He goes on to discuss 2

Corinthians, Galatians, and 2 Thessalonians.[174] The Acts of the Apostles and the book of

Revelation are among Irenaeus's scriptural resources. He introduces a passage from Acts

with "as the scripture says" in *Against Heresies*. 3.12.5 and he discusses the "number of

the antichrist" in Revelation claiming that it is "declared in scripture" in *Against

Heresies*. 5.30.2.[175]

The Shepherd of Hermas* is also included among Irenaeus's scriptural resources.

In an argument intended to prove that God, and not the Demiurge, is the creator, Irenaeus

writes, "Truly, then, has scripture declared, which says, 'First, of all believe that there is

one God, who has established all things and completed them, and having caused that

from what had no being, all things should come into existence'."[176] The text that Irenaeus

is quoting *as scripture* here is *Shepherd of Hermas* 26:1.[177] It is also possible that

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[173] *Haer.* 3.7.2

[174] In the context of this passage Irenaeus is making an argument about Pauline style, namely, his "transposition of words" in 2 Corinthians 4:5. Galatians and 2 Thessalonians are used by Irenaeus to establish patterns in Paul's style. This is evidence that Irenaeus uses Pauline epistles as a whole.

[175] *a Scriptura annuntiatus est* (SC 153:376).

[176] *Bene igitur scriptura quae dicit Primo omnium crede quonaim unus Deus, qui omnia constituit et consummavit et fecit ex eo quod non erat ut essent omnia, omnium capax et qui a nemine capiatur.* (*Haer*. 4.20.2 [SC 100:628]) ET ANF 1:488. The beginning of this quotation is alo preserved in a fragment from Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8.7: Καλῶς οὖν ἡ γραφὴ ἡ λέγουσα Πρῶτον πάντων πίστευσον ὅτι εις ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς ὁ τὰ πάντα κτίσας καὶ καταρτίσας (SC 100:628).

[177] Robert Grant claims that the term γραφή (scriptura) in this context does not mean "scripture" but "writing." Grant does not seem to make an argument for this claim but

Irenaeus refers to *1 Clement* as scripture. In *Against Heresies*. 3.3.3 when Irenaeus is

listing the succession on Roman bishops he reaches Clement and elaborates on his letter

to the Corinthians. He refers to that letter by the phrase *ipsa scriptura* suggesting that it

might be scripture in his mind.[178] In summary there is a body of texts called scripture in

Irenaeus that is similar to what would become the Christian canon much later.[179] In fact,

Irenaeus even goes so far as to speak of "two testaments" when he thinks about scripture

as a whole.[180]

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merely says in a footnote, "Clement of Alexandria, who knew Irenaeus's work, clearly referred to *1 Clement* and *Hermas* as 'scripture,' but this proves nothing for Irenaeus himself." Grant, 192 n.46. I presume that implied in Grant's claim is that Irenaeus does not link the *Shepherd* to an apostolic authority has he does other early Christian literature. By contrast Steenberg has rightly argued that when Irenaeus uses γραφή (scriptura) as a description of the *Shepherd* he actually means "scripture." The main reason that Steenberg is confident about this is Irenaeus's unqualified use of the term, "To say simply 'the writing declares' without further qualification, as we see done here, is to refer to the writing of what Irenaeus considers the sacred corpus in its Christian embrace." Steenberg: 62.We may also note that Eusebius also understands Irenaeus to mean "scripture" here. He comments, "And he [Irenaeus] not only knew but also received (ἀποδέχται) the writing of the Shepherd." (Eusebius, *Hist eccl*. 5.8.7 [Lake, LCL])

[178] I am less certain that Irenaeus counted *1 Clement* among his scriptural resources as I am about *The Shepherd of Hermas*. On the one hand, he does use the term *scriptura* in an unqualified way (that is, to distinguish it from his writing or the writing of an opponent). This would suggest that scriptura ought to be understood as "scripture" and not simply "writing." On the other hand, Irenaeus keeps *1 Clement* connected to a specific historical context and does not quote from it. Perhaps the most one can say is that *1 Clement* may be counted among Irenaeus's scriptural resources. Either way, nothing in my argument about how scripture is a structure containing resources and a schema paired by practice is undermined by the status of *1 Clement*.

[179] Osborn is representative of a majority scholarly opinion when he concludes, "Irenaeus does not supply a list which anticipates fourth-century definitions of the canon, but his defense of the four Gospels, and his intensive use of John and Paul, represent an important stage of its development." Osborn, 180.

[180] *Haer*. 4.9.1 and 4.32.1

Identifying Irenaeus's scriptural resources only gives half of his structure of

scripture; a scriptural schema makes up the other half. In book one of *Against Heresies*

Irenaeus complains that the Valentinians have complete disregard for how scripture ought

to be interpreted. He uses the image of a mosaic to illustrate what he believes his

opponents have done wrong:

> Their manner of acting is just as if one, when a beautiful image of a king has been constructed by some skilful artist out of precious jewels, should then take this likeness of the man all to pieces, should rearrange the gems, and so fit them together as to make them into the form of a dog or of a fox, and even that but poorly executed; and should then maintain and declare that this was the beautiful image of the king which the skilful artist constructed, … [and] should deceive the ignorant who had no conception what a king's form was like, and persuade them that that miserable likeness of the fox was, in fact, the beautiful image of the king.[181]

Three important observations may be made about this passage. First, the mosaic is a

useful image in understanding the model of scripture as structure that I have been using

in this dissertation. The mosaic is a combination of resources (the jewels) that have been

arranged according to a schema (a king or a fox). Second, Irenaeus's objection to the

Valentinians is not the scriptural resources they use; it is the schema that they pair with

those resources. He later distinguishes the Valentinians from Marcion's followers by

complaining that the Valentinians "inflated with the false name of 'knowledge,' do

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[181] Ὅνπερ τρόπον εἴ τις, βασιλέως εἰκόνος καλῆς κατεσκευασμένης ἐπιμελῶς ἐκ ψηφίδων ἐπισήμων ὑπό σοφοῦ τεχνίτου, λύσας τὴν ὑποκειμένην τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἰδέαν, μετενέγκοι τὰς ψηφῖδας ἐκείνας καὶ μεθαρμόσοι καὶ ποιήσοι μορφὴν κυνὸς ἢ ἀλώπεκος καὶ ταύτην φαύλως κατεσκευασμένην, ἔπειτα διορίζοιτο καὶ λέγοι ταύτην εἶναι τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐκείνην εἰκόνα τὴν καλήν, ἣν ὁ σοφὸς τεχνίτης κατεσκεύασεν…μεθοδεύοι τοὺς ἀπειροτέρους τοὺς κατάληψιν βασιλικῆς μορφῆς οὐκ ἔχοντας καὶ πείθοι ὅτι αὕτη ἡ σαπρὰ τῆς ἀλώπεκος ἰδέα ἐκείνη ἐστὶν ἡ καλὴ τοῦ βασιλέως εἰκών. (*Haer*. 1.8.1 [SC 264:114, 116]) ET ANF 1:326.

certainly recognize the Scriptures; but they pervert the interpretations…"[182] Third,

Irenaeus believes that one use of scriptural resources is preferable to another use of those

same resources, but by using this image he inadvertently implies that the standard of

preference is not inherent within the resources themselves; it is external to them. There is

nothing about a collection of jewels that dictates into what image it can or cannot be

arranged.

For Irenaeus that standard, the schema he pairs with scriptural resources in his

construction of scripture, is the Rule of Faith (*regula fidei*).[183] The notion of a canon

(κανών, *regula*) or criteria (κριτήριον, *norma*) as a means to discover the truth has a long

history in Hellenistic philosophy.[184] In order to judge (κρίνω) whether a statement is true

or false one must have a standard by which a judgment can be made. But for Irenaeus the

Rule of Faith is not just the means by which a true statement about the Christian faith is

distinguished from a false one, it is a part of his structure of scripture.

Irenaeus's most explicit statement of the Rule of Faith comes in *Against Heresies*

1.10.1. The statement reads like a proto-Trinitarian creed in so far as Irenaeus stresses

that the church believes in a God who created all things, a Son of God who "became

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[182] *Haer*. 3.12.12 (ANF 1:434-435)

[183] Rowan Greer provides a very helpful discussion of how Irenaeus used the Rule of Faith to organize biblical texts into a "coherent pattern." J. Kugel and R. Greer, *Early Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 156. I agree with Greer's analysis of Irenaeus's use of the Rule of Faith, but I do not think he goes far enough, it is not simply a means by which scripture is interpreted, it is a part of Irenaeus's scripture itself.

[184] Eric Osborn, "Reason and the Rule of Faith in the Second Century A.D.," in *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, ed. Rowan Williams (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 40-42.

incarnate for our salvation" and a Holy Spirit who has revealed God's activity to

humanity.[185] But Irenaeus's Rule of Faith contains more as well. He speaks of Jesus's

virgin birth, resurrection, ascension, and future role as a judge; punishment for angels

who have become wicked and people who are unrighteous; immortally for those who are

holy and keep God's commandments. Irenaeus is the first Christian theologian to

articulate a precise Rule of Faith of this kind.[186] But Irenaeus's Rule of Faith is not just a

list of doctrines he believes to be true. Underlying his rule of faith is a particular

narrative.[187] He begins with a statement about God as creator and ends with a statement

about the "everlasting glory" that will surround the righteous, but the underlying

narrative is most clearly seen in his statement concerning the Holy Spirit who:

> proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and
> the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and
> the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and
> His [future] manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father to gather all
> things in one, and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race, in order that
> to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, according to the will

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[185] *Haer.* 1.10.1. Paul Hartog maintains correctly that even when the Rule of Faith is expressed in Trinitarian forms it remains christocentric insofar as articles concerning Jesus are placed as a centerpiece. Paul Hartog, "The 'Rule of Faith' and Patristic Biblical Exegesis," *Trinity Journal* 28, no. 1 (2007): 74. Robert Wall makes a similar claim when he says, "In my judgment the church's Rule of Faith is narrative in shape, Trinitarian in substance, and relates the essential beliefs of Christianity together by the grammar of Christological monotheism." Robert Wall, "Reading the Bible from within Our Traditions: The Rule of Faith in Theological Hermeneutics," in *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies and Systematic Theology*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 101. Emphasis mine.

[186] Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 145.

[187] Hartog prefers to use the term "meta-narrative" because the Rule of Faith is used to organize a number of discrete biblical narratives into a coherent whole. "The single meta-narrative of the *regula fidei* provides an underlying dramatic coherence and unitive plot to the diverse and heterogeneous Scriptural witness." Hartog: 71.

of the invisible Father, "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess" to Him, and that He should execute just judgment towards all.[188]

The basic narrative that Irenaeus uses as the Rule of Faith begins with a creator God who made his plans known to humanity through the prophets that he was going to send Christ Jesus to die and be resurrected from the dead before returning to his place in heaven, after which he will come and judge humanity.

This narrative shapes Irenaeus's interpretation of scripture similarly to the way a *hypothesis* would be used by other ancient authors to interpret a classic text. Robert Grant defines a *hypothesis* in this sense as "the presentation (sometimes in a summary) of a plot structure intended by an author such as Homer."[189] Irenaeus is well aware of how a *hypothesis* was supposed to work in the interpretation of a text. He criticizes his opponents for their random collection and twisting of the contents of scripture by comparing them to those "who bring forward any kind of hypothesis they fancy, and then endeavor to support them out of the poems of Homer, so that the ignorant imagine that Homer actually composed the verses bearing upon that hypothesis, which has, in fact,

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[188] καὶ εἰς Πνεῦμα ἅγιον, τὸ διὰ τῶν προφητῶν κεκηρυχὸς τὰς οἰκονομίας, καὶ τὰς ἐλεύσεις, καὶ τὴν ἐκ Παρθένου γέννησιν, καὶ τὸ πάθος, καὶ τὴν ἔγερσιν ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ τὴν ἔνσαρκον εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἀνάληψιν τοῦ ἠγαπημένου Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν, καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ Πατρὸς παρουσίαν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα, καὶ ἀναστῆσαι πᾶσαν σάρκα πάσης ἀνθρωπότητος, ἵνα Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, καὶ Θεῷ, καὶ Σωτῆρι, καὶ Βασιλεῖ, κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ Πατρὸς τοῦ ἀοράτου, πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων, καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσηται αὐτῷ, καὶ κρίσιν δικαίαν ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι ποιήσηται. (*Haer*. 1.10.1 [SC264:155-157]) ET ANF 1:330.

[189] Grant, 47.

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been but newly constructed."[190] Irenaeus believes that scripture can only be properly understood when it is read in light of the Rule of Faith. I would further specify that the Rule of Faith is a *part* of Irenaeus's structure of scripture—a schema that has been paired with resources. Without the Rule of Faith Irenaeus does not have scripture, he only has a collection of discrete documents.

The Rule of Faith complements scriptural resources as a schema by being added to them by means of particular practices. These practices are most successful when they make the combination of resources and schemas appear to be natural. Throughout *Against Heresies* there is evidence of a number of such practices that pair Irenaeus's scriptural resources with the Rule of Faith. Perhaps the most important of these practices is the construction of a legitimating genealogy. Sara Parvis identifies the idea of apostolic succession as a "third mechanism," in addition to scripture and the Rule of Faith to make sure one has true knowledge.[191] Parvis is correct to stress the importance of apostolic succession in Irenaeus's thought, but it is not a third mechanism alongside what she calls scripture and the Rule of Faith, it is one of the means by which the Rule of Faith is

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[190] ὅμοια ποιοῦντες τοῖς ὑποθέσεις τὰς τυχούσας αὐτοῖς προβαλλομένοις, ἔπειτα πειρωμένοις ἐκ τῶν Ὁμήρου ποιημάτων μελετᾶν αὐτάς, ὥστε τοὺς ἀπειροτέρους δοκεῖν ἐπ' ἐκείνης τῆς ἐξ ὑπογυίου μεμελετημένης ὑποθέσεως Ὅμηρον τὰ ἔπη πεποιηκέναι. (*Haer*. 1.9.4 [SC 264:147]) ET ANF 1:330

[191] Sara Parvis, "Who Was Irenaeus? An Introduction to the Man and His Work," in *Irenaeus: Life, Scripture, Legacy*, ed. Paul Foster and Sara Parvis (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 21.We can compare these three mechanisms identified by Parvis with three standards for "right teaching" identified by Harnack, "…it directly follows that three standards are to be kept in view, viz., the apostolic doctrine, the apostolic canon of scripture, and the guarantee of apostolic authority, afforded by the organization of the Church, that is, by the episcopate, and traced back to the apostolic institution." Adolf von Harnack quoted in Osborn, "Reason and the Rule of Faith in the Second Century A.D.."

believed to be "in the true."[192] There is in Irenaeus an explicit connection between

apostolic succession and teaching authority. In book three Irenaeus argues that the

original apostles were unified in their teaching about Jesus, furthermore, their teaching

has been preserved without modification by those appointed by the apostles.[193] It is no

accident that Irenaeus reminds his readers that he had known Polycarp when they were

both in Asia Minor. "But Polycarp also was not only instructed by apostles, and

conversed with many who had seen Christ, but was also, by the apostles in Asia,

appointed bishop of the Church in Smyrna, whom I also saw in my early youth..."[194] By

connecting Polycarp to the apostles and then connecting himself to Polycarp, Irenaeus is

making a genealogical claim to his own authority and thus legitimizing his discourse

about what scripture really is. Irenaeus cautions his readers against those "who stand

apart from the primitive succession, and gather in any place whatsoever."[195] The idea of

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[192] It is important to note that the idea of apostolic succession was not just used to legitimate a scriptural schema; it was also used to legitimate scriptural resources. "Christians circulated information about the origins of their literature so that they could exclude alien books...from their collections" (Grant, 35.) However, since Irenaeus did not have significant disagreements with the Valentinians about scriptural resources, he used apostolic succession as a way of legitimating his scriptural schema against theirs.

[193] "In this order, and by this succession, the ecclesiastical tradition from the apostles, and the preaching of the truth, have come down to us. And this is most abundant proof that there is one and the same vivifying faith, which has been preserved in the Church from the apostles until now, and handed down in truth." (*Haer*. 3.3.3; ANF 1:416)

[194] *Haer*. 3.3.4 (ANF 1:416)

[195] *qui absistunt a principali successione et quocumque loco colligunt* (*Haer*. 4.26.2 (SC 100:718) ET ANF, 1:497. Pagels points out that Irenaeus expresses some anxiety in this section because he is aware that on the surface it can be difficult to distinguish between true and false teachers. Pagels, "Irenaeus, the 'Canon of Truth,' and the Gospel of John," 369. The reference to "any place whatsoever" is likely an attack on the private study groups or schools of the Valentinians.

apostolic succession links scriptural resources with the Rule of Faith by assigning a common origin to each of them. The appeal to apostolic succession as a means to legitimate the authority of one teacher over another—Irenaeus over his Valentinian opponents—is an exegetical practice used by Irenaeus in his construction of scripture because it legitimates his pairing of resources and schema.

Another exegetical practice utilized by Irenaeus in his construction of scripture is the employment of typology. David Dawson defines typology as "a mode of composition or interpretation that links together at least two temporally different historical events or persons because of an analogy they bear to one another."[196] Understood in this way typology is an exegetical practice that establishes a conceptual link between otherwise discrete texts. For early Christian interpreters it was a method whereby the "Old Testament" and "New Testament" could be placed in continuity allowing them to bear together the narrative of the Rule of Faith.[197] Irenaeus's exegetical warrant for typology

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[196] David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley: Univerisity of California Press, 1992), 15. Some modern interpreters have insisted on a distinction between typology on the one hand and allegory on the other; Jean Daniélou and R.P.C. Hanson are examples Daniélou; R.P.C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture* (Lousiville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002). The distinction is based on an historical correspondence that preserves the historicity of the texts. Other scholars, however, have rejected the distinction. See Frances Young, "Alexandrian and Antiochene Exegesis," in *A Hisoty of Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publsihing Company, 2003), 337. For an assessment of the scholarly iterature on allegory and typology see Peter Martens, "Revisiting the Allegory/Typology Distinction: The Case of Origen," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16, no. 3 (2008).I will discuss allegory in detail in chapter five.

[197] Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 184. Elaine Pagels calls historical typology "The hermeneutical correlate of the salvation-history perspective" Pagels, *The Johannine Gospel in Gnostic Exegesis: Heracleon's Commentary on John*, 45. I am aware of the

comes from John 5:46, where Jesus claims that Moses wrote about him; this suggests to

Irenaeus that passages from the LXX are Jesus's own words. "[Jesus] thus indicates in

the clearest possible manner that the writings of Moses are his words. If, then, [this be the

case with regard] to Moses, so also, beyond doubt, the words of the other prophets are

His [words]…"[198] Typology is an exegetical practice employed to make LXX texts

"about" Jesus and hence to include them into the story told by the Rule of Faith.[199]

Irenaeus is therefore able to speak about "two covenants" which are "of one and the same

substance, that is, from one and the same God…"[200] Typology is the means by which the

narrative of the Rule of Faith is able to bring these two covenants together into one

coherent whole.

The final practice by which Irenaeus pairs his scriptural resources together with

the Rule of Faith is baptism. Irenaeus does not provide many details about what the

practice of baptism actually looked like in second-century Lyons, but a brief comment on

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problems, both ethical and histroical, with the term "Old Testament." However, as this is a term used by many of the early Christian authors whom I will be discussing, I have decided to retain the term. I will place it within scare-quotes to indicate its problematic nature.

[198] *manifestissime significans Moysi litteras suos esse sermones. Ergo si Moysi, et reliquorum sine dubio et prophetarum sermones ipsius sunt.* (*Haer.* 4.2.3 [SC 100:400]) ET ANF 1:464.

[199] Pagels also points out the importance of the Gospel of John for Irenaeus's construction of scripture. She sees this construction proceeding in four conceptual steps: first, Irenaeus's restricts the sources of revelation. Second he argues for a fourfold gospel tradition which, third, includes the Gospel of John. The inclusion of John, fourth, opens up a new hermeneutic for reading the LXX. Pagels, "Irenaeus, the 'Canon of Truth,' and the Gospel of John," 359 ff.

[200] *Unius igitur et ejusdem substantiae sunt omnia, hoc est ab uno et eodem Deo…* (*Haer.* 4.9.1 [SC 100:476)] ET ANF 1:472.

1 Corinthians 6:11 indicates how Irenaeus viewed baptism, "'You have been washed',

believing in the name of the Lord, and receiving his Spirit."[201] Irenaeus's connection of

baptism with "believing in the name of the Lord" suggests that baptism entailed some

kind of confession. It is no coincidence then that Irenaeus's clearest statement about the

Rule of Faith in *Against Heresies.* 1.10.1 occurs in the context of baptism. Osborn argues

that the statement of the Rule of Faith found in this passage was a part of the baptismal

liturgy in Irenaeus's church.[202] Just before *Against Heresies.* 1.10.1 Irenaeus explicitly

connects the Rule of Faith with baptism by claiming that the one who follows the "rule of

truth, which he received by means of baptism" will interpret scriptural resources properly

and "he will certainly not receive the image of the fox instead of the likeness of the

king."[203] We do not know exactly what Irenaeus means by "receiving" the Rule of Faith

at baptism but it does suggest that baptism may have been the culmination of a

catechetical process in Irenaeus's church. Ferguson points out that since Irenaeus feels

compelled to explain why some new converts to Christianity were immediately baptized

in the narrative of Acts it is likely that baptism in Irenaeus's church entailed a period of

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[201] ἀπελούσασθε, πιστεύσαντες ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ λαβόντες αὐτοῦ τὸ Πνεῦμα (*Haer*. 5.11.2 [SC 153:139]) ET ANF 1:537.

[202] Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 148. Ferguson suggests that the association of Trinitarian statements with baptism may imply a triple immersion in water as a person was baptized. Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 304.

[203] τὸν κανόνα τῆς ἀληθείας…ὃν διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἴληφεν…ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀλώπεκα ἀντὶ τῆς βασιλικῆς εἰκόνος οὐ παραδέξεται. (*Haer*. 1.9.4 [SC264:150-151]) ET ANF 1:330. Irenaeus uses Rule of Faith and Rule of Truth interchangeably.

preparation.[204] Whatever such preparation included, a newly baptized person understood that the Rule of Faith was the only way to interpret scriptural resources.

<center>The Structure of the Self in Irenaeus's Against Heresies</center>

Here again, three questions are important: What are the resources of the self according to Irenaeus? What are the schemas by which those resources are organized and understood? How are these resources and schemas paired together by Irenaeus's exegetical practice?

Irenaeus's structure of the self was forged in the context of his polemic against his Valentinian opponents.[205] The most significant of the many differences between Irenaeus and the Valentinians in this regard is the former's insistence that the body is one of the resources of the self. That Irenaeus considers the body a part of the self distinguishes him not just from the Valentinians, but also from the Platonic tradition generally as well as some of the Alexandrian fathers specifically.[206] Most of Irenaeus's discussion of the self comes in the fifth book of Against Heresies where he is constructing an anthropology in opposition to that of the Valentinians. There he clearly lists the resources of the self:

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[204] Haer. 3.12. Ferguson, 303.

[205] Irenaeus's anthropology is far more dynamic and complex than what is suggested by the following discussion. My purpose here is to articulate the resources and the schema that form Irenaeus's structure of the self and the practice that pairs the two together. In recent years a number of studies have been published that deal with what is traditionally called Irenaeus's anthropology. The following pages are particularly indebted to John Behr, Asceticism and Anthropology in Irenaeus and Clement, Oxford Early Christian Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Osborn, Irenaeus of Lyons. Thomas Holsinger-Friesen, Irenaeus and Genesis: A Study in Early Christian Hermeneutics, Journal of Theological Interpretation Supplement (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009).

[206] Holsinger-Friesen, 119, 214. Osborn, Irenaeus of Lyons, 215.

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"For that flesh which has been moulded is not a perfect man in itself, but the body of a man, and *part of a man*. Neither is the soul itself, considered apart by itself, the man; but it is the soul of a man, and *part of a man*. Neither is the spirit a man, for it is called the spirit, and not a man; but the commingling and union of all these constitutes the perfect man."[207]

Thomas Holsinger-Friesen summarizes the most distinctive aspect of Irenaeus's claim about the self, "To be human is to be embodied."[208] This is the sort of claim that would have raised eyebrows among Irenaeus's contemporaries, especially the Valentinians. Irenaeus insists that the body is a part of the human self based on his interpretation of scripture, especially Genesis 2:7 which demonstrates "that God's care for the one human race involves his commitment to the physical body that he had formed from the dust."[209] Irenaeus develops his interpretation of Genesis 2:7 in order to make an argument against Valentinian exegesis of 1 Corinthians 15:50. In this passage Paul had said "flesh (σὰρξ) and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (NRSV). The Valentinians took this to mean that the body would not experience salvation. Irenaeus, however, argues that what Paul means is that the flesh alone, apart from the soul and spirit, cannot inherit the kingdom of God.[210] Rather, when the flesh is rightly subordinate to the soul and spirit, it is inherited by the kingdom of God.[211]

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[207] *Haer*. 5.6.1 (SC 153: 76,78) ET ANF 1:531.

[208] Holsinger-Friesen, 227.

[209] Ibid., 156.

[210] *Haer*. 5.9.3 (ANF 1:535).

[211] *Haer*. 5.9.4 (ANF 1:535).

The inclusion of soul among resources of the self would have been greeted with a yawn by most of Irenaeus's contemporaries.[212] The soul has two functions as a resource in Irenaeus's structure of the self. First, it is the animating principle for the body, and second, it is the source of reason for humanity. In the context of arguing that a group called the Ebionites have misunderstood passages about the soul Irenaeus says, "at the beginning of our formation in Adam, that breath of life which proceeded from God, having been united to what had been fashioned, animated the man, and manifested him as a being endowed with reason…"[213] Despite the soul's connection to rationality, John Behr has argued that "Irenaeus is not interested so much in the soul itself, as a principle of interiority, as in its animation of the flesh."[214] But although the soul does animate the body, Irenaeus is quick to point out that it does not have life inherently in itself.[215] Instead, the soul must get its "life" from the spirit.

The inclusion of spirit among Irenaeus's resources of the self is ambiguous. On the one hand, soul and body alone are insufficient to account for a living self because the soul does not inherently have the life that it imparts to the body.[216] Irenaeus claims:

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[212] Although many ancient philosophies treated the soul differently, nearly all considered the soul to be a part, if not the entirety, of the self. See chapter one.

[213] *Haer*. 5.1.3 (SC 153: 26) ANF 1:527.

[214] Behr, 91. Behr makes this point on the basis of *Haer*. 2.29.3 and 5.7.1. Irenaeus's emphasis on the soul's animation of the flesh as noted by Behr is likely due to the intimate connection that Irenaeus wants to draw between the soul and body in the context of his polemics against the Valentinians.

[215] *Haer*. 2.34.2-4 (ANF 1:411-12).

[216] Behr, 98.

Now the soul and the spirit are certainly a part of the man, but certainly not the man; for the perfect man consists in the commingling and the union of the soul receiving the spirit of the Father, and the admixture of that fleshly nature which was moulded after the image of God.[217]

Yet, on the other hand, when Irenaeus discusses the final destinations of those "who have been enrolled for life" and those "who are worthy of punishment" the former have their own bodies, souls, and spirits, whereas the latter have only their own bodies and souls.[218] Either those "who are worthy of punishment" no longer have all the resources of the self, or the spirit (possessed by those "who have been enrolled for life") is not actually a resource of the self. Since "the perfect man" has body, soul, *and spirit* one can conclude that Irenaeus counts spirit among the resources of the self.

Body, soul, and spirit are resources of the self that are organized and understood by Irenaeus according to a schema that I identify with the *imago dei*. Irenaeus's structure of the self—body, soul, spirit and their organization by the *imago dei*—is indebted to a reading of Genesis that unifies Genesis 1:26 and Genesis 2:7 as a holistic account of the creation of humanity.[219] Genesis 1:26 provided Irenaeus the idea of humanity being created in the "image (εἰκόνα) and likeness (ὁμοίωσιν)" of God whereas Genesis 2:7 provided Irenaeus the idea of humanity being "formed from the dust of the ground" and

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[217] *Haer*. 5.6.1 (SC 153:76) ET ANF 1:531.

[218] *Haer*. 2.33.5 (ANF 1:411). Behr concludes from this passage "So, the Spirit is vital to a proper appreciation of Irenaeus's understanding of the man. There is no 'complete' or 'perfect' man without the Spirit but the Spirit is not a 'part' of man; just as man does not live without participating in life, yet he does not have life in his own nature." Behr, 101.

[219] By reading these verses together as one creation account, Irenaeus does not differentiate himself from the Valentinians alone, but also from the Platonic Jewish exegete Philo and the Christian interpretive tradition that followed in the latter's footsteps. See Ibid., 87.

having "the breath of life." In *Against Heresies* 4.20.1 and 5.15.2-4 Irenaeus cites these two verses together to show that the God in whose image humanity is made is the *same* God who formed human bodies out of the dust: There is one God who creates and one creation of humanity.[220] This means that that the image and likeness of Genesis 1:26 is found in what God formed of the dust of the earth and what was breathed into it to make it a living being in Genesis 2:7. Osborn summarizes the correlation between these verses when he writes, "The image is plainly the body, and the likeness comes through the spirit."[221] It is because humanity is in the *imago dei* that the self contains a body, a soul, and a spirit.

But by using the *imago dei* as a schema to organize and understand the resources of the self and by insisting that the body is one of those resources, Irenaeus runs into a problem. If God is incorporeal how can something in God's image be corporeal? This problem is solved by Irenaeus by the application of his idea of recapitulation.[222] Recapitulation was a literary or rhetorical term indicating a "concluding summary" that

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[220] In the latter passage, *Haer*. 5.15.2-4, Irenaeus links Genesis 2:7 with John 9:6 where Jesus uses mud to heal a man born blind. Irenaeus uses the parallels between God's use of dust to create and Jesus's use of mud to heal to forge a connection between these passages and establish continuity between creation and salvation in the divine economy. "For, from the earth out of which the Lord formed eyes for that man, from the same earth it is evident that man was also fashioned at the beginning. For it were incompatible that the eyes should indeed be formed from one source and the rest of the body from another; as neither would it be compatible that one [being] fashioned the body, and another the eyes" [*Haer*. 5.15.4 (SC 153:210) ET ANF 1:543].

[221] Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 212. Osborn makes this statement on the basis of his reading of *Haer*. 5.6.1.

[222] The English term recapitulation is derived from the Latin *recapitulatio* that in turn translates the Greek term ἀνακεφαλαιωσις.

tied together all of the important elements of an argument or a narrative.[223] The Greek

term for recapitulation, ἀνακεφαλαιόω, also suggests a return to the beginning, source, or

head (κεφαλή). Irenaeus raises recapitulation from a literary context to a theological one

where it becomes a way of speaking about God's divine economy in the salvation of

creation. Osborn summarizes the theological function of recapitulation in Irenaeus's

thought by saying it does four different things: "It *corrects* and *perfects* mankind; it

inaugurates and *consummates* a new humanity."[224] According to Irenaeus, humanity is in

need of correction and perfection because Adam's disobedience has estranged humanity

from God. Because of this disobedience, humanity was not able to correct and perfect

itself. Irenaeus explains the solution:

> For as it was not possible that the man who had once for all been conquered, and
> who had been destroyed through disobedience, could reform himself, and obtain
> the prize of victory; and as it was also impossible that he could attain to salvation
> who had fallen under the power of sin,—the Son effected both these things, being
> the Word of God, descending from the Father, becoming incarnate, stooping low,
> even to death, and consummating the arranged plan of our salvation.[225]

Irenaeus's Christology points in two different directions: it points back toward Adam's

disobedience which must be corrected by obedience, but it also points forward to the

perfection which Christ will bring. For Christ to recapitulate the situation in this way

there must be, according Irenaeus, an analogy between Christ's own self and the human

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[223] Grant, 50-51.

[224] Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 97. Emphasis mine.

[225] *Haer*. 3.18.2 (ANF 1:446).

self; for this reason "the humanity of Christ is entire in body, soul, and spirit."[226] But it is

not that a body was added to Christ so that he may be analogous to humanity, rather,

according to Irenaeus, only in the incarnation was the *imago dei* most visible:

> For in times long past, it was said that man was created after the image of God,
> but it was not [actually] shown; for the Word was as yet invisible, after whose
> image man was created. Wherefore also he did easily lose the similitude. When,
> however, the Word of God became flesh, He confirmed both these: for He both
> showed forth the image truly, since He became Himself what was His image; and
> He re-established the similitude after a sure manner, by assimilating man to the
> invisible Father through means of the visible Word.[227]

This passage raises the question: why is it that the *imago dei* is most visible in the

incarnation? Behr explains this passage, "Irenaeus stressed that an image must have a

form, and a form can only exist in matter…But as God himself is immaterial…the

archetype of the image of God in man must be the incarnate Son of God."[228] In other

words, the Christology that is necessary for recapitulation is one where the *imago dei*

entails body as a central commonality between Christ and humanity. Osborn summarizes

the situation succinctly when he says, "The image of God is the body of the incarnate

Christ, which is the model of the first creation and the final perfection."[229] Irenaeus's

schema of the *imago dei,* informed as it is by recapitulation, demands that the self has just

these three resources: soul, spirit, and body. Irenaeus's structure of the self has body,

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[226] Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 111.See also Holsinger-Friesen who discusses the importance of Christ having a body for Irenaeus understanding of recapitulation. Holsinger-Friesen, 125.

[227] *Haer*. 5.16.2 (SC 153:216) ET ANF 1:544.

[228] Behr, 89. See also *Haer*. 5.6.1

[229] Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 214.

soul, and spirit for its resources that are paired with and organized by the schema the *imago dei*; all that remains to be seen is by what practice these resources and this schema are paired together and so become a structure.

The believer's participation in the eucharist is just that practice whereby the structure of the self is constructed and impresses itself on the participant as "in the true." Unfortunately, little is known about what eucharistic practice actually looked like for Irenaeus's church in Lyons.[230] Most scholars are now recognizing that the eucharist was not standardized in the early centuries of Christianity. There is a growing consensus that the eucharist began as a full meal but during the second century a transition was occurring where it was becoming the consumption of just a morsel of bread and a sip of wine.[231] There are, however, some general statements that can be made about the eucharist at Lyons in the second century. Evidence from Ignatius suggests that the eucharist was only to be offered by an authorized bishop.[232] Given Irenaeus's emphasis on apostolic succession it is likely that he would also have insisted that only a legitimated

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[230] Paul Bradshaw notes that most of the sources for Christian worship in Spain and Gaul come from the fourth and fifth centuries. All Irenaeus provides in this regard is a theological explanation of the eucharist. Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy*, Second ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 103.

[231] For a discussion of this transition see Paul F. Bradshaw and Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Eucharistic Liturgies: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2012), 25-59. Dennis E. Smith has also published an informative volume that discusses early Christian meal practice and its relationship to the eucharist. Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003).

[232] "Let that eucharsit be considered valid that occurs under the bishop or the one to whom he entrusts it." Ignatius, *Smyrn*. 8 (Ehrman, LCL)

bishop could offer the eucharist. Justin Martyr shows that the eucharist is not to be taken by the uninitiated.[233] Irenaeus also stresses the importance of the participant's attitude in taking the eucharist.[234] It is apparent from Irenaeus's discussion of the eucharist that the elements of bread and wine figure prominently.[235] Finally, for Irenaeus the eucharist involved some kind of invocation (ἐπίκλησις) whereby the bread was thought to be transformed in some way.[236]

Irenaeus makes explicit connections between the elements of the eucharist and the materiality of God's creation. In book four Irenaeus discusses the eucharist in the context of offerings that are given to God. It is only the church that makes a pure offering to God in the eucharist, "And the Church alone offers this pure oblation to the Creator, offering to Him, with giving of thanks, [things taken] from his creation."[237] It is important for Irenaeus that the elements involved in the eucharist are not just symbols of other realities, but their material nature is key to his understanding of this practice. The materiality of the elements is important because the bodily nature of Christ as savior is important. He

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[233] "We call this food the Eucharist, of which only he can partake who has acknowledged the truth of our teachings, who has been cleansed by baptism for the remission of his sins and for his regeneration, and who regulates his life upon the principles laid down by Christ." (Justin Martyr, *1 Apol.* 66; ET Thomas B. Falls, *Saint Justin Martyr*, The Fathers of the Church (New York: Christian Heritage, 1948), 105.

[234] *Haer.* 4.18.1.

[235] Irenaeus's most sustained discussion of the eucharist comes form *Haer.* 4.17-18 and 5.1-2.

[236] *Haer.* 4.18.5

[237] *Haer.* 4.18.4 (SC 100:606) ET ANF 1:485. Osborn comments, "attention to reality is present in the account of the Eucharist." Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 134.

specifically identifies the eucharist the "body of Christ."[238] He can say, therefore, "the

mingled cup and the manufactured bread receives the Word of God, and the Eucharist of

the body of Christ is made, from which the substance of our flesh is increased and

supported…"[239] The theological culmination of the eucharist is the nourishment if gives

to the participant because it is the body and blood of Christ.[240]

Irenaeus criticizes his opponents' practice of the eucharist on the basis of his own

eucharistic theology. Early in *Against Heresies* Irenaeus describes what he considers a

false eucharist practiced by a certain Marcus. He taunts that Marcus "pretends" to

consecrate cups of wine and that he offers an extended evocation to Charis to fill the

cups.[241] It is only later that Irenaeus makes it clear why his opponents cannot offer a true

eucharist: neither the Valentinians nor Ebionites can practice a eucharist rightly because

the former deny the bodily reality of Christ and the latter deny the spiritual reality; the

eucharist must acknowledge both of these aspects to be valid.[242] Irenaeus insists that an

authentic eucharist requires correct belief about the nature of Christ. He gives the

Valentinians an ultimatum: either they change their beliefs about the nature of the

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[238] *Haer*. 5.2.3 (SC 153:34) ET ANF 1:528. A Greek fragment of this section of *Haer*. is extant. The Greek reads σῶμα Χριστοῦ but the Latin reads *sanguinis et corporis Christi*. The Latin adds "blood." I have altered the translation from ANF to reflect this difference

[239] *Haer*. 5.2.3 (SC 153:34) ET ANF 1:528.

[240] *Haer*. 5.2.2

[241] *Haer*. 1.13.2. Charis is one of the aeons in the Pleroma in Marcus's theology.

[242] *Haer*. 5.1.2-3.

material world and the savior "or cease from offering the things just mentioned."[243] One

cannot *both* deny the bodily nature of Christ and the bodily salvation of the believer *and*

participate in a practice that is grounded in material and spiritual elements.

The way in which the practice of the eucharist pairs Irenaeus's resources of the

self and the schema by which they are organized emerges here. Participating in the

eucharist is an acknowledgement of the importance of the body—both Christ's and the

participant's—and its relationship to soul and spirit in the process of saving and being

saved. When a participant took the eucharist the "world imagined" and the "world lived"

become one in the same.[244] Participation in the eucharist was an embodied confession not

only that Christ had a body, but also that one's own self fundamentally entailed having a

body. After all, if the body were not a part of the self why would the eucharist be

conceived of as Christ's body nourishing the participant's body? The eucharist makes

sense as a practice because in it the resources of self are brought together with the *imago*

dei and the resources of the self must be organized according to the *imago dei* because if

not, the eucharist does not make sense; or as Irenaeus puts it, "But our opinion is in

accordance with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn establishes our opinion."[245] In

this line Irenaeus's structure of the self emerges most fully *as a structure*: it is structured

by and structures eucharistic practice.

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[243] *Haer*. 4.18.5 (SC 100:610) ET ANF 1:486. The "things just mentioned" is a reference
to the elements of the eucharist.

[244] Geertz, 112. See page 42 above.

