Thinking with Soul: *Psychē* and *Psychikos* in the Construction of Early Christian Identities

David M. Reis

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DAVID M. REIS

Early Christian writers devised numerous rhetorical strategies to clarify their perceptions of Christianity and to distinguish the followers of Jesus from various "others." Yet identity theorists have noticed that the self is not a "fixed" or static category, but rather one that is always under negotiation and (re) examination. Moreover, embedded within arguments distinguishing "us" from "them" are claims to power and knowledge. Drawing upon these insights, this essay examines how the concept of the soul, which had a long history of use in philosophic discussions on selfhood, became a useful tool to establish early Christian identities and marginalize opponents. Whether understood as a metaphor or as a "real" entity, *psychē* and its adjectival form *psychikos* became discursive "markers" in early Christian polemic or apologetic, enabling writers to carve out a sense of self and to establish a place for Christians on the social map of the Greco-Roman world.

"Identities . . . are not things we think about, but things we think with. As such they have no existence beyond our politics, our social relations, and our histories."

—John R. Gillis

In his *Apology*, Tertullian asserts that "Christians are made, not born."[1] Considering the vigorous debate over the nature of Christian identity in the

1. *Apol.* 18.4: *Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani* (ed. and trans. T. R. Glover, *Tertullian: Apology, De Spectaculis; Minuncius Felix, Octavius*, LCL 250 [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931], 91). See also *Test.* 1.7: *Fieri enim, non nasci solet Christiana* (ed. and trans. W. A. J. C. Scholte, *Q. S. Florentis Tertulliani: De Testimonio Animae* [Amsterdam: De Academische Boekwinkel, 1934], 9).

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early empire, few writers would have disagreed: for many commentators—Jewish, pagan, and Christian—Christianity faced difficult challenges in its self-presentation. Not only did it lack a shared cultural history typical of distinct peoples, it also attracted followers from various ethnic backgrounds.[2] In this ambiguous environment, followers of Jesus were faced with the problem of how to present themselves to neighboring communities. To counter accusations of Christian novelty, some authors sought to stake a claim for their faith's antiquity by claiming the epic history of Israel as their own.[3] At the other end of the spectrum, other writers acknowledged Christianity's recent appearance on the world stage, finding in this event demonstrable proof of its legitimacy, uniqueness, and superiority.[4]

Whatever the approach taken, early Christianity was deeply engaged in promoting itself to both insiders and outsiders through various discursive

2. Karen Jo Torjesen ("Social and Historical Setting: Christianity as Culture Critique," in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frances Young, Lewis Ayres, and Andrew Louth [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 181), who argues that "it is precisely the fact that Christians lacked a unique cultural identity that made the emergence of Christianity such a dilemma for the Empire. Christians did not have a common ethnic identity—that distinctive dye of language, custom, ritual, and local history that located other individuals and groups on the cultural map of the Roman Empire."

3. For instance, Just. *1 apol*. 23.1, 54–60; Tat. *orat*. 31.1. On this line of argumentation, see Arthur J. Droge, *Homer or Moses? Early Christian Interpretations of the History of Culture*, Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie 26 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1989). This strategy no doubt chagrined both Jewish and pagans alike. See, for instance, Just. *dial*. 9.1–2, 10.1–3, 11.5, 123.7–9, 135; Or. *Cels*. 2.1, 2.4, 3.5, 7.53. On Jewish reactions to Christianity, see Stephen G. Wilson, *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians 70–170* C.E. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 169–94.

