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Introduction

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Introduction

Dualist or holist, complementary or antagonistic, subordinate or equal, Christian or philosophical – various approaches to the issue of the unity of body and soul have one important implication, namely, all of them transpire through the individual embodied lived experiences of human beings. Hence, general theoretical agreements about psychological concepts can easily attenuate or vanish, yielding to the varied empirical data. Besides, the same person, playing different social roles, often slightly varies her views on the same psychosomatic subject, be it the solemn issue of individual salvation or practical plans for conceiving a new human being. The mysterious beginning and end of human life, together with the challenges of disease, ageing, emotional reactions and diverse perceptions, provide such a variety of theoretical hypotheses and empirical data that can be difficult to harmoniously systematise within some philosophical or religious theories. Nevertheless, the study of the Christian approach to the core psychological issue of the unity of body and soul is of paradigmatic significance for the history of the theories and practices of self-identity, morals, social and gender relations, epistemology, medicine, and scientific method. While covering such a gigantic terrain is an unthinkable enterprise, the specific target of this volume is to explore the diversity of individual lived experiences and theoretical approaches to the unity of body and soul as expressed by authors who flourished between the second and seventh centuries CE. Monks and bishops, medical doctors and philosophers, exegetes and theologians of Christian East, expressed plenty of nuanced views about the unity of body and soul: from the moment of conception and birth until the resurrection and post-mortem existence. To hear individual Christian voices contextualised in their various social networks and to demonstrate the diversity and peculiar patterns of patristic psychological views is the goal of this collective scholarly work.

This volume is the result of the workshop “Bodily Resurrection vs Immortality: Philosophy, Medicine, Theology,” that took place at the XVIII Conference on Patristic Studies in Oxford (August 19-24, 2019). The general aim of the workshop was to bring together specialists in Patristics, ancient Philosophy, Theology and the History of Medicine in order to explore longstanding tensions between such notions as soul and body, spirit and flesh, in the context of human life, death, reproduction, and bodily resurrection. The discussion revolved around late antique views on the human body and the relevant philosophical, medical and theological contexts. Free from the dichotomy between science and religion, the authors of Late Antiquity developed

their concepts in the atmosphere of vibrant interdisciplinary dialogue. To capture the main trends of this discussion, the contributors to this volume shared their expertise on the formation of such notions as body, flesh, soul, mind, emotions, reproduction and redemption in late antique philosophical and Christian contexts.

In the opening chapter of the volume, Professor Jörg Ulrich, from Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, explores how the combined reading of Gen 1:26f. and Gen 2:7 in the second century emphasised the unity of body and soul. Ulrich pinpoints an important discrepancy between the early Christian understanding of the biblical accounts of the creation of humans. Some patristic authors, whom Ulrich associates primarily with the platonic tradition, believed that when Genesis spoke about the image of God, it referred only to the human soul and not to the human body. Other exegetical traditions supposed that the account of the creation of man out of the dust of the earth, preserved in Gen 2:7, also implied creation in the image of God. Ulrich explores textual testimonies of the second exegetical tradition in the works of Clement of Rome, Justin, Pseudo-Justin, Irenaeus of Lyon, Theophilus of Antioch, and Tertullian. Although Ulrich primarily focuses on early Christian sources, he also shows that the combined interpretation of Gen 1:26f. and Gen 2:7 was not an invention of Christian authors but goes back to Old Testament exegetical tradition. In addition to a detailed analysis of second century patristic texts, Ulrich demonstrates how the idea of the unity of body and soul resonated in the early stages of Trinitarian discussions and in later Christological debates.

Professor Samuel Fernández, from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, analyses Origen's views about rational creatures and matter within the framework of eschatological theory. Fernández begins by exploring the concept of bodily resurrection in *On First Principles* and shows the correspondence that, according to Origen, exists between the beginning and the end of human life. Fernández proposes a helpful review of contemporary scholarly views on the concept of the "pre-existence of the soul" and suggests his own interpretation. In his analysis of the initial and final relationship between rational creatures and matter, Fernández proposes that we understand the "pre-existence of the soul" as the prenatal existence of rational creatures provided with light bodies. Hence, according to Origen, the priority of the soul over the body is identical to the priority of rational creatures over matter. Fernández emphasises that the nature of this priority is logical and not chronological. He argues that the primal transgression of rational creatures brought upon them their earthly birth in heavy bodies, which will be transformed in the eschaton, thus justifying the parallel between the prenatal and post-mortem existence.