[245] Haer. 4.18.5 (SC 100:610) ET ANF 1:486.

Conclusion

To speak meaningfully of scripture it is necessary to consider both the resources that compose scripture as well as the schemas by which those resources are organized and understood. Even though conclusions about Heracleon must remain tentative, there does not appear to be significant disagreement between him and Irenaeus about the *resources* of scripture;[246] yet, when they looked at those resources they saw very different things. The schemas they paired with those resources were very different from one another—so different, I conclude, that Heracleon and Irenaeus were using different scriptures. For Irenaeus, the Rule of Faith as a schema organized the meaning of scriptural resources in a particular way. By contrast, for Heracleon, the Valentinian Myth as a schema organized the meaning of scriptural resources in a different way. These two theologians may have been using the same tiles in their mosaic, but they ended up with different pictures. Yet, each had to engage in various exegetical practices to pair thir scriptural resources with their scriptural schemas.

The structure of the Christian self is also contested in the second century. Heracleon's self and Irenaeus's self are very different from one another. According to the former, the self is body, soul, *or* spirit, whereas for the latter the self is body, soul, *and* spirit. The disagreement about what resources are included in the self is directly related to the schema by which those resources are organized and understood. Heracleon organizes and understands the resources of the self according to a schema of diverse origins deriving from the Valentinian myth. Irenaeus organizes and understands the self

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[246] *The Preaching of Peter* may be an exception. I showed above that Heracleon quotes from this text in a fragment preserved by Origen. Irenaeus does not mention the text.

according to a schema of *imago dei*. Alternatively, one could summarize the difference

between the two schemas by saying that Heracleon is using a multiple-source schema and

Irenaeus is using a singular-source schema. But no matter what you call these different

schemas, they lead to different structures of the Christian self.

Finally, in Heracleon and Irenaeus there is not just a disagreement about scripture

and self, but also competing types of authority that are used to legitimate such structures.

Heracleon represents the authority of a philosopher in a philosophical school or a teacher

of a small study circle. His authority derived from the school context. By contrast,

Irenaeus represents the authority of the bishop whose authority is derived from the

ecclesial context. Indeed this difference of authority type became a rhetorical strategy

used by Irenaeus. Virginia Burrus summarizes this strategy, "heretics have teachers; the

orthodox have bishops…Heretics have free floating, and hence mutable, doctrines; the

orthodox have their tradition within an institutional context."[247] Debates between the

likes of Heracleon and Irenaeus then are not just about which resources to pair with

which schemas and by what practices, but about who gets to make those kinds of

decisions and what institutional practices allow them to do so.[248] The study of the

structures of scripture and self therefore is also a study of the production and use of

authority. As Christian history marched onward neither of these approaches became a

standard for Christian scripture or Christians self. Origen's structures of scripture and

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[247] Virginia Burrus, "Hierarchalization and Genderization of Leadership in the Writings of Irenaeus," *Studia Patristica* 21, no. (1989): 44.

[248] "Christian Leaders of the second and third centuries had to negotiate the relationship between teaching and formal clergy, between teacher-centered study circles and more formally constituted Christian communities, and between what they considered try and false versions of Christianity." Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 115.

self, the practices used to construct them, and the authority to legitimate those practices do not neatly fall in line with either Heracleon or Irenaeus. I turn now to Origen's structure of scripture.

CHAPTER THREE: STRUCTURING SCRIPTURE IN ORIGEN

Origen begins his work as an exegete with a stack of papyrus codices—one is the Gospel of John, another a Psalter, and still another an anthology of Paul's letters—but the end result is what he calls a "spiritual gospel": a story of the savior's descent into humanity so that he may bring humanity back into the contemplation of God. How does Origen get from start to finish? By what means does Origen see in his stack of codices such a story? What is the result of claiming that these codices contain this story? These questions concern the process of the becoming scripture of biblical texts in Origen's exegetical practice. According to the model of structure I have been using in this dissertation, it is necessary to know not only what resources and schemas form Origen's structure of scripture, but also the practices used to pair the two together into a coherent whole. Yet, even this is not sufficient. I must ask by what right or authority Origen uses these practices in his construction of scripture. These themes are the focus of this chapter: Origen's scriptural resources and schemas, the exegetical practices that pair them, and the authorization to employ such practices. I will demonstrate that Origen paired scriptural resources and schemas together into the structure of scripture by exegetical practices that he was authorized to use on account of his participation in Greco-Roman education.

This chapter begins, then, with an outline of Origen's structure of scripture including the resources and schemas that are component parts of that structure. Following this outline, I will discuss a number of exegetical practices necessary for Origen's

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construction of the structure of scripture: the practices of the Greco-Roman school and the bibliographic practices, both of which allowed Origen to emerge as an authoritative text-broker, as well as the practice of commentary and the practices of the grammarian by which Origen paired his scriptural resources and schemas together into a structure.

Origen's Structure of Scripture

Scripture, according to Origen, is composed of a broad range of resources—various texts and collections of texts—that are organized according to schemas of apostolic teaching and Christ's sojourn. In the following pages I will identify the texts that Origen includes among his scriptural resources. I will then discuss his scriptural schemas.

Scriptural Resources

My investigation begins with the question of what texts did Origen include among his scriptural resources. Fortunately, there are a few passages where Origen explicitly lists some of these texts: *Hom. Jes. Nav.* 7.1, *Comm. Jo.* 5.3 (=Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.7-10), *Frag. Ps.* (=Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.1-2), and *Frag. Matt.* (=Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.3-6).[249]

In *Hom Jes. Nav.* 7.1 Origen expounds on the story from the Book of Joshua where the Israelite priests have surrounded the walls of Jericho and blown their trumpets to make the walls of that city fall down. Origen says that the priests in this story represent

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[249] Notice that each of these passages is mediated through a later source. *Hom. Jes. Nav.* 7.1 is only available in Rufinus's fourth-century Latin translation and the rest of the passages are fragments found in Eusebius's fourth-century *Hist. eccl.* However, with a few minor exceptions to be noted below these passages are still helpful for understanding Origen's scriptural resources.

the apostles and the trumpets are their written compositions.[250] He then goes on to list the

"trumpets:" the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the two epistles of Peter,

James, Jude, the epistles of John, Acts, and the fourteen epistles of Paul.[251] In *Frag. Matt.*

(= Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.3-6) Origen mentions a fourfold gospel tradition and links

each of the Gospels to an apostle. Eusebius glosses this passage by saying that Origen is

"guarding the ecclesial canon" (τὸν ἐκκλησιαστικὸν φυλάττων κανόνα).[252] Origen also

addresses apostolic writings in *Comm. Jo.* 5.3 (=Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.7-10). In this

context he points out that the apostles actually composed very few books. He mentions

that Paul did not write to all the churches he taught, that Peter wrote one epistle for

certain but there is a second epistle that is doubted, that John wrote one gospel, the Book

of Revelation, and at least one epistle, although there may be a second and a third.

Finally, in *Frag Ps*. (=Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.1-2) Origen claims that there are "twenty-

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[250] For an English translation see Barbara J. Bruce, *Origen: Homilies on Joshua*, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 105 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2002), 74-75.

[251] There are a few things to notice about this list: First, Origen does not specify how many of John's epistles he has in mind. Second, the fourteen epistles of Paul presumably includes the Epistle to the Hebrews even though in another passage Origen claims that he does not know who wrote Hebrews (See Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.14) Third, there is no mention of Revelation in this passage even though Origen often cites from Revelation and believes it to have been written by the apostle John.

[252] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.3 (Oulton, LCL). Gregory Robbins has observed that Eusebius does not use the term κανών to refer to a closed list of Christian scripture. In this particular instance he is using the term to refer to the tradition of only accepting the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. See Gregory Robbins, "Eusebius' Lexicon of 'Canonicity'," in *Studia Patristica* (Louvain: Peeters, 1993). This fourfold gospel tradition was also used by Irenaeus, see Irenaeus, *Haer*. 5.6.1 and Eusebius *Hist. eccl*. 5.8.2-5.

two encovenanted books (ἐνδιαθήκους βίβλιους) according to Hebrew tradition."[253] He then goes on to list those twenty-two books with both their Greek and Hebrew titles.[254]

The lists that have just been discussed from *Hom. Jes. Nav.* 7.1, *Frag. Matt.*, *Comm. Jo.* 5.3, and *Frag. Ps.* are not intended as an indication that Origen was operating with a closed canon.[255] There is nothing exclusive about these lists. For example, the list from *Hom. Jes. Nav*. 7.1 says nothing about Revelation whereas the list from *Comm. Jo.* 5.3 includes it among books written by John. The list from *Frag. Matt.* is only a list of gospels and says nothing about epistles. The list from *Comm. Jo*. 5.3 mentions only the Fourth Gospel but is silent on the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.[256] The list from

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[253] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.1 (Oulton, LCL). There is a discrepancy here between what Origen is listing and what Eusebius says he is listing. As indicated above, Origen is listing books that are "canonical" according to Hebrew tradition. Eusebius, however, says that Origen is giving "the catalogue of sacred scriptures of the Old Testament" τοῦ τῶν ἱερῶν γραφῶν τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης καταλόγου.

[254] Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua (Jesus) the son of Nave, Judges-Ruth, 1-2 Kingdoms, 3-4 Kingdoms, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah (including Lamentations and the Letter of Jeremiah), Daniel, Ezekiel, Job, Esther, and Maccabees. Origen is here literally identifying individual books (βίβλοι) whether they are scrolls or codices. It needs to be remembered that in Origen's day there were not yet pandect bibles.

[255] William Oliver uses these passages to suggest the opposite. "Although Origen never lists the 'canon'… he believed that the writing of scripture had ceased and that he knew which writings were accepted as such." William G. Oliver, "Origen and the New Testament Canon," *Restoration Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1989): 26. For a conclusion similar to the one presented here see Everett R. Kalin, "Re-Examining New Testament Canon History: Part 1, the Canon of Origen," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 17, no. 4 (1990).

[256] There are also direct discrepancies to be noticed. The list in *Hom. Jes Nav*. seems confident that Peter wrote two epistles and that John wrote more than one. The list from *Comm. Jo.* 5.3 is much more reserved on this question. This difference is probably due to differences between Rufinus and Eusebius on the issue.

Frag. Ps. that gives the twenty-two books important to Jewish tradition is just that and no more; it says nothing about these being the only books that are scriptural. The purpose of including the lists from these passages here is to show that Origen was working from a large pool of resources; these lists do not exhaust what resources Origen used in his construction of scripture.

To the list of what Eusebius calls the "Old Testament" (παλαιᾶς διαθήκης) one must add Greek texts that were included in the LXX to Origen's scriptural resources. There is no doubt that Origen valued the Hebrew text of the "Old Testament", but he gave a special privilege to its Greek translation.[257] In his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* he discusses the difference between Hebrew and Greek versions of Isaiah 53:1:

> "It befits us to know, however, that 'Lord' is missing from the Hebrew copies in the passage 'Lord, who has believed our message?' but it is in the translation of the seventy elders. And the Apostle [i.e. Paul], approving of the fact that it is found in the latter, has recorded 'Lord.'"[258]

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[257] This is a good example that illustrates the problems with using the term "Old Testament." On the one hand, the use of the term violates inclusivicity. On the other hand there are no good substitutes in this context. "Septuagint" is inappropriate because it does not make sense to speak of the "Hebrew text of the Septuagint." "Jewish scripture" or "Hebrew scripture" are equally in approapriate in this context because my argument is that the text under consideration is *no longer* Jewish/Hebrew scripture for Origen; it becomes Christian scripture by means of Origen's exegetical practice.

[258] *Scire tamen nos conuenit quod: 'Domine quis credidit auditui nostro?' in Hebraeis exemplaribus 'Domine' non habeat sed in interpretatione Septuaginta Seniorum sit; et apostolus hoc probans quod apud illos est posuit 'Domine'.* (*Comm. Rom.* 8.6.2 [AGLB 34:660]) ET Thomas P. Scheck, *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Books 6-10,* The Fathers of the Church, vol. 104 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2002), 149. The *Comm. Rom.* has survived only in Rufinus's abridged Latin translation, however, given Origen's extensive use of the LXX here and elsewhere on can conclude that the attitude expressed here is Origen's own.

But it was not just the Greek text of the LXX that Origen preferred, more importantly, he often used books found only in the LXX as scriptural resources. He defended the legitimacy of the Greek additions to the Book of Daniel in a letter to Julius Africanus, he calls *2 Maccabees* a "scriptural authority" (*scripturarum auctoritate*) in *Princ.* 2.1.5, and he offers *Wisdom of Solomon* as a scriptural proof text alongside the Psalms in *Comm. Jo.* 28.122. In total Origen cites 11 texts from the LXX as scripture that are not found in the Hebrew Bible.[259]

The Shepherd of Hermas must also be counted among Origen's scriptural resources, despite its absence from the lists discussed above. Origen often cites this text, but an instructive citation is found in *Princ.* 4.2.4. In this passage Origen gives one of his clearest statements about the allegorical interpretation of scripture. On the one hand, Origen acknowledges that *The Shepherd* is "despised by some" (ὑπό τινων καταφρονοθμένῳ), but on the other hand, he quotes *Herm.* 8.3 as evidence that scripture can be interpreted both literally and allegorically. This interpretation is itself made possible by an allegorical reading of the passage from *The Shepherd.* Origen uses *The Shepherd* just as he does other scriptural resources.

There are a few other candidates for Origen's scriptural resources. In *Comm. Jo.* 2.73-88 Origen argues that the Holy Spirit is included in the "all things" that were made through the Word in John 1:3. He lists a possible objection to his teaching based on a

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[259] "In addition to the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures, Origen cites 11 additional texts not found in the Hebrew text: the Epistle of Jeremiah, Baruch, Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Sirach, the Wisdom of Solomon, and the three expansions which form part of the text of Daniel in the Septuagint." Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 68.

quotation from *The Gospel of the Hebrews*.[260] This quotation is introduced by the phrase,

"But if someone accepts (προσιῆται) the Gospel according to the Hebrews…"[261] Origen

does not address this objection by dismissing *Gos. Heb.*; rather, he interprets the text in

light of Matthew 12:15 to show that even if *Gos. Heb.* is accepted, his interpretation

about the Holy Spirit stands. According to Jerome, Origen "often used" *Gos. Heb.* so that

its use here may not be an anomaly.[262] The point is that Origen is open-minded about the

status of *Gos. Heb.* It may well count among his scriptural resources.

The Prayer of Joseph is also referenced by Origen in *Comm. Jo.* 2.188. He

introduces it in a manner similar to how he introduced *Gos. Heb.* "But if someone also

accepts (προσίεται) the apocryphal document (ἀποκρύφων τὴν ἐπιγραφομένην) in

circulation among the Hebrews entitled *The Prayer of Joseph*…"[263] By identifying the

text as "apocryphal" and as "in circulation among the Hebrews" Origen does shed some

doubt on the authority of this text. Yet, he is open-minded about the use of the text

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[260] The text quoted from *Gos. Heb.* is "My mother, the Holy Spirit, took me just now by one of my hairs and carried me off to the great mountain Thabor." Ἄρτι ἔλαβέ με ἡ μήτηρ μου, τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, ἐν μιᾷ τῶν τριχῶν μου καὶ ἀπήνεγκέ με εἰς τὸ ὄρος τὸ μέγα Θαβώρ. (*Comm. Jo.*2.87) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 116. The objection to Origen's claim is that the Holy Spirit cannot both be created through the Word and the mother of Christ.

[261] Ἐὰν δὲ προσιῆται τις τὸ καθ᾽ Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον (*Comm. Jo.* 2.87) ET Ibid.

[262] Jerome, *Vir. ill*. 2. The only other instance that I am aware of is in *Hom. Jer.* 15.4.2 to shed light on how Jeremiah 15:10, in which the speaker refers to his mother, can be applied to Christ. He does not identify the source of the text in this passage, but he introduces it in a similar manner: εἰ δέ τις παραδέχεται.

[263] Εἰ δέ τις προσίεται καὶ τῶν παρ᾽ Ἑβραίοις φερομένων ἀποκρύφων τὴν ἐπιγραφομένην Ἰωσὴφ προσευχήν. (*Comm. Jo.* 2.188) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 145.

because he finds in it the doctrine (δόγμα) of the pre-existence of souls that is so important to his schema of scripture.

This survey of Origen's scriptural resources permits a few preliminary conclusions: Nowhere in his extant corpus does Origen provide a definitive and exclusive list of scriptural resources. All lists that he gives are context specific and provisional. In addition, I will note here that Origen's scriptural resources are similar, but not identical to those of Heracleon and Irenaeus.[264] Both Origen and Irenaeus stress the importance of a fourfold gospel collection, the importance of Paul's letters, and the preference for the LXX over Hebrew versions of the "Old Testament." That said, Origen's openness to the *Gospel of the Hebrews* and *The Prayer of Joseph* suggests that he works with a larger collection of scriptural resources than does Irenaeus. This comparison illustrates William Sewell's axiom of the unpredictability of resource accumulation: Origen and Irenaeus share many theological commitments, but nonetheless, their structures of scripture are different due, in part, to the accumulation of resources; an accumulation which is neither predictable nor easily accounted for. Heracleon is also similar in this regard but as I indicated in the previous chapter, one must be careful about definitive conclusions regarding his scriptural resources due to the limited nature of his surviving fragments.

Scriptural Schemas

The resources identified above are only part of Origen's structure of scripture; it is now necessary to articulate by what schemas these resources are organized into a coherent whole. There are three primary schemas that Origen pairs with scriptural

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[264] Heracleon's inclusion of *The Preaching of Peter* marks a distinct difference between him and Origen. Origen dismisses this text in *Princ.* 1. *prf.* 8 and *Comm. Jo.* 13.104.

resources in the production of scripture: (1) apostolic teaching, (2) a narrative of procession and return, and (3) the idea that scriptural resources have a body, soul, and spirit. In the following paragraphs I will consider the first and second of these schemas leaving the third for explanation in chapter five after I have examined Origen's structure of the self upon which this schema is based.

In the preface to *On First Principles* Origen lists what he considers "the kind of doctrines which are believed in plain terms through apostolic teaching."[265] These doctrines include statements about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the soul, the devil, the world, scripture, and angels.[266] Origen lists these doctrines as a framework for theological speculation; any theological claim that violates them cannot be "in the true."[267] Yet, although he calls these statements "apostolic teaching", they are also a framework for scriptural resources. Here the basic ambiguity of the relationship between apostolic teaching and Christian scripture surfaces. Origen would have his readers believe that the former is distilled from the latter, but the relationship is far more complex: these doctrines are said to be "apostolic" (and hence "in the true") because they come from apostolic writings, but such writings are said to be apostolic because they do not violate apostolic teaching. Origen's task as an exegete is to show that these doctrines, and nothing contradictory, are the true meaning of scriptural resources.

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[265] *Species uero eorum, quae per praedicationem apostolicam manifeste traduntur…*(*Princ.* 1.prf.4 [SC 252:80)] ET Butterworth, 2.

[266] Origen's notion of apostolic teaching has much in commong with Irenaeus's Rule of Faith. On this basis the two belong to similar theological trajectories.

[267] On being "in the true" see chapter one and Foucault, "Discourse on Language," 224.

But even more important than apostolic teaching is a narrative schema that is a part of Origen's structure of scripture. In short, the narrative is the story of the procession and return of all things from and to God. According to Origen, all rational beings proceeded (or rather, "fell") from God when they ceased to contemplate God as they ought.[268] The return to God of these rational beings is made possible by the procession from and the return to God of Jesus Christ. There are then two intertwined stories of procession and return: one of rational beings generally and one of Jesus Christ specifically. Only in light of this narrative do scriptural resources come together for Origen. In Book 4 of *Princ.*, Origen says of what he calls the "Old Testament," "And we must add that it was after the sojourn (ἐπιδημήσαντος) of Jesus that the inspiration of the prophetic words and the spiritual nature of Moses' law came to light."[269] For Origen the sojourn of Jesus is the theme of the Old and New Testaments. The pairing of this narrative schema with scriptural resources results in Origen's structure of scripture, or as Martens puts it, "It is this one underlying message running through the Old and New Testaments that turns the Scriptures into Scripture."[270] I have called this schema more

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[268] Origen's indebtedness to ideas that would become core aspects of Neoplatonism is obvious here. See *Princ*. 2.8. Plotinus also speaks of souls forgetting their father and attributes this to arrogance and self-determination in *Enn*. 5.1.1.

[269] λεκτέον δὲ ὅτι τὸ τῶν προφητικῶν λόγων ἔνθεον καὶ τὸ πνευματικὸν τοῦ Μωσέως νόμου ἔλαμψεν ἐπιδημήσαντος Ἰησοῦ (*Princ*. 4.1.6 [SC 268:280]) ET Butterworth, 264. I have altered Butterworth's translation of ἐπιδημήσαντος as "advent" to "sojourn" to show the connection to Heiene's translation of the noun form, ἐπιδημία, below. Both the verb and noun form of this term have connotations of residing temporarily in a place that is not one's own.

[270] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 202. Martens' work often parallels and has also influenced my own understanding of Origen as an exegete. See chapter one for a brief discussion of where I differ from Martens.

important than the schema of apostolic teaching because Origen devotes much more attention to it, but it most be remembered nonetheless that Origen's notion of apostolic teaching underlies all of his ideas about scripture.

Origen and Irenaeus can be compared regarding their scriptural schemas insofar as the former uses apostolic teaching as a schema and the latter uses the Rule of Faith as a schema. There is, however, a subtle distinction: Irenaeus's Rule of Faith dictates that scriptural resources must be read in a specific way; Origen's apostolic teaching allows scriptural resources to be read in a variety of ways so long as apostolic teaching is not violated. To return to the example of a mosaic: Irenaeus's Rule of Faith requires a tile to be placed in a specific location but Origen's apostolic teaching allows a tile to be placed in a number of locations, but not just any location.

Origen and Heracleon can also be compared regarding their scriptural schemas insofar as the former speaks of Christ's sojourn and the latter speaks of the descent of the Savior as a part of the Valentinian myth. These narratives are not identical, however. For Origen Christ sojourns from God to return all people to the contemplation of God but for Heracleon the Savior descends from somewhere below God to save only a select few. The difference in these narratives has a significant impact on Origen's and Heracleon's structures of scripture.

Exegetical Practices that Construct Scripture

The rest of this chapter will discuss the exegetical practices used by Origen to pair his scriptural resources and schemas together into a structure. The practices associated with the Greco-Roman school as well as the practices associated with the use of books endowed Origen with the authority of a "text-broker" that transformed his utterances into

statements in the Foucauldian sense of the term. These statements can be found in Origen's commentaries where he interprets texts as a grammarian. The practice of commentary and the practice of grammar are used by Origen to pair scriptural resources and schemas together into a structure.

The Greco-Roman School

By "Greco-Roman School" I mean those institutions and practices that were responsible for education during the Greco-Roman period. Henri Marrou has defined education as "a collective technique which a society employs to instruct its youth in the values and accomplishments of the civilization in which it exists."[271] The Greek term translated as "education," παιδεία, contains an ambiguity: it is also translated as "culture." The reciprocal relationship between a culture's values and its educational system is captured in this very term. The purpose of Greco-Roman education was to train students to read and understand those texts that were "the recognized basis of its scale of values."[272] Παιδεία selected texts as "classic" which contained a culture's values and then interpreted them in a way conducive to instilling those values in readers.[273]

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[271] Henri I. Marrou, *Education in Antiquity*, trans., G. Lamb (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1956), xiii.

[272] Ibid., 161.

[273] The circular relationship between a culture's values and the texts that were identified as "classic" is analogous to the relationship between "apostolic teaching" and Christian scripture.

The first things for students to learn were the basic mechanics of reading and writing: individual letters, combinations of letters, and syllables.[274] After students had learned these basic reading and writing skills they could advance to learning how to read and interpret texts under the guidance of a grammarian. It was the grammarian who trained students the rules they must follow to properly interpret a text. I will say more about the grammarian and the practices of that profession below. Here I would like to point out that in the system of Greco-Roman education it was the grammarian who taught students the rules of interpretation, or better, who taught students *what* texts mean and *how* texts mean what they mean. Gregory Snyder has described this position as a "text-broker."[275] A text-broker is the one who controls and maintains the relationship between a culture's important texts (and the values discovered therein) and the readers of those texts.

If students proceeded beyond this point in education, they might enter a philosophical school.[276] The focus of these schools in Origen's time was on philosophical

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[274] Marrou, 270. William Johnson, who points out that Quintillian stressed the systematic learning of syllables, comments, "The focus on syllables seems strange to us, but was, as far as we know, a universal part of the method for learning to real among Greeks and Romans from at least the fifth century BC and continuing through the middle ages." William A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[275] Snyder recognizes that, "The appropriation of texts in the ancient world almost always involved some type of mediation by a trained specialist." Snyder, 11. That specialist who mediates is what Snyder calls a "text-broker."

[276] Pierre Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, trans., Michael Case (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard Univeristy Press, 2002), 98.; Marrou, 206.

texts.[277] Snyder has detected three phases in the classrooms of prominent philosophers of the period.[278] First, an authoritative text was read aloud; then, the teacher would explain and expound upon what had been read; finally, students may raise questions for the teacher to answer.[279]

Origen's early life as a student and his later life as a teacher fit well within this pattern of Greco-Roman παιδεία. Eusebius reports that Origen's father "brought him forth in secular studies (Ἑλλήνων μαθήμασιν)" and that Origen dedicated himself to "literary training (τῇ περὶ τοὺς λόγους ἀσκήσει)."[280] Origen advanced beyond the grammarian's classroom to study philosophy with a renowned philosopher at Alexandria named Ammonius. In a fragment recorded by Eusebius, Porphyry claims that Origen was well acquainted with a number of philosophical writings.[281] Eusebius claims that as a

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[277] Pierre Hadot notes that a major difference between education in the Hellenistic period and the Imperial period is that in the latter the teacher's task was to comment on important texts in the classroom. Hadot, 104.

[278] Snyder, 118.

[279] Porphyry gives an example of this process from Plotinus's school in his *Life of Plotinus*. He reports that Plotinus would have a philosophical commentary read and would then expand upon that commentary in a unique way (*Vit. Plot*. 14). Plotinus would then answer any questions raised by his students. Porphyry recalls that he once questioned Plotinus for three days on a philosophic topic. Another student complained, but Plotinus insisted that he could not go on until Porphyry had understood (*Vit. Plot*. 13).

[280] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 6.2 (Oulton, LCL). There is something misleading about translating Ἑλλήνων as "secular" because there did not exist a sharp distinction between "religious" and "secular" in this period. The emphasis Eusebius is making is that Origen received a classical literary training just like many of his non-Christian contemporaries.

[281] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 6.19. The authors mentioned by Porphyry are Numenius, Cronius, Apollophanes, Longinus, Moderatus, Nichomachus, Chaeremon, and Cornutus. If we compare this list with the list of commentaries that Porphyry reports were used in Plotinus's school in Rome we will notice that Cronius, Numenius, and Longinus are

young man Origen became the head of the catechetical school at Alexandria.[282] Many

modern scholars doubt that there was such a school in Alexandria at the time, but there is

some truth to Eusebius's claim: Origen distinguished himself as the head of a

philosophical school with students of his own.[283] If Origen had studied with Ammonius it

is possible that his school at Alexandria, and later at Caesarea, would have been similar

in form to Plotinus's school at Rome who had also studied with Ammonius.

As a student who had come up through the system of Greco-Roman education,

Origen would have mastered the interpretive techniques of the grammarian. As an

intellectual who had studied with a notable philosopher such as Ammonius, Origen

would have gained enough notoriety and authority to establish his own school by

gathering students around him. Origen became a text-broker, mediating the relationship

between his students and the texts central to his community. As a text-broker, Origen's

interpretations became statements in the Foucauldian sense: they were issued from a

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common to both (see Porphyry, *Vit. Plot*. 14.). There is some debate about whether the
Origen mentioned by Porphyry in the fragment preserved by Eusebius is the same Origen
mentioned by Porphyry in *Vit. Plot*. 3, 14, and 20. For an argument that Porphyry is
referring to the same Origen in each case see Ilaria Ramelli, "Origen, Patristic
Philosophy, and Christian Platonism: Rethinking the Christianization of Hellenism,"
Vigiliae Christianae 63, no. 3 (2009).Whether this is the same Origen or not, it is clear
from the sources that Origen the Christian studied with Ammonius and read much of the
same philosophical literature as Plotinus and Porphyry.

[282] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 6.3.3.

[283] Daniélou, 9ff; Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 77. Frances
Young suggests that after many of the Alexandrian church's catecheticists fled the city in
the wake of a persecution in 202 CE the bishop asked Origen to teach on an *ad hoc* basis
so that "Origen engaged in different levels of teaching concurrently." Frances Young,
"Towards a Christian *Paideia*," in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Origins to
Constantine*, ed. Frances Young and Margaret Mitchell (New York: Cambridge
University Press, 2006), 492.

legitimate authority who knew and practiced the accepted rules of interpretation; his statements were "in the true."

<center>The Use of Books</center>

The ideas produced by the Greco-Roman school manifest materially in the production and use of books.[284] Book production is a central theme of Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*, be it the production of Plotinus's *Enneads* or of works authored by Plotinus's students for internal or external use.[285] Yet, it costs money to produce books; therefore, for many intellectuals such as Origen, a literary patron was necessary. The relationship between the literary patron and client was reciprocal: the patron provided for the material and financial needs of the author, but the author in turn dedicated his work to the literary patron.[286] Such dedications provided the patron a certain amount of prestige and cultural capital.[287]

Origen's literary patron was a wealthy man named Ambrose who not only prompted Origen to write many of his commentaries, but also provided the means to do so: shorthand writers (ταχυγράφοι), scribes (βιβλιογράφοι), and "young women practiced

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[284] For a discussion of the way that philosophers produced and used books see Anthony Grafton and Megan Williams, *Christianity and the Transformation of the Book: Origen, Eusebius, and the Library of Caesarea* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 53-56.

[285] Porphyry takes time to discuss his editing of Plotinus's *Enneads* in *Vit. Plot*. 4. He also discusses treatises that he and his fellow students wrote in debate with one another and with those outside of Plotinus's school. See *Vit. Plot*. 3, 18.

[286] See Gamble, 83 ff. for a description of literary patronage. Gamble points out that in antiquity authors rarely made money on their own publications (if there was money to be made it was reserved for book sellers).

[287] Grafton and Williams, 14.

in calligraphy" (κόραις ἐπὶ τὸ καλλιγραφεῖν ἠσκημέναις).[288] The shorthand writers took

dictation from Origen, the scribes expanded those notes into treatises, and the

calligraphers likely produced ornate copies of the text for Ambrose and other cultural

elites.[289] Origen addresses Ambrose a number of times throughout his *Commentary on

the Gospel according to John* in the prefaces to the individual books of that

commentary.[290] In these prefaces Origen lavishes praise on Ambrose and often alludes to

the encouragement and provisions Ambrose had given to make this work possible. While

the relationship between Origen and Ambrose may have been typical of other patrons and

intellectuals at the time, two important observations can be made. First, Ambrose's

patronage made it possible for Origen to work independently of the support of

ecclesiastical institutions while at Alexandria.[291] At this early phase of his life, Origen's

authority as a text-broker did not come from the church, but from the cultural capital

made possible by the practices of the Greco-Roman school and the patrons he was able to

win on that account. Second, Eusebius reports that Origen had converted Ambrose from

some form of Valentinianism.[292] Ambrose's conversion was not just the movement of an

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[288] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 6.23.2 (Oulton, LCL).

[289] Grafton and Williams, 69.

[290] *Comm. Jo*. 1.9; 2.1; 5.1; 6.6; 13.1; 20.1; 28.6; and 32.2. Notice that Origen addresses Ambrose both in books that were composed in Alexandria and those that were later composed in Caesarea. The patron-client relationship between Origen in Ambrose was long-lived.

[291] Grafton and Williams, 69.

[292] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 6.18.1. Origen himself is not as specific; he simply mentions that Ambrose once belonged to a heterodox group (*Comm. Jo*. 5.8).

individual from one religious perspective to another; it was a movement of the means of scholarly production from the service of one competing form of Christianity to another. The construction and circulation of Origen's structure of scripture was made possible by Ambrose's wealth.

Origen's authority as a scholar was legitimated by Greco-Roman education, and his production of books was made possible by Ambrose's patronage, but underlying all of this was a scholarly environment extending from the library at Alexandria. Since the establishment of the great library of Alexandria by Ptolemy II in the third century BCE, Alexandria had become a major center of literary scholarship where literary indices and methods of criticism were developed.[293] Whether or not Origen had access to this library, he was no doubt influenced by the practices that "trickled-down" from it.[294]

Origen reveals much about his production of books in Book Five of his *Commentary on the Gospel according to John*.[295] Here Origen reflects on his prolific book production in light of the warning from Ecclesiastes 12:12 against "making many

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[293] One of the earliest librarians, Callimachus, developed a index of literary texts called The Pinakes that was later modified by Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus of Samothrace. The latter scholar is credited with formulating the principle of literary criticism of interpreting Homer by Homer. For a discussion of the influence of each of these on Origen see John A. McGuckin, "Origen as Literary Critic in the Alexandrian Tradition," in *Origeniana Octava: Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition*, ed. L. Perrone (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 123. McGuckin suggests that the cataloging of literary texts by the Alexandrian grammarians influenced Origen, but as Gregory Robbins has observed, following the work of Rudolf Pfeiffer, the Alexandrians used the terms πίναξ or κατάλογος rather than κανών. See Robbins, 139.

[294] Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 17.

[295] Book Five has only survived in fragments recorded in *Philocalia* 5 and in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25. On the latter fragment's relevance for Origen's scriptural resources, see above.

books." On a theoretical level Origen reasons that as long as he speaks the truth, he has only said one thing (no matter how many books he has written).[296] Origen transforms the "making of many books" from a warning about writing too much into a warning about writing what is false. On a practical level Origen appeals to his obligation to Ambrose to finish his commentary. In this discussion about the "making of many books" Origen says that he wrote his commentary by means of dictation. "Now I am saying these things in accordance with what appears to me, as a defense for those who are able to speak and write, and as a defense for me…I devote myself too boldly to dictating (ὑπαγορεύειν)."[297] The image of Origen as an author that emerges from this vocabulary is not a scholar quietly writing on a sheet of papyrus, but a scholar speaking aloud to shorthand writers (ταχυγράφοι) and possibly to students as well.

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[296] Origen's discussion of the unity of many books into one on the basis of truth is extremely important for understanding his structure of scripture. He claims, "Consequently, according to this understanding, we should say that he who utters anything hostile to religion is loquacious, but he who speaks the things of truth, even if he says everything so as to leave out nothing, always speaks one Word…If, then, a multitude of words is recognized on the basis of the teachings, and not on the basis of the recital of many words, see if we can thus say that all the sacred works are one book, but those outside the sacred are many." ὥστε κατὰ τοῦτ᾽ ἂν ἡμᾶς εἰπεῖν, ὅτι ὁ φθεγγόμενος ὃ δήποτε τῆς θεοσεβείας ἀλλότριον πολυλογεῖ, ὁ δὲ λέγων τὰ τῆς ἀληθείας, κἂν εἴπῃ τὰ πάντα ὡς μηδὲν παραλιπεῖν, ἕνα ἀεὶ λέγει λόγον καὶ οὐ πολυλογοῦσιν οἱ ἅγιοι τοῦ σκοποῦ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἕνα ἐχόμενοι λόγον. Εἰ τοίνυν ἡ πολυλογία ἐκ τῶν δογμάτων κρίνεται καὶ οὐκ ἐκ τῆς τῶν πολλῶν λέξεων ἀπαγγελίας, ὅρα εἰ οὕτω δυνάμεθα ἐν βιβλίον τὰ πάντα ἅγιαεἰπεῖν, πολλὰ δὲ τὰ ἔξω τούτων. (*Comm. Jo.* 5.5) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 163.

[297] Origen also describes his form of authorship as dictation in *Comm. Jo*. 6.8, 10; 20.1; 32.2, 74. The Greek of the last passage is μετὰ τὸ ὑπαγορευθῆναι τὰ πρότερα which Heine has translated "after the earlier things were explained." Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 356. There is no reason, however, why the passage cannot be translated as "after the earlier things were dictated."

There is reason to believe that Origen's commentary on John has its roots in his classroom practice. There are a few indications of this in the text.[298] Origen often uses the second person singular throughout the commentary. While a second person plural may be expected if he was addressing a classroom, the singular does suggest a conversational tone.[299] For example, in Book Nineteen when discussing the phrase "his hour had not yet come" (John 8:20), Origen refers his audience to a previous discussion saying, "You shall use (χρήσει) those discussions also for the present words."[300] This directive sounds like one that might be given to a group of students. Another directive is given in *Comm. Jo.* 20.212 where Origen is ridiculing Heracleon's claim that the devil has desires, but no will. Origen does not make an argument here, but gives these instructions: "Although we do not have [texts] in hand (ἐν προχείρῳ) at present to cite as evidence, you yourself will collect (συνάξεις) [such texts] to see if 'willing' has been applied to the devil anywhere in scripture."[301] This directive sounds like directions given to students to refute Heracleon's claims from scripture.

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[298] This argument has been made before by Heine who observed allusions in Gregory Thaumaturgus's *Address to Origen* to Books 20 and 32 of *Comm. Jo.* This suggests to Heine that Gregory had been in attendance while the lectures upon which *Comm. Jo.* 20 and 32 are based were delivered by Origen. Ibid., 16; Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 189 ff. Daneilou has also suggested that Origen's commentaries reflect the teaching of the διδασκάλιον Daniélou, xii.

[299] J. A. Trumbower, "Origen's Exegesis of John 8:19-53: The Struggle with Heracleon over the Idea of Fixed Natures," *Vigiliae Christianae* 43, no. (1989): 141.

[300] ἐν τοῖς ἀνωτέρω διὰ πλειόνων διειλήφαμεν, οἷς χρήσει καὶ εἰς τὰ παρόντα. (*Comm. Jo.* 19.63 [SC 290:86]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 183.

[301] Συνάξεις δὲ καὶ αὐτός, εἰ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος ἐν προχείρῳ οὐκ ἔχομεν παραθέσθαι, εἴ που ἐν τῇ γραφῇ τὸ θέλειν ἐπὶ τοῦ διαβόλου τέτακται. (*Comm. Jo.* 20.212 [SC

The phrase ἐν προχείρῳ above from *Comm. Jo.* 20.212 has an echo in two other

passages from the commentary. Origen uses the phrase "text in hand" (τὸ ἐν χερσὶν

ῥητόν) in *Comm. Jo.* 10.253 and *Comm. Jo.* 20.189. This phrase could be taken

metaphorically to mean "the text under discussion" but it could also be taken literally to

mean, "the text I am holding in my hand." Since the similar phrase from *Comm. Jo.*

20.212 suggests actual texts in hand, and given that some teachers in antiquity lectured

out of texts, I suggest that Origen means an actual text in hand.[302] This is what one would

expect if the commentary finds its origin in a classroom setting. It is easy to imagine

Origen holding a codex containing the Gospel of John. He reads a passage, explains it,

and then asks his students if they have any questions. All the while shorthand writers are

taking down notes.

There is another indication that points toward this picture. It was commonplace in

many philosophical schools for students to ask questions of the teacher. Traces of such

questions and answers may be found in the commentary. When commenting on John

2:23-24 Origen says, "Someone may ask (ζητήσαι τις ἄν) how it is that Jesus did not trust

himself to those who were attested to believe."[303] Origen also uses the indefinite pronoun

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290:260]) ET Ibid., 250. 2 Timothy 2:26 implies very clearly that the devil has a will. It
is interesting that Origen, who is usually very good at recalling biblical texts, did not
think of this verse. One also wonders: did Heracleon also forget this verse, did he not
know about it, or did he not consider it evidence?