4. The debate over Christianity as a "third/new race" is particularly instructive. See Richard Valantasis, "The Question of Early Christian Identity: Three Strategies Exploring a Third *Genos*," in *A Feminist Companion to the New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine, with Maria Mayo Robbins (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2006), 60–76; Michel Cambe, *Kerygma Petri: Textus et Commentarius*, CCA 15 (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2003), 263, 266–68; Bernard Pouderon and Marie-Joseph Pierre, ed., *Aristide: Apologie*, SC 470 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2003), 63–64, 77–82; Denise Kimber Buell, "Race and Universalism in Early Christianity," *JECS* 10 (2002): 446–50; André Schneider, *Le premier livre Ad nationes de Tertullien: introduction, texte, traduction, et commentaire*, Bibliotheca Helvetica Romana 9 (Rome: Swiss Institute of Rome, 1968), 187–90; Adolf Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, trans. James Moffatt (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), 266–78. An analogous debate occurs over the term "barbarian," an issue recently examined by Stamenka E. Antonova, "Barbarians and the Empire-Wide Spread of Christianity," in *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation*, ed. W. V. Harris, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition 27 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005), 69–86.

strategies: "Christianity," asserts Averil Cameron, "*was* its discourse or discourses."[5] Most contemporary scholarship would thus also agree with Tertullian's observation, yet for reasons more theoretical than polemical or apologetic. In particular, recent studies have come to accept as axiomatic the fluid nature of identity and social formation, highlighting their need for continual articulation and (re)examination. As a result, models of fixed identities and closed social boundaries have largely been discarded in favor of more nuanced studies that track how individual and group borders shift as new concerns and commitments arise.[6]

In this environment of contestation, those who claimed the name "Christian" deployed numerous techniques to distinguish themselves from rivals, whether Jewish, pagan, or Christian. In addition to strategies centering on theology, scripture, race, and sexuality, many authors sought to establish identity and difference through the use of the concept of the soul. As a well-known metonym for the true self, *psychē* had a pedigree in antiquity's cultural archive that early Christian writers found advantageous when attempting to identify how "they" were distinct from any number of "others." *Psychē* and its adjectival form *psychikos* thus became regular rhetorical arrows found in the quiver of the early Christian author: whether understood as a metaphor or as a "real" entity, whether used in polemical or apologetic contexts, soul-language acted as a discursive "marker" for early Christians to carve out a sense of self and delimit social space within the Greco-Roman world. In other words, the soul was, in the famous phrase of Levi-Strauss, "good to think."[7]

5. Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991), 32.

6. Recent works on the social and rhetorical construction of Christian identity that have influenced this study include Jennifer Wright Knust, *Abandoned to Lust: Sexual Slander and Ancient Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Denise Kimber Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Judith M. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) and *Neither Jew Nor Greek: Constructing Early Christianity* (London: T&T Clark, 2002); Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Karen L. King, *What is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Laura Nasrallah, *An Ecstasy of Folly: Prophecy and Authority in Early Christianity*, Harvard Theological Studies 52 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Ben F. Meyer and E. P. Sanders, ed., *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980–1981).

7. Claude Lévy-Strauss, *Totemism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 89.

IDENTITY AND IMAGINATIVE GEOGRAPHY

Studies on the soul in antiquity have noticed that although ancient writers may have treated the existence of the *psychē* as self-evident, it nevertheless has a history that can be traced in literature from Homer through the end of antiquity.[8] While many disagreements on the nature, function, and significance of the soul appear in Greco-Roman texts,[9] by the late Hellenistic period it became a commonplace to think of the *psychē* either as the "true" self or at least as the ruling part of the body-soul complex that was most akin to the unchangeable realm of the divine.[10] Yet at the same time, this "fixed" essence was a rhetorical construction: its "reality" demanded argumentation and thus existed, like all other things, within its discursive formulations.[11]

This emphasis on discourse as a means for examining ancient religious identities intersects with broader discussions of identity theory. These latter studies posit a discursive model of identity that recognizes the subject as neither wholly independent of social experience nor as a "blank slate" waiting to receive a social imprint. Rather, a discursive subjectivity arises through modes of communication that are produced and reproduced in time and space.[12] The advantage of this approach lies in its rejection of an "essentialized" conception of selfhood in favor of one that is in continual flux and negotiation: as Jonathan Rutherford states, "Identity . . . is never a static location, it contains traces of its past and what it is to become."[13]

8. Erwin Rohde, *Psyche: The Cult of Souls and Belief in Immortality Among the Greeks*, 8th ed., trans. W. B. Hillis (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1925). See also David M. Reis, "The Journey of the Soul: Its Expressions in Early Christianity" (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate University, 1999).