Professor Ilaria Ramelli, from Durham University, devotes her contribution to the study of Origen's ideas about the unity of body and soul in both the earthly life and the afterlife, and also to Origen's influence on Gregory of Nyssa in this respect (as in many others). Ramelli shows that, unlike the Neoplatonists, Origen argued against *metempsychosis* and propounded the notion of *ensomatosis*, which emphasised the idea of the unity of one soul and one body. Thus, Ramelli maintains, Origen claimed that only God is entirely intelligible, while rational creatures and human souls were created together with their individual ethereal, pneumatic, spiritual bodies. Therefore, the "skin tunics" (Gen 3:21) in the eyes of Origen were not simply associated with corporeality *per se*, but with a particular kind of heavy and corruptible body. Ramelli explains that this blanket corporeal condition of the whole creation is necessary for its freedom. Since the capacity of change is predicated on their corporeal nature, it is only due to their bodies that rational creatures can pursue either virtue or vice, with the following consequences for their bodies. In support of the primordial union of the body and the soul, Origen professed that even the risen body will be composed of the same four elements as the earthly body. Contrary to what is commonly assumed, Ramelli demonstrates that many of Origen's ideas were endorsed and developed by Gregory of Nyssa.

Ilaria Vigorelli, from the Pontifical University of Holy Cross, devotes her chapter to a detailed analysis of various aspects of the trinitarian anthropology of Gregory of Nyssa. She starts by explaining his elaborate methodology of argumentation identified with the notion of *akolouthia*, understood as a relational logical sequence that takes into account common premises known to his addressees. Another indispensable component of Gregory's method accorded with the notion of piety (*eusebeia*), which enabled Gregory's audience to grasp his message. After establishing these epistemological requirements of Gregory's discourse on the soul and the body, Vigorelli goes through the most essential aspects of his anthropological thought and shows how he linked it to his trinitarian doctrine. Vigorelli demonstrates that Gregory had a holistic vision of human nature where the dualism of intelligible soul and corporeal body was harmonised by the condition of *apatheia* and *isaggelia*, restored by Christ. Taking as a point of departure the ontological similitude and kinship of the human soul and divinity, Gregory elaborated the Pauline idea of *epektasis* as the final relational condition of human divinisation.

Professor Kuo-Yu Tsui, from the National Chengchi University in Taipei, explores the issue of the body in the ascetic thought of Evagrius Ponticus. Contrary to what is commonly assumed, Tsui elucidates the positive role of the body in Evagrius' thought. She outlines the tripartite structure of Evagrius' anthropology (derived from Origen and Greek philosophy), and describes how he integrates this scheme with

Christian ascetic practices. Thus, according to Evagrius, human nature is divinely endowed with the seed and potential for an eventual unification with the divine through which the body may be elevated to the rank of the soul, and the soul to that of the mind (*nous*). Evagrius emphasized that this unification does not occur until the mind is sufficiently purified from preoccupations with bodily distractions by means of prayer and contemplation. Tsui demonstrates that, in the teachings and examples of Evagrius, the practical ascetic life (*praktikē*), which consists of both bodily and spiritual disciplines, helps guide and strengthen monks as they struggle and train against intruding or obstructing passions and strive through divine grace for the blessed intermediate stage of *apatheia*, a prerequisite for higher levels of contemplation (*theōria*). Tsui observes that, although Evagrius encouraged the desert monks to embrace the ideal of a total withdrawal from the world (*anachoresis*), he did not regard the body as an impediment to salvation. On the contrary, Tsui demonstrates that Evagrius engaged with the body as a providential vehicle that, when cared for and used according to its proper nature, grants access to sensory experience and knowledge of the material world as divine creation, and is therefore necessary and instrumental in bringing about the restoration of the mind. Tsui shows that, for Evagrius, the path of the spiritual journey towards higher levels of contemplation is precisely through the virtuous and disciplined body.

Professor Andrew Crislip, from Virginia Commonwealth University, reflects upon resurrection, emotion and embodiment in Egyptian monastic literature. Crislip especially focusses on the affective and emotional language of such doctrines as the resurrection of Christ himself, the real presence of his body and blood in the Eucharist, and the post-mortem fate of martyrs. Thus, Crislip showcases the variety of embodied experiences of individual resurrection, Eucharist and the resurrected body of Christ. Crislip starts with an exploration of the letters of Antony the Great and his contemporary Ammonas, and then studies the sermons of Shenoute, and homiletic literature produced and transmitted in late antique Coptic monasteries. Crislip offers an emotion-based mode of analysis of the resurrection narratives, which reflects phenomena observed in current research in cognitive and affective neuroscience. This interdisciplinary approach expands our understanding of ancient Christian theories and practices, and creates a platform for an interdisciplinary dialogue between historical and contemporary scientific disciplines.