[302] Snyder gives a number of examples from Platonic and Peripatetic schools where the
teacher taught with a text in hand. Snyder, 111-121.

[303] Ζητήσαι τις ἂν πῶς τοῖς μεμαρτυρημένοις πιστεύειν ἑαυτὸν οὐκ ἐπίστευεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς.
(*Comm. Jo*. 10.307 [SC 157:572]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel
According to John, Books 1-10*, 324. Origen answers the question by making a distinction
between believing in Jesus and believing in Jesus's name.

to introduce questions at *Comm. Jo.* 32.104 and *Comm. Jo*. 32.170.[304] Rather than being rhetorical questions raised by Origen for heuristic purposes, the "someone" (τις) in these passages may have been actual students.

Finally, if Origen's dictation took place in a classroom this would also help explain why he would need shorthand writers *and* scribes from Ambrose. The former would have been responsible for taking down lecture notes while the latter would be responsible for converting those lecture notes into a commentary.[305] It is not that the commentary is a verbatim transcription of lectures given by Origen on the Gospel of John, but it may be that the content of the commentary comes mostly from such lectures and has been edited for the sake of publication. In which case the production of the *Comm. Jo.* is an extension of Origen's activity and authority in the classroom.

It is reasonable to suppose that Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel according to John* was the product, either in whole or in part, of his classroom. In that environment Origen was given the authority of a text-broker by Greco-Roman παιδεία insofar as he was a product of that system and therefore knew how to use its accepted methods or its discursive regularities that transformed utterances into statements. So long as Origen followed the methods of Greco-Roman scholarship, his interpretations of scripture became statements in the Foucauldian sense: They are utterances whose location of authority can be assigned. He was therefore able to authoritatively pair resources together

[304] Examples of Origen's use of the indefinite pronoun to raise interpretive questions could be multiplied from the commentary.

[305] Compare to Porphyry's *Vit. Plot*. 4 where Porphyry mentions that Amelius recorded Plotinus's lectures in notebooks.

with schemas to construct a structure of scripture. Origen was not just a text-broker; he was a "scripture-broker." It is important now to examine the practices Origen used as a scripture-broker to construct scripture: commentary and grammar.

Commentary as a Practice

Authoring a commentary on a text is one of the most important exegetical practices whereby scriptural resources and schemas are paired and reproduced. The discussion of Heracleon's commentary on the Gospel of John in chapter two provided an opportunity to consider the discursive function of commentaries generally. There I followed Gregory Snyder in defining commentaries as a text where "the lemmata to be explained are explicitly cited in the text itself."[306] Not only does this definition distinguish commentaries from other kinds of literature, but it also gives insight into how commentaries function as a type of discourse. The physical proximity of the lemmata to the comment gives rise to a reciprocal relationship between the two. On the one hand, the authority given to the base text by the reader bleeds over into the comment by their close association. The most effective commentaries are those where the comment seems the most natural interpretation of the lemmata.[307] Before long the reader may simply assume that the comment is the only or best interpretation of the lemmata and then apply the

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[306] Snyder, 75. Here Snyder is following M. Del Fabbro, "Il Commentario Nella Tradizione Papiracea," *Studia Papyrolgica* 18, no. (1979).

[307] Commentary performs a similar function to what Gerard Genette calls a "paratext." The comment serves "to direct and control the reception of a text by its readers." Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, ed. John Drakakis, The New Critical Idiom (New York: Routledge, 2006), 103.

authority of the lemmata to the interpretation of the comment.[308] On the other hand, the

lemmata now receive a wider circulation because they are present not only in the base

text, but are also present in the commentary. Wherever the commentary is read, so are the

lemmata.[309] Snyder distinguishes two major types of commentary in antiquity. In what he

calls Type I the author discusses all or most of the base text and uses its organization as

the organization for the commentary; in what he calls Type II the author uses only

selections of the base text and organizes the commentary according to topics.[310] Origen's

commentary on the Gospel of John is an example of Snyder's Type I commentary.

Although there are recurring topics that are important to Origen throughout the

commentary, he follows the order of the Gospel of John in his comments on it. That

Origen organizes his commentary in this way indicates the high regard in which he held

the text.

Commentaries in antiquity were generally introduced with a preface containing

standard elements.[311] Book One of Origen's commentary begins with just such a preface

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[308] This is why many commentaries, be they biblical or philosophical, become original endeavors in their own right.

[309] This point is most clearly exemplified in modern critical editions of ancient texts where ancient commentaries are used as textual witnesses alongside ancient manuscripts of the original text.

[310] Snyder, 75.

[311] Heine identifies the following as standard components in ancient philosophical commentaries: (1) The theme of the text, (2) The usefulness of the text, (3) the authenticity of the text, (4) The place of the text in the reading of a larger corpus, (5) The reason for the title, and (6) The division into sections. Ronald E. Heine, "The Introduction to Origen's Commentary on John Compared with the Introductions to the Ancient Philosophical Commentaries on Aristotle," in *Origeniana Sexta*, ed. Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluec (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995), 5.

to the entire work. Origen discusses a number of important issues regarding the Gospel of John as a whole. The purpose of the preface was to establish a number of things about the text under discussion in order that it may be properly understood. Key elements in Origen's preface are the theme of the text, the place of the text in a larger corpus, and the reason for the title.[312] By beginning with these standard elements Origen is able to circumscribe the interpretive possibilities of the Fourth Gospel.

The establishment of a text's overarching theme is key to setting the limits of interpretation. Origen compares the Gospel of John with the synoptic gospels by saying that it contains "the greater and more perfect expressions concerning Jesus, for none of those [other gospels] manifested his divinity as fully as John…"[313] Furthermore, as I will show in Origen's discussion of the title "gospel," this gospel, as a gospel, "is a discourse which teaches about the sojourn (ἐπιδημίαν) of the Good Father in his Son with those who are willing to receive him."[314] These themes, the divinity of Jesus and his sojourn,

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[312] Discussion of a text's place in a larger corpus in Christian circles led to discussions of catalogues and eventually became the basis of "canon debates." In a recent article Jonathan J. Armstrong has argued that Victorinus of Pettau (fl. 270 CE), following Origen's *Commentary on Matthew*, provided a catalogue of scripture in his own *Commentary on Matthew*. More importantly, Armstrong suggests that Victorinus's catalogue of scripture in his preface to his *Commentary on Matthew* is actually what is now known as the Muratorian Fragment. See Jonathan J. Armstrong, "Victorinus of Pettau as the Author of the Canon Muratori," *Vigiliae Christianae* 62, no. (2008).

[313] τοὺς μείζονας καὶ τελειοτέρους περὶ Ἰησοῦ λόγους· οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἐκείνων ἀκράτως ἐφανέρωσεν αὐτοῦ τὴνθεότητα ὡς Ἰωάννης. (*Comm. Jo*. 1.22 [SC 120:79]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 37.

[314] λόγος ἐστὶν… διδάσκων τὴν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ πατρὸς ἐν υἱῷ τοῖς βουλομένοις παραδέξασθαι ἐπιδημίαν. (*Comm. Jo*. 1.28 [SC 120:74]) ET Ibid., 39. Origen's language here is striking in so far as it suggests that "the Good Father" is the one who makes the sojourn. Yet, elsewhere in this same passage Origen is clear that it is the Son who makes

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fundamentally shape Origen's interpretation of the gospel.[315] By claiming that the themes

of John are Jesus's divinity and his sojourn into the world, Origen is establishing a

discursive regularity to which an accurate account of the gospel must conform.

The Gospel of John does not stand alone as a text; rather it must be placed in a

larger corpus in order to be properly understood.[316] In Origen's time the Gospel of John

would have been a discrete book, or at most a part of a gospel collection. Origen's

discussion of the place of John among other texts may be understood as a conceptual, as

opposed to a physical, binding together of texts. Origen concerns himself with this

"binding" in *Comm. Jo.* 1.14-26. This discussion is informed by a cultic metaphor that

Origen uses involving the terms πρωτογέννημα and ἀπαρχή. Presumably, πρωτογέννημα

refers to a preliminary offering given to God and ἀπαρχή refers to a subsequent and more

complete offering. Origen claims that the law of Moses is the πρωτογέννημα whereas the

gospel is the ἀπαρχή. Origen does not specify what is included in the law of Moses but he

seems to include the writings of the prophets under that heading. He is clear that there is a

distinction between what he calls the Old and New Testaments based on content. Origen

summarizes his basic distinction:

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the sojourn (see below). The meaning of this passage is that the Son is making the
sojourn on behalf of the Father.

[315] The term ἐπιδημία is used over 70 times throughout *Comm. Jo*. The notion of Christ's
sojourn is crucial to his understanding of the gospel.

[316] Heine speaks of this under the heading of ἡ τάξις τῆς ἀνάγνωσις. In philosophical
commentaries, such as those on Aristotle, this referred not only to the relationship of the
text under discussion to others written by the same author, but also to the order in which a
student ought to read those works. We will revisit this latter idea in chapter five when
discussing the curriculum in Origen's school in Caesarea. Here the concern is the
relationship of the Gospel of John to other scriptural resources.

We must note in addition that the Old Testament is not gospel since it does not make known "him who is to come," but proclaims him in advance. On the other hand, all the New Testament is gospel, not only because it declares alike with the beginning of the Gospel, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world," but also because it contains various ascriptions of praise and teachings of him on account of whom the gospel is gospel.[317]

Origen indicates that all of the apostolic writings (of which he mentions Acts, Paul, and Peter specifically) are "somehow" (πώς) understood as gospel alongside the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. (*Comm. Jo.* 1.18). Yet, he also makes a distinction between the gospels and other apostolic writings. These latter texts, though "wise and trustworthy and most beneficial" are nonetheless not as direct a witness to Christ as are the gospels.[318] Therefore the gospels stand apart from the rest of scripture, especially the "Old Testament," as the ἀπαρχή stands apart from the πρωτογέννημα. Finally, Origen makes a culminating distinction between the Gospel of John and the other gospels when he claims that the former is the ἀπαρχή of the gospels because it most fully reveals Jesus's divinity.[319] Origen has defined not only the literary corpus to which the Gospel of

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[317] Ἦ καὶ τούτῳ παραστατέον ὅτι ἡ παλαιὰ μὲν οὐκ εὐαγγέλιον, οὐ δεικνύουσα τὸν ἐρχόμενον ἀλλὰ προκηρύσσουσα, πᾶσα δὲ ἡ καινὴ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν ἐστιν, οὐ μόνον ὁμοίως τῇ ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου φάσκουσα· Ἰδοὺ ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου, ἀλλὰ καὶ ποικίλας δοξολογίας περιέχουσα καὶ διδασκαλίας τοῦ δι' ὃν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον εὐαγγέλιόν ἐστιν. (*Comm. Jo.* 1.17 [SC 120:66]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 35-36.

[318] σοφὰ μὲν καὶ εὔπιστα…καὶ σφόδρα ἐπιτετευγμένα. (*Comm. Jo.* 1.15 [SC 120:66]) ET Ibid., 35.

[319] Heine groups this distinction not under the place of the text in a larger corpus, but under the division of a text into chapters (ἡ εἰς κεφαλια διαιρησις), see Heine, "The Introduction to Origen's Commentary on John Compared with the Introductions to the Ancient Philosophical Commentaries on Aristotle," 9. This may well be the case if Origen is working from a book containing the four gospels, but if he is not, it seems best to me to group this distinction under the placement of the text in a larger corpus. In either case, the Gospel of John holds a special place in Origen's mind.

John belongs but he as organized that corpus hierarchically: ascending from the "Old Testament" to the apostolic writings to the gospels and finally, to the Gospel of John. This hierarchy is based upon the degree to which the texts under discussion reveal Jesus's divinity. The upshot of this taxonomy is that Origen has thereby established the literary network within which passages from the Gospel of John may be interpreted. This preliminary work is necessary if one is to interpret scripture by scripture, an important technique in Origen's exegetical practice.

All of the above discussion begs the question, "What is a Gospel?" In the preface, therefore, Origen establishes the reason that the Gospel of John is given the title "gospel." He gives three nonexclusive definitions of the term gospel that proceed along etymological grounds. In each definition the gospel (εὐαγγέλιον) is a statement (λόγος) containing something good; either something "beneficial to the hearer," "the presence of a good for the believer," or "an awaited good [that] is present."[320] But the Gospel of John (as well as the other gospels) does not just proclaim any good thing, but specifically "Each gospel teaches about the saving sojourn (ἐπιδημίαν) with men of Christ Jesus…a sojourn which occurred on account of men."[321] Origen's point is that the Gospel of John is titled a gospel because it is about Jesus's sojourn; therefore, the reader is prompted to discover that sojourn within the text.

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[320] *Comm. Jo*. 1.27 (SC 120:74) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10,* 39.

[321] Ἕκαστον γὰρ εὐαγγέλιον…διδάσκον τὴν δι' ἀνθρώπους…Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ σωτήριον αὐτοῖς ἐπιδημίαν. (*Comm. Jo*. 1.28 [SC 120:74]) ET Ibid.

Origen uses the term "gospel" in an equivocal way: there is a "spiritual gospel" which is Jesus's sojourn and there is a "perceptible gospel" wherein the spiritual gospel can be discovered. The first of these makes the second possible. In fact not only are the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John perceptible gospels, but the "Old Testament" can be as well, "But that gospel which produced the gospel thought to exist in the Old Testament too, had to be called 'gospel' *in a special sense*."[322] This equivocal use of the term gospel, on the one hand "spiritual" and on the other "perceptible" leads to a fundamental insight about Origen's method in his commentary:

> And, indeed, the task before us now is to translate the gospel perceptible to the senses (τὸ αἰσθητὸν εὐαγγέλιον) into the spiritual gospel (πνευματικόν). For what is the interpretation of the gospel perceptible to the senses unless it is translated into the spiritual gospel? It is little or nothing, even though the common people believe they receive the things which are revealed from the literal sense.[323]

The language here of "perceptible to the senses" and "spiritual" presupposes the idea that scripture has a body, soul, and spirit, an idea I will discuss in a later chapter after I have discussed Origen's structure of the self. What Origen here calls the translation of the perceptible gospel into the spiritual gospel is what I am identifying as the construction of scripture by the pairing of resources and schemas. Origen makes the resources

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[322] Ἐχρῆν δὲ τὸ ποιητικὸν τοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ παλαιᾷ διαθήκῃ νομιζομένου εὐαγγελίου εὐαγγέλιον ἐξαιρέτως καλεῖσθαι εὐαγγέλιον. (*Comm. Jo.* 1.36 [SC 120:80]) ET Ibid., 41. Martens comments, "For Origen, then, all of Scripture was a gospel because of its continual (even if sometimes oblique) reference to the 'good things' that made its hearers glad. The good things were, in the end, the many facets of the one good thing: Jesus Christ." Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 221.

[323] Καὶ γὰρ νῦν πρόκειται τὸ αἰσθητὸν εὐαγγέλιον μεταλαβεῖν εἰς πνευματικόν· τίς γὰρ ἡ διήγησις τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ, εἰ μὴ μεταλαμβάνοιτο εἰς πνευματικόν; Ἤτοι οὐδεμία ἢ ὀλίγη καὶ τῶν τυχόντων ἀπὸ τῆς λέξεως αὐτοὺς πεπεικότων λαμβάνειν τὰ δηλούμενα. (*Comm. Jo.* 1.45 [SC 120:84]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 43.

(perceptible gospel) into scripture (spiritual gospel) by pairing the former with a schema:

Christ's sojourn. The standard elements of the preface to a philosophical commentary are

leveraged by Origen to pair his scriptural resources and schema. Because Origen begins

his commentary this way, the reader is primed to see Christ's sojourn in the text of the

Gospel of John. Sure enough, as the reader moves from the lemmata to Origen's

comment and back again, she is not disappointed: the Gospel of John turns out to be

about Christ's sojourn as Origen as indicated.

The Practice of Grammar

According to Eusebius, Origen began his career as a grammarian, and as far as

practice is concerned, Origen never ceased being a grammarian.[324] An early handbook

on grammar by Dionysius Thrax defines grammar as "the practical study (ἐμπειρία) of

the normal usages of poets and prose writers."[325] But the actual practice of grammarians

was far more involved than this simple definition suggests. It was the job of grammarians

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[324] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 6.2. The only sense in which Origen ceased to be a grammarian is
that he applied the *ars grammatical* to what his Greco-Roman counterparts considered
"barbarian literature," that is, Jewish and Christian texts. Peter Martens prefers the term
"philologist" to the term "grammarian." Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 23-66. For my
purposes here it does not matter which term one employes, what is important is the
practices emplyed for interpretation of texts. For a discussion of the two terms see John
Edwin Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, Reprint ed., vol. Volume 1: From the
Sixth Century B.C. to the End of the Middle Ages (New York: Hafner Publishing
Company, 1964), 4-10.

[325] Γραμματική ἐστιν ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιηταῖς τε καὶ συγγραφεῦσιν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ
λεγομένων. (Dionysius Thrax, *Tekhne Grammatike*, I) ET Alan Kemp, "The *Tekhne
Grammatike* of Dionysius Thrax," in *The History of Linguistics in the Classical Period*,
ed. Daniel J. Taylor, Studies in the History of the Langauge Sciences (Philadelphia: John
Benjamins Publishing Company, 1987), 172. The term ἐμπειρία suggests something like
experience or practiced based activity. I would like to gloss this translation by suggesting
that grammar is the practice-based study of texts.

not only to comment on texts, but also, as Robert Kaster explains, "to compile rules of correct usage in the *ars grammatica*, and to inculcate a knowledge of both texts and rules in the minds of their students."[326] Grammar was the application of rule-governed practices to classical texts for the sake of achieving the appropriate interpretation of them. There was in fact a reciprocal relationship between the grammarian and the texts he interpreted. The grammarian derived authority from the classical status of his texts whereas the texts achieved circulation and were given a voice through the grammarian.[327]

Dionysius Thrax divided the grammarian's practice into six divisions, but the most important of the grammarian's practices were διόρθωσις/διόρθωτικον (text criticism), ἀνάγνωσις (reading), and ἐξήγησις (interpretation).[328] The manner in which books were produced in antiquity made διόρθωσις and ἀνάγνωσις foundational tasks for the grammarian. Since texts were copied by hand it often happened that a copyist made a mistake in copying the text or that a copyist deliberately tampered with the text he was transmitting. It fell to the grammarian to collate manuscripts together in order to establish

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[326] Robert A. Kaster, "Islands in the Stream: The Grammarians of Late Antiquity," in *The History of Linguistics in the Classical Period*, ed. Daniel J. Taylor, Studies in the History of the Language Sciences (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1987), 149-150.

[327] Kaster frames this relationship between the grammarian and tradition: "There was in all this a nice cooperation between the grammarian and his tradition. The tradition fortified the grammarian in the authority and security of his niche; the grammarian preserved the tradition and paid it the compliment of his improvements." Ibid., 158.

[328] Dionysius Thrax's six divisions are (1) Skill in reading, (2) Interpretation, (3) Explanation of obscure words, and historical references, (4) Etymology, (5) Accounting for patterns, and (6) Critical assessment of literature. See Kemp, 172. (1) corresponds to ἀνάγνωσις above and 2-5 are subsumed under ἐξήγησις. Διόρθωσις is conspicuously absent from Dionysius's account.

the wording of the text to be interpreted. Ἀνάγνωσις emerged as a practice in light of the

scribal habit of *scriptio continua*; it was necessary to sort out where words and phrases

began and ended. In addition, while reading aloud the grammarian had to inflect his voice

properly to bring out the sense of the text.[329] The lion's share of the grammarian's

practice was given to ἐξήγησις.[330] This practice was achieved ultimately by a number of

sub-practices: ἱστορικόν (historical inquiry), τεχνικόν (attention to grammatical detail),

and γλωσσηματικόν (etymology).[331] Διόρθωσις, ἀνάγνωσις, and ἐξήγησις are all rule-

based practices used by the grammarian in the proper interpretation of texts.

Διόρθωσις, Ἱστορικόν, Τεχνικόν, and Γλωσσηματικόν

Origen's employment of these grammatical practices is well documented.[332] What

I wish to do in the following pages is to demonstrate how these discursive practices are

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[329] A lengthy quotation from Dionysius Thrax illustrates the importance of ἀνάγνωσις for the grammarian: "When reading, proper attention must be given to style of delivery, to prosodic features, and to the correct division of the utterance. From the style of delivery we perceive the true value of the piece, from the prosodic features the art of its construction, and from correct division the overall sense…Unless the rules are carefully observed, the true value of the poetry is lost, and the reader's whole approach becomes subject to ridicule." (Dionysius Thrax, Tekhne Grammatike) ET Ibid., 172-173. Quintilian provides a similar description of ἀνάγνωσις and says he can give only one rule: the reader "must understand what he reads." Quintilian, *Inst*. 1.8.2 (Bulter, LCL)

[330] Marrou points out that the term ἐξήγησις became a near synonym of γραμματικός. Marrou, 166.

[331] This list could be greatly expanded, but the three mentioned here figure most prominently in the discussion of Origen's discursive practice below.

[332] See most recently Martens, *Origen and Scripture*. Origen does not explicitly discuss ἀνάγνωσις but it is presupposed throughout his exegesis. An important example occurs in his discussions of John 1:3-4. Each citation of these verses presupposes an important decision regarding how the text is to be read: Does a full stop belong before ὃ γέγονεν so that this relative clause modifies what comes after (ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν) or does the full stop belong after ὃ γέγονεν so that it modifies what comes before (καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο

used in the construction of scripture; that is, how Origen uses them to pair scriptural

resources and schemas together into one whole. To that end I will examine a few

passages where these practices are evident in Origen's commentary on John. In each of

these passages Origen is using the types of practices that were expected of a grammarian.

To begin with, there is an example of a kind of τεχνικόν or at the very least a

careful reading in *Comm. Jo.* 32.169-197 that allows Origen to associate apostolic

teaching with the text of John. In this passage Origen explains the meaning of John

13:19, "I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe

that I am he" (NRSV). Origen notes that there is something odd about Jesus saying this to

the disciples; Origen assumes that the disciples *already* believed that Jesus was the

Christ. Why then would Jesus say this to those who already believed in him? There

appears to be a gap, or something unexplained in the text. Origen solves this problem by

making a distinction between "first theorems" and "second theorems."[333] The disciples

already have accepted the "first theorems," i.e. that Jesus was the Christ, but there was

room for them to grow in wisdom by accepting "second theorems." This distinction,

which Origen uses to make sense of the text, allows him to discuss what the "first

theorems" are: There is one God; Jesus Christ is Lord who is both human and divine;

οὐδὲ ἕν)? Origen always places ὃ γέγονεν with what comes after. See *Comm. Jo.* 1.112; 1.223; 2.114; 2.137.

[333] Ὁ παραλαμβάνων σοφίας θεωρήματα ἔσθ᾽ὅτε ἐπί προτέροις, δι᾽ἃ ἤδη σοφός, ἐστιν, ἀναλαμβάνει δεύτερα…(*Comm. Jo.* 32.172 [SC 385:260, 262]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 375. I am dissatisfied with Heine's rendering of θεωρήματα as "doctrines." I have translated θεωρήματα a theorems not only because of linguistic similarities, but because a theorem is a guideline upon which further conclusions are based. I think this is what Origen has in mind here.

There is the Holy Spirit; Humans possess free will and will be punished or rewarded for how they use it.[334] In short, Origen uses τεχνικόν to discover a gap in the text and then takes advantage of that gap to insert apostolic teaching into his explanation of the text.

Near the beginning of Origen's commentary when he discusses John 1:28 in *Comm. Jo.* 6.204-226, he is faced with variant readings in the manuscripts and forced to engage in διόρθωσις. At stake is whether the text should read Βηθαβαρᾷ or Βηθανίᾳ. Origen acknowledges that Βηθανίᾳ "occurs in nearly all the manuscripts" including Heracleon's commentary.[335] He even acknowledges that Βηθανίᾳ was likely the earlier reading. However, as Origen also points out, he knows of no Βηθανίᾳ near the Jordan River. Origen then engages in ἱστορικόν, a sub-species of ἐξήγησις, by providing a geographical account of the area alluded to in the text. He claims that Βηθανίᾳ was actually about fifteen stades from Jerusalem but that the Jordan River was about another 188 stades out from Βηθανίᾳ. This geographical discussion not only aids Origen in making a text-critical decision, but by participating in ἱστορικόν he demonstrates the appropriate practical knowledge that lends him authority as an interpreter.

The geographical details alone were enough to convince Origen to read Βηθαβαρᾷ over Βηθανίᾳ (*Comm. Jo.* 6.204), but Origen does not stop his discussion there. He goes to make another argument for his text-critical choice on the basis of γλωσσηματικόν. According to Origen, Βηθαβαρᾷ means "house of preparation" and Βηθανίᾳ means "house of obedience" (*Comm. Jo.* 6.206). It is appropriate, then, that

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[334] *Comm. Jo.* 32.187-189.

[335] σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις κεῖται (*Comm. Jo.* 6.204 [SC 157:284]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 224.

John the Baptist, who was preparing the way of Christ, should baptize at a place called "the house of preparation." Likewise, Βηθανία, "house of obedience" is a suitable name for the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. This approach to διόρθωσις reinforces Origen's decision about the text and further allows him to stress the continuity between Jesus and John. It also provides an opportunity for Origen to highlight a methodological principle, "We must not, therefore, despise precision concerning names if we wish to understand the Holy Scriptures perfectly."[336]

By employing γλωσσηματικόν for the sake of perfecting understanding, Origen has acknowledged that scriptural resources are incomplete on their own; they must be paired with schemas. A poignant example of this comes in *Comm. Jo.* 10.37-47. In this passage Origen comments on John 2:12 which says that Jesus "went down to Capernaum." Origen glosses "Capernaum" as "field of exhortation" (*Comm. Jo*. 10.37). Capernaum is no just longer a location to be found on a map of Palestine, it is now something else as well. Having delocalized "Capernaum" in this way, Origen then engages in τεχνικόν by noting that the text uses the verb κατέβη, "And we must examine further why they do not now go into (εἰσέρχονται) Capernaum, nor go up to (ἀναβαίνουσιν) it, but go down (καταβαίνουσιν)."[337] What then does it mean for Jesus

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[336] Οὐ καταφρονητέον οὖν τῆς περὶ τὰ ὀνόματα ἀκριβείας τῷ ἀπαραλείπτως βουλομένῳ συνεῖναι τὰ ἅγια γράμματα. (*Comm. Jo*. 6.207 [SC 157:286]) ET Ibid., 225. What follows is a short discussion of various names and their meanings in other Gospels as well as the "Old Testament."

[337] Ἔτι δὲ ἐξεταστέον, διὰ τί νῦν οὐκ εἰσέρχονται εἰς τὴν Καφαρναοὺμ μηδὲ ἀναβαίνουσιν εἰς αὐτήν, ἀλλὰ καταβαίνουσιν. (*Comm. Jo*. 10.39 [SC 157:408]) ET Ibid., 264. Heine translates Καφαρναοὺμ as "Capharnaum" I have altered his translation to "Capernaum" for consistency with modern English translations of the Gospel of John.

(and those with him) to descend to a "field of exhortation?" Origen takes this as a

description of Jesus's sojourn not from one place in Palestine to another, but a sojourn

from God to humanity in need of exhortation. The narrative from John also includes the

detail that Jesus stayed in that location for only three days. Origen concludes, "For the

lower 'field of exhortation' does not have the capacity for illumination concerning many

teachings, being capable of only a few."[338] In this passage the grammatical practices

γλωσσηματικόν and τεχνικόν have opened the resource, the Gospel of John, to be paired

with a schema, the narrative of Jesus's procession from God. Without this pairing, Jesus's

procession has no textual basis and the text is just an account of a change in location. But

by using γλωσσηματικόν and τεχνικόν to pair the resource and schema together, Origen

has produced something more than the resource or schema alone; he has constructed

scripture.

Interpreting Scripture by Scripture

Perhaps the most important practice that Origen uses in ἐξήγησις is the principle

of interpreting scripture by scripture. This practice derives from the Hellenistic

grammarians who used the principle of interpreting Homer by Homer: if one passage

from Homer was obscure, the grammarian could use another passage from Homer to

clarify its meaning.[339] Origen provides a Pauline warrant to further justify this

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[338] τὸν γὰρ περὶ τῶν πλειόνων δογμάτων φωτισμὸν ὁ τῆς κατωτέρω παρακλήσεως ἀγρὸς οὐ χωρεῖ, ὀλιγωτέρων τυγχάνων δεκτικός. (*Comm. Jo*. 10.41 [SC 157:410]) ET Ibid., 265.

[339] The origin the slogan Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν is often attributed to Aristarchus of Samothrace as in McGuckin, 123. Pfeiffer, however, has shown that although the principle is true to Aristarchus's work, its formulation actually comes from

grammatical practice. Taking the language of 1 Corinthians 2:13 (πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες) Origen incorporates a practice of "interpreting spiritual things by spiritual things."[340] Origen uses a similar technique throughout his commentary; one such example comes in his comment on the Last Supper where Jesus washes his disciples' feet in *Comm. Jo.* 32.5-55. The text from John says that the Father had given "all things" (πάντα) into Jesus's "hands" (τὰς χεῖρας). Origen appeals to Ps. 109:1 (LXX) to explain what is meant by πάντα. "For Jesus's enemies were also a part of the 'all things' that Jesus knew…to be given to him by the Father."[341] But this does not fully explain πάντα; are there other things to be included? Origen turns his attention now to 1 Corinthians 15 which he quotes as follows, "For, as in Adam all (πάντες) die, so also in the Lord all (πάντες) shall be made alive."[342] Now that Origen has brought himself to comment on 1 Corinthians 15:22 he must point out, for the sake of preserving God's justice, that although all will be made alive in the Lord, this will only occur in a specific

Porphyry. Rudolf Pfeiffer, *A History of Classical Scholarship from the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 226-27.

[340] Origen appealed to 1 Cor. 2:13 early on in his exegetical career in a commentary on the psalms. See *Sel. Ps*. in PG 12:1080C and Ronald E. Heine, "Reading the Bible with Origen," in *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity*, ed. Paul M. Blowers (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 136-139. Origen also appeals to 1 Cor. 2:13 in this way in *Comm. Jo*. 13.361; in this passage the one who is able to interpret the spiritual by the spiritual has reached the pinnacle of understanding and "is absent from the body and present with the Lord." (2 Cor. 5:8)

[341] καὶ γὰρ οἱ ἐχθροὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μέρος τι τῶν πάντων ἦσαν οὓς ᾔδει…δεδόσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς. (*Comm. Jo*. 32.27 [SC 385:198]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 347.

[342] Ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν, οὕτως καὶ ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται. (*Comm. Jo*. 32.27 [SC 385:198]) ET Ibid. Origen's text differs from Nestle-Aland 27 by reading τῷ κυρίῳ rather than τῷ Χριστῷ.

"order" (τάγματι) according to 1 Corinthians 15:23 (*Comm. Jo.* 32.28). Origen will return to this point later. What is important here is that Origen has used Psalm 109 and 1 Corinthians 15 to shed light on what is meant by πάντα in John 13:3.

Origen next glosses τὰς χεῖρας as a "actions and virtuous deeds" to suggest that all things have been turned over to Jesus's actions and deeds, therefore as John 5:17 says, "My Father works until now, and I work." What then is the work of Jesus that the Father has turned over to him by giving him all things? Origen explains:

> Now, it was because of those that went forth (τὰ ἐξελθόντα) from God that he went forth (ἐξῆλθεν) from God. He came to be outside of (ἔξω) God, although he had not previously wished to go forth (ἐξελθεῖν) from the Father, so [that] those that had gone forth (τὰ ἐξελθόντα) might come (ἔλθη) into his hands (εἰς τὰς χεῖρας) in the way and order (τάξει) of Jesus, and by following (ἀκολουθοῦντα) him they might be disciplined to go to God, and they will be with God because they follow (ἀκολουθεῖν) him.[343]

This passage appears to be out of place as an interpretive comment on the Last Supper, but there are important linguistic ties to what Origen has already said. The phrase εἰς τὰς χεῖρας is clearly drawn from John 13:3 and the term τάξει is comes from 1 Corinthians 15:23 where it was used to qualify the sequence in which the πάντες of 1 Corinthians 15:22 would be made alive in Christ. Origen had claimed that the order (τάξις) of 1 Corinthians 15:23 was necessary to preserve God's justice, i.e. not all would be made alive at the same time because some had sinned more that others. Origen further explains this τάξις with John 13:36 where Jesus tells Peter that Peter will only be able to follow

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[343] Διὰ τὰ ἐξελθόντα δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἔξω γενομένου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ μὴ βουληθέντος προηγουμένως ἐξελθεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρός, ἵνα ἔλθη τὰ ἐξελθόντα εἰς τὰς χεῖρας ὁδῷ καὶ τάξει τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ οἰκονομηθῇ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ὑπάγειν ἀκολουθοῦντα αὐτῷ, διὰ τὸ ἀκολουθεῖν αὐτῷ ἐσόμενα πρὸς τὸν θεόν. (*Comm. Jo*. 32.35 [SC 385:202]) ET Ibid., 349. altered.

(ἀκολουθήσεις) Jesus later (*Comm. Jo*. 32.36). Much of the key terminology of Origen's comment in *Comm. Jo*. 32.35, εἰς τὰς χεῖρας, τάξει, and ἀκολουθοῦντα, come from the scriptural resources that Origen has pooled together to explain the πάντα that the Father has given to Jesus. Other important terms for Origen's comment, in particular τὰ ἐξελθόντα/ἐξῆλθεν come from his narrative schema.[344]

The principle behind the grammarian's practice of interpreting Homer by Homer is that the author of a text is that text's best interpreter. When Origen interprets scripture by scripture, the underlying logic for him is that scripture has but one author (i.e. the Holy Spirit) and therefore represents a coherent whole.[345] Whenever Origen uses a text from the LXX to interpret a New Testament text or uses one New Testament text to interpret another, he is claiming that these discretely bound volumes belong together as a whole; he is binding the books together conceptually even before book technology allowed them to be bound together physically. Furthermore, in the particular instance described above, the assumption that discrete scriptural resources can be used to interpret one another allowed Origen to use their language in combination to articulate one of his scriptural schemas, that of procession and return. The text of John 13 raised the question of what work the Father had handed over to Jesus. Origen then used terms from other passages and a narrative schema to answer that very question.

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[344] See, for example, Origen's discussion in *Princ*. 2.8.

[345] Origen often refers to this author as the Holy Spirit. For a discussion see Jeremy M. Bergen, "Origen on the Authorial Intention of Scripture," *Conrad Grebel Review* 23, no. 3 (2005).

The Practice of Grammar and Exegetical Authority

     Origen employed these discursive practices not just to interpret the Fourth Gospel

generally, but he did so in competition with a previous interpreter. I have already noted

that Origen's literary patron Ambrose commissioned Origen to write this commentary in

order to refute the interpretation of Heracleon. In order to finish this discussion of

Origen's exegetical practice, I would like to consider the rhetoric he uses in those

passages where he engages with Heracleon's interpretation. There are a few reminders

that are important in this context. Heracleon's commentary is no longer extant; it is only

preserved in fragments in Origen's own commentary. While I do not think that Origen

deliberately misrepresented Heracleon, it is possible that at times he misunderstood

him.[346] In addition, Bart Ehrman has convincingly argued that Origen and Heracleon

were working from different textual traditions of the Gospel of John; they were simply

not interpreting the *same* text.[347] For these reasons any discussion about the

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[346] Harold Attridge suggests that Origen imposed a rigid structure of "fixed natures" onto
Heracleon's interpretation. Harold Attridge, "Heracleon and John: Reassessment of an
Early Christian Hermeneutical Debate," in *Biblical Interpretation: History, Context, and
Reality*, ed. Christine Helmer, Symposium (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature,
2005), 71.

[347] See Bart Ehrman, "Heracleon, Origen, and the Text of the Fourth Gospel," *Vigiliae
Christianae* 47, no. (1993). Ehrman notes that in 11 out of 49 instances where Origen and
Heracleon are in disagreement, they are working with different texts. In one particularly
striking example it appears that Origen's version of John 1:3 read οὐδὲ ἕν whereas
Heracleon's read οὐδέν. Origen's argument that "not one thing" came into being apart
from the Word is strongly supported by the text he is reading. By contrast, Heracleon
argues that "nothing" of the things in the cosmos (as opposed to the Pleroma) came into
being apart from the Word. Heracleon's interpretation would be much more tenuous if his
text read the emphatic οὐδὲ ἕν as opposed to οὐδέν. Ehrman suggests that the text used
by Heracleon may be a better read and that Origen may be the source of the variant οὐδὲ
ἕν. Ehrman: 109. The 27th edition of the Nestle-Aland reads οὐδὲ ἕν.

disagreements between Origen and Heracleon must be provisional. My focus is therefore

on the rhetoric used by Origen in his characterization of Heracleon's exegesis.

The differences between Origen and Heracleon that I am about to discuss ought

not give the impression that there was no agreement between the two. To state the

obvious, the Gospel of John is an important text for both commentators. Heracleon, like

Origen, engages in the practice of the grammarian in order to interpret the text of John.[348]

Origen and Heracleon even occasionally agree on the meaning of a particular passage.[349]

Even more striking is a near similarity between Origen's and Heracleon's view of

Christ's sojourn. Origen describes Christ going out from the Father to retrieve those

others who had gone out. This sojourn has a striking similarity in Heracleon who also

comments about Jesus "going down" to Capernaum: "[Heracleon] says Capernaum

means these most remote places of the cosmos, these material realms into which [Christ]

descended."[350]

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[348] Attridge notes that Hercaleon's surviving fragments contain examples of διορθωτικον, γλωσσιματικον, and ἱστορικον. Attridge, 61.

[349] See *Comm. Jo*. 6.126; 6.115; 6.126 and 13.350.

[350] καί φησι τὴν Καφαρναοὺμ σημαίνειν ταῦτα τὰ ἔσχατα τοῦ κόσμου, ταῦτα τὰ ὑλικὰ εἰς ἃ κατῆλθεν. (*Comm. Jo*. 10.48 [SC 157:414]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 266. I have altered Heine's translation of Καφαρναοὺμ for sake of continuity with modern English translations of the Gospel of John. For both Origen and Heracleon Christ has descended into the cosmos, but there is also a key difference here. For Heracleon, Christ is descending into what is utterly alien to him; For Origen, Christ is descending into his own creation. The difference is manifest in their mutual interpretations of "Capernaum." As we have seen, Origen glosses it as "field of exhortation" whereas Heracleon glosses it as "the most remote places of the cosmos."

These similarities make the exegetical conflict between Origen and Heracleon all the more intense. Since Heracleon's exegesis is not extant outside of Origen's citations, I cannot provide a full discussion of their debate. However, the rhetoric that Origen uses around his opponent's interpretation is itself worthy of investigation for Origen's own construction of scripture. There are three main types of criticism that Origen levels against Heracleon in order to maintain his own interpretation: criticism of Heracleon's method, criticism of Heracleon's use (or non-use) of sources, and on the basis of these, criticism of Heracleon's authority as an interpreter.

Origen criticizes Heracleon's use of grammatical practice. At *Comm. Jo.* 6.126 Origen claims that Heracleon's understanding of the meaning of prophet in John 1:25 is inaccurate. Heracleon apparently said that it was a part of the role of the prophet to baptize. However, Origen discredits this by pointing out that Heracleon "is not able to show that any of the prophets baptized."[351] Origen is claiming that Heracleon has failed to engage in ἱστορικόν; if he had, then he would have known that baptism is *not* a regular part of the prophet's role.