9. For instance, Arist. *An.* 1; Sextus Empiricus (*Pyrrhon hypot.* 2.31) refers to discussions of the soul as an "extensive and interminable battle" (πολλὴ καὶ ἀνήνυτος μάχη) (ed. and trans. R. G. Bury, *Sextus Empiricus: Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, LCL 273 [New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1933], 171). See also Tert. *An.* 2.6, 3.2; *Test.* 1.

10. For instance, Plato, *Phaed.* 79c–80b; Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* 1.22.53–23.55.

11. This observation draws upon the insight of King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, 225: "The thing itself is a product of its own production, reproducing its producer's positionality, particularity, and contingency."

12. Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift, "Introduction," in *Mapping the Subject: Geographies of Cultural Transformation*, ed. S. Pile and N. Thrift (New York: Routledge, 1995), 2–5.

13. Jonathan Rutherford, "A Place Called Home: Identity and the Cultural Politics of Difference," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. J. Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 24. See also Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004).

When examined in this way, identity, whether collective or individual, is neither "natural" nor self-evident, but instead emerges through the deployment of discursive strategies that demand constant reflection, justification, and rearticulation.[14]

One important feature in the creation of identity is the establishment of "otherness." The contextual nature of identity means that it is formed in relation to others, and thus that an awareness of difference is an essential requirement for the creation of any subjectivity: "no identity can ever exist by itself and without an array of opposites, negatives, [and] oppositions."[15] Creating a sense of self, a "subject position" (e.g. as teacher, student, man, or woman), therefore goes hand in hand with formulating binaries that isolate and highlight the characteristics or dispositions of "others," those foils who are not "like us." In their attempt to enforce a rigid sense of identity, these distinctions often appear as static and impermeable, yet the shifting, fluid nature of self-definition implies that constructions of "sameness" and "difference" are likewise in need of continual examination, that the borders between "us" and "them" are perhaps more porous than the "essentialized" rhetoric asserts.[16] "Identities," as Kathryn Woodward maintains, "are contested."[17]

14. John R. Gillis "Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship," in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. J. R. Gillis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3–24: "Both identity and memory are political and social constructs. . . . We can no longer afford to assign either the status of natural object, treating it as 'fact' with an existence outside language" (5). See also Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 13–14; Laurence J. Silberstein, "Mapping, Not Tracing: Opening Reflection," in *Mapping Jewish Identities*, ed. L. J. Silberstein (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 1–4; Kathryn Woodward, "Concepts of Identity and Difference," in *Identity and Difference*, ed. K. Woodward (London: SAGE Publications, 1997), 10–15, 21–29; Pile and Thrift, "Introduction," 1–12.

15. Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 52. So also Woodward, "Concepts of Identity and Difference," 29–38: "Identity . . . is not the opposite of, but *depends on*, difference" (29). See also Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 269–97; Jonathan Z. Smith, "Differential Equations: On Constructing the 'Other,'" Thirteenth Annual Lecture in Religion (Arizona State University, March 5, 1992), 1–17.

16. Rutherford, "Place Called Home," 21–22. See also Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 99–100; Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 10; Richard Handler, "Is 'Identity' a Useful Cross-Cultural Concept?" in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 30: "Groups . . . are symbolic processes that emerge and dissolve in particular contexts of action."

17. Woodward, "Identity and Difference," 15.

This aspect of contestation brings identity formation within the orbit of power and knowledge.[18] Creating a sense of self and a place in which to exercise this subjectivity are never innocent activities, but complex fictions[19] that seek to classify reality in order to monitor, marginalize, and assert authority.[20] Individuals and groups thus engage in rivalries, competing within "entanglements of power" for the right to name themselves and to "map" themselves onto the undifferentiated, overlapping, and contested space of the social world.[21] The resulting order constitutes an act of "imaginative geography," the transformation of indeterminate "space" into meaningful "place."[22] In this way, identity and place are so intertwined that it is difficult to think of the creation of one without the other: as Derek Gregory argues, "mapping imaginative geographies can be said to constitute a 'cartography of identities' . . . because there is a sense in which 'knowing oneself' is, in part, a matter of 'mapping where one

18. Michel Foucault, "Questions on Geography," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 68–69, 74; Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 23.