Anna Usacheva, from the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, analyses Christian theories of reproduction in the context of Hellenistic dualist discourse and embryology. Usacheva gives an overview of the philosophical and patristic texts and compares the embryological theories of Aristotle, Galen and Porphyry with the views of Athenagoras of Athens, Justin the Martyr, Methodius of Olympus and Gregory of Nyssa. She also argues that, in the fifth century, Christian interest in the mysteries of reproduction was heated by the debates about the union of the divine and human

natures of Christ, and speculation regarding the details of Jesus' generation. Some novel views of ensoulment were introduced by such representatives of the Antiochene school of theology as Theodoret of Cyrus and Nemesius of Emesa. A brief analysis of Theodoret and Nemesius' views of reproduction demonstrates that, although these authors closely engaged with Aristotelian, Galenic and Neoplatonic concepts, their ideas show a continuity with early Christian concepts. Usacheva claims that, due to the specific metaphysical principles of Christian doctrine, the church fathers were bound to balance a dualist lexicon, which they often used, with holistic anthropological and Christological statements. According to Usacheva, patristic theories of reproduction represent a vivid example of balanced Christian holistic thought, which imbibed plenty of Hellenistic concepts, yet remained true to the fundamental principles of Christian doctrine.

Samuel Kaldas, from St Cyril's Coptic Orthodox Theological College, studies the soul-body relation in the homilies of the fourth century Syrian writer known as Pseudo-Macarius or Macarius-Symeon. Kaldas explores Macarius' language and metaphors, and shows just how deep and disguised was Macarius' affinity with Platonic asceticism. Instead of focusing on the direct philosophical influences on Macarius' thought, Kaldas takes the more subtle path of unraveling the intrinsic structure and framework of Macarius' ideas about the spiritual life. It transpires from Kaldas' study that the importance of Macarius' metaphorical language rests on his belief in the twofold nature of the universe, comprising the invisible and visible worlds. Hence, the symbolic characteristics of physical objects, arranged on an imaginary scale of their "hardness" and "subtlety", demonstrate Macarius' implicit "physical theory" of the different kinds of substances. Thus, Kaldas shows that, in the eyes of Macarius, the soul is a "subtle body", clothed in the "garment" of the physical body, which although coarser in nature than the soul, is indispensable not only in the present life but also after death. Kaldas demonstrates how, in his theology of the transformation from "the garments of flesh" to "the garments of light", Macarius combined the basic outline of Platonic *topoi* with Syriac imagery.

Professor David Bradshaw, from the University of Kentucky, explores Patristic views on why there is no repentance after death. Bradshaw demonstrates that, despite a strong and biblically justified agreement between the church fathers about the impossibility of post-mortem repentance, their explanations of this doctrine were rather different. After outlining the main attitudes to this issue from the second to the fourth centuries, Bradshaw focusses on the more detailed expositions of the problem offered by such later authors as Nemesius of Emesa, Dorotheus of Gaza, Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor, John of Damascus and Theophylact of

Bulgaria. Bradshaw demonstrates that, according to these theologians, after death and separation from the body, the soul loses its capacity for moral transformation. Bradshaw argues that, although varied in their explanations, the views of the church fathers are not incompatible, and the diversity of their approaches can most likely be explained by the contexts of and motives for their compositions. Bradshaw also analyses Patristic views on Christ's descent to Hades, and the opportunity for repentance that this offered to its inhabitants.

Professor Siam Bhayro, from the University of Exeter, explores treating the body and the soul in late-antique and early-medieval Syriac sources. Bhayro's particular focus is on the legacy of Sergius – a priest, theologian, philosopher, prolific translator, diplomat and chief physician of the city of Resh 'Ayna. Instead of the conventional comparison of the sixth-century Sergius with the ninth-century Arabic scholar Hunayn ibn Ishaq, or the usual association of Sergius' image with the Graeco-Roman model, Bhayro tries to navigate a new path. He notes that, unlike the Graeco-Roman milieu, with its humoral pathology and differentiation between the roles of physicians and priests, the Syro-Mesopotamian tradition suggested a simultaneous and complementary treatment of the body and the soul. Hence, Bhayro compares Sergius' scholarship with the legacy of the earlier Syriac scientist, scholar, astrologer, philosopher and poet, Bardaisan of Edessa. Similarly to Sergius, Bardaisan was also known to be both a priest and a physician, who served in the royal court in Edessa. Bhayro demonstrates that Bardaisan's astral scholarship and medical practice were based on the historic Syro-Mesopotamian systems, as was his overall scholarly model of the priest-physician-scholar. Bhayro argues that Sergius' model of scholarship reflected many aspects of Bardaisan's status and accorded with the traditional near eastern model of scholarship. Hence, Sergius followed the traditional Syro-Mesopotamian approach to the treatment of the body and the soul.