There are also times where Origen claims that Heracleon has failed to engage in τεχνικόν. One telling example comes at *Comm. Jo.* 6.92 where Origen is commenting on the dialogue between John the Baptist and the Jews who question him about his identity. Apparently Heracleon did not register the definite article preceding the term "prophet" in John 1:21 and took John the Baptist to deny being any kind of prophet and not just *the*

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[351] οὐ γὰρ ἔχει δεῖξαί τινα τῶν προφητῶν βαπτίσαντα. (*Comm. Jo.* 6.126 [SC 157:228]) ET Ibid., 204.

prophet.[352] Origen makes the following critique based on Heracleon's interpretation, "In the books which [Heracleon] has left he passed over such important things without examination (ἀνεξετάστως), having said very few things and those not investigated scientifically in their sequences (μὴ βεβασανισμένα ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς)."[353] Origen's use of the term βασανίζω reveals much about his attitude toward Heracleon as an interpreter. The term has a meaning about investigating something according to specific rules or procedures.[354] Heracleon's interpretation disregards the rules of grammatical practice and is therefore not scientific. He may offer exegetical utterances, but he does not offer exegetical statements.

A common refrain in Origen's criticism of Heracleon is that he has no evidence or sources for his conclusions.[355] One such example comes in *Comm. Jo.* 10.214 where Origen discusses Jesus's cleansing of the temple in John 2. Origen complains that Heracleon "has added on his own what has not been written, namely that the whip was

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[352] The disagreement between Origen and Heracleon here may be due to different textual traditions that they were each working with. See above. However, what is important here is how Origen rhetorically shapes his disagreements with Heracleon.

[353] Ὁ δὲ μὴ ἐπιστήσας τοῖς τόποις, ἐν οἷς καταλέλοιπεν ὑπομνήμασιν ἀνεξετάστως παρελήλυθεν τὰ τηλικαῦτα, σφόδρα ὀλίγα καὶ μὴ βεβασανισμένα ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς εἰπών. (*Comm. Jo.* 6.92 [SC 157:196]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 194.

[354] The term is used by Hippocrates in *De aere aquis et locis*. In section 3 the author is expounding upon how digestion changes according to the seasons. He tells his reader that he "will now set forth clearly how each of the foregoing questions ought to be investigated (βασανίζειν) and the tests applied" (Hippocrates, *Aer.* 3 [Jones, LCL]). He then goes on to provide a detailed medical discussion about how different types of weather affect the digestive system.

[355] See *Comm. Jo.* 2.100; 2.139; 6.306; 10.118; 13.66; and 13.249.

tied to a piece of wood."[356] The interpretation that Heracleon provides is that the "piece of wood" is a type of the cross that has destroyed all evil. Origen would not have objected to this typology per se, his complaint is that Heracleon is not sticking to what the lemma actually says. In another instance, in discussing Jesus's conversation with the woman at the well in John 4, Heracleon claims that the woman says that the water from Jacob's well lacks nourishment, to which Origen responds, "From what source can he demonstrate that Jacob's water lacks nourishment?"[357] Later, in response to a claim made by Heracleon about the savior's power, Origen has to ask, "And from what source also did [Heracleon] learn that 'the will of God is the Savior's power?'"[358] According to Origen, Heracleon is simply not sticking to what the text actually says as he provides comment upon it.

A final criticism that Origen makes of Heracleon is that the latter lacks authority to interpret texts. This claim is made explicitly in *Comm. Jo.* 6.111, where Origen is arguing against Heracleon's interpretation of the place held by John the Baptist with regard to the prophets who came before him and Jesus Christ who came after. Origen claims that Heracleon asserts certain things "without any evidence (χωρὶς πάσης κατασκευῆς)… as though he has the authority (ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων) to lay down a

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[356] Ἔπειτα ἑαυτῷ προσείληφεν τὸ μὴ γεγραμμένον, ὡς ἄρα εἰς ξύλον ἐδέδετο τὸ φραγέλλιον. (*Comm. Jo.* 10.214 [SC 157:510]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1-10*, 302.

[357] Πόθεν γὰρ δεικνύναι ἔχει ἄτροφον εἶναι τὸ τοῦ Ἰακὼβ ὕδωρ; (*Comm. Jo.* 13.66 [SC 222:66]) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 82. In this and in the following quotation the English term "source" is not in the Greek which simply reads πόθεν. Heine has supplied "source" to make the meaning clearer.

[358] Πόθεν δὲ καὶ ὅτι δύναμις τοῦ σωτῆρος τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ; (*Comm. Jo.* 13.249 [SC 222:164]) ET Ibid., 119.

doctrine…"[359] Origen goes on a little later in the passage to say that Heracleon does not

have the authority (ἐξουσίαν) to say anything he wants about the text. Why does Origen

deny to Heracleon the authority to interpret texts? Is it simply because he disagrees with

him? While this may be possible, I do not think that Origen would be so petty. The first

time Heracleon is introduced in Origen's commentary is in *Comm. Jo.* 2.100-104

regarding a disagreement about the meaning of the prepositional phrase δι᾽αὐτοῦ in John

1:3. The details of their disagreement do not concern me here, but what is important is

that Origen characterizes Heracleon's interpretation as a "private understanding" (τὸν

καθ᾽ ἑαυτὸν νοῦν). In this context καθ᾽ ἑαυτὸν does not mean "private" as opposed to

public. After all, while Origen was in Alexandria his own school was private and not

public.[360] So Origen cannot be criticizing Heracleon's understanding as "private" in that

sense. What Origen means then, is that Heracleon's authority as an interpreter is derived

entirely from himself and is, therefore, no real authority at all.[361] Heracleon's alleged

failure to employ discursive regularities such as ἱστορικόν or τεχνικόν as well as his

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[359] χωρὶς πάσης κατασκευῆς…ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων τοῦ δογματίζειν. (*Comm. Jo.* 6.111 [SC 157:212]) ET Ibid., 200.

[360] Pierre Hadot notes that during the imperial period the government had a role in establishing and funding select philosophical schools. Hadot, 147. These schools could be considered "public" as opposed to "private." Origen's school at Alexandria was, by contrast, neither public nor officially associated with the ecclesiastical structure. Daniélou, 14.

[361] For similar usages of καθ᾽ ἑαυτὸν see *Comm Jo.* 1.291 and 10.20. In the former passage Origen is arguing that the Word has its own "individuality (περιγραφὴν), that is to say, lives according to himself (καθ᾽ ἑαυτόν)…" In the latter passage Origen is discussing Jacob and Esau and suggests that if Jacob had not been blessed as Esau, then Esau would have been unable to receive a blessing "by himself" καθ᾽ ἑαυτόν). In each of these instances the force of καθ᾽ ἑαυτόν is not "private" but source of action.

failure to appeal to sources to support his claims indicate to Origen that he is not following the proper rules for interpreting texts and therefore he stands outside of an authoritative interpretive tradition. Since he stands outside this interpretive tradition, his interpretations are καθ᾽ ἑαυτὸν and not "in the true."

The effective use of exegetical practices such as the writing of a commentary and the employment of the *ars grammatica* necessitated a legitimating authority that transformed utterances into statements. In Origen's mind, his successful completion of a Greco-Roman education and the ability to attract literary patrons authorized him as a text-broker. He possessed a legitimate teaching authority that allowed him to control the meaning of a set of texts that he passed on to students in his school. These practices all contributed to the process of becoming scripture of the biblical text.

Conclusion

Somewhere between Origen's stack of papyrus codices and his structure of scripture are found the exegetical practices of the Greco-Roman School, the practices associated with the use of books, the practice of writing a commentary, and the practices of grammar. These were employed by Origen to pair together his scriptural resources and his scriptural schema into a coherent whole: the structure of scripture. The corollary to this is that Origen's structure of scripture cannot be reduced to a stack of papyrus codices or a narrative of Christ's sojourn; To speak meaningfully about what Origen means by scripture one must take account of both of these parts, otherwise Origen will be misunderstood.

Throughout this chapter I have made occasional comparisons between Origen's structure of scripture and the structures of scripture constructed by Heracleon and

Irenaeus. These comparisons are an important part of understanding scripture in early Christianity generally. Interestingly, the scriptural resources used by each of these Christian theologians are similar. Although Origen's collection of scriptural resources may be more open than Irenaeus's scriptural resources and although Origen rejects *The Preaching of Peter* that Heracleon appears to have accepted, the three generally use the LXX, a gospel collection, and a collection of apostolic writings. It is tempting therefore to conclude that they all used the same, or at least similar, scriptures. But such a conclusion would be incorrect because it fails to account for their scriptural schemas.

Origen, Irenaeus, and Heracleon all pair their scriptural resources with different scriptural schemas in their construction of scripture. In this chapter I listed apostolic teaching and a narrative of Christ's sojourn as the schemas that Origen pairs with this scriptural resources. Origen's apostolic teaching has similarities with Irenaeus's Rule of Faith, but it organizes Origen's scriptural resources differently in that it is less restrictive. The narrative of Christ's sojourn as marked similarities to Heracleon's Valentinian myth, especially where Heracleon speaks of the descent of the Savior. However, there is a crucial difference: Origen's Christ descends from God to return all people to the contemplation of God whereas Heracleon's Savior descends from a position lower than God only to retrieve a select few. These differences are important because since scripture is composed of resources and schemas a difference in schema leads to a difference in scripture. In short, Origen, Irenaeus, and Heracleon have different scriptures. A failure to conceive of scripture as a structure may obscure this insight.

There is another scriptural schema that is a part of Origen's structure of scripture which I mentioned in this chapter but did not yet discuss: the idea that scriptural

resources have a body, soul, and spirit. In order to understand this scriptural schema one must first be familiar with Origen's structure of the self. This will be the topic of the next chapter: the becoming self of a human person in Origen's exegetical practices. After the next chapter I will return to this last scriptural schema and show how it relates to what I am calling the anthropomorphizing of scripture in chapter five.

CHAPTER FOUR: STRUCTURING THE SELF IN ORIGEN

Questions of identity and continuity of the self were cast in a new light when
early Christians claimed that they would enjoy a resurrected existence after they had died.
Not only did they have to account for continuity of self over time, as did their
contemporaries, they had to account for continuity across the chasm of death. Yet, the
project of the Christian self was not entirely otherworldly; like their Jewish and pagan
contemporaries early Christians had a practical aim in cultivating the self. They aimed "to
enhance the self's potential, to correct its deficiencies, to bridge the gap between the self
and the (divine) other."[362] Underlying all of this was the question of what the self actually
was: what constitutes the self?

This chapter will address how Origen dealt with this question. I begin with a
discussion of Origen's structure of the self by identifying both its resources and its
schema. Following the discussion of the structure of the self, I examine by what
exegetical practices these resources and schema were paired together into a coherent
whole. For the sake of organizational convenience, my discussion of the exegetical
practices by which the self is constructed is divided into two subsections: liturgical
practices and homiletical practices. This division should not be taken as absolute; after
all, Origen's homilies took place in a liturgical context. The division merely highlights a

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[362] David Michael L. Satlow and Steven Wietzman Brakke, ed. *Religion and the Self in
Antiquity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 10.

difference of emphasis: in discussion of the liturgical practices I emphasize the *form* of the practice whereas in the discussion of homiletical context I emphasize the teaching *content* of the homilies. In either case, the purpose of discussing exegetical practices in this chapter is to show the process of the becoming self of a human person.

The liturgical context is fitting for this investigation because it was one of the most important sites for the construction of the Christian self in Origen's period. The details of Origen's biography dictate, therefore, that I will be considering the latter portion of his life when he lived in Caesarea.[363] It was only *after* his move to Caesarea that Origen was given an official place in the ecclesial hierarchy. During a three year period at Caesarea Origen preached hundreds of homilies.[364] Unfortunately many of these homilies are no longer extant in the original Greek.[365] Origen's homilies on Jeremiah are an exception in that many of them are still extant in Greek. Therefore I will be making special reference to this collection of homilies later in this chapter as I discuss the practices associated with the liturgical context that were employed in the construction of the self for Origen and his congregations.

Origen's Structure of the Self

The self, according to Origen, is composed of three resources—a body, a soul, and a spirit—that are organized and understood according to a schema of the self's

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[363] The exception to this will be frequent reference to Origen's *Princ.* that was composed early in this life at Alexandria.

[364] Trigg, 177.

[365] Only 21 of the 279 homilies that have survived in their entirety are in Greek. Twenty of these are on Jeremiah and one is the homily on 1 Samuel [1 Kings in the LXX] 28. There are also Greek fragments of homilies on Matthew and Luke.

directionality toward or away from its origin in God. Directionality provides organization and continuity of the resources of the self. In the next few pages I will first discuss these reseouces and schmeas.

Resources of the Self

Origen most clearly lists the self's resources in the passage from *On First Principles* where he says, "a man consists of body, soul, and spirit."[366] This clearly stated trichotomy is drawn from the language of 1 Thessalonians 5:23, but under a closer investigation of Origen's other comments a much more complex picture emerges: Origen is not entirely clear about what he means by "body" and as often as not he thinks of the self as a dichotomy in terms of inner and outer. Such ambiguities are common in Origen. Jean Daniélou reminds us that Origen does not yield easily to systemization: "the only thing to do [is] to admit that his mind could follow several lines of thought at the same time without bringing them into harmony with one another."[367] While Daniélou is surely correct to caution us in this regard, Henri Crouzel detects two main points behind Origen's understanding of the self: (1) his doctrine of a person as a trichotomy and (2) that humanity shares in the image of God.[368] Following Crouzel, I consider the body, soul, and spirit the resources of the self in Origen's thought, even though Origen often collapses the soul and spirit together under the rubric of the "inner man." Following

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[366] ὁ ἄνθρωπος συνέστηκεν ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς καὶ πνεύματος. (*Princ*. 2.4.2 [SC 268:312]) ET Butterworth, 276. See also *Princ*. 3.4.1 where Origen lists "soul and body and 'vital' spirit." *anima et corpore ac spiritu uitali* (SC 268:200).

[367] Daniélou, 312.

[368] Crouzel, 87.

Daniélou it must be admitted that there may be points of contradiction that Origen did not fully work out.

The soul is undoubtedly the central resource of the self for Origen. In his discussion of the soul in *On First Principles,* Origen gives a definition that follows Aristotle's. Rufinus gives the passage, "For the soul is defined thus, as an existence possessing imagination and desire, which qualities can be expressed in the Latin, though the rendering is not so apt as the original, by the phrase, capable of feeling and movement."[369] Origen, like many of his contemporaries, attributed the self's ability to reason and power of movement to the soul. Each of these capacities is important for Origen's understanding of the soul; the power of reason is the means by which the soul, and hence, the self, is able to contemplate God, but it is the power of movement by which the soul is able to direct its power of reason to whatever it so desires. Origen explains this by offering an etymology for the word soul. He derives the term ψυχή from the verb ψύχεσθαι which means "to cool."[370] This is significant for Origen because he views God as a "consuming fire" and the devil as something cold. Souls, then, are termed souls insofar as they have turned their powers of rationality from the contemplation God and so have grown cold. This suggests that what Origen calls a "soul" was not always a soul;

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[369] *Definitur namque anima hoc modo, quia sit substantia* φανταστικὴ *et* ὁρμητική, *quod latine, licet non tam proprie explanetur, dicit amen potest sensibilis et mobilis.* (*Princ.* 2.8.1 [SC 252:336]) ET Butterworth, 120. This definition is close to Aristotle's, "The soul in living creatures is distinguished by two functions, the judging capacity which is a function of the intellect and of sensation combined, and the capacity for exciting movement in space." Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ ψυχὴ κατὰ δύο ὥρισται δυνάμεις ἡ τῶν ζῴων, τῷ τε κριτικῷ, ὃ διανοίας ἔργον ἐστὶ καὶ αἰσθήσεως, καὶ ἔτι τῷ κινεῖν τὴν κατὰ τόπον κίνησιν. (Aristotle, *On the Soul,* 3.9 [Hett, LCL]).

[370] *Princ.* 2.8.3.

indeed, beforehand it was a mind or a rational nature.[371] The soul is the source of

rationality and movement for the self and is for that very reason a dynamic resource that

seems capable of significant transformations.

If the power of movement comes from the soul, Origen must ask if there is

anything about the soul that inclines it towards evil. In *Princ.* 3.4.1 he raises this very

question and offers three possible answers: (1) that there are two souls within a person,

one is inclined towards good and the other is inclined toward evil, (2) that the soul's

connection to the body inclines it to those evils that are pleasant to the body, or (3) that

the soul, being essentially one, is composed of parts, one of which inclines toward good

another of which inclines toward evil.

Origen rejects the third of these options for the reason that scripture does not

confirm it.[372] By contrast, Origen is able to make scriptural arguments for both of the

other options. Regarding the first option, that there are actually two souls, a lower and a

higher, Origen suggests that the soul that is inclined toward the good is heavenly and the

soul that is inclined toward evil is earthly, that is, it is produced "along with the body

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[371] "All of these considerations seem to show that when the mind departed from its original condition and dignity it became or was termed a soul, and if ever it is restored and corrected it returns to the condition of being a mind." *Ex quibus omnibus illud uidetur ostendi, quod mens de statu ac dignitate sua declinans, effecta uel nuncupata est anima; quae si reparata fuerit et correcta, redit in hoc, ut sit mens.* (*Princ.* 2.8.3 [SC 252:348]) ET Butterworth, 125.

[372] *Princ.* 3.4.1. The idea that the soul has multiple parts is reminiscent of Plato's teaching of the tripartite soul. Origen's rejection of this idea is significant because it demonstrates that Origen was not simply Christianizing the Platonic tradition by using the bible as a proof text for a Christian Platonism. Whatever Origen's relationship to the Platonic tradition is, it is nothing if not complex and nuanced.

from bodily seed."[373] According to Origen the heavenly soul is referred to multiple times

throughout scripture: in Genesis 25:22-25 where Jacob's soul was already given victory

over Esau's, in Jeremiah 1:5 where Jeremiah's soul was sanctified from the womb, and in

Luke 1:41 where John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit while in the womb. By

contrast, the earthly soul is referred to in Galatians 5:17 as "the flesh" which is in

opposition to the spirit. Regarding the second option, that the soul is led toward evil by

its association with the body, Origen again cites Galatians 5:17 as well as Romans 8. The

only thing that Origen is dogmatic about is that the soul does not have two parts. Whether

its inclination toward evil is due to there actually being two souls, or whether it is due to

the soul's association with the body, Origen leaves it up to his reader to decide.

Either way, the soul's (or the heavenly soul's) capacity for rationality is due to its

being fashioned after the image of God.[374] Origen discusses an innate desire for learning

about the created order that is intended to bring a person into contemplation of God.[375]

Karen Jo Torjesen rightly attributes this to the logos found in the soul that is in the image

of the Logos, which is both the reason rational beings were made *and* the goal for which

they exist.[376] In his second homily on Jeremiah Origen stresses that the image of God

applies to the soul of every person, "In the same way, the soul, not only of the first man,

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[373] *ex corporali eam semine simul adserunt cum corpore seminari* (*Princ.* 3.4.2 [SC 268:202]) ET Butterworth, 231.

[374] Crouzel points out that Origen's terminology in this regard is very consistent. The soul is not the image of God, the Logos is. Therefore the soul is after the image of God or the image of the image of God. Crouzel, 93.

[375] *Princ.* 2.11.4

[376] Torjesen, 109.

but of all men, arose *according to the image…*"[377] Though this image is present in the

soul, Origen maintains that it must be cultivated by living according to virtue. Celsus, the

second-century detractor of Christianity, criticized Christians for having no images of

their God. Origen responds, "In each of those who do all in their powers to imitate [the

savior] in this respect there is an image 'after the image of the creator'; which they make

by looking to God with a pure heart…"[378] Origen likens this process to sculptors who

make pagan idols. The image of God, that is the Logos, must be cultivated in the soul

much like a statue is brought out of a stone by a sculptor.[379]

Origen speaks more about the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit than he does about

the spirit of an individual person, but spirit is nonetheless an important resource of the

self. In both *Princ.* 2.4.2 and in 3.4.1 he lists the spirit along with soul and body. The

corollary of the above suggestion that the soul is inclined toward evil when it directs

itself toward the body is that the soul is inclined toward good when it directs itself toward

the spirit. There are a number of places where Origen discusses the soul as something

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[377] τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ἡ ψυχὴ οὐ τοῦ πρώτου μόνου γέγονε κατ' εἰκόνα, ἀλλὰ παντὸς ἀνθρώπου…(*Hom. Jer.* 2.1 [GCS 6:17]) ET John Clark Smith, *Origen: Homilies on Jeremiah; Homily on 1 Kings 28*, Fathers of the Church (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 23. Origen's use of the image of God must be distinguished from that of Irenaeus. For the latter, the image of God is applicable to the entire person, including the body. For Origen, the image of God is not to be applied to the body for the reason that God is incorporeal. See *Hom. Gen.* 1.13.

[378] Καὶ ἐν ἑκάστῳ δὲ τῶν κατὰ δύναμιν ἐκεῖνον καὶ ἐν τούτῳ μιμησαμένων ἐστὶν ἄγαλμα τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος, ὅπερ κατασκευάζουσι τῷ ἐνορᾶν θεῷ καθαρᾷ καρδίᾳ, μιμηταὶ γενόμενοι τοῦ θεοῦ. (*Cels.* 8.18 [SC 150:212]) ET Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 465.

[379] This is a stock image among philosophers when discussing self-improvement. It can also be found in Plato, *Phadr.* 252d and Plotinus, *Enn.* 1.6.9.

between the flesh (perhaps understood as an earthly soul) and the spirit.[380] The spirit in

these instances appears to be some part of a self that is more closely attuned to God;

Crouzel comments that the spirit is "the divine element present in man."[381] Origen seems

to use "spirit" language only when he is either trying to be systematic about his

discussion of the human person or when he wants to highlight what is best in human

nature. As often as not, however, Origen combines spirit with soul and speaks of both of

them together as the "inner man."[382] This inner man stands in distinction if not in

opposition to an "outer man," that is, the body.

The body is the last resource of the self. On the one hand the body ought to be the

most easily understood resource of the self because it is most concrete. On the other

hand, there are a number of ambiguities if not contradictions in Origen's comments on

the body. Origen acknowledges that humans are a kind of animal and therefore have

bodies that make it possible to interact with the physical environment.[383] The question is

whether the body counts among as a resource of the self. An affirmative answer to this

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[380] *Comm Jo*. 32.18 and *Comm. Rom*. 1.18

[381] Crouzel, 88. The idea expressed by Crouzel is based upon 1 Cor. 2:13 which is a key text for Origen's theory of interpretation.

[382] See for example *Hom. Jer*. 13.1. Daniélou comments on the inner being, "Man's real being is therefore his inner being, which in a sense partakes of the nature of God." Daniélou, 295. While Daniélou is correct that for Origen the "inner being" has a connection with God, he over states his case to imply that the outer being is less real. If this were the case Origen would not insist participating in the physical parts of baptism, eucharist, and prayer as he does.

[383] "For we men are animals, formed by a union of body and soul, and thus alone did it become possible for us to live on earth." *...nos homines animal sumus compositum ex corporis animaeque concursu; hoc enim modo habitare nos super terras possible fuit.* (*Princ*. 1.1.6 [SC 252:102]) ET Butterworth, 11.

question is more likely if it can be demonstrated that for Origen the self has always *had* a body and/or if the self always *will* have a body.

Origen is not consistent concerning whether the self always had a body. He claims that to live "apart from any association with a bodily element is a thing that belongs only to the nature of God."[384] This suggests that body is a resource of all selves except for God's self whose nature is to be without body. In another passage Origen makes a very different claim: "All these [souls and rational natures] are incorporeal in respect of their proper nature, but though incorporeal they were nevertheless made."[385] It is not only in *On First Principles* that Origen makes this kind of claim about the soul. In his late work, *Against Celsus*, Origen also claims that the soul, by nature, is incorporeal.[386] It seems that Origen wants to maintain *both* that God alone is incorporeal *and* that the soul is incorporeal by nature. There may be a way out of this contradiction. *Princ.* 2.2.2 contains the following passage:

> [I]t is only in idea and thought that a material substance is separable from [rational beings] and that though this substance seems to have been produced for

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[384] *...cum solius dei...naturae id proprium sit, ut sine materiali substantia...*(*Princ.* 1.6.4 [SC 252:206]) ET Ibid., 58. Origen makes a similar claim about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at *Princ.* 2.2.2.

[385] *omnes secundum propriam naturam incorporeae sunt, sed...quod incorporeae sunt, nihilominus factae sunt.* (*Princ.* 1.7.1 [SC 252:208]) ET Ibid., 59. One may be tempted to attribute this contradiction to a difference in the Greek original and Rufinus' Latin translation. However, both passages come from the Latin translation. This is all the more interesting because Rufinus admits to looking for contradictions (which he attributed to heretical interpolations) and correcting them. See Rufinus' preface to the work.

[386] *Cels.* 7.32.

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 is found in the Trinity alone.[387]

G. W. Butterworth, the translator of the English version of the text, has suggested that this passage was modified by Rufinus to make Origen more palatable to fourth-century Christians. This conclusion is not necessary however. It may be that when Origen wishes to speak about the nature of the soul itself, he can do so hypothetically without appeal to corporeality. When he wishes to speak about a self, however, he must include body because while the soul is incorporeal by nature, it is never found apart from some kind of body. If the above passage is a legitimate translation of the Origen's Greek, and I do not think it necessary to doubt it, then one can conclude that in Origen's system some kind of body has always been a resource of the self.

Another debated topic is whether the body will always be among the self's resources. Early Christians were faced with a conceptual challenge: what happens to the body *after* the resurrection, or more specifically for those who read Paul as an authority, how is one to understand 1 Corinthians 15? Early Christians wanted to maintain some kind of continuity between the self in the present life and the post-resurrection self.[388] The question is whether the continuity will be of spirit, soul, and body, or just one or two of these resources. In *On First Principles* Origen entertains a few different answers to this question without insisting on any of them. He offers as suggestions that post-

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[387] *materialem uero substantiam opinione quidem et intellectu solo separari ab eis et pro ipsis uel post effectam uideri, sed numquam sine ipsa eas uel uixisse uiuere: solius namque trinitatis incorporea uita existere recte putabitur.* (*Princ.* 2.2.2 [SC 252:248]) ET Butterworth, 81.

[388] Raymond Martin and John Barresi, *The Rise and Fall of Soul and Self: An Intellectual History of Personal Identity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 57.

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resurrection existence may be without body, or that body and soul will be combined into an ether-like body, or that the existence will take place in a radically different sphere than what can currently be known.[389] While Origen does not expand upon the third option, it is clear that he entertains ideas of a self without a body in post-resurrection existence. Much later in his life, in *Against Celsus*, Origen is less open-minded about this question. Celsus had apparently mocked early Christians for desiring an embodied afterlife; after all, who would want a decayed corpse to be raised to life?[390] Origen responds by saying that an accurate understanding of the resurrection is not how Celsus, and presumably "simple-minded" Christians, understood it. Rather, following Paul's lead in 1 Corinthians 15, Origen claims that the resurrected body would somehow be different from, yet in continuity with, the earthly body.[391] In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul had spoken of a body being sown in corruption but reaped incorruptible. Origen uses similar logic when he discusses the body as a tabernacle of the soul, the former of which possesses a "seminal principle" (λόγον σπέρματος).[392] This seminal principle gives rise to a body more suited for "purer,

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[389] *Princ.* 2.3.7

[390] Celsus mocks this idea as "the hope of worms:" "For what sort of human soul would have any further desire for a body that had rotted?" Ποία γὰρ ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ ποθήσειεν ἂν ἔτι σῶμα σεσηπός; *Cels.* 5.14 ET Chadwick, 274.

[391] "Neither we nor the divine scriptures maintain that those long dead will rise up from earth with the same bodies without undergoing some change for the better." Οὔτε μὲν οὖν ἡμεῖς οὔτε τὰ θεῖα γράμματα αὐταῖς φησι σαρξί, μηδεμίαν μεταβολὴν ἀνειληφυίαις τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον, ζήσεσθαι τοὺς πάλαι ἀποθανόντας, ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἀναδύντας. (*Cels.* 5.18 [SC 147:58]) ET Ibid., 277.

[392] *Cels.* 7.32 (SC 150:84) ET Ibid., 420. Origen is borrowing the Stoic idea of σπερματικὸς λόγος to make sense of Paul's logic in 1 Cor. 15. The idea is that the body contains within itself the principle of its further development. Origen specifically fuses the idea of σπερματικὸς λόγος and Paul's metaphor of a seed being sown in *Princ.* 2.10.3.

ethereal, and heavenly regions."[393] In Origen's mature thought the body is a resource of the self even in post-resurrection existence.

Whatever one is to make of the body before and after earthly existence, it is a key resource of the self in the present life for Origen. The self includes an earthly body so that it can participate in the large pedagogical project that is the created order. Origen interprets the "vanity to which creation has been subjected" of Romans 8:20 as the possession of bodies.[394] When rational natures (which may be corporeal already) turned away from God, the cosmos was created as a place for them to dwell as they returned, stage by stage, to the contemplation of God. This required the creation of bodies for these rational natures. In a sense, embodiment is a punishment, but it is intended for the rehabilitation of rational natures.[395] The body is therefore not a bad, but a good thing. Daniélou has pointed out that Origen nowhere condemns the body in itself because it is a part of God's creation.[396] When Origen wished to refer to a negative effect of embodiment he used the term "flesh" not body.

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[393] τοὺς καθαρωτέρους καὶ αἰθερίους καὶ οὐρανίους τόπους. (*Cels*. 7.32 [SC150:86]) ET Ibid.

[394] *Princ*. 1.7.5

[395] *Princ*. 1.6.3. "It is a fundamental principle of [Origen's] thought that all punishments, in this world and succeeding ones, are remedial; they belong to God's providential plan for bringing all erring rational creatures back to God." Trigg, 115.

[396] Daniélou, 218. The goodness of the body is an important part of Origen's system especially when it comes to his teaching about the incarnation. It is on this point, more than any other, where Origen stands in opposition to the middle Platonism of his day.

This discussion shows that Origen's resources of the self are the same as those used by Irenaeus and Heracleon: body, soul, and spirit. However, Heracleon differs from Origen and Irenaeus in that he does not apply these resources to each individual but to humanity as a whole: some selves are *hylic*, others are *psychic* and still others are *pneumatic*. There is also a subtle difference between Irenaeus and Origen. Both insist that body is a resource of the self but Origen's concept of "body" is more ambiguous than is Irenaeus's. Because Irenaeus connects body to the *imago dei* it is necessary that the body a self possesses now will be the same after the resurrection except that immortality will be added. By contrast, Origen is open to a body that is radically transformed by the resurrection.

The Schema of the Self

Origen's structure of self contained body, soul, and spirit as its resources. These resources were organized and understood according a schema that I will call directionality toward, or away from, God. The Christian self is the self whose resources are organized and progressing toward God; the non-Christian self (for Origen the heretic, Jew, or pagan) is the self whose resources are organized and digressing away from God. Torjesen has done more than most recent scholars to demonstrate the pedagogical basis of Origen's theological and exegetical thought. She identifies "the journey of the soul" as a "general principle" of Origen's exegetical project.[397] Torjesen is correct about this, but the term "self" is more appropriate in this context than "soul" for the reason that it is not

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[397] Torjesen, 70-71.

just the soul that is involved in a journey toward or away from God. The whole person, the self, is involved.[398]

Origen's resources of the self and schema of the self are so closely related and mutually informing that I have already been speaking of the schema as I was discussing the resources. The etymology of ψυχή discussed above is used by Origen to demonstrate a digression of the soul away from God. Origen understands the reality of present embodiment as a pedagogical project intended to bring the self back into the contemplation of God. In a way, the resources of the self *cannot* be understood without also understanding the self's directionality toward or away from God. The story of that directionality can be summarized in this way: rational natures were created in an initial state of fellowship and contemplation of God, but at some point those rational natures turned their attention away from God. The degree to which these rational natures turned away from God is the degree to which they "fell" away from God and became embodied in the present rank of the created order. Some became angels and celestial beings, others became humans, others animals, and still others the devil and his hosts. God created the cosmos as a dwelling for all of these rational natures, now embodied souls. The purpose of the cosmos is to bring these now embodied souls back into contemplation and fellowship with God.[399] The resources of the self—body, soul, and spirit—are implicated in different ways throughout this basic narrative: the soul and spirit are the primary

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[398] Crouzel generally maintains that the "trichotomy" exists at every stage of humanity with the possible exception of "spirit" which is lost for those who are damned. That the spirit could be lost is suggested by Origen's comments in *Princ*. 2.10.7. See Crouzel, 92.

[399] For elements of this summary see *Princ*. 1.4-7; 2.1-3; 2.8-9

resources that contemplate God, but the body plays a key role in the project of bringing the soul and spirit back to contemplation of God. The role of the body is important enough that Origen insists that the body, or rather some elevated state of it, continues even after the soul is restored to God.

A central premise of this schema, and of Origen's thought generally, is the freedom of the will. The freedom of the will is central because with it the self can turn again to God and ascend back to God. It is also essential to the schema of the self because it allows Origen to acknowledge the great disparity of situation found among creatures while still defending the justice and impartiality of God. The paradigmatic example of this is Origen's discussion of the story of Jacob and Esau. How can Jacob be declared a victor over Esau before their birth if God is just? How can one account for these two twins being born into essentially different situations? Origen addresses this issue by claiming that Jacob and Esau existed *before* they were born into the cosmos with earthly bodies. In that pre-existence Jacob must have used his free will toward a better end than did Esau.[400]

Origen's schema of the self can be compared with Irenaeus's and Heracleon's. The *imago Dei* is fundamental for both Irenaeus and Origen. However, for the former this concept is a schema that organizes all the self's resources *including the body*. By contrast, Origen only applies *imago Dei* to the soul, or rather; the soul is patterned after the *imago Dei* that is, in turn, Christ. Because *imago Dei* does not apply to all of Origen's resources of the self it does not rise to the level of a schema. The origin of the self is a key aspect of

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[400] *Princ*. 2.9.6-8

the schema of the self for both Heracleon and Origen. For Heracleon, different selves have different origins and are therefore *hylic, psychic*, or *pneumatic.* For the Origen, all selves have the same origin: created by God for the contemplation of God. Because Heracleon and Origen understand the origin of the self differently, they understand directionality as a schema differently.

From all of this discussion I conclude that the self, according to Origen, is composed of three resources—a body, a soul, and a spirit—that are organized and understood according to a schema of the self's directionality toward or away from its origin in God. More specifically, the directionality toward or away from God is the difference between the Christian self and the non-Christian self (for Origen this means pagans, heretics, and Jews).

Liturgical Practices that Construct the Self

The exegetical practices with which I am concerned in this section are those that occur primarily in a liturgical context: baptism and eucharist, but I will also comment on the practice of prayer. All of these practices can be considered rituals in that they "embody assumptions about [the participant's] place in the larger of order of things."[401] The main concern in what follows is how a ritual functions in the process of becoming self of the human person for Origen and those who participated with him in liturgical activities. It is not that Origen's structure of the self is simply expressed in liturgical

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[401] Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), xi.

activity, but rather that the liturgical activity functions to construct the self by pairing together the above listed resources and schema.[402]

Scholars are not as informed about Christian liturgical practices in the first few centuries as it was once assumed. The sources, such as the so-called "church orders," are often opaque in their descriptions of early Christian liturgy and are notoriously difficult to place either chronologically or geographically. In a comprehensive study of the sources and methods for reconstructing early Christian liturgy, Paul Bradshaw offers some key conclusions of modern scholarship on the topic that I summarize here: Much less is known about early Christian liturgy than was once assumed; there was a greater amount of diversity than uniformity; there is no "classical shape of Christian liturgy" before the fourth century; and that the liturgy that emerges in the post-Nicene period is a compromise of a number of different traditions.[403] One simply cannot take data from the *Didache*, Justin Martyr, or the *Apostolic Tradition* and assume that such data was true for all Christian communities everywhere across the Roman Empire in the first few centuries.[404] It is not that these texts are useless as sources, but in what follows I will rely

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[402] In an article about Origen's anthropology and the rituals of caring for the dead and prayer Ulrich Volp makes a similar point about the relationship between ritual and theology. "I think most people would also agree that the relation between theology and rituals has always been more complex than just the former having an impact on the latter." Ulrich Volp, "Origen's Anthropology and Christian Ritual," in *Origeniana Nona: Origen and the Religious Practice of His Time*, ed. G. Heidl and R. Somos (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2009), 493.

[403] Bradshaw, *The Seach for the Origins of Christian Worship*, x.

[404] While the *Didache* can be assigned to an early date originating in Syria it cannot be concluded that it was used at such an early time in other regions. Likewise, while Justin Martyr's descriptions of a Christian service can be assigned to second-century Rome, it is not clear if he is reporting how things were done in the city of Rome or if he is describing

on them sparingly as I discuss the liturgical practices of Origen's congregation in

Caesarea in the third century. Of greater value is what Origen himself says about such

things as baptism, eucharist, and prayer. Because Origen takes for granted that his

audience knows what these practices look like, he does not generally discuss them as

though talking to outsiders.[405] Origen's primary concern in discussing these practices is

to show that they are symbols of other realities. Yet, as I will show, that these practices

are symbols does not mean that they were unimportant for Origen or his congregation, or

that participation in them simply meant decoding the inner, hidden reality.

In the course of his homilies on Numbers, Origen comes to Numbers 4, where

God commands that when the Israelites traveled through the desert Aaron and his sons

were to cover up all the cultic paraphernalia from the tabernacle for transport. Then the

Kohathites were to transport these items on litters that they carried on their shoulders.

Origen takes this to mean that spiritually advanced Christians are able to see the hidden

meanings of things (like Aaron and his sons) while others are not able to see hidden

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what one may find generically of any Christian community throughout the Roman
Empire. The case of the *Apostolic Tradition* is by far the most complicated. There is a
lively scholarly debate about who wrote it, where it was written, and when it was written.
St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly devoted an issue the problems surrounding the
Apostolic Tradition. See especially Paul Bradshaw, "Who Wrote the *Apostolic Tradition*?
A Response to Alistair Stewart-Sykes," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 48, no. 2
(2004); Alistair Stewart-Sykes, "*Traditio Apostolica* the Liturgy of Third-Century Rome
and the Hippolytean School or Quomodo Historia Liturgica Conscribenda Sit," *St.
Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 48, no. 2 (2004). Stewart-Sykes argues that the
Apostolic Tradition can reasonably be located in third-century Rome where as Bradshaw
generally argues that the Apostolic Tradition is a composite text of a much later date.

[405] There are some exceptions to this rule, most notably his is very detailed discussion of
prayer in *On Prayer,* which I will discuss below.

meanings but still engage in the things themselves (like the Kohathites). Following this

explanation comes a passage worth quoting at length:

> Moreover, in the ecclesiastical observances there are some things of this sort, which everyone is obliged to do, and yet not everyone understands the reason for them. For the fact that we kneel to pray, for instance, and that of all the quarters of the heavens, the east is the only direction we turn when we pour out our prayer, the reasons for this, I think, are not easily discovered by anyone. Moreover, who would readily explain the reasons for the way we receive the Eucharist, or for the rite of explanation by which it is celebrated, or for the things that are done in baptism, the words, actions, sequences, questions and answers? And yet we all carry these things on our shoulders…[406]

This passage is important not just for its few but precious details about prayer, eucharist,

and baptism, but because it shows that Origen had an interest in the liturgical act itself,

not just its inner meaning. In another context Origen criticizes "whose who do away with

perceptible things (τὰ αἰσθητὰ) entirely and practice neither baptism nor the eucharist."[407]

So I agree with many modern interpreters who argue that such practices are symbols of

other realities for Origen, but that does not mean that the practices in themselves have no

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[406] *Sed et in ecclesiasticis obseruationibus sunt nonnulla huiusmondi, quae omnibus quidem facere necesse est, nec tamen ratio eorum omnibus patet. Nam quod, uerbi gratia, genua flectimus orantes et quod ex omnibus caeli plagis ad solam Orientis partem conuersi orationem fundimus, non facile cuiquam puto ratione compertum. Sed et eucharistiae siue percipiendae siue eo ritu quo geritur explicandae, uel eorum quae geruntur in baptismo, uerborum gestorumque et ordinem atque interrogationum ac responsionum quis facile explicet rationem? Et tamen omnia haec operta licet et uelata portamus super humeros nostros…*(*Hom. Num*. 5.1.4 [SC 415:124]) ET Thomas P. Scheck, *Homilies on Numbers: Origen*, ed. Thomas C. Oden and Gerald L. Bray, Ancient Christian Texts (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009), 17.