19. See Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), 8 n. 8. In his discussion of representations of geography, Gregory draws upon the insight of Clifford Geertz that ethnographies should be regarded as "fictions, in the sense that they are 'something made,' 'something fashioned'—the original meaning of *fictio*—not as if they are false, unfactual, or merely 'as if' thought experiments." More recently, Derek Gregory (*The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* [Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004], 17) has made a similar point with respect to the word "fabrication": it is, he states, both "something fictionalized" and "something made real."

20. King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, 235: "History is not about truth but about power relations of domination." See also Woodward, "Identity and Difference," 35–36; Rutherford, "Place Called Home," 10.

21. Joanne P. Sharp, Paul Routledge, Chris Philo, and Ronan Paddison, "Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance," in *Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance*, ed. J. P. Sharp, P. Routledge, et al. (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1–42.

22. For a discussion of space and place, see Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 24–46. Drawing on the research of Yi-Fu Tuan, Smith asserts that "[s]pace is more abstract than place. What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value. . . . When space feels thoroughly familiar to us, it has become place" (28). He thus sides with contemporary geographers who have inverted the classical position that "place creates man" and that place "forms or imprints personality" (30–31). The concept of "imaginative geography" is taken from Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 49–72. For Said, the phrase denotes the way the West represented and constructed the Orient according to its own predispositions and biases.

stands.'"[23] Whether this is accomplished through persuasion or coercion,[24] the constellation of power, knowledge, and geography combine to produce imagined communities that create a sense of reality or "naturalness" by advancing their beliefs and practices over those of another.

These observations on the dynamics of identity formation offer a productive way to view the rhetorical investments of early Christian authors who deploy *psychē* and *psychikos* within the context of individual and group definition. The soul's central place in discussions of identity, a long-standing characteristic of Greco-Roman religious and philosophical discourse, filter into a variety of early Christian texts to elaborate upon similarity and difference, and, ultimately, to establish power relationships between the "constructed" insiders and outsiders. An analysis of the ways in which authors speak about the soul thus provides another lens through which to view the creation and fortification of Christianity's social boundaries.[25]

PSYCHĒ IN EARLY CHRISTIAN SELF-DEFINITION

In his letter to the Thessalonians, Paul reminds his community that they had turned away from the worship of idols "to serve a living and true God" (1 Thess 1.9). While this marks one of the earliest attempts in the New Testament to clarify the boundaries between followers of Jesus and outsiders, it was clearly not sufficient for addressing all of the nuances and complexities of life that Christians encountered in succeeding centuries. Indeed, persistent criticisms from both outsiders and insiders continually challenged Christian writers to clarify what a Christian "was" and to locate Christianity's "place" on the social map of the ancient world. The result was a centuries-long engagement with the issues of identity formation and the construction of imaginative geographies, both of which intersected with discussion of the soul.

23. Derek Gregory, "Imaginative geographies," *Progress in Human Geography* 19 (1995): 474–75. See also Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 211: "The conviction of belonging to a specific territory, whether real or imagined . . . is surely one of the irreducible components in a sense of identity"; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991).

24. Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 8.

25. Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society*, 9. See also Chad Kile, "Feeling Persuaded: Christianization as Social Formation," in *Rhetoric and Reality in Early Christianities*, ed. Willi Braun (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 229.

The Metaphorical Soul in Identity Formation

The binary formulations so important in self-definition, especially those that speak of Christians as resident aliens who stand against "the world" and materiality, were already common fare in first-century literature.[26] This theme receives greater treatment and further specificity, however, in the sub-apostolic age through the use of the concept of the soul. The *Epistle to Diognetus*,[27] for example, attempts to persuade the pagan Diognetus to turn to Christianity by constructing a type of Christian identity dependent upon a metaphorical understanding of the soul.