Andrew Summerson, from Calumet College of St. Joseph, explores how Maximus the Confessor in his *Ad Thalassium* presented the issue of human passions in the light of human salvation and *theosis*. Summerson argues that, according to Maximus, Adam fell at the very moment he was created. Hence, right from the start of human existence, passions became a part of human nature, and thus required a transformation that could only be achieved with the assistance of Christ. Summerson shows that, in tune with Neoplatonic tradition, Maximus believed that "ignorance of God" was at the root of fallen human passibility. Consequently, both human passions and the wrong interpretation of scripture are different symptoms of the same disease of original sin. Summerson explores Maximus' ideas about the medicinal healing of human emotion, which went back to the early Christian trope of Christ as divine

physician. In his analysis of the Christian practice of *apatheia*, Summerson points out its distinctly Stoic roots, and explains that the Stoic notion was not about the complete eradication of passions but instead about the replacement or transformation of vicious passions with good ones. To describe such a transformation, Maximus again employed a medical metaphor that associated the good use of passions with an immunisation, established by God for salutary purposes.

Professor Vladimir Cvetkovic, from the University of Belgrade, analyses Maximus the Confessor's view on the soul and the body in the context of five divisions. To explore the nature of Maximus' anthropology, Cvetkovic chooses a fascinating angle: he studies Maximus' doctrine of the fivefold division that comprises such binaries as the unities between male and female, paradise and the inhabited world, earth and sky, sensible and intelligible nature, and human and divine. In tune with other post-Chalcedonian authors, Maximus argued that this final, paradigmatic unity between the divine and human natures is analogous to the union between the human body and soul. Cvetkovic demonstrates how Maximus pictured the beautiful divine cosmological design, which harmonised various kinds of universal unities, and particularly focused on the comparison between the body-soul union in the human being and the unity of the divine and human natures in Christ. Cvetkovich also explores the continuity of Maximus' psychology with respect to the teachings of Nemesius of Emesa and Leontius of Byzantium, and analyses Maximus' polemics against Severus of Antioch. Thus, Cvetkovich explains the rationale behind Maximus' doctrine of Christ's composite hypostasis and human composite nature, and also outlines a connection between his anthropological, Christological and eschatological doctrines.

This volume represents the first publication in the Series "Contexts of Ancient and Medieval Anthropology" (CAMA), recently established by Schoeningh, a German imprint of Brill. This series welcomes multidisciplinary research on the history of ancient and medieval anthropology, broadly understood in terms of both its European heritage and its reception of, and engagement with, various cultural and intellectual traditions (e.g. in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Coptic, Syriac, Arabic etc.). This series encourages multidisciplinary studies of the various philological, textual, and archaeological sources concerned with the development of anthropological theories in ancient medicine, philosophy, religion, and theology, as well as the subsequent theoretical and practical interactions between these theories. Particularly welcome are studies that emphasise the fundamental connection between different philosophical, scientific, and socio-cultural contexts where anthropological theories were produced and applied, and that analyse the implications of these theories in ethical, ascetic,

ecological, gender, and political life from Classical Antiquity up to the Middle Ages. Attempts to understand human beings as biological, physiological, religious, and socio-cultural entities persisted from Antiquity and are echoed in the establishing of the complex and multifarious European identity. In grasping this cross-cultural and diversified process, one is able to see the foundations of contemporary scientific, religious, and political discourses that treat the human being and how humanity relates to the world.

The editors of this volume would like to thank all the contributors, and the editorial board of the series, for their enthusiastic and collegial collaboration. We would also like to thank the publisher's team, particularly Dr Martin Illert and Dr Rebecca Hagen, for their professionalism and support. We are also grateful to the following research students in Halle – Franziska Grave, Hannah Mälck and Maline Teepe – for their ever-reliable work, which has helped enormously in ensuring the timely publication of this volume.

Anna Usacheva, Siam Bhayro, Jörg Ulrich