[407] οἱ τὰ αἰσθητὰ πάντη ἀναιροῦντες καὶ μήτε βαπτίσματι μήτε εὐχαριστίᾳ χρώμενοι (*Or*. 5.1 [GCS 3:308]) ET Rowan A. Greer, *Origen: An Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer and Selected Works*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 90-91.

value.[408] Rather, Origen is interested in the *actual* ritual practices themselves and it is important that these practices are *actually* carried out even if the participant does not understand them entirely.

<div align="center">Baptism</div>

Origen does not describe baptism in detail in any of his extant writings. On those occasions where he discusses baptism he usually does so from a theological or exegetical rather than a practical perspective. By his own admission he has not added anything to the practice, but he follows it "in such a way that we have received [it] as handed down and commanded"[409] From a theological perspective Origen grants that baptism achieves the forgiveness of sins and brings one into participation with the divine nature.[410] He also puts baptism in exegetical perspective by combing themes from John 3 (being born from above) and Romans 6 (dying and being raised with Christ): "The one who has died to sin and is truly baptized into the death of Christ and is buried with him through baptism into

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[408] Daniélou, 28; Trigg, 191.

[409] ...*tradita et commendatasuscepimus.* (*Hom. Num.* 5.1.4 [SC 415:124]) ET Scheck, *Homilies on Numbers*, 17. See also *Comm. Rom.* 5.8.3 where Origen claims that baptism and anointing are done "in accordance with the form handed down to the churches." *secundum typum eclesiis traditum* (AGLB 33:423-424) ET Thomas P. Scheck, *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Books 1-5*, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 103 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001), 355. Daniélou comments that Origen's "ideas on the question [of baptism] are just as much an expression of the Church's tradition as his conception of the worship of God is a consequence of his personal standpoint as a didaskalos." Daniélou, 52.

[410] For forgiveness of sins see *Comm. Cant.* 4.1 and *Comm. Rom.* 5.9. It must also be noted that Origen at times discusses martyrdom as a "baptism of blood" which also brings the forgiveness of sins, even if the martyr has not yet been baptized by water, see *Comm. Mat.* 6.16 For participation with the divine nature see *Comm. Rom.* 4.9 and *Comm. Jo.* 20.340.

death, he is the one who is truly baptized in the Holy Spirit and with the water that is from above."[411] Modern interpreters have pointed out that when Origen discusses baptism exegetically he actually speaks of three different kinds of baptism: the baptism found in the "Old Testament" and practiced by John the Baptist, the baptism practiced by Christians in Origen's day, and an eschatological baptism that Christians have yet to experience.[412] The first of these is entirely figurative, the second, which is of concern here, is both a reality signified by the first kind of baptism *and* a figure of the eschatological baptism to come.

As I have already indicated there is little direct evidence about what the practice of baptism actually looked like for Origen's church, but a general picture of the elements involved can be sketched on the basis Origen's extant writings.[413] Baptism began with a period of preparation in which the catechumen prepared herself to be baptized.[414] In Origen's church the rite of baptism included a renunciation of the devil, a confession of faith, an immersion in water, the invocation of the Trinity, an anointing with oil, and finally the laying on of hands. Origen indicates that those who were to be baptized had to

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[411] *tamen qui mortuus est peccato et uere baptizatur in morte Christi et consepellitur ei per baptismum in mortem, iste uere in Spiritu Sancto et aqua de superioibus baptizatur.* (*Comm. Rom*. 8.5.3 [AGLB 33:424]) ET Scheck, *Origen: Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Books 1-5*, 355.

[412] Crouzel, 223; Daniélou, 59.

[413] Much of the following discussion is indebted to Ferguson, esp. 400-428.

[414] This preparation included not only bodily disciplines such as fasting, but also a period of teaching and of observing the behavior of those who wished to be baptized. Origen describes this period of observation in *Cels*. 3.51.

proclaim a renunciation of the world.[415] In *Hom. Num.* 12.4.5 Origen asks his audience to

recall what they declared to the devil at the time of baptism, "What did he declare to the

devil? That he would not make use of his pomp or indulge in his works or submit in any

way to any of his services and pleasures."[416] A confession of faith likely accompanied the

renunciation of the devil.[417] Based on *Hom. Num.* 5.1.4 quoted above, the confession of

faith likely took the form of questions and answers between the one being baptized and

the one baptizing.[418] Following the renunciation and confession, it appears that the one

being baptized was submerged in the water while the Trinity was invoked. Everett

Ferguson points out that the phrases "you descend into the water" and "you ascend" in

Hom. Ex. 5.5 come from baptismal practice, not the Exodus narrative Origen discusses.[419]

In *Princ.* 1.3.2 Origen makes the claim that "saving baptism is not complete except when

performed with the authority of the whole and most excellent Trinity, that is, by naming

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[415] This renunciation is connected with baptism in *Hom. Josh*. 26.2

[416] *quid denuntiauerit diabolo; non se usurum pompis eius neque operibus eius neque ullis seruitiis eius ac uoluptatibus pariturum* (*Hom. Num*. 12.4.5 [SC 442:108]) ET Scheck, *Homilies on Numbers*, 70. F. Ledegang suggests that Origen is paraphrasing, if not following the actual formula used at baptism. F. Ledegang, *Mysterium Ecclesiae: Images of the Church and Its Members in Origen* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), 430. Ledegang also draws attention to the similarity of this passage to what is found in *Apostolic Tradition* 21.

[417] Origen references "what is believed at baptism" in *Comm. Jo*. 10.298.

[418] Renunciation and confession at baptism are also mentioned together in *Hom. Ex*. 8.4 "When, therefore, we come to the grace of baptism, renouncing all other gods and lords, we confess the only God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." *Cum ergo uenimus ad gratiam baptismi, unuersis aliis diis et domines renuntiantes, solum confitemur Deum Patrem et Filium et Spiritum sanctum*. (SC 321:254) ET Heine, *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, 322-323.

[419] Ferguson, 402.

the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."[420] Finally, after renunciation, confession, emersion, and invoking the Trinity, it may be that the person baptized was anointed with oil and had hands laid upon her.[421]

The anointing with oil forms an important aspect of baptism from the perspective of the becoming self of a human person. Anointing with oil, also described as "sealing" (τὸ σφραγιζεῖν), can be found in liturgical practice as early as the Pauline communities.[422] The author of Ephesians uses the verb σφραγίζω in connection with the Holy Spirit as a mark that sets Christians apart and anticipates a future redemption (Eph. 1:13 and 4:30) The author of Revelation also uses the same verb in a similar connection (Rev. 7:3). Anointing was a physical activity within baptismal practice that set Christians apart and anticipated a future salvation.

The practice of baptism constructs the structure of the self described above primarily by transgressing the corporeal-incorporeal boundary and by situating the participant on a trajectory toward contemplation of God. The rite of baptism includes a number of corporeal elements—water, oil (for anointing), and laying on of hands—that are employed for an incorporeal end. This is what makes baptism a mystery or symbol for

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[420] *ut salutare baptismum non aliter nisi excellentissimae omnium trinitatis auctoritate, id est patris et filii et spiritus sancti cognominatione compleatur.* (SC 252:146) ET Butterworth, 30. That this passage is only available in Rufinus' translation ought not cast doubt on its authenticity. Origen is making an allusion to Matthew 28:19 and expresses similar ideas in *Comm. Matt*. 12.20 and *Comm. Jo*. 6.166.

[421] Anointing is mentioned in conjunction with baptism in *Comm. Rom*. 5.8.3 and *Hom. Lev*. 9.9.3. Origen alludes to Acts 8:18 and Titus 3:5 in *Princ*. 1.3.7 in connecting the laying on of hands with baptism.

[422] Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 151.

Origen. Baptism cannot be reduced to its corporeal aspects; otherwise it would be just like the outward circumcision of the Jews; nor can it be reduced to its incorporeal aspects, otherwise Origen would not have criticized those who have stopped baptizing because they devalued the physical.[423] Baptism is a bold claim that not only is the self composed of corporeal and incorporeal aspects, but that there is a definite connection among those elements: the cleansing of the body cleanses the soul.[424] It is not just any water that allows this to happen, but water affected by the invocation of the Trinity.

While baptism blurs the boundary between the corporeal and incorporeal, it establishes a boundary between the participant's old and new lives by initiating the participant into the Christian church. This transition is marked by the double speech act of renouncing the devil/world and confessing the Christian faith. These performative utterances do not just describe a new belief system; they create a new directionality toward which the participant orients herself.[425] This new directionality is understood as a journey that begins with baptism. The narrative sequence from the "Old Testament" where Israel crosses the Red Sea out of Egypt and then crosses the Jordan River into the Promised Land is mapped onto the catechumen's experience of first entering the catechumenate (Red Sea) and then being baptized (Jordan River).[426] This is only the

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[423] See *Or*. 5.1 quoted above.

[424] Therefore Origen has to raise the question about what to do if one sins after baptism in *Hom. Jer*. 16.5.2. See also *Mart*. 30.

[425] The purpose of identifying a speech act as a performative utterance is to acknowledge that "to say something is to do something." Bell, 68.

[426] F. Ledegang suggests that these stories may have been incorporated into Origen's baptismal liturgy. Ledegang, 684-685.

beginning of the journey, however, as Origen makes clear in *Hom. Jer.* 16.5. The

journey's end is (re)union with the divine.[427] The self's resources and schema are paired

in the ritual of baptism; to paraphrase Geertz: in baptism the self as lived and the self as

imagined turn out to be the same self.[428] That is to say, the self as imagined crossing the

Jordan River into the Promised Land via baptism is the self whose resources are now

oriented to God. Were this not the case, the baptism practiced by Origen and his

congregation would not make any sense.

<div align="center">Eucharist</div>

Origen sheds little light on the practice of eucharist in his church for two reasons.

First, because the eucharist was only practiced by those who had been baptized, Origen

did not generally speak about it in detail to the uninitiated.[429] Second, Origen had a

tendency to shift a discussion about the eucharist to a discussion about scripture and

exegesis.[430] For example, Origen explains the "drinking of blood" in John 6:53 in this

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[427] In *Hom. Gen.* 10.5 Origen claims that Christ and the church are united in the "bath of water." But it is clear from other passages that this union may begin with baptism, but it is not complete in baptism.

[428] Geertz, 112.

[429] *Hom. Lev.* 9.10; *Hom. Lev.* 13.3

[430] This is by no means accidental, nor does it demonstrate a preference for scripture over eucharist. Instead, as De Lubac has persuasively demonstrated, scripture and eucharist have the same common core, that is the Logos, in Origen's mind. "Scripture and Eucharist, moreover, appear closely associated in everything, since it is in the midst of the same assembly, in the course of the same liturgy, that the Bread of the Word is broken and the Body of Christ is distributed." Henri de Lubac, *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture According to Origen*, trans., Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 407.

way: "We are said to drink the blood of Christ *not only* in the rite of the sacraments, *but also* when we receive his words…"[431] Because of the little amount of information that can be gained about the eucharist in Origen's church only a minimal description can be given; however, even the little that can be discovered about this practice sheds light on how it was used in the construction of the self.

The rite of eucharist was a central act of the Caesarean church and was practiced several times a week by those how had been initiated by baptism. They were required to approach the ritual having purified themselves ethically: forgiving those who had wronged them, and it is possible that they had to abstain from sexual activity for a period.[432] Origen likens this preparation to the disciples finding and preparing an upper room for the Passover meal with Jesus. "Thus no one who enacts the Passover as Jesus wishes is in a room below. But if someone celebrates with Jesus, he is in a great room above, in a furnished room made clean, in a furnished room adorned and prepared."[433]

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[431] *Bibere autem dicimur sanguinem Christi non solum sacramentorum ritu, sed et cum sermons eius recipimus…*(*Hom. Num*. 16.9.2 [SC 442:262]) ET Scheck, *Homilies on Numbers*, 101. Emphasis mine. See also *Hom. Ex*. 13.3 and *Hom. Lev*. 13.3. Origen appeals to his audience's respect for the eucharist in order to get them to treat exegesis in the same way. This is telling about his audience's attitude toward the rite of eucharist and their attitude toward scripture.

[432] "It is therefore necessary, that one be 'pure from a woman' in order to take the show bread; is it not far more necessary that one be purer for receiving the greater Show Bread over which the name of God, Christ, and of the Holy Spirit has been invoked, so that he might receive the breads truly to his salvation and not 'to his judgment.'" *Fr. 1Cor*. 34 ET Harold Buchinger, "Early Eucharist in Transition? A Fresh Look at Origen," in *Jewish and Christian Liturgy and Worship: New Insights into Its History and Interaction*, ed. Albert Gerhards, Jewish and Christain Perspectives Series (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 215.

[433] οὐδεὶς οὖν πάσχα ποιῶν ὡς Ἰησοῦς βούλεται, κάτω ἐστὶ τοῦ ἀναγαίου. ἀλλὰ εἴ τις ἑορτάζει μετὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἄνω ἐστὶν ἐν ἀναγαίῳ μεγάλῳ, ἐν ἀναγαίῳ σεσαρωμένῳ, ἐν

As far as the ritual itself is concerned, church leadership would be gathered with, but distinguished from those who had already been baptized. The elements of the eucharist, bread and wine were displayed on a table.[434] The elements were then prayed over and consumed by those participating in the ritual. Origen comments in *Against Celsus*, "But we give thanks to the Creator of the universe and eat the loaves that are presented with thanksgiving and prayer over the gifts, so that by the prayer they become a certain holy body which sanctifies those who partake of it with pure intention."[435] The exact formula or components of this "thanksgiving and prayer," are unknown, but from other texts it is reasonable to assume that there was an invocation of the Trinity.[436] In a fragment on 1 Corinthians dealing with the eucharist, Origen speaks of the "Greater Show Bread over which the name of God, of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit has been invoked…"[437] After a prayer of thanksgiving and a Trinitarian invocation, the participants very carefully consumed the elements of the eucharist.

ἀναγαίῳ κεκοσμημένῳ καὶ ἑτοίμῳ. (*Hom. Jer*. 19.13.4 [GCS 6:169]) ET Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 212.

[434] Origen refers both to a "cup of the new covenant" and "bread of blessing" in *Hom. Jer*. 19.13.4. The elements were generally referred to as προσφορά which indicates that they were viewed as an offering. For their display on a table see Comm. Ser. Matt. 85.

[435] ἡμεῖς δὲ τῷ τοῦ παντὸς δημιουργῷ εὐχαριστοῦντες καὶ τοὺς μετ᾽ εὐχαριστίας καὶ εὐχῆς τῆς ἐπὶ τοῖς δοθεῖσι προσαγομένους ἄρτους ἐσθίομεν, σῶμα γενομένους διὰ τὴν εὐχὴν ἅγιόν τι καὶ ἁγιάζον τοὺς μετὰ ὑγιοῦς προθέσεως αὐτῷ χρωμένους. (*Cels*. 8.33 [SC 150:246]) ET Chadwick, 476. The omission of wine or drink is certainly interesting, but it does not mean that wine was not a part of the eucharistic ritual.

[436] For a brief but helpful discussion of what this prayer may have contained see Buchinger, 215-222.

[437] τοὺς μείζονας τῆς προθέσεως λάβῃ ἄρτους, ἐφ᾽ ὧν ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος. (*Frag. 1 Cor*. 34) ET Ibid., 215.

Both Origen and his congregation held this ritual in a high regard, though perhaps

in different ways. In *Hom. Ex.* 13.3 Origen challenges his audience to take scripture as

seriously as it does eucharist:

> I wish to admonish you with examples from your religious practices. You who are accustomed to take part of the divine mysteries know, when you receive the body of the Lord, how you protect it with all caution and veneration lest any small part fall from it, lest any of the consecrated gift be lost.[438]

Clearly, Origen's audience took the eucharistic element with great respect. Origen also

took the eucharistic ritual very seriously; it contained a higher mystery that could lead to

either salvation or punishment.[439]

Origen and his audience believed that by participating in the eucharist, with the

right attitude and in the right way, they would experience salvation.[440] The claim I make

here is that by participating in the eucharist Origen and his audience were constructing

Christian selves. One of the most important ways that eucharist constructs the self is by

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[438] *Volo uos admonere religionis exemplis; nostis, qui diuinis mysteriis interesse consuestis, quomodo, cum suscipitis corpus Domini, cum omni cautela et ueneratione seruatis, ne ex eo parum quid decidat, ne consecrati muneris aliquid dilabatur.* (*Hom. Ex.* 13.3 [SC 321:386]) ET Heine, *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, 380-381.

[439] *Hom. Num.* 16.9.2 and *Frg. Jer.* 50

[440] Origen's commentary on the Lord's Prayer in *On Prayer* is instructive in this regard. There he seems to oscillate between understanding "daily bread" as the Word of God and the eucharistic element (See note 71 above). He explains, "Therefore, 'daily bread,' that is, 'bread for being,' is what corresponds most closely with a rational nature and is akin to Being itself. It procures at one time health, vigor, and strength to the soul; and since the Word of God is immortal, it shares its own immortality with the one who eats it." ἐπιούσιος τοίνυν ἄρτος ὁ τῇ φύσει τῇ λογικῇ καταλληλότατος καὶ τῇ οὐσίᾳ αὐτῇ συγγενής, ὑγείαν ἅμα καὶ εὐεξίαν καὶ ἰσχὺν περιποιῶν τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ τῆς ἰδίας ἀθανασίας ἀθάνατος γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ μεταδιδοὺς τῷ ἐσθίοντι αὐτοῦ. (*Or.* 27.9 [GCS 3:369]) ET Greer, 142.

involving all the resources of the self. Origen spoke of preparing oneself for the eucharist as going to a "room above" that was properly cleaned and furnished.[441] By this he means preparing oneself spiritually, but such preparation may also have entailed a period of sexual abstinence.[442] In other words, both soul/spirit and the body must be prepared even to participate in the ritual. The cooperation between corporeal and incorporeal continues in the ritual itself. For Origen, the rite cannot be reduced to either its physical elements or its spiritual meaning.[443]

By definition, those who are participating in the eucharist have already began a transition away from the non-Christian world by baptismal initiation. Participation in the eucharist further enforces this transition. Celsus had complained that Christians are impious in that they are not grateful to the *daemons* who provide humanity with the good things of life. Origen counters that proper thanksgiving is owed to the Christian God, a thanksgiving that Christians offer in the rite of eucharist.[444]

Finally, the whole purpose of eucharist is for a sanctification that leads to fellowship with God.[445] Origen conceived the created order in general as a pedagogical project that leads the self back to God. The body was a key part of that project. Here, in the eucharist, the self, participates with "a certain holy body" (i.e. the body of the savior)

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[441] *Hom. Jer*. 19.13.4

[442] *Frag. Jer.* 50

[443] *Or*. 5.1

[444] *Cels*. 8.57.

[445] *Or*. 27.13.

in order to be reunited with God. In other words, eucharist mobilizes all the resources of the self together toward the divine. Key is that all the resources must be involved: without the corporeal, the eucharist is empty, without the incorporeal the eucharist is meaningless.

<center>Prayer</center>

Baptism and eucharist were regular practices for Origen and his fellow Christians at Caesarea, but these practices were not a part of everyday life. Prayer, on the contrary, was supposed to be a daily practice. Origen accepts the command of 1 Thess. 5:17 to pray continually by suggesting that "the entire life of the saint taken as a whole is a single great prayer."[446] He then goes on to distinguish prayer in that sense from prayer in an ordinary sense, "Now prayer in the ordinary sense ought to be made no less than three times each day."[447] For those who followed Origen's exhortation to pray at least three times a day, prayer would have become a routine part of their everyday lives and become, therefore, a significant practice whereby the self was constructed.

Origen devoted an entire treatise to the topic of prayer in addition to the comments he made about prayer throughout his other works. A brief look at this treatise gives insight into how the practice of prayer paired together the resources and schema of the self. Near the beginning of this treatise Origen makes a distinction based on Romans 8:26 between praying "as we ought," (καθὸ δεῖ) by which he means the form of prayer,

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[446] πάντα τὸν βίον τοῦ ἁγίου μίαν συναπτομένην μεγάλην εἴποιμεν εὐχήν. (*Or*. 12.2 [GCS 3:325]) ET Greer, 104.

[447] ἡ συνήθως ὀνομαζομένη εὐχὴ, οὐκ ἔλαττον τοῦ τρὶς ἑκάστης ἡμέρας ἐπιτελεῖσθαι ὀφείλουσα. (*Or*. 12.2 [GCS 3:325]) ET Ibid.

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and praying "what we ought," (ὃ δεῖ) by which he means the content of prayer.[448] My

concern in what follows is with the form of prayer that Origen advocates. It is important

to realize that even if Origen prioritizes the spiritual aspects of prayer, he is still very

concerned with its physical aspects.

A good example of the importance of the physical aspects of prayer comes at *On

Prayer* 31-32. In these final sections of the treatise Origen concerns himself specifically

with instructions about "the disposition and the posture one ought to have in praying"

where "The question of disposition must be referred to the soul, that of posture to the

body."[449] The practice of prayer requires that the body and soul be utilized together if

prayer is to be effective. The position of the one praying is therefore important:

> "And although there are a great many different positions for the body, he should
> not doubt that the position with the hands outstretched and the eyes lifted upward
> is to be preferred before all others, because it bears in prayer the image of
> characteristics befitting the soul and applies it to the body."[450]

Certain types of prayer, however, ought not to occur while standing, but while kneeling.

This is the case when one confesses one's sins to God.[451] Physical kneeling is important

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[448] *Or.* 2.1 (GCS 3:299) ET Ibid., 82 ff.

[449] τὸ περὶ τῆς εὐχῆς πρόβλημα διαλαβεῖν εἰσαγωγικώτερον περὶ τῆς καταστάσεως καὶ τοῦ σχήματος…καὶ τὸ μὲν τῆς καταστάσεως εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν ἐγκαταθετέον, τὸ δὲ τοῦ σχήματος εἰς τὸ σῶμα. (*Or.* 31.1 [GCS 3:395]) ET Ibid., 164.

[450] οὐδὲ διστάσαι γὰρ χρὴ ὅτι, μυρίων καταστάσεων οὐσῶν τοῦ σώματος, τὴν κατάστασιν τὴν μετ᾽ ἐκτάσεως τῶν χειρῶν καὶ ἀνατάσεως τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν πάντων προκριτέον, οἱονεὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πρεπόντων ἰδιωμάτων τῇ ψυχῇ κατὰ τὴν εὐχὴν φέροντα καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ σώματος. (*Or.* 31.2 [GCS 3:396]) ET Ibid., 164-65. Origen allows that if the one who praying is physically incapable of standing there are other acceptable positions.

[451] "And kneeling is necessary when someone is going to speak against his own sins before God, since he is making supplication for their healing and their forgiveness." καὶ ἡ

for Origen in this context because it symbolizes a "spiritual kneeling" (τὴν νοητὴν γονυκλισίαν).[452] Whether the context of prayer calls for standing or kneeling, the posture of the body is no accidental detail. Bodily postures are indicative of the soul's dispositions.

Origen also gives attention to the physical direction one should face while in prayer, namely, the east. Origen explains, "[W]ho would not immediately acknowledge that it is perfectly clear we should make our prayers facing east, since this is a symbolic expression of the soul's looking for the rising of the true Light."[453] Just as standing or kneeling was important in different contexts due to the disposition of the soul, so here the direction one faces is important because it symbolizes something about the soul's disposition, namely its anticipation of "true Light."

The purpose of praying in the right way is "to be mingled with (ἀνακραθῆναι) the Spirit of Lord."[454] Origen does not use the verb ἀνακραθῆναι very often, but when he does it is usually in the context of being united with God or Christ.[455] The term belongs,

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γονυκλισία δὲ ὅτι ἀναγκαία ἐστὶν, ὅτε τις μέλλει τῶν ἰδίων ἐπὶ θεοῦ ἁμαρτημάτων κατηγορεῖν, ἱκετεύων περὶ τῆς ἐπὶ τούτοις ἰάσεως καὶ τῆς ἀφέσεως αὐτῶν. (*Or*. 31.3 [GCS 3:396]) ET Ibid., 165.

[452] *Or*. 31.3 (GCS 3:396) ET Ibid.

[453] τίς οὐκ ἂν αὐτόθεν ὁμολογήσαι τὸ πρὸς ἀνατολὴν ἐναργῶς ἐμφαίνειν τὸ δεῖν ἐκεῖ νεύοντας συμβολικῶς, ὡς τῆς ψυχῆς ἐνορώσης τῇ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ φωτὸς ἀνατολῇ, ποιεῖσθαι τὰς εὐχάς; (*Or*. 32.1 [GCS 3:401]) ET Ibid., 168. As with his discussion of standing during prayer, Origen makes allowances for situations where the one praying is unable to face east.

[454] ἀνακραθῆναι…τοῦ κυρίου πνεύματι (*Or*. 10.2 [GCS 3:320]) ET Ibid., 100.

[455] A good example comes in *Comm. Jo*. 19.25: "For, in our view, the Lord has known those who are his because he has been made one (ἀνακραθεὶς) with them and has given

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then, to his lexicon of the self's directionality toward God. In prayer two resources of the self, the body and soul, work in harmony toward the goal of "mingling with" the Spirit of the Lord. That is to say, they are unified together in the self's directionality toward God. When Origen or his fellow Christians prayed along the lines suggested by Origen, they engaged in a practice in such a way that the resources of the self are paired with the schema of the self into a coherent whole.

One of the common characteristics of baptism, eucharist, and prayer is that they all involve both corporeal and incorporeal resources of the self. This is true whether considered from the perspective of body, soul, and spirit, or inner and outer man. Furthermore, it is not simply a *balance* of corporeal and incorporeal, that is, a compromise between the inner and outer man. Instead it is both in all of their fullness. In these liturgical practices the corporeal *and* incorporeal resources of the self are oriented toward the contemplation of God.

Homiletical Practices that Construct the Self

Homiletical Situation

Homilies were a standard part of Christian exegetical practice from the very beginning.[456] Justin Martyr explains that after reading from the "memoirs of the Apostles

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them a share of his own divinity and taken them up, as the language of the Gospel says, into his own hand…" κατὰ γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἔγνω κύριος τοὺς ὄντας αὐτοῦ ἀνακραθεὶς αὐτοῖς καὶ μεταδεδωκὼς αὐτοῖς τῆς ἑαυτοῦ θειότητος καὶἀνειληφὼς αὐτούς, ὡς ἡ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου λέξις φησίν, εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ χεῖρα…(SC 290:60) ET Heine, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 13-32*, 173.

[456] The so-called "Epistle to the Hebrews" is more likely a homily that was given the superficial appearance of an epistle. Its homiletic nature is evident in its self description as an "word of encouragement" (τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως) in 13:22 Alistair Stewart-Sykes, *From Prophecy to Preaching: A Search for the Origins of the Christian Homily*

or the writings of the Prophets…the president (ὁ προεστὼς) of the assembly verbally

admonishes and invites all to imitate such examples of virtue."[457] Justin does not use the

term homily (ὁμιλία) here but he clearly has something like a homily in mind.

There are a number of definitions of "homily" (or its synonym "sermon")

available from the scholarly literature, but they generally include reference to a public

performance, the exposition of a text, and a connection to liturgy.[458] By drawing attention

to the public nature of the Christian homily I do not mean to suggest that it was public in

that homilies were delivered in the public spaces of a city such as its markets or forums.

Rather, I mean that most homilies were not intended for an exclusive group requiring

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(Boston: Brill, 2001), 163. The so-called *2 Letter of Clement* also has more resemblances
to a homily than an epistle.

[457] τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν…ὁ προεστὼς
διὰ λόγου τὴν νουθεσίαν καὶ πρόκλησιν τῆς τῶν καλῶν τούτων μιμήσεως ποιεῖται. (*1
Apology* 67.3-4) ET Falls, 106-107.

[458] To cite two standard examples: "In Christian usage a homily is a discourse given on a
biblical text for a congregation as a part of a service of worship" Joseph T. Lienhard,
"Origen as Homilist," in *Preaching in the Patristic Age: Studies in Honor of Walter J.
Burghardt, S.J.*, ed. David G. Hunter (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 36. " 'Sermon'
may be defined as a public explanation of a sacred doctrine or a sacred text, with its Sitz
im Leben being worship." Folker Siegert, "Homily and Panegyrical Sermon," in
Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period: 330 Bc-Ad 400, ed. Stanley E.
Porter (Boston: Brill, 2001), 421. There are, of course, a number of different sub-genres
to the homily. The most important of these for Origen's context is what Alistair Stewart-
Sykes calls a Proemic Homily which "begins with a scriptural citation and then goes on
to treat the citation by dividing it into sections for exegesis." Alistair Stewart-Sykes,
"Hermas the Prophet and Hippolytus the Preacher: The Roman Homily and Its Social
Context," in *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine
Homiletics*, ed. Mary B. Cunningham and Pauline Allen, A New History of the Sermon
(Boston: Brill, 1998), 41.

specific membership commitments.[459] The public nature of the homily is key to its effectiveness as an exegetical practice: the larger the audience, the more wide-spread the effect of its discourse. Origen typically organized his homilies by quoting and explaining separate sections of the text that had been read to the audience.[460]

Chapter two uncovered two different models of teaching authority in the middle of the second century. For Heracleon, teaching authority was primarily a function of the philosophical school and the charisma of the teacher who was able to gather students together. For Irenaeus, teaching authority was primarily a function of apostolic succession that linked the teacher to the teaching authority of the apostles. Each of these models of teaching authority, which will here be identified as "charismatic" for the former and "ecclesial" for the latter, played significant functions in Origen's own authority as a preacher, especially in his Caesarean period.[461]

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[459] Whereas certain elements of the Christian liturgy were exclusive, such as the eucharist, it appears that homilies were not. Heine points out that Origen's "Old Testament" homilies, at least, were not for catechumens alone. Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 179.

[460] Torjesen has demonstrated how Origen's homilies proceed by being centered on the biblical text. Torjesen, 27 ff.

[461] I am drawing the term "charismatic" from Joseph Trigg, "The Charismatic Intellectual: Origen's Understanding of Religious Leadership," *Church History* 50, no. 1 (1981). Much of the following discussion is informed by this article. Jean Daniélou also discusses two modes of authority present in the church during this period that he associates with "the presbyter" and "the teacher." The distinction made by Daniélou is not exactly the same as what I have in mind here, but there are some similarities in terms of their legitimation. Daniélou's main point is that during the third century these two forms of authority were coalescing. This is certainly true of Origen's Caesarean period. Daniélou, 47-50.

Origen was not compelled to justify his own teaching authority via the official

mechanisms of the institutional church.[462] On the contrary, Origen believed that the

teacher's authority was justified by the teacher's ability to bring out the meaning of the

text. Origen often invokes the image of the "Old Testament" priest in this regard. In *Hom.*

Lev. 1.4, Origen interprets the priest who flays a calf in preparation for a burnt offering

(Lev. 1:6) as "the one who removes the veil of the letter from the word of God and

uncovers its interior parts which are members of spiritual understanding."[463] The ability

to understand scripture in this way is possible, according to Origen, because God inspires

the interpreter of scripture as well as the authors of scripture.[464] Origen confesses that he

is not able to interpret scripture on his own, but that he needs divine inspiration to do

so.[465] Origen complains that it is often the case that those who lack the ability to interpret

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[462] Recall that Ambrose's patronage allowed Origen to pursue a teaching career
independently of the sponsorship of the church at Alexandria.

[463] *qui de verbo Dei abstrahit velamen litterae et interna eius, quae sunt spiritalis
intelligentiae membra…*(*Hom. Lev.* 1.4 [SC 286:80]) ET Gary Wayne Barkley, *Origen:
Homilies on Leviticus 1-16*, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 83 (Washington, D.C.: The
Catholic University of America Press, 1990), 35.

[464] The inspiration of the interpreter of scripture was a widespread notion in early
Christianity. Everett Kalin has persuasively demonstrated that early Christians did not
limit inspiration to the authors of scripture. He summarizes his position, "[I]n summary
we can say that the early church saw the inspiration of the Scriptures as one aspect of a
much broader activity of inspiration in the church. Inspiration was attributed to bishops,
monks, martyrs, councils, interpreters of Scripture, various prophetic gifts, and to many
other aspects of the church's life." Everett R. Kalin, "The Inspired Community: A Glance
at Canon History," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 42, no. 8 (1971): 547.

[465] *Hom. Jer.* 19.11.2 See also *Princ.* 1.pref.3: "The grounds of [the apostles'] statements
they left to be investigated by such as should merit the higher gifts of the Spirit and in
particular by such as should afterwards receive through the Holy Spirit himself the graces
of language knowledge and wisdom." *rationem scilicet assertionis eorum relinquentes ab
his inquirendam, qui spiritus dona excellentia mererentur et praecipue sermonis,*

texts are elevated to positions of leadership in the church whereas those who have the

ability to do so are left out of the ecclesial hierarchy.[466] The discussion that Origen

provides in Book Twelve of his *Commentary on Matthew* makes it clear that "those who

maintain the function of the episcopate" are not guaranteed, because of their office, to

have acceptable moral disposition and spiritual insight.[467] Trigg summarizes Origen's

criteria for teaching authority: (1) spiritual insight and (2) holiness of life.[468]

   This view of teaching authority no doubt contributed to the conflict between

Origen and Demetrius, the bishop of Alexandria, in the early phase of Origen's life.

However, Origen's view of teaching authority did not cause him to turn down official

ordination by the bishops in Palestine. Around the year 230 CE, on a trip to Athens via

Palestine, Origen was ordained a presbyter at the Caesarean church. According to

Eusebius, Origen "received the laying-on of hands (χειροθεσίαν) for the presbyterate at

Caesarea from the bishops there."[469] Origen was ordained so that he could be given the

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saepientiae et scientiae gratiam per ipsum sanctum spiritum percepissent (SC 252:78, 80) ET Butterworth, 2.

[466] *Hom. Num*. 2.1

[467] *Comm. Matt*. 12.14 (ANF 9:459). For a discussion of Origen's critique of the moral behavior of both laity and clergy see Daniélou, 41-43.

[468] Trigg, "The Charismatic Intellectual," 16.

[469] πρεσβείου χειροθεσίαν ἐν Καισαρείᾳ πρὸς τῶν τῇδε ἐπισκόπων ἀναλαμβάνει. (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl*. 6.23.4 [Oulton, LCL]). Although Eusebius's primary goal in Book Six of *Hist. eccl*. is to tell the story of Origen's life, he devotes some effort to listing the succession of bishops in Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria. These lists help locate the story of Origen's life historically but they also have the rhetorical effect of situating Origen's life as a part of apostolic succession. In that sense, Eusebius, like bishops Alexander of Jerusalem and Theoctistus of Caesarea before him, fashions Origen into a legitimate teaching authority.

task of "expounding the scriptures" and "other parts of the Church's instruction."[470] The opportunity to teach was not new for Origen; he had already gained a reputation for his teaching in Alexandria. What was new, however, was the opportunity to teach in an official ecclesial context, in a context that was no longer a private philosophical school, but a public institution connected with the practices of baptism and eucharist.[471] Origen's teaching authority was no longer due just to his charisma as a teacher or the legitimation he received from Greco-Roman παιδεία, but now his authority was "official" from an ecclesial perspective. By means of χειροθεσία Origen's teachings were now "in the true" for a larger and different audience.

Most of the audience who heard Origen's homilies at Caesarea was from pagan backgrounds, but there was some diversity as far as socio-economic status and levels of commitment were concerned. The prevailing polemic against Judaism found in Origen's homilies might suggest that his audience was former Jews who had converted to Christianity, but this is not the case. It is far more likely that Origen's audience was made up primarily of converted pagans. In *Homilies on Jeremiah*, Origen refers to himself and his audience as "we who were from the pagan nations (οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν);" later in the same homily he says, "But we were not servants of God but of idols and demons, pagans (ἐθνικοί) just recently come to God."[472]

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[470] τὰ τῆς τῶν θείων γραφῶν ἑρμηνείας καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τοῦ ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ λόγου πράττειν συνεχώρουν. (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.27 [Oulton, LCL]).

[471] Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church*, 135.

[472] Καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἦμεν δοῦλοι τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ εἰδώλων καὶ δαιμόνων, ἐθνικοί, ἐχθὲς καὶ πρώην προσεληλύθαμεν τῷ θεῷ. (*Hom. Jer.* 4.5.3 [GCS 6:29]) ET Smith, *Homilies*

There is also evidence that at least some of Origen's audience was wealthy. In his *Homilies on Exodus* 12.2, Origen explains what it means to "turn to the Lord" with zeal by giving an example of sparing no cost on a son's education, "Do you not see to it that he lacks nothing at all in pedagogues, teachers, books, and expenses?"[473] On another occasion, Origen encourages his hearers to read "not from the volumes of secular authors, but from the prophetic and apostolic volumes."[474] Each of these comments suggests that at least some of Origen's audience had the time and financial means to read and even purchase books. Some amount of wealth can be assumed.

Origen's audience was diverse in terms of level of commitment. At least his "Old Testament" homilies were preached before an audience containing those who had yet even become catechumens, those who were catechumens, and those who had already been baptized.[475] Origen often makes a conceptual distinction in his audience between the

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on Jeremiah, 37-38. The phrase οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν and the noun ἐθνικοί may be better translated as "we who were from the gentile nations" and "gentiles" respectively, but Smith's translation is stressing the religious background rather than the ethnic background. The two are, of course, closely related. Terms deriving from ἔθνος are important in the LXX text of Jeremiah and therefore are important to Origen's discursive practice discussed below.

[473] *paedagogos, magistros, libros, impensas, nihil prorsus deesse facis…*(*Hom. Exod.* 12.2 [SC 321:356]) ET Heine, *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, 369.

[474] *non ex saecularium auctorum, sed ex propheticis atque apostolicis uoluminibus.* (*Hom. Gen.* 2.6 [SC 7:110]) ET Ibid., 87.

[475] Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 179.

simple who are not yet able to understand spiritual things and the spiritual who are able to do so.[476]

The remaining discussion of Origen's homiletical practice is a based on his *Homilies on Jeremiah*. As indicated above, these homilies come from Origen's Caesarean period and not his Alexandrian period. The main difference between these periods is that in the third-century Caesarea had a larger Jewish population than did Alexandria; there was also a prominent rabbinic school that had an influence on the local religious-intellection environment.[477] Like Origen's other homilies on Septuagint texts these homilies were addressed to an audience that contained both those who had been initiated into Christianity by baptism as well as those who had not. Unlike like most of Origen's other homiletical collections, most of the homilies on Jeremiah have survived in Origen's Greek. They provide better examples of Origen's language than do the homilies that have survived only in Latin translation.

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[476] David Dunn-Wilson characterizes the distinction: "…Origen discerns two levels of spirituality in his congregations. There are those with 'simple faith' who 'live a better life as far as they can, and accept doctrines about God such as they have capacity to receive,' and there are the spiritual aristocrats, who 'are initiated into the mysteries of the religion of Jesus which are delivered only to the holy and pure…" David Dunn-Wilson, *A Mirror for the Church: Preaching in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publsihing Company, 2005), 49.