The text's setting is a conversation between a Christian author and the pagan Diognetus, a man of social and political standing[28] who professes an interest in Christianity and whom the author seeks to convert to the faith.[29] Specifically, he is interested to know which God Christians obey and

26. For instance, John 15.18–20; Phil 3.20; Eph 2.19; Col 1.13; 1 John 4.4–6, 5.4; Heb 11.13–16; Jas 4.4; 1 Pet 1.1, 1.17, 1.22–23, 2.11; *Gos. Thom.* 29, 42, 56, 80, 87, 110, 112. For analyses of this theme, see Benjamin H. Dunning, "Aliens and Sojourners: Self as Other in the Rhetoric of Early Christianity" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2005); Reinhard Feldmeier, "The 'Nation' of Strangers: Social Contempt and Its Theological Interpretation in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity," in *Ethnicity and the Bible*, ed. Mark G. Brett (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002), 241–70; Vincent L. Wimbush, "'. . . Not of This World . . .': Early Christianities as Rhetorical and Social Formation," in *Reimagining Christian Origins: A Colloquium Honoring Burton L. Mack*, ed. Elizabeth A. Castelli and Hal Taussig (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 23–36; Rowan Greer, "Alien Citizens: A Marvelous Paradox," in *Civitas: Religious Interpretations of the City*, ed. Peter S. Hawkins (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), 39–56.

27. Critical editions and translations include Bart D. Ehrman, trans., "Epistle to Diognetus," in *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 2, LCL 25 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 121–59; Henri Irénée Marrou, *À Diognète*, 2nd ed., SC 33 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1965); J. J. Thierry, ed., *The Epistle to Diognetus*, Textus Minores 33 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964); Henry G. Meecham, *The Epistle to Diognetus*, Theological Series 7 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1949). For a brief but useful introduction to this text, see also David E. Aune, *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2003), 136–39. Most scholars place this text in the second century. For a summary of opinions, see Charles E. Hill, *From the Lost Teaching of Polycarp: Identifying Irenaeus' Apostolic Presbyter and the Author of the Ad Diognetum*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 186 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 98–100.

28. On the phrase κράτιστε Διόγνητε, see Marrou, *Diognète*, 254–59; Meecham, *Epistle*, 92–93.

29. Charles E. Hill (*From the Lost Teaching*, 101–6) contends that the text "appears to be the transcript of an oral address delivered in the presence of the addressee" (103), and argues that its plea for Diognetus's conversion to Christianity makes it

how their worship leads them to "despise the world and disdain death," reject the worship of the Greeks and Jews, and show affection toward one another. Finally, he seeks to learn from the author why this "this new race or way of life" (καινὸν τοῦτο γένος ἢ ἐπιτήδευμα) has entered the world now and not at an earlier age (1).[30]

Before responding, the author informs Diognetus that in preparation for learning about this "new teaching," he must purge his previous understanding and "become as it were a person made new at the beginning" (2.1; LCL 25:131–33). With this exhortation, the author suggests that an appreciation of the Christian way of life demands nothing less a fundamental reorientation of thought-patterns, a point that foreshadows the argument of Christian distinctiveness to follow. In order for this argument to carry persuasiveness, however, the author first launches into a polemic against what he considers alternate and inferior forms of religious worship. He thus begins by challenging Diognetus to consider how incongruous it is for pagans to worship divinities whose idols are composed of material elements (e.g. stone, copper, wood, iron, and clay) that humans employ in everyday use and that ultimately suffer destruction. If all of these idols are really alive, the author queries, then why do pagans habitually protect only those made of precious metals? Alternatively, if pagans admit that they lack powers of perception, then their sacrifices are disingenuous (2.2–4, 7–9; LCL 25:133–35). These inconsistencies suggest that pagan worship is characterized by an intellectual deficiency: the idols that pagans worship are "lifeless (ἄψυχα)" "[a]nd in the end," the author derisively asserts, "these are what you become like" (2.4–5; LCL 25:133).

If pagan worship stands condemned as foolishness, so too do Jewish sacrifices, which wrongly assume that God is in need of anything. Although the Jews correctly practice monotheism, their system of sacrifice dishonors the God who made the universe and needs none of the gifts that they offer (3.1–5; LCL 25:135–37). Moreover, the author continues, the Jews err through the promulgation of their laws: while their fasting arbitrarily

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fits most closely with the protreptic genre. See also Rudolf Brändle, *Die Ethik der "Schrift an Diognet": Eine Wiederaufnahme paulinischer und johanneischer Theologie am Ausgang des zweiten Jahrhunderts* (Zurich: Theologische Verlag, 1975), 14–16; Meecham, *Epistle*, 7–9. The authorship of the text is much disputed, but Hill (*From the Lost Teaching*, 128–60), following the argument initially made by Pier Franco Beatrice, makes a persuasive case for Polycarp. For other candidates, see Brändle, *Ethik*, 230–35; Marrou, *Diognète*, 242–43, 266–67; Meecham, *Epistle*, 16–18.

30. All citations of this text come from Ehrman's critical edition (see above, n. 27).

condemns some of the things that God gave humanity, other practices such as the Sabbath, circumcision, and their festivals promote a spirit of arrogance and a false sense of election (4.1–6; LCL 25:137–39).

In contrast to these two forms of worship, Christianity, so the *Epistle* asserts, displays a mysteriousness and transcendence that distinguishes it from pagan and Jewish practices (4.6, 7.1; LCL 25:139, 143–45). Unlike these other traditions, Christians received the truth in their hearts from Jesus, "the craftsman and maker of all things . . . by whom all things are set in order and arranged and put into perfection" (7.2; LCL 25:145). This miraculous event ushered in a new age in human history, for prior to Jesus' incarnation no one "had any idea what God was like" (8.1; LCL 25:147). It was only through this divine revelation, then, that God presented himself to humanity for the first time, and Christians demonstrate the veracity of this revelation through their faith, which allows them alone to see God (8.6; LCL 25:147). It is therefore through their knowledge and love of God that Christians distinguish themselves from others, not only intellectually, but also on a practical level through civic engagement: "whoever takes up the burden of his neighbor, whoever wants to use his own abundance to help someone in need, whoever provides for the destitute from the possessions he has received from God—himself being a god to those who receive them—this one is an imitator of God" (μιμητής . . . θεοῦ) (10.6; LCL 25:153).

With this initial distinction between Christians and "others" in place, the *Epistle* develops the identity of "this new race" of Christians through the construction of a series of binaries. For the author, pagans and Jews lack a complete understanding of the divine on account of their deceptive teachers, suffer from immature intellects, maintain ridiculous practices, and display such characteristics as impiety, deceitfulness, arrogance, disorderliness, and lawlessness (2.1, 3.3, 4.3, 4.6, 8.2–4, 9.1–2; LCL 25:131–39, 147–51). In contrast, the saving work of Jesus transformed Christians from their former lives of error into a new people characterized by their mature understanding of God, an access to otherworldly mysteries, and an ethical righteousness (4.6, 7.1–2, 8.10–11, 9.1–6; LCL 25:139, 143–45, 149–51). With these contrasting definitions of identity, the *Epistle* draws clear lines between those within and outside the boundaries of true faith, concluding that the proper knowledge of God, with its corresponding benefits, is simply unavailable to those who lack the Christian faith (10.1; LCL 25:153).

Yet the author does not support this contention by drawing upon the

conventional topics found in ancient ethnographic literature to identify the various peoples of the world.[31] Indeed, instead of highlighting distinctive characteristics or attributes such as language, geography, ethnicity, or physiognomy, he claims that the Christians blend into their surroundings at every turn:

> Christians are no different from other people in terms of their country, language, or customs (οὔτε γῇ οὔτε φωνῇ οὔτε ἔθεσι). Nowhere do they inhabit cities of their own, use a strange dialect, or live life out of the ordinary. . . . They inhabit both Greek and barbarian cities. . . . And they show forth the character of their own citizenship (πολιτείας) in a marvelous and admittedly paradoxical way by following local customs in what they wear and what they eat and in the rest of their lives. (5.1–2, 5.4; LCL 25:139–41)