[477] Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 47 ff. Heine also notes that the latter portion of Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel according to John* may reflect a shift in Origen's concerns as he moved to Caesarea: Origen is less and less interested in engaging Heracleon's exegesis. Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 158. For discussion on Caesarea in the third century, including the Jewish and Christian communites, see Lee I. Levine, *Caesarea under Roman Rule*, ed. Jacob Neusner, Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), 46-135.

Addressing the Text to the Hearer

For any homiletical endeavor to be successful the preacher must find a way to bridge the gap between his own audience and the text under consideration. This was also true for Origen. Torjesen has analyzed Origen's homilies on the Psalms, Jeremiah, and the Song of Songs and demonstrated that Origen bridges this gap in different ways depending on the text he is using.[478] In his homilies on Jeremiah Origen situates his audience as the addressee of the text. From the very beginning of the homilies Origen asks, "What, then, does this history mean for me?"[479] Origen poses the question again in *Hom. Jer.* 12 when discussing the phrase "But if you do not hear in a hidden way, your soul from the face of insult will cry out" (cf. Jer.13:17).[480] After discussing what it means to hear in a hidden way and what it means for the soul to cry out, Origen asks his audience, "Whom does the word concern...Is it not about us?"[481]

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[478] Torjesen, 50. In the case of Origen's homilies on the Psalms Origen situates his audience in the place of the psalmist.

[479] τί οὖν πρὸς ἐμὲ αὕτη ἡ ἱστορία; (*Hom. Jer.* 1.2.1 [GCS 6:2]) ET Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 4. There is no verb in this sentence; one could also capture Origen's meaning: "What use, then, is this history for me?"

[480] Generally speaking Origen's quotations of Jeremiah come from the LXX (though there are a few exceptions). In what follows I have provided the quotations from Jeremiah as translated by Smith in his English translation of Origen's homilies. The LXX version of Jeremiah is considerably different from the received Masoretic text. This differences range from minor variation of terms to large displacements of texts. For a discussion of this issue see Peter C. Craigie, Page H. Kelley, and Joel F. Drinkard Jr., *Jeremiah 1-25*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1991), xli-xlv.

[481] περὶ τίνων γὰρ ὁ λόγος;…οὐ περὶ ἡμῶν ἐστι; (*Hom. Jer.* 12.13.3 [GCS:6:101]) ET Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 128.

Underlying the discursive practice of relating audience and the text in this way is Origen's understanding of 1 Corinthians 10:11. Again, in *Hom. Jer.* 12 Origen is explaining a text from Jeremiah that describes God's judgment on kings, prophets, and priests. Origen takes this to mean that those of the ecclesial authority, "us presbyters" and "deacons," along with the laity, are not immune from God's punishment should they sin. The reason that the prophecy from Jeremiah applies to Origen and his audience is because "what has been written down about them [i.e. those in Jeremiah's time], as the Apostle says, *was written down for us, for whom the end of the ages has come.*"[482] By asserting that his audience is the proper addressee of the text, Origen establishes a relationship between the Book of Jeremiah and his hearers such that whatever meaning he discovers in that text is directly relevant for his audience.

On the basis of the above, Origen is able to discover the self's directionality toward God and apply it to his audience. He does this specifically with regard to Jeremiah 15:18:

> *"Therefore," says the Lord, "If you will return, I will also restore* (ἀποκαταστήσω) *you."* These words again are said to each person whom God exhorts to 'return' to him. But for me there seems to be evident here a mystery (μυστήριον) in *I will restore you*. No one is *restored* (ἀποκαθίσταται) to a certain place unless he was once there, but the restoration is to one's own home.[483]

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[482] τὰ δὲ περὶ ἐκείνων ἀναγεγραμμένα, φησὶν ὁ ἀπόστολος, ἐγράφη δι᾽ ἡμᾶς, εἰς οὓς τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων κατήντησεν. (*Hom. Jer.* 12.3.1 [GCS 6:89]) ET Ibid., 115. Italics are original to Smith's translation to distinguish scriptural citation.

[483] Διὰ τοῦτο τάδε λέγει κύριος· ἐὰν ἐπιστρέψῃς, καὶ ἀποκαταστήσω σε. ταῦτα πάλιν λέγεται πρὸς ἕκαστον, ὃν παρακαλέσει ὁ θεὸς ἐπιστρέψαι πρὸς αὐτόν. μυστήριον δέ μοι δοκεῖ ἐνταῦθα δηλοῦσθαι ἐν τῷ ἀποκαταστήσω σε. οὐδεὶς ἀποκαθίσταται εἴς τινα τόπον μηδαμῶς ποτε γενόμενος ἐκεῖ, ἀλλ᾽ ἡ ἀποκατάστασίς ἐστιν εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα. (*Hom. Jer.* 14.18.4 [GCS 6:124]) ET Ibid., 155.

If this text were not addressed to Origen's audience it would merely be a promise to exiled Jews to return to their homeland. However, as applied to Origen's audience it means something else. The term μυστήριον often indicates a theological teaching for Origen that is not a part of official church doctrine.[484] In this case Origen hints at the ἀποκατάστασις, or restoration of the self to its original place of contemplation with God.[485] Origen capitalizes on an etymological point: without the prepositional prefix (ἀπο), the term κατάστασις simply means a state of being. The meaning of ἀποκατάστασις is well captured by the English *re*store. Since the text is not addressed to an exilic Israel, but to a group of third-century Christians, Origen is able to shift the narrative reference and apply the schema of directionality toward God to his audience.

A similar logic can be found in *Hom. Jer.* 28.2.1. The text from Jeremiah reads "Flee from the midst of Babylon and let each save again his own soul" (cf. Jer. 51:6). Origen says, "Whoever among you has a soul confounded by the passion of varied vices, to you is directed this word."[486] Later in the homily Origen continues, "The addition of *again* refers to a mystery: After once tasting salvation and then afterwards falling away from it on account of sins, we came to Babylon. This is why it is appropriate that each save his soul, so that he begins to recover what he lost…"[487] After addressing this text to

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[484] That is, those apostolic teachings listed by Origen in *Princ*. Prf. 4-10.

[485] Traditionally, this is referred to as the restoration of "souls," but I speak of "selves" because Origen at times indicates that souls cannot exist without bodies. See discussion above.

[486] *Hom. Jer*. 28.2.1 ET Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 262. Homily 28 is available only in a Latin translation from Jerome.

[487] *Hom. Jer*. 28.3.2 ET Ibid., 263-264.

his audience, Origen points out that there is a mystery regarding the use of "again" in the text. Origen refers to the self's fall from God and its directionality back toward God. In the previous homily, Origen had glossed the "voice of those fleeing Babylon" of Jeremiah 50:28 as the voice of catechumens. To prepare for baptism is to flee Babylon and save oneself again, that is, to return to the contemplation of God.

Constructing the Other

Trigg rightly contextualizes Christianity as a sect in Origen's time by which he means it was "a religious body that demands a high degree of loyalty from its members and sharply distinguishes itself from the larger society in which it exists."[488] Evidence for this attitude is evident throughout Origen's homilies, especially his concern for distinguishing Christians from their contemporaries. Origen's discussion of the "other" is another homiletical practice by which he constructs the Christian self.[489] The other for Origen is the pagan philosopher, the heretic, and especially the Jew. These others, like the Christian self, have the resources of body, soul, and spirit, but what they lack, what keeps them from being Christian selves, is the schema of directionality toward God which organizes the resources of the self.

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[488] Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church*, 30.

[489] Cunningham and Allen note that polemics against the other were a common vehicle for Christian self-identity. See Mary B. Cunningham and Pauline Allen, eds., *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian an Byzantine Homiletics* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 9.

Constructing Philosophers and Heretics as the Other

There are several times throughout his homilies on Jeremiah where Origen concerns himself with philosophers and heretics.[490] In *Hom. Jer.* 5 Origen explains the meaning of "circumcise yourselves for your God" (cf. Jer. 4:4). The prepositional phrase "for your God" is important for Origen because it indicates that the circumcision in view is not literal. However, the phrase "for your God" does more than distinguish a literal from a metaphorical circumcision. He goes on to discuss two other groups that circumcise themselves metaphorically, but not "for your God." "Those who practice philosophy *circumcise* their habits" that is, they have self-control; and "those from the heresies have self-control and there is a circumcision for them, but it is a circumcision not *for God*."[491] What then does it mean to be circumcised for God? Origen explains: "And whenever you share in communion in accord with the rule of the Church, in accord with

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[490] Despite his negative characterizations of philosophers discussed here, Origen's attitude toward philosophy is far more positive than some other early Christian theologians such as Tertullian. While Origen rejects Stoicism and Epicureanism outright, his attitude toward philosophy in general is quite positive. As far as heretics are concerned, Origen either speaks of them generally or singles out Marcion, Basilides, and Valentinus (*Hom. Jer.* 10.5; 17.2). Origen's chief disagreement with Marcion, Basilides, and Valentinus is that they have rejected the God portrayed by the LXX (*Hom. Jer.* 18.9) and denied free will (*Hom. Jer.* 28.12). Or, at least, this is how Origen presented their teaching.

[491] περιτέμνονται τὰ ἤθη καὶ τὴν καρδίαν ὥς τε εἰπεῖν σωφρονίζουσιν οἱ φιλοσοφοῦντες σωφρονίζουσιν οἱ ἀπὸ τῶν αἱρέσεων καὶ γίνεται αὐτοῖς περιτομή, ἀλλὰ περιτομὴ μέν, οὐ τῷ θεῷ δέ. (*Hom. Jer.* 5.14.1 [GCS 6:43]) ET Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 57. Origen's reference to the heretics as having self-control here stands in stark contrast to the tendency of other proto-orthodox writers to characterize heretics as licentious.

the purpose of sound teaching, it is not only to circumcise, but to circumcise *for God.*"[492]

Origen constructs philosophers and heretics here as self-controlled, but as lacking a

connection with the teachings of the church. These others may be self-controlled, but that

does not make their "circumcision" the right circumcision.

Origen again speaks of philosophers and heretics together when discussing

Jeremiah 16:20, "If a man will make gods for himself…" Origen's point is that this text

does not just point to idolatry in the literal sense:

> So, too, I believe it is the case either among the Greeks who generate opinions, so
> to speak, of this philosophy or that, or among the heretics, the first who generate
> opinions. These have *made idols for themselves* and figments of the soul, and by
> turning (στραφέντες) to them *they worship the works of their hands*, since they
> accept as truth their own fabrications. [493]

The problem with the philosophers and heretics is not their lifestyles, it is the opinions

toward which they are oriented. The verb used above, στραφέντες, suggests that their

directionality is wrong. Rather than being oriented toward a return to God, they have

oriented themselves to things of their own making. In other words, they are continuing on

a directionality away from God that first began when they, like all selves, turned from

God.

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[492] ὅταν δὲ κατὰ τὸν ἐκκλησιαστικὸν κανόνα, κατὰ τὴν πρόθεσιν τῆς ὑγιοῦς διδασκαλίας κοινωνικὸς ᾖς, οὐ περιτέτμησαι μόνον, ἀλλὰ περιτέτμησαι τῷ θεῷ. (*Hom. Jer.* 5.14.1 [GCS 6:43-44]) ET Ibid.

[493] οἷον νόησόν μοι εἴτε ἐν Ἕλλησι τοὺς γεννήσαντας δόγματα, φέρ᾽ εἰπεῖν, τῆσδε τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἢ τῆσδε, εἴτε ἐν ταῖς αἱρέσεσι τοὺς γεννήσαντας πρώτουςδόγματα, οὗτοι ἐποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς εἴδωλα καὶ ἀναπλάσματα τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ στραφέντες προσεκύνησαν τοῖς ἔργοις τῶν χειρῶν αὐτῶν, ἀποδεξάμενοι ὡς ἀλήθειαν τὰ ἴδια ἀναπλάσματα. (*Hom. Jer.* 16.9.1 [GCS 6:141]) ET Ibid., 177.

Constructing Jews as the Other

Origen puts forth more effort constructing Jews as other in the *Homilies on Jeremiah* than he does constructing the philosophers or heretics as other. This is due in part to the text of Jeremiah itself that often invokes the theme of Jewish and gentile peoples. But equally significant is the cultural context of Caesarea. Just before Origen moved to Caesarea a strong rabbinic school had developed which continued to have a strong cultural influence in Origen's day.[494] That this strong Jewish presence was relevant to Origen's church community is evident in his warnings against attending synagogue along with attending church.[495] This situation—the themes of Jeremiah and the cultural context of Caesarea—prompted Origen to pay special attention to Jews as other in order to construct the Christian self.

Origen's *Homilies on Jeremiah* fit into a literary category that has often been called the *Adversus Judaeos* tradition.[496] There are two major themes in this tradition each of which can be detected in Origen's homilies: (1) the rejection of the Jews paralleled by the election of the Gentiles, and (2) the inferiority of the Jewish law and

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[494] Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 147. Origen's actual interaction with Jews, rather than his portrayal of them in homilies, has received surprisingly little attention. Notable exceptions are N. R. M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews: Studies in Jewish-Christian Relations in Third-Century Palestine* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976). Lisa R. Holliday, "Origen of Caesarea: Creating Christian Identity in the Third Century" (University of Kentucky, 2006).

[495] Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church*, 183-184.

[496] Rosemary Radford Ruether, "The *Adversus Judaeos* Tradition in the Church Fathers: The Exegesis of Christian Anti-Judaism," in *Essential Papers on Judaism and Christianity in Conflict*, ed. Jeremy Cohen (New York: New York University Press, 1991), 176.

cult paralleled by its spiritual fulfillment in Christianity. This tradition reaches a fever

pitch in the patristic period. Origen capitalized and contributed to this tradition in his

construction of Jews as other.

Utilizing the terminology from Jeremiah, Origen constructs a binary between

Jews and pagans. Following this binary, Origen then applies certain parts of Jeremiah to

Jews (his contemporaries as well as their predecessors) and other parts to his audience as

former pagans. In *Hom. Jer.* 5, Origen divides Jeremiah 3:21-22 as follows:

> And when these statements concerning Israel were originally said and the sons of
> Israel heard *that they were unrighteous in their ways and they forgot their holy*
> *God* [cf. Jer. 3:21], then the Holy Spirit next places the word among us who are
> from the pagan nations and says, *Return* (Ἐπιστράφητε) *you sons, and when you*
> *return I will heal your afflictions* [cf. Jer. 3:22].[497]

There is no doubt that Origen would characterize his audience's lives before Christianity

as unrighteous, but his relegating Jer. 3:21 to Jews and applying Jer. 3:22 to his audience

is evidence of an artificial division in service of a rhetorical end: *they* were unrighteous,

we can return and be healed. Origen implicitly acknowledges his artifice by having an

imaginary interlocutor object to his interpretation. The interlocutor complains that Origen

applies statements that are clearly directed toward Israel to former pagans. Origen replies

to this objection with a hermeneutical principle, "We wish to suggest that when he wants

to speak to Israel about what concerns return (περὶ ἐπιστροφῆς), he applies the name of

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[497] καὶ ὅτε προηγουμένως ταῦτα εἴρηται τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἤκουσαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ
ὅτι ἠδίκησαν ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπελάθοντο θεοῦ ἁγίου αὐτῶν, ἑξῆς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα
τὸ ἅγιον μετατίθησι τὸν λόγον ἐφ' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν καί φησιν· Ἐπιστράφητε,
υἱοί, ἐπιστρέφοντες, καὶ ἰάσομαι τὰ συντρίμματα ὑμῶν. (*Hom. Jer.* 5.1.2 [GCS 6:30]) ET
Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 40-41. Although Origen does not exploit it here, the
imperative Ἐπιστράφητε fits well with the schema of directionality toward God: Applied
to his audience it is an appeal to orient the self toward the contemplation of God.

Israel not after many words but immediately."[498] The underlying logic is that if the topic

is return (ἐπιστροφή), it applies to Jews *only if* the author makes a special effort to apply

it to them; that is, the most natural read is to apply the topic of return to former pagans,

not Jews. The application of a negative text to Jews but a positive text to Christians is a

standard literary feature of the *Adversus Judaeos* tradition.[499]

For Origen, as for many other early Christian theologians, the salvation of the

pagan nations is predicated upon the failure of the Jewish people to be in right

relationship with God. Origen makes this idea explicit when he claims, "The calling of

the pagan nations has its beginning in the transgression of Israel."[500] Origen is not unique

in making such a claim and he cites Romans 11:11 as a proof text. What is interesting is

how he uses this idea to construct an image of the Jewish self that he then can use as a

negative image for the Christian self. An example of this comes in Origen's discussion of

Jer. 3:7-9 in *Hom. Jer.* 4.5. The text from Jeremiah states that Judah has been handed a

bill of divorce from God because of Judah's unfaithfulness. Origen glosses "Judah" here

as the "assembly of Israel" and thereby sets up the Jews as a negative example.[501] In the

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[498] Θέλομεν παραστῆσαι ὅτι οὐ μετὰ πολλά, ἀλλ᾽ εὐθύς, ὅπου βούλεται πρὸς τὸν Ἰσραὴλ λέγειν τὰ περὶ ἐπιστροφῆς, προστίθησι τὸ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ὄνομα. (*Hom. Jer.* 5.2.1 [GCS 6:31]) ET Ibid., 42. I have altered Smith's translation slightly: he renders περὶ ἐπιστροφῆς as "concerns conversion." I have rendered it "concerns return" to fit with his previous translation of ἐπιστράφητε in Hom. Jer. 5.1.2. But see Smith's comment at Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 41 n. 8.

[499] Ruether, 179.

[500] Ἡ κλῆσις τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀρχὴν ἔσχεν ἐκ τοῦ παραπτώματος τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. (*Hom. Jer.* 4.2 [GCS 6:24]) ET Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 32.

[501] "And we need to be taught from the way he treated them, when he separated them according to their sins…" *Hom. Jer.* 4.5.2 Καὶ δέον ἡμᾶς παιδευθῆναι ἐξ ὧν ἐκείνοις ἐποίησε κρίνας αὐτοὺς κατὰ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα. (*Hom. Jer.* 4.5.2 [GCS 6:28]) ET Ibid., 37.

context of Jeremiah 3 the "adultery" of Judah and Israel is the practice of idolatry (Jer. 3:6). The Jews formerly had fellowship with God, but have turned away from God to serve idols. By contrast, Origen and his audience have moved in an opposite direction: from idols to God. "But we were not servants of God but of idols and demons, pagans just recently come to God."[502] In this homily, Origen first constructs the directionality of the Jewish self as moving away from God to idols, so that he can construct the directionality of the Christian self as moving away from idols to God.[503]

The homiletical practice of constructing of Jews as the other clearly relies upon the practice of entering the text described above. Indeed, in *Hom. Jer.* 9 there is an extended example of how these two homiletical practices are used together in the construction of the Christian self. Origen employs these practices in concert to colonize the text of Jeremiah at the expense of the Jews. This homily covers most of the text of Jeremiah 11:1-10. The first move Origen makes in the colonization of the text is to interpret the phrase "men of Judah" (Jer. 11:2) as Christians, not Jews. Origen justifies this interpretation by associating "Judah" with Christ.[504] He gives two reasons. First, he

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The logic of Jeremiah 3:7-9 is that Judah should have learned a lesson watching Israel being carried off in captivity, but did not. The end result, what is important for Origen's interpretation, is that both Judah and Israel, that is the whole Jewish people, turned away from God and were punished.

[502] Καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἦμεν δοῦλοι τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ εἰδώλων καὶ δαιμόνων, ἐθνικοί, ἐχθὲς καὶ πρώην προσεληλύθαμεν τῷ θεῷ. (*Hom. Jer.* 4.5.3 [GCS 6:29]) ET Ibid., 38.

[503] This depiction of the faithful former pagan and the idolatrous Jew is a standard part of the *Adversus Judaeos* tradition. Ruether, 177.

[504] Notice the shift in Origen's interpretation of "Judah." Above, Origen argues that "Judah" refers to "the assembly of Israel" who were implicated in idolatry. Now, "Judah" refers to "Christ. This just goes to show how fluid Origen's exegesis is in practice.

points out, following Hebrews 7:4, Christ was descended from Judah. Second, Origen

turns his attention to Genesis 49:8 which says of Judah "Your hand shall be on the neck

of your enemies." Origen can find no historical record of Judah laying a hand on his

enemies, therefore, he concludes, Genesis 49:8 must be applied to a different Judah. As it

turns out, Jesus has defeated the devil and "disarmed principalities and powers," and

therefore the Judah of Genesis 49:8 is actually Jesus.[505] Origen concludes, "If this is so,

and the word now speaks to the *men of Judah* [Jer. 11:2], to whom else could he speak

than to us who believe in the Christ, who is called Judah…"[506] If "men of Judah" refers to

Christians, then it is also the case, Origen claims, that "inhabitants of Jerusalem" (Jer.

11:2) must refer to the Church. "For the city of God, the Vision of Peace, is the Church,

the peace which he brought to us is in her, and is completed and beheld if we are children

of peace."[507] Jeremiah 11:1-10 is no longer addressed to Jews, but addressed to Origen's

Christian audience.

The promise of Jeremiah 11:4, "So you shall be my people and I will be your

God" (NRSV) applies not to Jews, according to Origen, but to Christians. Origen

concludes:

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[505] *Hom. Jer.* 9.1.4.

[506] Εἰ τοῦθ᾽ οὕτως ἔχει, λέγει δὲ ὁ λόγος νῦν πρὸς ἄνδρας Ἰούδα, πρὸς τίνας ἂν λέγοι ἢ πρὸς ἡμᾶς τοὺς πιστεύοντας ἐπὶ τὸν Χριστόν, διὰ τὴν φυλὴν Ἰούδα λεγόμενόν πως καὶ Ἰούδαν; (*Hom. Jer.* 9.1.4 [GCS 6:65]) ET Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 87.

[507] ἔστιν γὰρ ἡ πόλις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ ἐκκλησία, ἡ Ὅρασις τῆς εἰρήνης, ἐν αὐτῇ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἣν ἤγαγεν ἡμῖν, εἴγε ἐσμὲν τέκνα εἰρήνης. (*Hom. Jer.* 9.2.1 [GCS 6:65]) ET Ibid. Origen makes this claim on the basis of an allusion to Rev. 3:12 and an etymology of Jerusalem that means "Vision of Peace."

Not everyone who says they are a people of God are a *people* of God. Hence, that people who were proclaimed to be a people of God heard, *You are not my people* in the passage *Therefore you are not my people* [cf. Hos. 1:9]…For, *they have provoked me to jealousy with what is not God*—he speaks concerning the former—*they have provoked me with their idols* [cf. Deut. 32.21].[508]

Origen's statement that simply claiming to be God's people is not enough is clearly a polemic against the Jews. He sees in Hosea 1:9 God's rejection of the Jews and connects this rejection to the idolatry mentioned in Deuteronomy 32:21. The reason that the Jews are no longer God's people is that they turned from God to idolatry. By contrast, Origen's audience has now been made into a people of God for the reason that they have turned to God from idolatry. "Thus we were made into a people for God, and the *righteousness* of God was *proclaimed to the people who will be born* [cf. Ps. 21(22):31], to a people from the pagan nations."[509] By addressing the text from Jeremiah to a contemporary audience, Origen has shifted its promise of being God's people from Jews to Christians; by evoking Jewish idolatry, which is itself a turning from God, Origen has set Jews up as a foil for Christians who turned from idols to God. The Christian self whose directionality is toward God stands out in sharp contrast to the Jewish self whose directionality is away from God.

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[508] Οὐ πᾶς ὁ λέγων λαὸς εἶναι θεοῦ λαὸς ἔστιν θεοῦ. Ἐκεῖνος οὖν ὁ ἐπαγγειλάμενος εἶναι λαὸς θεοῦ οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς ἤκουσαν ἐν τῷ διότι οὐ λαός μου ὑμεῖς, καὶ ἐρρήθη πρὸς τὸν λαὸν ἐκεῖνον οὐ λαός μου, καὶ πάλιν οὗτος ὁ λαὸς ἐκλήθη λαός· αὐτοὶ γὰρ παρεζήλωσάν με ἐπ' οὐ θεῷ—περὶ ἐκείνων δὲ λέγει—παρώργισάν με ἐν τοῖς εἰδώλοις αὐτῶν· (*Hom. Jer.* 9.2.4 [GCS 6:66-67]) ET Ibid., 88-89.

[509] Γεγόναμεν οὖν ἡμεῖς τῷ θεῷ εἰς λαόν, καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ ἀναγγέλλεται τῷ λαῷ τῷ τεχθησομένῳ τῷ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν. (*Hom. Jer.* 9.3.1 [GCS 6:67]) ET Ibid., 89.

Conclusion

Origen's structure of the self is constructed in the liturgical context where baptism, eucharist, prayer, and homiletical practice pair the self's resources—body, soul, and spirit—with the self's schema—directionality toward God—into a coherent whole. Participation in liturgical practices required the participant to involve not just the corporeal or just the incorporeal, nor was the participant required to strike a balance between the two, rather the participant was required to involve both the corporeal and incorporeal in all their fullness. Without this involvement of both corporeal and incorporeal in the directionality toward God, ritual practices would not make sense as practiced. In addition, Origen's audience emerged with understanding of the self as oriented toward God: distinctly Christian, not heretical or Jewish.

Throughout this chapter I have had occasion to compare Origen's structure of the self with the structures of the self constructed by Heracleon and Irenaeus. As far as resources are concerned, Origen's self has most in common with Irenaeus's. For both of these Christian theologians each self has three resources: body, soul, and spirit, even if Origen tends to collapse this trichotomy into a dichotomy. However, Origen and Irenaeus pair these resources with different schemas. As far as schemas are concerned Origen has something in common with Heracleon. The point of origin is significant for the schema of the self for these two Christian theologians: For Heracleon the Valentinian myth claims that selves have different points of origin and therefore have different points of return. For Origen every self has the same point of origin: created by God for the contemplation of God. In other words, despite similarities in these structures of the self

the differences are instructive: different resources, different selves; different schemas, different selves.

At the completion of this chapter I have now discussed two important processes: the becoming scripture of biblical texts and the becoming self of the human person. Origen, Heracleon, and Irenaeus carry out these two processes in different ways with different results. In the next chapter I will discuss two additional and related processes found in Origen's exegetical practice: the anthropomorphizing of scripture and the scripturalizing of the self. Neither Origen's structure of scripture nor his structure of the self are complete without these processes.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE SELF STRUCTURES SCRIPTURE AND SCRIPTURE STRUCTURES THE SELF: ORIGEN'S SCRIPTURE-SELF COMPLEX

Up to this point in this dissertation I have treated scripture and self as though they were separate phenomena. A distinction between the two is appropriate in the cases of Heracleon and Irenaeus because for neither of these Christian theologians do scripture and self have a *structural* relationship. Both Heracleon's and Irenaeus's structures of scripture can be conceived of, in total, without reference to their structures of self. The same could be said respecting their structures of self with reference to their structures of scripture.[510] A similar distinction for Origen, however, is artificial. Indeed, the past two chapters in which I have discussed Origen's structures of scripture and self separately have been incomplete.[511] In Origen's thought the structures of scripture and self mutually structure one another to such a degree that it is best to think of these phenomena as a scripture-self complex rather than two distinct structures.

Therefore, in this chapter I will discuss how scripture and self mutually structure one another, what practices support and are also made possible by this mutual structuring, and finally, in conclusion, what it means to speak of Origen's scripture-self complex. I

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[510] I am not claiming that either of their structures of self is not generally influenced by their structures of scripture, only that their structures of self do not require their structures of scripture to be what they claim it to be.

[511] For example, when discussing scriptural schemas in chapter three I listed "the idea that scriptural resources have a body, soul, and spirit" as a third schema that must await explanation until after I had discussed Origen's structure of self.

will demonstrate that Origen conceptualizes the resources of the self and applies them as a schema to the resources of scripture. I call this process the anthropomorphizing of scripture. It is this process that makes possible Origen's most (in)famous exegetical practice: allegorical reading. Following this discussion I will show that scripture structures self by orienting the self's directionality toward the contemplation of God. This occurs because the self is able to discover Christ's sojourn within scripture and follow Christ back toward God by the practices of Christian παιδεία. I call this process the scripturalizing of the self.

All of these elements—self, scripture, allegorical reading, and Christian παιδεία—can be found throughout Origen's extant corpus. Yet, in his *Commentary on the Song of Songs,* these elements reach a crescendo.[512] For this reason, I will make special reference to Origen's exegesis of the Song of Songs throughout this chapter. In its original form this commentary contained ten books that presumably covered the entire Song of Songs.[513] Of those ten books only three have survived and these three are extant only in Rufinus's Latin translation. There are some Greek fragments that have been preserved in Procopius of Gaza (c. 465-528 CE). A comparison of these fragments to Rufinus's

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[512] Jerome offers the following praise for Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, "While Origen surpassed all writers in his other books, in his *Song of Songs* he surpassed himself…And this exposition of his is so splendid and so clear, that it seems to me that the words, *The King brought me into His Chamber*, have found their fulfillment in him." *Origenes, cum in ceteris libris omnes vicerit, in Cantico Canticorum ipse se vicit…ita magnifice aperteque disseruit, ut mihi videatur in eo completum esse, quod dicitur: introduxit me rex in cubiculum suum. (Orig. Hom. Cant.* prologue [SC 37:58]) ET Lawson, 265.

[513] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.32.2.

translation shows that Rufinus's version "is extremely free."[514] However, when compared to Origen's other works that are extant in Greek, it is clear that Rufinus has often captured the over-all intent of Origen's meaning. This is especially true of the passages I have cited below in my discussion.[515]

Self Structures Scripture: Anthropomorphizing of Scripture

In the previous chapter I argued that the resources of the self in Origen's thought were body, soul, and spirit. I also demonstrated that these resources were often reduced in practice to a dichotomy that Origen identified as the inner (soul and spirit) and outer (body) man. In chapter three I hinted that these resources of the self somehow served as a schema by which the resources of scripture are understood for Origen. It is now time to explore this idea fully by discussing how this occurs and what this implies for Origen's exegetical practice.

William Sewell introduced an axiom he called "the transposability of schemas" when discussing the means by which structures change over time.[516] He suggested that since individuals are generally aware of the schemas they are employing (whether they would call them schemas or not), it is no surprise that an individual may transpose a schema from one resource set to another. Origen does just this in *Princ.* 4.2.4, except that he first implicitly conceptualizes the resources of the self as a schema. He claims, "For

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[514] Lawson, 5.

[515] I agree with Crouzel that Rufinus's translations "render the ideas close enough." Crouzel, 42. To support this claim I have also discussed passages from *Contra Celsum* and Greek passages from *On First Prinicples*. Passages from these works support and contextualize the passages from *Commentary on the Song of Songs.*

[516] Sewell, 139-143. See chapter one above.

just as man consists of body, soul, and spirit, so in the same way does the scripture, which has been prepared by God to be given for man's salvation."[517] Instead of simply transposing a schema from one resource set to another, Origen conceptualizes the relations that obtain between a resource set (that of the self), that is, that the corporeal has a relationship to the incorporeal, and transfers that conception to a different resource set (that of scripture). Therefore, body, soul, and spirit are not added to the structure of scripture as resources, but as a schema. Origen has anthropomorphized scripture.[518] Its resources, such as the Book of Genesis, the Gospel of John, or the Song of Songs for example, can be considered from the perspective of body, soul, and/or spirit.[519] That is to say, because scripture is anthropomorphized, an entirely new practice, allegorical reading, is now justified by virtue of what the structure of scripture itself is.

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[517] ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος συνέστηκεν ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς καὶ πνεύματος, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ἡ οἰκονομηθεῖσα ὑπὸ θεοῦ εἰς ἀνθρώπων σωτηρίαν δοθῆναι γραφή. (*Princ.* 4.2.4 [SC 268:312]) ET Butterworth, 276.

[518] Origen's motivation for anthropomorphizing scripture in this way is to make sure that scripture contains nothing contradictory or unworthy of God. He often complains that the simple-minded read scriptural passages that anthropomorphize God to indicate that God actually has human-like characteristics. In other words, Origen anthropomorphizes scripture so that he can de-anthropomorphize God.

[519] Although not every individual text has a body, soul, or spirit. Some have only a "spirit," that is, an allegorical meaning. See *Princ.* 4.2.5, "But since there are certain passages of scripture which, as we shall show in what follows, have no bodily sense at all, there are occasions when we must seek only for the soul and the spirit, as it were, of the passage." Ἀλλ' ἐπεί εἰσί τινες γραφαὶ τὸ σωματικὸν οὐδαμῶς ἔχουσαι, ὡς ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς δείξομεν, ἔστιν ὅπου οἰονεὶ τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς γραφῆς μόνα χρὴ ζητεῖν. (SC 268:316) ET Butterworth, 277-278.

Allegorical Reading: Terms and Historical Background

An examination of Origen's allegorical reading needs to begin with a discussion

regarding terminology, both modern and ancient. Most modern scholarship employs the

terms "allegory" and "typology" to describe non-literal interpretations. The former is

often thought to be illegitimate interpretation whereas the latter is thought to be

legitimate. Peter Martens recently surveyed the major modern works on Origen's

exegetical practices and noted that not only are the terms "allegorical" and typological"

used in value-laden ways, but that most scholars use different criteria to evaluate

"allegory" as illegitimate and "typology" as legitimate.[520] There are two problems with

this approach. First, the ancient sources in general, and Origen in particular, do not justify

a distinction between these terms.[521] Origen, in at least one instance, uses the participle

ἀλληγορούμενα adverbially as equivalent to the adverb τυπικῶς.[522] Second, while ancient

authors did distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate uses of non-literal reading,

that distinction was neither reflected in the terminology used nor were the bases of the

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[520] Martens, "Revisiting the Allegory/Typology Distinction: The Case of Origen." R.P.C. Hanson's work has been one of the most influential in English scholarship. He defined typology as "the interpreting of an event belonging to the present or the recent past as the fulfillment of a similar situation recorded or prophesied in Scripture," and allegory as "the interpretation of an object or person or number of objects or persons as in reality meaning some object of person of a later time, with no attempt made to trace a relationship of 'similar situation' between them." Hanson, 7. The issue for Hanson is that allegory is arbitrary and disregards or nullifies history.

[521] I do not agree, then, with Daniélou when he claims that historians *need* to maintain a distinction between "allegory" and "typology." Origen certainly preferred some examples of non-literal reading to others, but this preference is not indicated by the use of one term over another. See Daniélou, 139.

[522] *Comm. in I Cor.* 35 cited and discussed in Martens, "Revisiting the Allegory/Typology Distinction: The Case of Origen," 301.

distinction the same as those found in modern scholarship.[523] In short, it is not helpful when scholars make evaluative distinctions between allegory and typology and apply these terms to ancient reading practices.

The terms ἀλληγορία and ἀλληγορέω were not used with great frequency until a few generations before Origen, though the phenomenon dates back to the sixth century BCE.[524] Plutarch (c. 45-120 CE) comments that before the terms ἀλληγορία and ἀλληγορέω were common coinage authors used to use the term ὑπόνοια.[525] The basic meaning of this latter term is "a hidden thought" but it was also used to refer to the "real meaning" or "deeper sense" of something.[526] Two other first-century authors provide definitions of ἀλληγορία: Quintilian provides a minimal definition calling ἀλληγορία an extended metaphor (presumably involving a narrative structure), but Heraclitus (the first-century grammarian) goes further and provides an etymological definition, "For the trope which says [ἀγορεύων] one thing but signifies something other [ἄλλα] than what it says

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[523] In *Cels.* 4.38 Origen the term ἀλληγορία for both interpretations he finds agreeable and those he does not. Martens identifies five criteria that Origen uses distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable allegory: (1) similitude, (2) conformity to the rule of faith, (3) etymology, (4) interpreting scripture by scripture, and (5) following the lead of authoritative exegetes, i.e. Paul. Ibid.: 310-313.

[524] Cleanthes the Stoic (third century BCE) may have been the first to use the term ἀλληγορικῶς but it may be that the term comes from Apollonius the Sophist who is quoting him much later. Hanson, 37; Sandys, 149. Pfeiffer traces the "allegorical line" all the way back to Theogenes in the in the sixth century BCE. Pfeiffer, 35.

[525] Plutarch, *How the Young Man Sbould Study Poetry*, 19e (Babbitt, LCL)

[526] Sandys, 29.

receives the name 'allegory' [ἀλληγορία] precisely from this."[527] One could also include

other similar terms, such as symbol (σύμβολον) and type (τύπος), under the definition

provided by Heraclitus. So Origen sometimes uses the term σύμβολον in this sense:

> The truth (ἀληθείας) of the events recorded to have happened to Jesus cannot be
> fully seen in the mere text and historical narrative; for each event to those who
> read the Bible more intelligently is clearly a symbol of something else (σύμβολόν
> τινος εἶναι) as well.[528]

In a comment on 1 Corinthians, to which I have already alluded, Origen uses the terms

ἀλληγορούμενα and τυπικῶς synonymously.[529] There were, then, a number of terms used

to describe reading texts in non-literal ways that did not necessarily describe *different*

methods of non-literal reading. Furthermore, whatever subtle nuances may be implied by

these different terms, those nuances are not the evaluative differences suggested by many

modern scholars' use of the term allegory in opposition to typology. One must be aware,

then, of how one uses the terms. In what follows I will use the term "allegory" to refer to

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[527] Ὁ γὰρ ἄλλα μὲν ἀγορεύων τρόπος, ἕτερα δὲ ὧν λέγει σημαίνων, ἐπωνύμως ἀλληγορία καλεῖται. (Heraclitus, *Homeric Problems* 5.2) Greek text and translation from D.A. Russell and David Konstan, *Heraclitus: Homeric Problems*, Writings from the Greco-Roman World (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 9.

[528] Τὰ συμβεβηκέναι ἀναγεγραμμένα τῷ Ἰησοῦ οὐκ ἐν ψιλῇ τῇ λέξει καὶ τῇ ἱστορίᾳ τὴν πᾶσαν ἔχει θεωρίαν τῆς ἀληθείας· ἕκαστον γὰρ αὐτῶν καὶ σύμβολόν τινος εἶναι παρὰ τοῖς συνετώτερον ἐντυγχάνουσι τῇ γραφῇ ἀποδείκνυται. (*Cels.* 2.69 [SC 132:446]) ET Chadwick, 118.

[529] "'These things ἐστιν ἀλληγορούμενα [happened allegorically],' and 'these are two covenants,' [Gal 4.24] since 'these things happened τυπικῶς [figuratively] to them, and were written for us upon whom the end of the ages has come.' [1 Cor 10.11]." *Comm in I Cor.* 35 translated and quoted in Martens, "Revisiting the Allegory/Typology Distinction: The Case of Origen," 301.

any non-literal reading that is based on a literal narrative or includes a narrative in the allegory.[530]

Origen was not the first to use the practice of allegorical reading to interpret texts. On the contrary, a number of other groups, such as the Stoics and Neoplatonists, as well as individuals, such as Philo and Paul, used allegorical reading as an exegetical practice to interpret texts. Allegorical interpretation was characteristic of the Stoic school.[531] The Stoics approached cultural classics, especially Homer's *Iliad*, allegorically in order to show that these texts actually taught Stoic doctrines.[532] Heraclitus, the first-century CE grammarian who provided a definition of allegory mentioned above, used allegorical reading to insist that Homer's *Iliad* taught natural philosophy. He reads *Iliad.* 15.18-21 as an allegory of the four elements where ether is primary followed by air, water, and earth.[533] But Stoics were not the only ones to allegorize Homer. Despite Plato's suspicion of allegory, Neoplatonists also used allegory to interpret Homer.[534] Porphyry's *On the*

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[530] Here I am relying on Dawson, 6. The presence of narrative, on either the literal or allegorical levels distinguishes "allegory" from "etymology." The latter is often used in the service of the former, but they are distinct exegetical practices nonetheless.

[531] Pfeiffer, 237.

[532] The justification for this procedure for the Stoics was that if the logos is a fundamental principle underlying all reality, then the same logos that is present in the physical world must also be manifest in poetry as well. Ibid., 238.

[533] Heraclitus, *All.* 40.2. For an in-depth discussion of Heraclitus's allegorical interpretation of Homer see Dawson, 38-52. Pfieffer points out that Stoic allegorical readings of Homer, which he associates with the library at Pergamum, stood in marked contrast to the method of the Alexandrian grammarians who used text criticism, not allegory, to remove offensive passages from Homer. Pfeiffer, 140.

[534] Pfeiffer, 237.

Cave of the Nymphs is an allegorical interpretation of Homer's *Odyssey* 13.102-112; Porphyry reads this passage as an allegory of the universe.[535] In fact, Porphyry accuses Origen of plagiarizing Hellenism in applying allegorical reading to what Porphyry thought of as a barbarian literature.[536] R. P. C. Hanson goes as far to say that by the time Origen was employing allegorical reading, "it had become almost part of the intellectual atmosphere in which educated men moved, in a position perhaps comparable to that held by the theory of evolution in our day."[537]

Philo of Alexandria is an important predecessor to Origen's allegorical reading of scripture. Although Philo lived several generations before Origen, the two belonged to the same intellectual environment (Alexandrian Platonism). More importantly, however, Origen often acknowledges his own debt to Philo's scholarly work.[538] Origen mentions

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[535] For discussion see Sandys, 244.

[536] Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.19.8. Celsus also condemned the application of allegorical reading to "barbarian" texts such as the Septuagint. According to Origen, Celsus considered the philosophizing allegories of Philo as more ridiculous than the texts allegorized (*Cels.* 4.51). Because Hellenists like Porphyry and Celsus disallowed the application of allegory Christian scripture, they were unable to take Christian scripture seriously. See Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church*, 218 ff.

[537] Hanson, 62. While I agree with Hanson here it must also be noted that allegorical reading was not without its critics (also like the theory of evolution in our day). For a discussion of criticisms see Dawson, 52-72.

[538] David Runia and Annewies Van Den Hoek are to be credited with advancing the study of the relationship between Philo and Origen by providing extensive catalogues of passages where Origen explicitly or implicitly references Philo. See David Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Suvey*, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum Ad Novum Testamentum (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 157-183; Annewies van den Hoek, "Philo and Origen: A Descriptive Catalogue of Their Realtionship," in *The Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, ed. David Runia and Gregory Sterling (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2000).

Philo explicitly three times throughout his corpus and makes implicit references to him many more times.[539] A brief survey of these passages indicates that Origen speaks highly of Philo's intellectual achievement, that Origen constantly refers to Philo as a predecessor, and finally that Origen refers to Philo most often with regard to questions of biblical interpretation.[540] *Hom. Jer.* 14.5 provides an example where Origen's interpretation is indebted to Philo's.[541] In Jeremiah 15:10 the prophet laments, "Woe is me, my mother, that you ever bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land" (NRSV). Philo cites this passage in *The Confusion of Tongues* 44 and 49 and identifies the "mother" of Jeremiah 15:10 as "wisdom."[542] Origen relies on Philo when he says of Jeremiah 15:10, "But of those before me, someone has pointed out this text by saying that he was saying these things not to his biological mother but to the mother who gives birth

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[539] The explicit references can be found at *Cels.* 4.51; 6.21; and *Comm. Matt.* 15.3. For a list of possible implicit references see van den Hoek. Van Den Hoek identifies 304 passages from Origen's extant corpus that may be dependent upon Philo. He rates these passages from "A" to "D" where "A" means certain dependency and "D" means that there is likely no dependence. According to his analysis 109 of the 304 passages fall under the categories of "A" or "B" categories. For a discussion of his methodology see Annewies van den Hoek, "Assessing Philo's Influence in Christian Alexandria: The Case of Origen," in *Shem in the Tents of Japhet: Essays on the Encounter of Judaism and Hellenism*, ed. James Kugel, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism (Boston: Brill, 2002).

[540] Runia, 163.

[541] Van den Hoek rates the probability that Origen is dependent on Philo in this passage as "A"

[542] "But to every wise man [vices] are, as they should be, a source of pain, and often will he say to his mother and nurse, wisdom, 'O mother, how great didst thou bear me!'" ἐφ' οἷς εἰκότως καὶ πᾶς σοφὸς ἄχθεται, καὶ πρός γε τὴν μητέρα καὶ τιθήνην ἑαυτοῦ, σοφίαν, εἴωθε λέγειν· ὦ μῆτερ, ἡλίκον με ἔτεκες. (Philo, *Conf.,* 49 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL])

to prophets. But who produces prophets other than the wisdom of God?"[543] This is but one of many examples where Origen demonstrates his knowledge and dependence on Philo's corpus.[544]

The apostle Paul is a much more important predecessor to Origen's allegorical reading. Origen constantly cites him not only as an authoritative example, but also as providing theoretical justification for a Christian allegorical reading of scripture. There are a number of passages from the Pauline corpus that Origen frequently cites as hermeneutical maxims, but Paul also provided a few examples of allegorical reading that Origen took as normative. 1 Corinthians 10:1-11 provides just such an example. In this passage Paul discusses a number of events from the narrative of Exodus as τύποι for contemporary Christians. He ends the discussion by claiming, "These things happened to them to serve as an example (τυπικῶς), and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. (NRSV)." Origen takes this passage as an example that past events have some meaning for contemporary readers.[545] Another

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[543] Τῶν πρὸ ἐμοῦ δέ τις ἐπέβαλε τῷ τόπῳ λέγων ὅτι ταῦτα ἔλεγεν οὐ πρὸς τὴν μητέρα τὴν σωματικήν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν μητέρα τὴν γεννῶσαν προφήτας. τίς δὲ γεννᾷ προφήτας ἢ ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ; (*Hom. Jer.* 14.5 [GCS 6:110]) ET Smith, *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 140.

[544] On account of his appreciation of Philo's work Origen brought a number of Philo's books with him when he moved from Alexandria to Caesarea. This is the reason that most of Philo's corpus has been preserved in the manuscript tradition. Runia, 158.

[545] Hanson argues that the non-literal reading of the Exodus narrative employed by Paul in this passage is fundamentally different than that employed generally by Origen. Hanson is correct to observe that Paul is using a past historical event to illuminate current historical circumstances. Hanson, 79-80. Hanson opposes this non-literal reading, which he calls "typology" to Origen's non-literal reading, which he calls "allegory." Origen's allegory allegedly erases the historicity of events in favor of non-historical realities. I maintain, along with Martens, that Hanson's distinction between "typology" and "allegory" is anachronistic and obscures more than it clarifies. In fact, the distinction

important passage where the apostle use allegorical reading is found in Galatians 4:21-31 where he discusses Moses' two wives and their sons. Paul states, "Now this is an allegory [ἀλληγορούμενα][546]: these women are two covenants" (NRSV). Paul uses Hagar and Sarah as symbols of two other realities, namely a covenant associated with Mount Sinai and slavery and a covenant associated with a "Jerusalem above" (v. 26) and freedom. The mechanics of Paul's allegorical reading are not entirely clear, but what is clear is that he takes elements from the text of Genesis and refers them to other realities. Origen understands this passage not only as a justification for reading scripture allegorically, but also as a template of how to do so.[547]

<div align="center">Allegorical Reading in Origen</div>

I turn now to Origen's practice of allegorical reading. I will discuss his theoretical basis for allegorical reading followed by a few examples of how he allegorizes texts. The purpose of the first part of the discussion to show that Origen justifies his allegorical reading on the basis of anthropomorphizing scripture; the purpose of the second part of the discussion is to show how the practice of allegorical reading continues to pair scriptural resources and schemas in the construction of scripture.

Origen's Theoretical Basis for Allegorical Reading

There are a number of passages throughout Origen's corpus where he discusses allegorical reading from a theoretical perspective; that is to say, he often informs his

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made by Hanson is the product of modern discursive practices designed to keep certain statements "in the true" while denying to others the same privilege.

[546] Literally: "have been spoken allegorically."

[547] *Princ*. 4.2.6

reader of why he believes allegorical reading is not just a justifiable exegetical practice, but a necessary one. In the following pages I will discuss two such passages: *Princ.* 4.2 and *Comm. Cant.* 3.13.

Origen begins his discussion of scriptural interpretation in *Princ.* 4.2 by identifying the most common mistake made by interpreters, namely, reading the text literally. The Jews have read the prophecies of the Septuagint literally and therefore fail to see that those prophecies are about Christ; the heretics have read anthropomorphic passages about God literally and have therefore failed to see that the God of the Septuagint and the God proclaimed by Jesus are the same God; and the "simple Christians" have read the same passages literally but instead of attributing those passages to a lesser god have formed false conceptions of what God is actually like.[548] In order to avoid these misinterpretations, it is necessary that Origen offer a counter-method of interpretation.

The centerpiece of Origen's discussion of allegorical reading comes at *Princ.* 4.2.4 where he articulates the various levels at which scripture can be read. He begins this section by a truncated quotation Proverbs 22:20-21 from the Septuagint, "Register these things in three ways (τρισσῶς) in counsel and knowledge in order that you may answer true words to those who accuse you."[549] Origen then fills out what is meant by τρισσῶς by speaking of the flesh (σάρξ), and soul (ψυχή) of scripture along with the "spiritual

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[548] *Princ.* 4.2.1. One can see here that there is a relationship between Origen's practice of allegorical reading and his practice of "othering" as discussed in chapter four above.

[549] καὶ σὺ δὲ ἀπόγραψαι αὐτὰ τρισσῶς ἐν βουλῇ καὶ γνώσει, τοῦ ἀποκρίνασθαι λόγους ἀληθείας τοῖς προβαλλομένοις σοι. (*Princ.* 4.2.4 [SC 268:310]) Translation mine.

law" (πνευματικοῦ νόμου).[550] The use of the terms σάρξ and πνευματικοῦ νόμου do not

correspond exactly to the resources of the self as discussed in chapter three of this

dissertation but Origen reverts to more familiar language at the close of the section. I

have quoted this passage often but here I present an alternative translation to bring out

some salient points, "For just as a self is combined from body, soul, and spirit, in the

same way also has scripture been arranged by God in order to be given to selves for

salvation."[551] On the basis of this passage many interpreters of Origen have correctly

expected that Origen would then interpret passages of scripture on three different levels.

However, this is not what Origen tends to do in his actual exegetical practice. Instead, he

usually interprets scripture on just two levels: on a literal level and an allegorical level.

Origen is inconsistent then when one compares his discussion here in *On First Principles*

and his actual exegetical practice. I suggest that this inconstancy is due primarily to the

tendency Origen displays in his anthropology to reduce the self's three resources (body,

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[550] In his Latin translation Rufinus renders σάρξ as *corpus*, ψυχή as *anima*, and πνευματικοῦ νόμου as *spiritali lege*. In the next sentence (discussed in the footnote below) Rufinus uses *corpus* to translate σῶμα. This suggests that Rufinus did not think Origen was making a conceptual distinction between σάρξ and σῶμα in this pages.

[551] ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος συνέστηκεν ἐκ σώματος καὶ ψυχῆς καὶ πνεύματος, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ἡ οἰκονομηθεῖσα ὑπὸ θεοῦ εἰς ἀνθρώπων σωτηρίαν δοθῆναι γραφή. (*Princ.* 4.2.4 [SC 268:312]) One might object to my translation of ἄνθρωπος as "self" by pointing out that if that is what Origen meant here he would have used the term αὐτός. However, When αὐτός is used to mean "self" in Greek texts it is usually along the lines of a Platonic divide between a true inner self as opposed to the body. I have argued that Origen stands opposed to this conception of the self. For him, the self *includes* the body, even if that body may be radically transformed by the resurrection. From this perspective I think that ἄνθρωπος may well mean the entirety of what makes a person a person, that is, a self. My translation of οἰκονομηθεῖσα as "arranged" rather than "prepared" is meant to highlight that there is a particular order in scripture that is meant to be followed to most effectively make salvation possible.

soul, and spirit) to two resources (inner and outer). In fact, when Origen gives another

theoretical justification for the practice of allegorical reading in his *Commentary on the*

Song of Songs, he does so by appealing not to body, soul, and spirit, but to the inner and

outer nature of things. This does not undermine my contention that Origen has

anthropomorphized scripture, it demonstrates that the same inconstancy present in his

anthropology is also present in his anthropomorphizing of scripture.

In *Comm. Cant.* 3.13 Origen provides another theoretical justification for the

practice of allegorical reading.[552] Here, he explains the meaning of the terms "roe" and

"hart" from Song. 2:9. He then proceeds to list other passages from scripture where one

or both of these terms are present, as any grammarian would do.[553] Following a

discussion of these passages, Origen justifies his procedure:

> We have quoted [these passages] that *we may speak not in the doctrine of human wisdom, but in the doctrine of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual* [1 Cor. 2:13] Let us therefore call upon God…that He may…transfer our perception from the doctrine of human wisdom and lift and raise it to the doctrine of the Spirit…[554]

Origen's quotation of 1 Cor. 2:13 and his prayer for perception to be transferred from

human to divine wisdom are fundamental to his practice of allegorical reading. He then

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[552] Lawson labels this section 3.12 in his English translation, but the editors of the *Sources Chrétiennes* edition label the section 3.13. I will be following the numbering from the *Sources Chrétiennes*.

[553] Deut. 12:15, 22; 14:4f; Ps. 28 [29]:7-9; Job 39:1-4; Pro. 5:19

[554] *Quae ob hoc assumpsimus, ut loquamur non in doctrina humanae sapientiae, sed in doctrina Spiritus, spiritalibus spiritalia comparantes. Et ideo invocemus Deum Patrem Verbi quo nobis Verbi sui manifestet arcane sensumque nostrum removeat a doctrina humanae sapientiae et exaltet atque elevet ad doctrinam Spiritus…* (*Comm. Cant.* 3.13.8 [SC 376:628]) ET Lawson, 218. Emphasis original to indicate scriptural allusion.

combines Rom. 1:20 and 2 Cor. 4:18 in order to show that visible/seen things make knowledge of the invisible/unseen things possible.[555] This is because God created things on earth "after the likeness of heavenly patterns (*caelestes imagines per similitudinem*)."[556]

Jesus's parable of the mustard seed in Matthew 13:31-32 provides additional justification of the correspondence between the earthly and celestial. Jesus introduces the parable by saying, "Like (ὁμοία) is the Kingdom of Heaven to a mustard seed" (Matt. 13:31). According to Origen, if something as insignificant as a seed bears a likeness to the celestial, surely the same is true for greater things such as plants. Origen continues, "and if with plants, undoubtedly with animals, whether they fly or creep or go upon all fours."[557] With regard to the passage at hand, Origen is making the point that if something as insignificant as a seed can have a hidden meaning, so does something higher up on the *scala naturae*, such as a roe or hart.[558] However, there is a larger theoretical observation here, the entire created order has been constructed by God in such a way that correspondences between the visible and invisible are built into the very order of things.

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[555] Indeed, throughout *Comm. Cant.* 3.13 Origen constantly alludes to distinctions between invisible/visible, unseen/seen, above/below, celestial/earthly, and hidden/manifest.

[556] *Comm. Cant.* 3.13.10 (SC 376:630) ET Lawson, 219.

[557] *et si virgulta, sine dubio et animantia vel alitum vel repentium et quadrupendum.* (*Comm. Cant.* 3.13.12 [SC 376:630]). ET Ibid.

[558] The concept of *scala naturae* or "chain of being" was widespread in Hellenistic thought and can be traced to Aristotle's natural philosophy, especially his biological studies.

Origen brings in a lengthy quotation from *Wisdom* 7:17-21 in support of this point. The author of this passage claims that God has given him "true knowledge of things that are (τῶν ὄντων γνῶσιν ἀψευδῆ)."[559] A long list of the things known by the author of this passage are listed, but important among them for the present discussion are "the natures of living creatures" and "all such things as are hid and manifest." (*Wis.* 7:20, 21). "The natures of living creatures" is important in this context specifically because Origen is preparing to give an allegorical reading of living creatures, the roe and hart from Song. 2:9. The claim is that animals have specific natures, the knowledge of which illuminates something otherwise hidden.[560] Origen explains knowledge of the hidden and manifest, "And [the author of *Wisdom*] doubtless shows by this that each of the manifest things is to be related to one of those that are hidden;…all things visible have some invisible likeness and pattern."[561] The relationship between hidden and manifest mentioned here by the author of *Wisdom* leads Origen to see in the nature of reality itself a design that leads from the knowledge of earthly to the knowledge of the heavenly:

> [S]o that the creation of the world itself, fashioned in this wise as it is, can be understood through the divine wisdom, which from actual things (*rebus ipsis*) and

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[559] The Latin in Rufinus' translation reads *eorum quae sunt scientiam veram*. *Cant.* 3.13.15 (SC 376:632)

[560] Origen gives examples where knowledge of animals helps illuminate the point of a passage of scripture: Lk 13:32 (foxes), Mt. 3:7 (vipers), Jer. 5:8 (stallions), Ps. 48:13 (beasts) and Ps. 57:5 (serpent).

[561] *ostendens sine dubio quod unumquodque erom que in manifesto sunt referatur ad aliquid eorum quae in occulto sunt, id est singula quaeque habere aliquid similitudnis et rationis ad invisibilia.* (*Comm. Cant.* 3.13.16 [SC 376:632]) ET Lawson, 220.

copies (*exemplis*) teaches us things unseen by means of those that are seen, and carries us over from earthly things to heavenly.[562]

Even though Origen has been using scriptural texts such as Matthew 13 and *Wisdom* 8 in support of his claims, he is discussing the nature of the created order itself. Origen is not yet talking about *scripture* as something visible that reveals something invisible. He makes the transition from the created order to scripture at *Cant.* 3.13.28, "But this relationship [between the visible and invisible] does not obtain only with creatures; the Divine Scripture itself is written with a wisdom of a rather similar sort."[563] In other words, the created order was designed in such a way that visible elements have a correspondence to invisible elements such that one learns the latter by means of the former. Likewise, scripture was designed in such a way that the visible elements have a correspondence to invisible elements such that one learns the latter by means of the former. The created order and scripture have this common correlation because they both have the same author. Origen's reasoning from the nature of reality in general to the nature of scripture in particular is no accident. Remembering from the previous chapter that the self, in its corporeal and incorporeal resources, is a microcosm of the created order, it is clear that in these pages Origen's reasoning from the created order to scripture indicates that he is conceptualizing the resources of the self as a schema to be applied to

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[562] *ut ipsa creatura mundi tali quadam dispensatione condita intelligatur per divinam sapientiam, quae rebus ipsis et exemplis invisibilia nos de visibilibus doceat et a terrenis nos transferat ad caelestia.* (*Comm. Cant.* 3.13.27 [SC 376:640]) ET Ibid., 223.

[563] *Haec autem rationes non solum in creaturis omnibus habentur, sed et ipsa scriptura divina tali quadam sapientiae arte conscripta est.* (*Comm. Cant.* 3.13.28 [SC 376:640]) ET Ibid.

scripture; this lays the foundation of his theoretical justification of allegorical reading found in *Cant.* 3.13.

Examples of Allegorical Reading in the *Commentary on Song of Songs*

The practice of allegorical reading is made possible, for Origen, because scripture is like the self in that it has corporeal and incorporeal aspects that are joined by a link of correspondence.[564] Origen uses this exegetical practice, like the exegetical practices discussed in chapter three to pair scripture's resources and schemas together into a structure. There are a number of poignant examples of this in Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs.* In general, Origen's exegesis in the commentary is organized by the three different stories he detects in the text; he opens his prologue by explaining these levels of meaning:

> It seems to me that this little book is an epithalamium, that is to say, a marriage song, which Solomon wrote in the form of a drama and sang under the figure of the Bride, about to be wed and burning with heavenly love towards her bridegroom, who is the Word of God. And deeply indeed did she love Him, whether we take her as the soul made in this image, or as the Church.[565]

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[564] Origen's emphasis on this link of correspondence suggests that he would reject the premise of the 19th century contrast of allegory and symbol that attributed to the former an arbitrary connection to what it symbolized and to the latter an organic connection to what it symbolized. Just because moderns (and some ancients) did not see the same connections between the corporeal and incorporeal that Origen did in his allegorical reading does not, on its own, justify the claim that Origen's allegories are arbitrary.

[565] *Epithalamium libellus hic, id est nuptiale Carmen, dramatis in modum mihi videtur a Solomone conscriptus, quem cecinit instar nubentis sponsae et erga sponsum suum, qui est Sermo Dei, caelesti amore flagrantis. Adamavit enim eum sive anima quae ad imaginem eius facta est, sive ecclesia.* (*Comm. Cant.* prol. 1.1 [SC 375:80]) ET Lawson, 21. The theme of "drama" plays a distinct role in all of Origen's thought. Rowan Greer has discussed this theme in the introduction to his translations of selections from Origen's work. Greer summarizes the drama that underlies Origen's theology, "The drama may be initially discussed by underlining three different metaphors Origen uses to articulate it: the journey, the growth to maturity, and the warfare against sin and evil." Greer, 17-18.

There are then three stories that share the same text. First, a love story between a bride

and a groom, second, a love story between the church and Christ, and third a love story

between a soul and the Word of God.[566] More often than not, Origen will explain a

passage first along the lines of the drama between the bride and groom and will then use

that as a basis for explaining the latter two stories.

A concise example of how one passage can contain these three stories is found in

Comm. Cant. 4.3 where Origen explains Song 2:15, "Catch us the little foxes that destroy

the vines, and our vineyard will flourish."[567] He starts with a comment about the literal

drama about the bride and groom. He simply notes in this regard that this passage marks

a change of character where the groom is no longer speaking to the bride, as in the

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[566] While Origen is fairly consistent in the order of presenting these stories, he sometimes conflates the latter two in his interpretation. Given that Origen anthropomorphizes scripture along the schema of body, soul, and spirit, as discussed above, and given that here he speaks of three stories, it is easy to correlate the body, soul, and spirit to these three stores. In fact, this is just what Lawson does in the introduction to his translation Lawson, 10. However, while there is clearly a correspondence between the level of body and the love story between a bride and groom, I do not find it so easy to correlate the love story between the church and Christ with the level of spirit and the love story between the soul and the word of God with the level of soul (the obvious linguistic connection not withstanding) insofar as this level is thought of as the "moral level." Rather, I consider the latter two stories to be two non-exclusive examples of allegorical reading corresponding to the "inner" aspect of an "inner"/ "outer" dichotomous anthropology.

[567] *Capite nobis vulpes pusillas exterminantes vineas; et vineae nostrae florebunt.* (*Comm. Cant.* 4.3.1 [SC 376:720]) ET Ibid., 254. There is some discrepancy if Rufinus's translation contained a division between a third and a fourth book. A small amount of manuscripts justify the division, but a statement from Cassiodorus does not. Cassiodorus writes, "The most eloquent interpreter Rufinus has in three books explained the work [Song of Songs] in greater detail, with certain passages added, as far as the precept which says: 'Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines.'" (*Institutes*, 5.4) ET Leslie Webber Jones, *Cassiodorus: An Introduction to Divine and Human Readings*, ed. Austin P. Evans, Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), 86.

previous verse, but to his own companions.[568] The introduction of the groom's

companions, which Origen discovers here at the literal level, is important for his

allegorical reading.

Origen signals a transition from the literal level to the story of the soul and the

Word of God by saying, "But we must search out these matters by the spiritual

interpretation (*spiritali expisitione*) as we have done from the beginning."[569] There are

four elements to be explained by an allegorical reading: little foxes, vines (both explicit

in the text), the groom, and the companions of the groom (both implicit in the text).

Origen assigns to each "another meaning:" the little foxes are base thoughts brought

about by demons, the vine, or rather its fruit, is the virtues found in the soul, the groom is

the Word of God, and the companions are angels. With this shift in reference, the verse is

now about the Word of God commanding angels to aid souls in resisting the evil thoughts

brought about by demons so that virtues may grow in the soul.[570] The detail that the foxes

are little is not too small for Origen to interpret, "For as long as a bad thought is only

beginning, it is easily driven from the heart."[571]

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[568] Here, and elsewhere when he discusses the literal drama, Origen operates exactly as one would expect a grammarian to operate. The text itself does not explicitly indicate a change of addressee; Origen presumably does not think it makes sense for the groom to say this to the bride.

[569] *Sed haec, ut coepimus, spiritali expositione discutienda sunt.* (*Comm. Cant.* 4.3.1 [SC 376:720]) ET Lawson, 254.

[570] *Comm. Cant.* 4.3.2-3

[571] *Dum enim cogitatio mala in initiis est, facile potest abici a corde.* (*Comm. Cant.* 4.3.6 [SC 376:722]) ET Lawson, 256.

The transition from the story of the soul and the Word of God to the story of Christ and the church comes at *Comm. Cant.* 3.4.8. This transition entails a shift in meaning for the four elements. Now the little foxes are heretical teachers, the vine is orthodox belief (defined by the Rule of Faith), the groom is Christ, and the companions of the groom are the church's teachers. The verse is now about Christ commanding the church's teachers to root out false doctrines that might destroy orthodox belief.[572] The detail that the foxes are little retains its importance because this process must happen before heresy gets out of hand and "spreads like a canker" (2 Timothy 2:17).[573]

After offering these two allegorical readings, Origen spends time collecting passages from scripture where foxes are mentioned so that he can coordinate those passages with the allegorical narratives suggested here. Among these passages is 2 Esdras 4:3. 2 Esdras is here grouped together with Origen's other resources of scripture (Psalms, Matthew, Luke, and Judges) because it contributes to the allegorical narratives discussed here by virtue of the occurrence of the word "fox."[574]

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[572] It is interesting that Origen here focuses on the church's teachers, not priests and bishops. According to Eusebius, this part of the *Comm. Cant.* was written c. 240 CE, after Origen had already settled as a presbyter in Caesarea. Even at this point he views the role of the teacher as the primary defense against heresy.

[573] *Comm. Cant.* 4.3.9.

[574] Origen comments, "These are all the passages from the Sacred Scriptures that we can think of at the moment, which contain mention of this animal; from them the discerning reader may gather whether what we have given here is an apt interpretation to explain the passage before us that says: 'Catch us the little foxes.'" *Haec sunt interim quae ad praesens nobis ex scripturis divinis occurrere poterunt in quibis animalis huius facta est memoria, ut ex his sapiens quisque lector prudenter posit conicere si apta usi sumus expositione in his quae proposita sunt nobis ad explanandum id quod ait: Capite nobis vulpes pusillas.* (*Comm. Cant.* 4.3.16 [SC 376:728]) ET Lawson, 258.

The story about the soul and the Word of God as discussed in this allegory is not exactly the scriptural schema of Christ's sojourn as discussed in chapter three of this dissertation, but it is related to that story in that the Word of God takes action on behalf of the soul in trying to produce virtue, and not vice, in it. The story about Christ and the church relates to the scriptural schema of the rule of faith by showing that the narrative of the Song of Songs, itself a scriptural resource, is concerned with the importance of orthodox teaching. In each case, the allegorical reading of "foxes" brings multiple scriptural resources together and pairs them with the schemas found by the practice of allegorical reading.

Another example of allegorical reading can be found in *Comm. Song.* 2.1 where Origen discusses the meaning of Song 1:5, "I am black and beautiful O daughters of Jerusalem" (NRSV).[575] Origen gives an interpretation of this verse according to the story of the bride and groom, the church and Christ, and the soul and the Word of God, but the lion's share of interpretation is devoted to the story of the church and Christ.

Origen signals his transition from the story of the bride and groom to that of the church and Christ by telling his reader that he will turn to the "mystical exposition" (*ordinem mysticum*). This passage is allegorized in such a way to highlight a conflict between the Gentile church and the Jews.[576] The bride is taken to represent the Gentile church and the daughters of Jerusalem are taken to represent Jews. Origen then

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[575] In his discussion of this verse Origen also applies the other exegetical practices discussed in chapter three above, especially διόρθωσις and ἐξήγησις.

[576] See chapter four above for a discussion of the relationship between Gentile Christians and Jews in Caesarea.

personifies the Gentile church and composes a monologue that she speaks to Jews who have criticized her because she was not constituted by the law of Moses.[577] In this monologue the church reminds the Jews that Miriam was punished for criticizing Moses when he took an Ethiopian wife. She says, "How is it that you do not recognize the true fulfillment of that type in me? I am the Ethiopian."[578] Origen then proceeds to gather a few other passages that discuss Ethiopians to shed light on the present passage: Numbers 12:1-16; 1 Kings 10:1-10 with Matthew 12:42; Zephaniah 3:8-11; and Jeremiah 38 [45]:10 with Jeremiah 39 [46]: 15-18. In each case Origen provides an allegorical reading where the Ethiopian in the passage represents the Gentile church. A brief look at Origen's allegorical reading of Numbers 12 and 1 Kings 10 will illustrate how Origen uses "Ethiopian" in an allegorical reading.

In the case of the passage from Numbers 12 Origen notes a difficulty at the literal level of the text, "Now on careful consideration the narrative here is found to lack coherence. What has their saying, *Hath the Lord spoken to Moses only? Hath He not also spoken to us?* to do with their indignation about the Ethiopian woman?"[579] Incoherence at the literal level always signals to Origen that the text must be taken in a non-literal sense. Therefore, Miriam and Aaron must not be objecting to the ethnicity of Moses's wife, but

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[577] *Comm. Cant.* 2.1.4-7.

[578] *Quomodo ignoratis illius imaginis adumbrationem in me nunc veritate compleri? Ergo sum illa Aethiopissa…*(*Comm. Cant.* 2.1.6 [SC 375:264]); ET Lawson, 93.

[579] *In quo, si diligenter consideres, nec, consequentiam sermo habere invenitus historicus. Quid enim convenire ad rem videbitur, ut indignantes pro Aethiopissa dicant: Numquid Moysi soli locutus est Dominus? Nonne et nobis locutus est?* (*Comm. Cant.* 2.1.22 [SC 375:272]) ET Ibid., 97.

to something else, namely, "they understood the thing Moses had done in terms of the mystery (*mysterium*); they saw Moses—that its, the spiritual Law—entering now into wedlock and union with the Church that is gathered together from among the Gentiles."[580] According to Origen's allegorical reading of Numbers 12, Miriam represents the synagogue and Aaron represents Israel's priesthood, both of whom are jealous of the Gentile church. By virtue of allegorical reading, then, Song of Songs 1:5 and Numbers 12:1-16 are two different texts that are about the *same* narrative: the jealousy of the Jews sparked by the Gentile church's relationship with God.

Origen's allegorical reading of 1 Kings 10:1-10 assigns meanings to most of the literal elements of that passage and is, therefore, lengthy and complex.[581] A discussion of a few of these elements will show how he is using his allegorical reading of that passage in light of his allegorical reading of Song 1:5. Origen begins this allegorical reading with the historical observation that the Queen of Sheba was Ethiopian. This detail is not made

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[580] *secundum mysterium magis intellexisse quod gestum est, et vidisse quod iam Moyses id est spiritalis lex, in nuptias et coniugium congregatae ex gentibus migrat ecclesiae…*(*Comm. Cant.* 2.1.23 [SC 375:272]) ET Ibid. This passage stands as a fine counter example to those who say that Origen annihilates history by allegorical reading. On the contrary, Origen seems to grant that this event happened, but that Miriam and Aaron were themselves allegorical readers of Moses actions who objected to the meaning of the allegory!

[581] Important among these interpretations is that Origen connects elements of this text with basic liturgical elements of the church of his day: "She also saw *His servant's residence*, which seems to me the order which obtains in the church with regard to the seats of bishops and priests. That she saw also *the orders*—or *stations*—*of his ministers* seems to me to denote the order of deacons who assist at divine worship." *Vidit et sedem puerorum eius, ecclesiasticum, puto, ordinem dicat, qui in episcopatus vel presbyterii sedibus habetur. Vidit et ordines—sive stationes—ministrorum eius, diaconorum, ut mihi videtur, ordinem memorat adstantium divino ministerio.* (*Comm. Cant.* 2.1.32 [SC 375:280]); ET Ibid., 100.

explicit in the text; rather, Origen derives this information from an understanding of geography.[582] Since the Queen of Sheba was Ethiopian, Origen takes her to represent the Gentile church. The other main character from this passage—Solomon—is taken to represent Christ on the basis of Matthew 12:42. Therefore, "This queen came, then, and, in fulfillment of her type (*secundum figuram*), the church comes also from the Gentiles to hear the wisdom of the true Solomon…Our Lord Jesus Christ."[583] In the story from 1 Kings, Solomon answers all of the Queen of Sheba's questions just as Christ gives the church knowledge of God, knowledge of the created order, knowledge of the soul, and knowledge of the future judgment.[584] According to 1 Kings, then, the Gentile church receives teaching from Christ. It is that teaching that makes her beautiful in spite of the fact that she is (outwardly) black. The practice of allegorical reading has discovered, in two different scriptural resources, Song 1:5 and 1 Kings 10:1-10, the same narrative about the Gentile church.

Examples of allegorical reading from Origen's exegesis of Song of Songs could be multiplied by the hundreds (and examples from his extant corpus by the thousands). What the above discussion demonstrates that is that the practice of allegorical reading was justified, or made possible, for Origen by applying the resources of the self as a schema to the structure of scripture. Since scripture has both corporeal and incorporeal

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[582] This passage is then a good example of how the practice of allegorical reading is often used in concert with other exegetical practices, in this case ἱστορικόν.

[583] *Venit ergo et haec, immo secundum figuram eius ecclesia venit ex gentibus audire sapientiam veri Solomonis et veri pacifici Domini Iesu Christi.* (*Comm. Cant.* 2.1.27 [SC 375:276]) ET Lawson, 98.

[584] *Comm. Cant.* 2.1.27. Origen goes on to point out that knowledge of these things had eluded the pagan philosophers.

aspects that are connected to one another, just as the self has corporeal and incorporeal aspects that are connected, one can reason from the corporeal meaning to the incorporeal meaning by discovering those connections. Once one has done so, it becomes clear that otherwise diverse scriptural resources are in fact linked together by virtue of having the *same* incorporeal narrative behind *different* corporeal narratives. Allegorical reading is, then, a practice whereby Origen constructs the structure of scripture by pairing resources and schemas together.

Scripture Structures Self: The Scripturalizing of the Self

Origen's structure of the self contains a set of resources alternately labeled "body, soul, and spirit" or "inner and outer man" that are organized by a schema that I identified as directionality either toward or away from God. In Origen's thought this description is not yet complete because it does not account for the way that scripture structures the self. In short, the self's directionality is oriented toward God by being aligned with scripture's narrative schema of Christ's sojourn.

One of Sewell's theoretical axioms that accounted for the way that structures change over time was "the intersection of structures."[585] As structures find points of intersection they are able to influence one another and to be used in new ways that otherwise would not have been possible. *Princ.* 4.2.4 is again important for seeing how self and scripture intersect one another. I have already shown from that passage that self structures scripture by providing a particular schema for it, but the passage also indicates how scripture and self are intersecting in such a way that scripture structures the self.

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[585] Sewell, 143. See chapter one above.

Origen claims that scripture was given so that the self might have salvation, but how is it that scripture makes salvation possible for the self? An answer to this question requires that one understand what "salvation" is according to Origen.

Origen's discussions of salvation often reference the Pauline idea of God being "all in all."[586] First Corinthians 15:28 suggested to Origen a future time when all things would be subordinated to Christ, Christ would be subordinated to God, and God would be "all in all." He comments, "[W]e are to understand this to involve the salvation of those subjected and the restoration (*reparatio*) of those that have been lost."[587] The notion of restoration expressed here is essential to Origen's soteriology. Origen often uses the term ἀποκατάστασις to express the return of all created things to their initial state of contemplation of God. In chapter four I discussed Origen's homiletical comment on Jeremiah 15:18 where he focuses etymologically on the term ἀποκαταστήσω. The point Origen was making in that context was that God will *re*store the self to the origin from which it has fallen. Salvation means the restoration of the self to its original state of contemplation of God; that is to say, in salvation the self returns to the function for which it was originally created.[588] On its own however, the self lacks the ability to restore itself

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[586] *Princ.* 3.5.7. See 1 Cor. 15:28; Col. 1:7-9; and Eph. 1:22. The passages from Ephesians and Colossians does not contain the phrase πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν but they are often alluded to by Origen alongside of 1 Cor 15:28.

[587] *subiectorum salus in eo intellegatur et reparatio perditorum.* (*Princ.* 3.5.7 [SC 268:232]) ET Butterworth, 243.

[588] This brief explanation is sufficient to understand the "what" of Origen's soteriology, but the issue becomes more complex when one attempts to understand the "who" of Origen's soteriology. On a general level Origen appears to be inconsistent whether he believes salvation will be universal or if it will be exclusive. On a more specific level, it is unclear whether or not Origen believed the devil would ultimately be restored to the

to an original state of the contemplation of God; this is where scripture comes to structure the self.

As I demonstrated in chapter three, a narrative schema of Christ's sojourn organizes scriptural resources into a coherent whole. According to Origen, residues of Christ are found within scripture. It has often been observed that Origen views scripture as a kind of incarnation of the logos.[589] This means that a reader of scripture is able to encounter the logos within the pages of scripture. Origen describes just such an encounter in his first homily on the Song of Songs:

> God is my witness that I have often perceived the Bridegroom drawing near me and being most intensely present with me; then suddenly He has withdrawn and I could not find him though I sought to do so…So does He act with me repeatedly, until in truth I hold Him and go up, "leaning on my Nephew's arm."[590]

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contemplation of God. The solution to these difficulties do not directly affect the argument made here, namely, that salvation is the return of the self to the contemplation of God, but for a survey of these issues including the relevant passages in Origen and secondary scholarship, see Mark S. M. Scott, "Guarding the Mysteries of Salvation: The Pastoral Pedagogy of Origen's Universalism," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 18, no. 3 (2010). For later accusation against Origen in this regard and how it relates to other critiqes of Origen see Clark, 86-158.

[589] Crouzel is correct to point out that these are not two separate incarnations, but that " an incarnation of the Word into the letter is *analogous* to the other incarnation into the flesh; not however as a second incarnation…" Crouzel, 70. See also Daniélou, 131.

[590] *Saepe, Deus testis est, sponsum mihi adventare conspexi et mecum esse quam plurimum; quo subito recedente, invenire no potui quod quaerebam…a me rursus inquiritur et hoc crebro facit, donec illum vere teneam et adscendam innixa super fratuelem meum.* (*Hom. Cant.* 1.7 [SC 37:75]) ET Lawson, 280. The groom is often called "nephew" in the Song of Songs. Origen interprets "nephew" as Christ because (1) since a nephew is the son of one's brother, and (2) since the Jews are the older brothers of the church, it follows that Christ, being a son of Jews, is the church's nephew. See *Comm. Cant.* 2.10.2-3.

In this passage Origen capitalizes on the teasing presence then absence of the bridegroom found in the Song of Songs to describe his own experience of encountering Christ in the study of scripture. The image is almost playful: Origen pursues Christ from scriptural resource to scriptural resource following him in a narrative that proceeds ever upward. The process is possible because the narrative of Christ's return to God becomes a template that orients the self's directionality to God. Christ pursued the self that has fallen away from God so that the self can pursue Christ back to the contemplation of God. Scripture is both the means and the grounds upon which the self achieves (or better re-establishes) its directionality toward God. The study and contemplation of scripture bears resemblance to the study and contemplation of God from which the self had turned.[591] The self needs help, however, in finding Christ in scripture, for this reason a particular practice is necessary so that the self can discover the narrative schema of scripture, find Christ in that narrative, and follow Christ back to a contemplation of God. Christian παιδεία is this practice.

Christian Παιδεία

The discussion of Greco-Roman παιδεία in chapter three above situated the practices that allowed Origen to become an authoritative text-broker and to pair scripture's resources and schemas into a coherent whole. Here παιδεία is again important, but now from the perspective of a *Christian* παιδεία that makes it possible for scripture to structure the self so that the latter may attain salvation. Christian παιδεία in Origen's

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[591] "Yet the part played by ideal scriptural interpreters in this life was not uninformed by the events that had transpired in the previous world. Rather, their exegetical project was patterned after the original project that they had suspended." Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 233.

school at Caesarea supplements Greco-Roman παιδεία: the former, like the latter, aims for a moral transformation of the student.[592] However, Origen's Christian παιδεία extends the nature of moral transformation to end in the contemplation of God and uses a different set of texts to achieve that moral transformation.

The Curriculum of Origen's School in Caesarea

Greco-Roman παιδεία often culminated in the study of philosophy that included logic, physics, and ethics.[593] The curriculum of Origen's school at Caesarea also contained philosophy. There are a number of places throughout Origen's extant corpus where he places Greco-Roman learning in high esteem; his eleventh homily on Genesis provides one such example. In this homily Origen has occasion to discuss the fact that the patriarchs often had more than one wife. At first he allegorizes the situation by equating wives with virtues so that if the text says that a patriarch had many wives, it really means that the patriarch had many virtues. This leads Origen to discuss what is meant by "foreign wives" or "concubines." He takes these to mean "the knowledge of literature or the theory of grammar…geometry or mathematics or even the discipline of rhetoric."[594] These are "foreign wives" or "concubines" because they are learned "outside in the world" as opposed to learned from scripture. Yet, these things are good because they can be used to help oneself and others understand "the true philosophy of Christ and the true

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[592] Ibid., 222.

[593] Marrou, 209. The alternative to philosophical study was either rhetoric or study of law.

[594] *eruditio litterarum vel artis grammaticae…geometrica doctrina vel ratio numerorum vel etiam dialectica disciplina* (*Hom. Gen.* 11.2 [SC 7:282, 284]) ET Heine, *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, 171.

piety of God."[595] Likewise in *Contra Celsum* Origen affirms, "To have been truly

educated (πεπαιδεῦσθαι) is certainly not a bad thing. For education (παίδευσις) is the way

to virtue."[596] Origen's curriculum at Caesarea included therefore standard topics in

Greco-Roman philosophy, but these were included as a means to an end: the study of

scripture in such a way that the self is oriented to the contemplation of God.[597]

One of Origen's students, Gregory Thaumaturgus, provides an account of what it

was like to be involved in Origen's school at Caesarea in his *Address to Origen*.[598]

Although his account is highly stylized, it nonetheless sheds light on some of the details

of Origen's curriculum.[599] Gregory lists dialectic, physics, ethics, and theology as

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[595] *Hom. Gen.* 11.2 ET Ibid.

[596] Τὸ μὲν οὖν ἀληθῶς πεπαιδεῦσθαι οὐ κακόν· ὁδὸς γὰρ ἐπ' ἀρετήν ἐστιν ἡ παίδευσις (*Cels.* 3.49 [SC 136:118]) ET Chadwick, 162.

[597] Origen is not unique in this attitude toward Greco-Roman philosophy; Clement also took this approach. Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church*, 168-70. This attitude was easily justifiable by claiming that the logos present in scripture is the same logos that inspired the best of Greek philosophy. Furthermore, both Clement and Origen claimed that the best of Greek culture was plagiarized from Jewish authors. So Origen even claims that the epithalamium, a literary genre, was first developed by Solomon in the Song of Songs and later appropriated by Greco-Roman literature. See *Hom. Cant.* 1.1.

[598] Gregory's authorship of the *Address to Origen* has been questioned of late. I follow Michael Slusser who attributes the text to Gregory. Michael Slusser, *St. Gregory Thaumaturgus: Life and Works*, The Fathers of the Church (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 16-17. However, one need not attribute the text to Gregory to consider it a witness to Origen's curriculum at Caesarea.

[599] Trigg captures the high style of the *Address* when he wryly observes that Gregory "never uses one word when fourteen will do…" Joseph W. Trigg, "God's Marvelous *Oikonomia:* Reflections of Origen's Understanding of Divine and Human Pedagogy in the *Address* Ascribed to Gregoy Thaumaturgus," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 9, no. 1 (2001): 29. Robin Lane Fox notes that Gregory begins by claiming a poor style and inability with Greek rhetoric, however, "After two of the clumsiest sentences in the

subjects he studied with Origen while in Caesarea.[600] The purpose of dialectic was to discover the truth-value of a given statement. In this regard Gregory points out that Origen taught his students that truth can be discovered in both "Greek and barbaric" (Ἑλληνικὸν ἤ βάρβαρόν) expressions.[601] With regard to physics, Gregory singles out geometry and astronomy as a "sky-high ladder" that Origen used to "make heaven accessible."[602] Ethics receives a more substantial treatment in which Gregory includes the virtues of prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude. He claims that Origen taught by example as much as by word and that the goal of the study of ethics was moral transformation.[603]

The culmination of the curriculum was the study of theology. The term θεολογία in this context does not mean the study of Christian authors only, let alone the study of scripture. According to Gregory, Origen encouraged his students to read widely including "all the writings of the ancient philosophers and signers (ὑμνῳδῶν), neither excluding nor

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history of Greek prose, he refuted his disclaimer by a fluid abundance which does not lack ingenuity." Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York: Alfred A. Knof Inc., 1986), 525.

[600] Gregory's discussion of dialectic is found in *Address,* 99-108, physics in 109-114, ethics in 115-149, and theology in *Ad.* 150-181. For a general outline of the treatise see Trigg, "God's Marvelous *Oikonomia*," 28-29.

[601] *Address,* 107 (SC 148:140) ET Slusser, 108. The emphasis on "barbarian" literature may have prepared students for reception of scripture's unpolished style, but this is also likely a reference to provincial scholars who wrote in Greek such as Numenius of Syria. Fox, 521.

[602] ὥσπερ διὰ κλίμακός τινος οὐρανομήκους ἑκατέρου τοῦ μαθήματος βατὸν ἡμῖν τὸν οὐρανὸν παρασκευάσας. (*Address,* 114 [SC 148:142]) ET Slusser, 109.

[603] *Address,* 137

disdaining any of them…except those which belong to the atheists…"[604] Origen

encouraged such a wide range of reading in his curriculum because he did not want his

students to become overly dogmatic or stuck in too narrow a philosophy.[605]

The final court of appeal in the study of theology was scripture. Origen helped his

students discern truth from falsehood:

> To [false teachers] he advised us to pay no attention, even if someone be hailed by
> everyone as a genius, but to pay heed to God alone and his prophets (προφήταις).
> He himself expounded and clarified the dark and enigmatic places, of which there
> are many in the sacred words (ταῖς ἱεραῖς).[606]

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[604] τῶν ἀρχαίων πάντα ὅσα καὶ φιλοσόφων καὶ ὑμνῳδῶν…μηδὲν ἐκποιουμένους μηδ᾽ ἀποδοκιμάζοντας…πλὴν ὅσα τῶν ἀθέων (*Address,* 151-152 [SC 148:158]) ET Slusser, 116. Slusser notes that the term ὑμνῳδός is an unusual term for "poets." He goes on to suggest that Gregory is alluding to "the Psalms and other biblical writings" with the term ὑμνῳδός Slusser, 116 n. 73. I agree that scripture was a part of Origen's curriculum, indeed it was the most important part of it, but there is no reason to assume that ὑμνῳδός means anything other than poets in this context. Origen himself does not use the term often, but when he does it is in reference to the Psalmist (see *C. Cels.* 7.18; 8.17; and 8.32). In none of those instances, however, does ὑμνῳδός function as a synecdoche for scripture as a whole. I think the most natural way to understand ὑμνῳδός here is as singers or poets. Gregory's use of the term "atheist" is a reference to Epicurean philosophers who were often accused of atheism because they claimed that the gods had no involvement with or care for humanity. See A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974), 41-49.

[605] "This was a wise and very sound method, lest one isolated doctrine from one group or another be the only one heard and promoted…" Σοφῶς τοῦτο καὶ μάλα ἐντέχνως· μή πη εἷς τις καὶ καθ᾽ ἑαυτὸν τῶνδέ τινων ἢ τῶνδε λόγος αὐτὸς μόνος ἀκουσθεὶς καὶ τιμηθείς…(*Address,* 154 [SC 148:158, 160]) ET Slusser, 117.

[606] Περὶ τούτων μὲν μηδὲν προσέχειν συμβουλεύων, μηδὲ εἰ πάνσοφός τις ὑπὸ πάντων ἀνθρώπων μαρτυρηθείη, μόνῳ δὲ προσέχειν θεῷ καὶ τοῖς τούτου προφήταις· αὐτὸς ὑποφητεύων καὶ σαφηνίζων ὅ τί ποτε σκοτεινὸν καὶ αἰνιγματῶδες ᾖ, οἷα πολλὰ ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς (*Address,* 173-174 [SC 148:168]) ET Ibid., 120.

Gregory's use of ἱεραι to refer to scripture is typical of his style in the *Address* where he conspicuously avoids traditional Christian terminology.[607] The context makes it clear, however, that Gregory has scripture in mind. I suggest that προφήτης be understood more broadly than simply the prophetic writings in this context. Since Gregory is here praising Origen for his interpretive skill regarding difficult passages in scripture, προφήτης may be understood in the sense of someone who speaks for God, including an inspired writer of scripture. Perhaps Gregory is using the term προφήτης in this sense so that he can include Origen among God's prophets.[608] He later says, "I think [Origen] says these things only by fellowship with the divine Spirit, for it takes the same power to listen to prophets as it does to prophecy…"[609] This brief survey of Gregory's *Address* reveals three important insights regarding Origen's curriculum: (1) It mirrored Greco-Roman philosophic training by including dialectic, physics, and ethics; (2) The study of scripture was the culmination of the curriculum;[610] (3) The whole curriculum was designed to take the self upward to the contemplation of God.

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[607] See Trigg, "God's Marvelous *Oikonomia*," 30.

[608] The notion of "inspiration" was not limited to the authors of scripture in early Chrsitianity. See Kalin, "The Inspired Community."

[609] Λέγει τε ταῦτα οὐκ ἄλλως οἶμαι ἢ κοινωνίᾳ τοῦ θείου πνεύματος· τῆς γὰρ αὐτῆς δυνάμεως δεῖ προφητεύουσί τε καὶ ἀκροωμένοις προφητῶν (*Address,* 179 [SC 148:170]) ET Slusser, 121.

[610] So Martens, "The culmination of the *paideia* is not Roman law or Greek philosophy. The educational system has been conceived as a propaeduetic, a course of introductory study, for a new *telos*, the examination of the church's Scriptures." Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 30.

The curriculum as discussed by Gregory is reflected in the prologue to Origen's commentary on the Song of Songs. In that prologue Origen situates the Song of Songs with respect to two other Solomonic texts: Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.[611] He argues that each of these books corresponds to a traditional branch of philosophy: Proverbs contains moral philosophy, Ecclesiastes contains natural philosophy, and the Song of Songs contains what he calls "inspective" philosophy.[612] Origen justifies the association of these books with specific disciplines based on their contents.[613] Proverbs contains practical advice on how to conduct oneself and corresponds to moral philosophy. Ecclesiastes corresponds to natural philosophy, Origen argues, because it discusses "the things of nature" (*rebus naturalibus*) and makes distinctions between "useless" (*inania*) and "essential" (*necessariis*) things.[614] Finally, Song of Songs is associated with inspective philosophy because it encourages one to contemplate the divine. Origen explains what he means by introspective philosophy, "The study called inspective (*inspectiva*) is that by which we go beyond things seen and contemplate somewhat of things divine and heavenly, beholding them with the mind alone, for they are beyond the range of bodily

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[611] This kind of discussion is what Heine calls ἡ τάξις τῆς ἀνάγνωσις and it was a standard part of the prologue to a philosophical commentary. See Heine, "The Introduction to Origen's Commentary on John Compared with the Introductions to the Ancient Philosophical Commentaries on Aristotle."

[612] Even after Origen mentions that logic is woven throughout all of Solomon's works, the order of the subjects listed here is different from how they are presented in Gregory's *Address*. In either case, however, theology or "introspective" philosophy is the culmination of the other subjects. For a discussion and bibliography see Trigg, "God's Marvelous *Oikonomia*," 29 n. 9.

[613] *Comm. Cant.* Prologue 3.6-7.

[614] *Comm. Cant.* Prologue 3.6 (SC 375:132) ET Lawson, 41.

sight."[615] The stress here on what is beyond, divine, and heavenly illustrates why this branch of philosophy can only come after a thorough study of moral and natural philosophy: the self must be trained to see beyond the things of the world. The process begins, however, with using the body to understand the natural world, that is, things that can be seen. Origen therefore insists that these Solomonic books be studied in their proper order: Proverbs first, then Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs last.[616] There is a progression that must be followed for successful completion of the curriculum:

> For, when the soul (*anima*) has completed these studies, by means of which it is cleansed in all its actions and habits and is lead to discriminate between natural things, it is competent to proceed to dogmatic and mystical matters, and in this way advances to the contemplation of the Godhead with pure and spiritual love.[617]

A progression through moral philosophy and natural philosophy to something greater is clearly in view here. In the case of the Song of Songs there is a danger in studying it before one has been properly prepared. Those who are inexperienced, who are not able to understand what the Song of Songs is *really* about, may be led astray by the erotic

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[615] *Inspectiva dicitur, qua supergressi visibilia de divinis aliquid et caelestibus contemplamur, eaque mente sola intuemur, quoniam corporeum supergrediuntur adspectum.* (*Comm. Cant.* Prologue 3.3 [SC 375:130]) ET Ibid., 40.

[616] Origen's insistence of a right order for reading these books raises the question how they would have been bound. Presuming the general Christian preference for the codex, is it the case that each of these books were bound separately or was it the case that they were bound together as a collection of Solomonic writings?

[617] *Praemissis namque his quibus purificatur anima per actus et mores, et in rerum discretionem naturalium preducitur, competenter ad dogmatica venitur et ad mystica atque ad divinitatis contemplationem sincero et spiritali amore conscenditur.* (*Comm. Cant.* Prologue 3.16 [SC 375:138]) ET Lawson, 44.

imagery.[618] The only way to avoid this danger is first to train the reader to see through the

erotic imagery to the real meaning of the story: that of the soul and the Word of God or

that of the church and Christ. The practice of allegorical reading, discussed above, plays

an important role in Origen's Christian παιδεία. In fact, a part of the story of the soul and

the Word of God contained in the Song of Songs is that the soul must follow the Word of

God through ethics and natural philosophy to the contemplation of God in scripture.[619]

The curriculum at Origen's school in Caesarea is carefully constructed so that the self is

trained to study scripture in such a way that its narrative schema can be uncovered and

used to orient the self's directionality toward the contemplation of God.

The Practice of Study

Even the most carefully designed curriculum does not succeed without teachers

who teach and students who study. I have already discussed Origen's role as a teacher in

chapter three above; here I turn to the practice of study as a means whereby the reader of

scripture uncovers the narrative schema of Christ's sojourn and uses that schema as

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[618] Origen deals with this danger throughout the second section of his prologue where he is addressing the theme (σκοπός) of the book. He writes, "You must not be surprised, therefore, if we call the discussion of the nature of love difficult and likely to be dangerous to ourselves, among whom there are as many inexperienced folk as there are people of the simpler sort." *Non ergo mirum sit si et apud nos, ubi quando plures simpliciores, tanto plures et imperitiores videntur, difficilem dicimus et periculo proximam de amoris natura disputationem…*(*Comm. Cant.* Prologue 2.2 [SC 375:90]) ET Ibid., 24. His fundamental point is that the theme of the Song of Songs is *not* erotic love, but rather the love between the soul and the Word of God and the love between the church and Christ. His discussion here follows the general format of what one would expect of the prologue to an ancient commentary. For σκοπός as a part of ancient commentaries see Heine, "The Introduction to Origen's Commentary on John Compared with the Introductions to the Ancient Philosophical Commentaries on Aristotle," 5.

[619] *Comm. Cant.* 1.4.7.

means to orient the self's directionality toward contemplation of God. Martens

summarizes the practice of study in Origen's overarching vision of the self's return to

God by pointing out that the "eschatological journey runs through the classroom."[620]

Torjesen clarifies what is meant by the task of exegesis for Origen, "to discover these

doctrines in their original order and purpose from Scripture in such a way that the

Christian hearing the exegesis is himself 'formed' by them."[621] Torjesen has in mind

those who heard or read Origen's own exegesis, but the description works equally well

for the general study of scripture. Origen himself comments that before contemplation of

God is possible, "a soul will have traversed *in order* (*per ordinem*) all the sorts of

instruction in which she was exercised and taught…"[622] Knowledge of God does not

happen by accident; it occurs only after ordered, careful, and deliberate study.

All of this raises the question of who in Origen's community had the leisure to

study as well as access to their own copies of scripture.[623] Heine argues that at least some

members of Origen's community would have had the wealth necessary to own their own

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[620] This delicious phrase comes from a larger quotation: "If the eschatological journey would run through a classroom, what relationship was there between this future scholastic enterprise and the learning that transpired in this life? Origen clearly envisioned a continuum of intellectual activity that bridged this life with the next." Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 238.

[621] Torjesen, 42.

[622] *cui fuerint omnes doctrinae per ordinem decursae, in quibus…exercitata videtur et erudita…* (*Comm. Cant.* 1.3.12 [SC 375:214]) ET Lawson, 73. Emphasis mine.

[623] Martens highlights the setting succinctly, "The setting in which Origen issued his educational mandate comes into stark focus when we consider the rarity of private access to the Christian Scriptures in antiquity." Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 25.

copies of scripture for study.[624] To support this point Heine points to a few passages from Origen's homilies on Genesis. Throughout these homilies the "digging of wells," so common in the text of Genesis, represents study of scripture or learning generally. In *Hom. Gen.* 12.5 Origen exhorts his audience:

> "Therefore, you also attempt, O hearer, to have your own well and your own spring, so that you too, when you take up a book of the Scriptures, may begin even from your own understanding to bring forth some meaning, and in accordance with those things which you have learned in church…"[625]

In this short passage Origen uses the term "own" (*proprius*) three different times. Although "own" modifies "well," "spring," and "understanding" and not "book of the Scriptures" it is clear that Origen has private study in mind. Further, that his hearer's understanding should be in agreement with what was leaned in church indicates that it is being formed outside of the context of church. Therefore, even though not all of Origen's audience had the means for private study, he expected that at least some of them would study scripture outside of church meetings.

A statement made by the bride in the Song of Songs provides Origen an opportunity to reflect on the study of Scripture in general terms. In Song 1:6b, the Bride says, "My mother's sons…have made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept" (NRSV). After establishing that the bride's mother represents the "heavenly Jerusalem" and therefore her sons represent the apostles, Origen claims that

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[624] Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church*, 181.

[625] *Tempta ergo et tu, O auditor, habere proprium puteum et proprium fontem; ut et tu, cum apprehenderis librum Scripturarum, incipias etiam ex proprio sensu proferre aliquem intellectum et secundum ea quae in Ecclesia didicisti…* (*Hom. Gen.* 12.5 [SC 7:306]) ET Heine, *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, 183.

the vineyards the bride has been made to keep represent "the books of the Law and Prophets" (*volumina legis ac prophetarum*) and "the evangelic writings and the apostles' letters," (*evangelica scripta atque…Apostolorum litteras*) but her own vineyard represents "the learning that everyone used to receive before he came to faith" (*eruditionem…quae unusquisque exercebatur ante fidem*).[626] By leaving this more basic learning behind, the self moves on to the study of scripture. In this allegorical reading the vineyard is scripture and the keeper of the vineyard is the soul, or even better, the student who studies scripture. Origen does not complete the allegory by discussing specifically what the fruit of the vineyard is, but given his other discussions about the goal of study we may presume it to be contemplation of God. Although the language of "vineyard" is given to Origen by the text of Song of Songs it is a fruitful image for him. Vineyards do not just develop and produce fruit on their own; they require someone to tend them. Likewise, scripture on its own does not just produce fruit; it must be tended to carefully by a student for it to have its intended effect.[627]

Tending to scripture so that it might bear fruit meant using the practices of the grammarian described above in chapter three. Origen gives an example for his students about how to study scripture by the exegetical practices he demonstrated in his classroom

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[626] *Comm. Cant.* 2.3.9-11 (SC 375:320) ET Lawson, 115-116.

[627] Gregory Thaumaturgus also used the image of a farm or garden for the educational process in his *Address to Origen* 93-94. In Gregory's use of the image the farm/garden is the student and the farmer/gardener is the teacher. Gregory's metaphor bleeds into his discussion about Origen's curriculum and I presume, therefore, that the produce in Gregory's image is the same as in Origen's: a self that contemplates God. Michael Slusser points out that Gregory's discussion may have allusions to the Parable of the Sower in the gospels, but since this image was a common *topos* of popular philosophy it is not certain to be an allusion to that parable. Slusser, 106 n. 38.

and in his commentaries. He expected his students to engage in the practices of grammar: διόρθωτικον, ἱστορικόν, τεχνικόν, γλωσσηματικόν, above all, ἀλληγορία.[628] The ideal student would master all of these techniques in the service of uncovering the narrative schema of Christ's sojourn found in scripture.[629]

The study of scripture involves great labor on the part of the student. Origen addresses the difficulty of study in his comments on Song of Songs 2:8 in *Comm. Cant.* 3.11.13-14. This passage explains what is meant by seeing the groom, that is, the Word of God, leaping and skipping over mountains and hills. Origen describes the difficulty of understanding obscure passages of scripture as being "in the thick of an argument about some passage" or getting "shut up in the straits of propositions and enquires."[630] But it is in such instances "if then she [the soul] should chance to perceive Him to be present, and from afar should catch the sound of his voice, forthwith she is *uplifted*."[631] The student who works through the difficult passages is the student who is rewarded with an

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[628] For a discussion of διόρθωτικον, ἱστορικόν, τεχνικόν and γλωσσηματικόν see chapter three above.

[629] Here the reciprocal relationship between the structures of self and scripture again reveals itself. In one context, that of the formation of scripture, these practices are used to pair scriptural resources and schemas together. In another context, the orienting of the self's directionality toward God, these practices are used to *discover* the narrative schema of scripture. See the conclusion below for more discussion.

[630] *in disputatione sermonis est posita…angustiis propositionum quaestionumque concluditur* (*Comm. Cant.* 3.11.13 [SC 376:604]) ET Lawson, 209.

[631] *si forte adesse eum sentiat anima et eminus sonitum vocis eius accipiat, sublevatur statim.* (*Comm. Cant.* 3.11.13 [SC 376:604]) ET Ibid. Emphasis mine

encounter with the Word of God.[632] Origen goes on, "He [the Word of God] then suggests to her [the soul] interpretations of a *high* and *lofty* sort, so that this soul can rightly say, 'Behold, He cometh leaping upon the mountains…[Song 2:8]'"[633] In this passage Origen hints at the cooperative nature of interpretation. The student struggles with the meaning of difficult passages and is only then given "interpretations of a high and lofty sort." By describing scriptural interpretation this way, Origen is relying on a directional metaphor that has been apparent in a number of passages already discussed. The directional implication of "uplifted" and "high and lofty" is that of moving from the earthly and mundane toward the heavenly and divine. I would also suggest that the image of the Word of God skipping over the mountains when coupled with he imagery of pursuing the word of God fits well with the notion that in scripture the self discovers the sojourn of Christ and follows the latter part of that sojourn back toward God.

Progress of the Self

The preceding discussion of Christian παιδεία, including the survey of Origen's curriculum at Caesarea and his reflections on the process of studying, make clear that the goal for Origen is the progression of the self toward God on the basis of the self's finding in scripture the means to orient its directionality toward God. Torjesen is correct then when she claims that the progress of the soul is the foundation of Origen's exegesis, and I

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[632] This passage can be compared to Origen's description of pursuing the Word of God through the scriptures in *Hom. Cant.* 1.7, a passage I discussed above. The experience Origen is explaining here is one that he knew well.

[633] *scilicet et excelsae sensus sibi intelligentiae suggerentum, ita ut merito dicat haec anima: Ecce hic venit saliens super montes…*(*Comm. Cant.* 3.11.14 [SC 376:604]) ET Lawson, 210. Emphasis mine.

would add, his whole pedagogy.[634] However, as I suggested in chapter four, something is missed when we speak of the progress of the *soul* rather than the progress of the *self*. It is true that in many of the preceding quotations from Origen's commentary on the Song of Songs and elsewhere that Origen typically uses the term soul. But it is worth noting that in most of these contexts "soul" stands in explicit distinction not to "body" but to "church." As Origen makes clear, he finds two allegorical stories in the Song of Songs: an allegory of the soul and the Word of God and an allegory of the church and Christ. The language of soul as compared to church suggests the individual rather than the corporate.[635]

I acknowledge that Origen tends to value the soul over the body, or the "inner man" over the "outer man," but that does not mean that the body does not play a crucial role in achieving the goal of study: a contemplation of God. That the body plays such a role is evident in Origen's interpretation of "bed" in Song of Songs 1:16. This verse refers to a bed shared by the bride and groom. Origen explains, "But the bed which she says she shares with the Bridegroom seems to me to denote the soul's body (*corpus…animae*); although the soul is still in the body, she has been considered worthy

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[634] Torjesen, 72 ff.

[635] Both individual and corporate are extremely important for Origen; otherwise he would not dedicate so much interpretive energy to unfolding both stories within his commentary on Songs. Crouzel rightly notes, "The *Commentary on the Song of Songs* find [sic.] no problem in passing, sometimes without the transition even being noted, form the Church as Bride to the soul as bride: Origen seems to think that these ideas, far from exhibiting a contrast, are complementary…" Crouzel, 77.

to be admitted into the company of the Word of God."[636] There is an implied

impermanence to the body in this passage, but that can be ascribed to the fact that Origen

anticipates that the self's body will be transformed in the resurrection. However, the

passage does make clear that the body is a part of the process of being "admitted into the

company of the Word of God." It is not just the soul that progresses to God, it is the

whole self: body, soul, and spirit.

To conclude this discussion of the scripturalizing of the self, it can be noted that

in a homily on Noah's Ark Origen likens the building of an ark to the building of a

library:

> If there is anyone who…can turn from the things which are in flux and passing
> away and fallen, and can hear the word of God and the heavenly precepts, this
> man is building an ark of salvation within his own heart and is dedicating a
> library, so to speak, of the divine word within himself.[637]

Origen expands on this image of an internal library, but one of the important points he

makes is that the library one should dedicate in one's heart should contain the volumes of

the prophets and apostles. By this Origen means an internalization of scripture,

particularly the narrative schema of Christ's sojourn. After all, the scripture's resources

cannot be internalized, only its schemas can. In so doing the self follows Christ's return

to God and thereby orients the self's directionality toward God; this is what the

scripturalizing of the self means.

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[636] *Commune autem sibi cubile quod dicit esse cum sponso, corpus hoc mihi videtur
indicari animae, in quo adhuc posita digna habita sit adscisci ad consortium Verbi Dei.*
(*Comm. Cant.* 3.2.2 [SC 376:502]) ET Lawson, 172.

[637] *Si quis est...conuertere se potest a rebus fluxis ac pereuntibus et caducis et audire
uerbum Dei ac praecepta caelestia, hic intra cor suum arcam alutis aedificat et
bibliothecam, ut ita dicam, intra se diuini consercrat uerbi.* (*Hom. Gen.* 2.6 [SC 7:108])
ET Heine, *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, 86.

Conclusion: Origen's Scripture-Self Complex

In this chapter I have claimed that in addition to the processes of becoming scripture of biblical texts and becoming self of the human person there are two further processes in Origen that must be recognized: the anthropomorphizing of scripture and the scripturalizing of the self. Each of these processes is in turn associated with exegetical practices that further construct scripture and self.

The anthropomorphizing of scripture is made possible by what Sewell calls the "transposability of schemas." Origen essentially schematizes the resources of the self, and the relationship among those resources, and transposes them onto his structure of scripture. On the basis of this move, he claims that scripture has corporeal and incorporeal aspects and that there is a link between those aspects. Because scripture is anthropomorphized in this way, it can be read allegorically. The interpreter of scripture is able to begin with the corporeal aspect of scripture, its literal meaning, and move from there to its incorporeal aspect, that is, its allegorical meaning. As often as not, the interpreter of scripture discovers that the allegorical meaning is related to Origen's scriptural schemas. There is a duality of allegory here similar to the duality of structure: allegory is made possible because scripture has been constructed in a specific way but scripture is constructed in a specific way by allegory. This duality is most apparent when the allegorical meaning discovered by Origen is that scripture has allegorical meaning.

The scripturalizing of the self is made possible by what Sewell calls the "intersection of structures." Because scripture is a collection of texts that tell the story of Christ's sojourn, it is uniquely qualified to be aligned with the directionality of the self. The most succinct way to express this is that according to Origen Christ has followed the

self's procession out from God so that the self can follow Christ's return to God. Within the pages of scripture the self discovers Christ's sojourn and can then follow Christ leaping and skipping over mountains and hills back to the contemplation of God. Discovering Christ's sojourn requires a Christian παιδεία mobilized by the practice of study, including reading allegorically. In this very practice of study scripture continues to be constructed because the student pairs scriptural resources and schemas together into a coherent structure.

Scripture structures the self and the self structures scripture. In the final analysis Origen's structure of scripture and his structure of self are not two independent structures; they are parts of an even greater whole. I call that whole Origen's scripture-self complex. I mean this term as a short hand description of the dynamic processes described in the chapter: the anthropomorphizing of scripture and the scripturalizing of the self. To speak of Origen's scripture-self complex is to acknowledge not only the dynamic nature of scripture and self, but also to acknowledge that the two mutually structure one another by the exegetical practices that they make possible: allegorical reading and Christian παιδεία. These exegetical practices feed back into the complex re-inscribing scriptural schemas on scriptural resources and the schema of the self on the resources of the self. Therefore scripture cannot be what scripture is without the self being what the self is and the self cannot be what the self is without scripture being what scripture is. There is no chronological relationship between the two: scripture does not precede the self any more than the self precedes scripture. They are correlative: structuring one another in the same moment that they are structured by one another. They

emerge together in Origen's theology simultaneously as a scripture-self complex that is

actualized in every moment of exegetical practice.

A CONCLUDING REFLECTION

The theologian may indulge in the pleasing task of describing Religion as she descended from Heaven, arrayed in her native purity. A more melancholy duty is imposed the historian. He must discover the inevitable mixture of error and corruption which she contracted in a long residence upon earth, among a weak an degenerate race of beings.

-Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* [638]

The historian of early Christianity cannot take scripture or the self for granted as though they "descended from heaven arrayed in their native purity." In fact, neither scripture nor the self has "native purity," they do not have native anything. It is not that the historian of early Christianity must discover scripture and the self among a "mixture of error and corruption," but it must be acknowledged that scripture and the self have had a "long residence upon the earth" and that that residence has been marked by change and alteration over time. In the end, there is no one thing that either scripture or the self has ever been. They are always becoming in the practices of historical agents.

Synthesis

In the preceding chapters I have discussed four processes: (1) the becoming scripture of biblical texts, (2) the becoming self of a human person, (3) the anthropomorphizing of scripture, and (4) the scripturalizing of the self. The first two of these processes were discussed with reference to Heracleon, Irenaeus, and Origen. While

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[638] Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Abridged Eidtion; New York: The Modern Library, 2003), 236-237.

the latter two were applicable to Origen only. I do not intend to summarize here everything that was said before, but I would like to highlight a few points that lead to further reflection.

As far as the becoming scripture of biblical texts is concerned, Heracleon, Irenaeus, and Origen provide interesting points of comparison and contrast. I have noted that in general terms they all had a similar collection of scriptural resources, but they show a greater variety when it comes to scriptural schemas and the practices by which they paired those schemas. Heracleon and Irenaeus stand in general opposition to one another whereas Origen shares something in common with each.

Irenaeus and Origen hold in common a core set of beliefs that the former called the Rule of Faith and the latter called apostolic teaching. Although Origen emphasized the schema of Christ's sojourn over the schema of apostolic teaching, Irenaeus and Origen belong in the same theological trajectory. What is worth noting here is that Irenaeus and Origen relied on different methods and modes of authority in their respective constructions of scripture. Irenaeus stressed the importance of ecclesial authority and apostolic succession to legitimate his own exegetical practices. For Irenaeus scripture comes of age in the church and is best interpreted in that context. The bishop, not the teacher, is the one who constructs scripture. By contrast, Origen did not come into a position of ecclesial authority until well after he had begun to construct scripture. Some of his most important exegesis comes before his ordination. Origen believed that God's inspiration to interpret may be given to anyone, not just a bishop. The private school headed by the well-trained grammarian is the context where Origen's scripture comes of age. I do not mean that Origen downplayed the importance of scripture in the ecclesial

context, far from it. However, one cannot deny scholarly flavor of Origen's scripture and the authority used to construct it. Origen's tool for the trade was not apostolic succession; it was the practice of grammar.

Though he would be loath to admit it, Origen's authority as an interpreter emerges from the same context as does Heracleon's. Both are the products of Greco-Roman παιδεία and both used similar exegetical practices to construct scripture in the context of the school setting. Origen's complaints against Heracleon are not that he uses the wrong exegetical practices, but that he does not do them well. Exegetical practices aside, there are also similarities between Heracleon's and Origen's scriptural schemas. Both are mythic in character. By this I mean that they make reference to events before the lived time of everyday life. Without sufficient nuance, Heracleon's descent of the Savior to retrieve the *pneumatics* and *psychics* looks very much like Origen's sojourn of Christ to bring fallen selves back into the contemplation of God. But there are differences in these schemas: Heracleon's Savior does not appear to have his starting point with God whereas Origen's Christ does. The mission of Heracleon's Savior appears to be far more limited than the mission of Origen's Christ.

In short, the becoming scripture of biblical texts in Heracleon, Irenaeus, and Origen can be discussed from the perspectives of resources, schemas, and practices. Even where the resources are the same, one must still discover what are the schemas and practices. Where there are differences in terms of resources, schemas, and even possibly practices, there are different scriptures.

As far as the becoming self of the human person is concerned, there is again opportunity for comparison of Heracleon, Irenaeus, and Origen. All three of these

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Christian theologians list body, soul, and spirit as the self's resources, but as I have shown, Heracleon does so in a unique way; for him body, soul, and spirit are applied to humanity generally, not to an individual specifically. Therefore a self is body, soul, *or* spirit. By contrast, Irenaeus and Origen insist that a self contains all three resources, though their reasons for doing so may differ. This brings me to recall the self's schemas.

For Heracleon it is a schema of diverse origins based in the Valentinian myth, for Irenaeus the schema is the *imago dei*, and for Origen it is directionality toward God. Again, Heracleon and Origen show some similarity here: a self's end was connected to its beginning. The difference is that for Heracleon selves have different beginnings and therefore different ends, whereas for Origen selves have the same beginning and therefore, at least potentially, the same end. Irenaeus too has a schema of the self that is associated with beginnings, except for him that beginning is the creation of humanity as found in the opening chapters of Genesis. This is why his schema is the *imago dei*. What is most fascinating about Irenaeus in this regard is that he connects the *imago dei* with all of the self's resources whereas Origen excludes the body from being in the image of God. Because Irenaeus's schema of the self, and therefore his structure of the self, is connected with the creation accounts in Genesis he presents a more limited story than does Origen. Origen's schema of the self allows his structure of the self to extend much further back than does Irenaeus's structure of the self. If I may put it this way: by the time Irenaeus's structure of the self has its beginnings, Origen's structure of the self is already on round two.

Interestingly, Heracleon, Irenaeus, and Origen all use various ritual practices in their constructions of the self. There is something about a ritual practice that effectively

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mobilizes all the resources of the self toward a particular end. In short, the becoming self of a human person in Heracleon, Irenaeus, and Origen can be discussed from the perspectives of resources, schemas, and practices. Even where the resources are the same, one must still discover what are the schemas and practices. Where there are differences in terms of resources, schemas, and even possibly practices, there are different selves.

The processes of the anthropomorphizing of the self and the scripturalizing of scripture pertain uniquely to Origen as compared to Heracleon and Irenaeus. Here is perhaps the most important difference between Origen and Heracleon and Irenaeus before him. The structure of scripture and the structure of the self mutually structure one another in Origen's exegetical practice. In this sense they are dual structures. But I went further to say that they structure one another so closely that it is best to speak of a scripture-self complex emerging out of Origen's exegetical practice. For a full grasp of Origen's teachings on scripture, one must know something about his teachings on the self, and for a full grasp of his teachings on the self one must know something about his teachings on scripture.

Moving Forward

I realize that not all readers will agree with every detail concerning self, scripture, and exegetical practice that I have presented in the previous chapters. Despite potential disagreements, I maintain that using a theory of structure as I have described here is a beneficial way to think about scripture and the self in early Christianity (or in the Christianity of later periods for that matter). I will conclude this dissertation by mentioning some of the important features that have come to light by using the theory of structure to analyze scripture and the self as has been done here.

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Perhaps most important is the recognition that early Christian scripture is more than the sum total of the texts that were identified by a particular Christian theologian. While it is certainly important to identify what texts count as scripture, having done so does not complete the scholar's task. There is something more that must be identified. I have called that something a schema but other terminology may also be appropriate. The point is that there is something further that must be identified that organizes disparate texts into a coherent whole. This is especially true for the period of early Christianity when there were not yet pandect bibles. It may also be the case that a schema is distinct from the means by which a text is identified as scripture; that is to say, whatever schema *makes* a text scripture may be different from characteristics that *distinguish* a text as scripture. For example, for Origen a text may be identified as scripture because of its author, but that is not what makes it scripture. What makes it scripture, I have argued, is that it, along with other texts, are paired with the schema of Christ's sojourn. An important consequence of this is that just because two authors list the same texts as scripture it does not mean that they have the same scripture. One must further inquire about the schema that organizes the texts into a coherent whole.

It is also important to realize, if scripture is a combination of resources and schemas as I have claimed, that resources and schemas cannot be paired apart from the activity, the exegetical practices, of an historical agent. That agent may be a single individual or a community, but either way, the agent has an important role to play. Scripture comes to be what it is in the context of exegetical practice. There is no scripture hovering unaffected above the accidents of history. Scripture comes to be what it is every time a historical agent sits down to read particular texts (or listen to particular voices) in

particular ways. What those texts and ways are may vary from occasion to occasion or location to location, but it is practice that constitutes scripture. Having said that, scripture can constitute practice. The more often a particular text is read in a particular way the more normative it may become for those who read it. When this occurs the details of a text may influence the ways in which that text is read.

Most of what has just been said about scripture can also apply, *mutatis mutandus*, to the self. The self is more than meets the eye. When one begins to engage in practices that indicate that one is more than a biological organism then a self emerges. The self is sustained in various ways by various historical agents by what they do and how they go about it. One way to study early Christian communities is to discover the elements that are considered constitutive of the self and *why* those elements are constitute the self. Again, practice is key here: the resources and schemas of the self are not paired apart from historical agents. Selves emerge in practice.

Finally, scripture and the self are important concepts in the study of religion. By thinking about these concepts as structures as I have done in this dissertation, that is, as combinations of resources and schemas that are paired into structural wholes by the practices of historical agents, one can develop a rubric for fruitful comparisons in the study of religion. In the case of Judaism, Christianity, and possibly Islam, scripture can be compared under the heading of resources regarding Abrahamic traditions. But even where there are no common resources, the scholar of religion may discuss scriptures under the headings of schemas or practices. The same is true for the self in various religious traditions. In other words, although I have used structure in this dissertation to discuss various forms of Christian scripture and the Christian self, it may be the case that

the model of structure used here may be fruitfully employed in other areas of religious

studies.

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