At first glace it would appear that the author undermines his attempt to prove that Christians are a *genos* by claiming that they assimilate into their surroundings. Yet as the letter continues, it appears that his argument seeks to reconfigure the conception of *genos* according to certain dispositions or attitudes toward the world.[32] Specifically, the *Epistle* claims that Christians' beliefs about God have instilled within them ambivalence for life and a contempt for death. Thus, the author contends that while Christians may participate fully in civic life, they nevertheless "live as resident aliens" and "endure all things as foreigners," and though they "live on earth . . . [they] participate in the life of heaven" (5.5, 5.9; LCL 25:141).[33] As temporary sojourners on earth, they suffer persecutions without complaint, because their faith has enabled them "to despise that which merely seems to be death" (10.7; LCL 25:155).

To underscore this point, the letter develops the analogy that Christians' existence in the world is like that of a soul in the body (6.1; LCL 25:141).[34] This metonymical formulation receives expansion through a series of asyndetic clauses and sentences (6.2–10; LCL 25:141–43):

31. For a discussion of common topics or themes in Greco-Roman ethnographic literature, see Buell, *Why This New Race*, 36–41.

32. Buell, *Why This New Race*, 32.

33. οἰκοῦσιν . . . ὡς πάροικοι . . . καὶ πανθ' ὑπομένουσιν ὡς ξένοι . . . ἐπὶ γῆς διατρίβουσιν, ἀλλ' ἐν οὐρανῷ πολιτεύονται.

34. ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχή, τοῦτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κόσμῳ Χριστιανοί.

the soul is spread throughout all the limbs of the body	Christians are spread throughout the cities of the world
the soul lives in the body but does not belong to the body	Christians live in the world but do not belong to the world
the soul, which is invisible, is put under guard in the visible body	Christians are known to be in the world but their worship of God remains invisible
the flesh hates (μισεῖ) the soul and attacks (πολεμεῖ) it, even though it has suffered no harm, because it is hindered from indulging in its pleasures	the world hates (μισεῖ) the Christians, even though it has suffered no harm, because they are opposed to its pleasures
the soul loves the flesh that hates (μισοῦσαν) it, along with its limbs	Christians love those who hate (μισοῦντας) them
the soul is imprisoned (ἐγκέκλεισται) in the body, but sustains the body	Christians are detained in the prison of the world (κατέχονται . . . ἐν φρουρᾷ τῷ κόσμῳ), but they sustain the world
the soul, which is immortal, dwells in a mortal tent (σκηνώματι)	Christians temporarily dwell in perishable surroundings (παροικοῦσιν ἐν φθαρτοῖς) but await that which is imperishable (ἀφθαρσίαν) in the heavens
the soul grows stronger even when mistreated by what the body eats and drinks	Christians increase daily even when punished
God has appointed (τάξιν) Christians to this position	it would not be right (οὐ θεμιτόν) for them to abandon it

In Judith Lieu's estimation, the text's construction of Christian identity is ambivalent enough to make it of limited value as an external apologetic. While hypothesizing that its argument would have resonated more forcefully among insiders, its practical content, she asserts, "is surprisingly thin and hardly able to create an alternative community."[35] Thus, Lieu con-

35. Lieu, *Neither Jew Nor Greek*, 179–81.

cludes that its inability to draw sharp boundaries between Christian and non-Christian lifestyles makes it "remarkably opaque."[36] Unfortunately, the excursus on the soul and body only adds to this opacity, for, she argues, "it implies symbiosis and invisibility, not differentiation."[37]

While she is surely correct to question the text's success in convincing pagans to convert,[38] its ability to contribute to the formation of a Christian identity should not be underestimated. Building upon the differences between Christianity and "other" forms of worship found in the initial chapters of the text, this section employs the soul-body dichotomy to explicate further the distinctiveness of the Christian life, which is not consonant with the expectations of the "world." The two terms represent decidedly different paths and goals that are oppositional and contentious. A reading sensitive to Greco-Roman philosophy, particularly Plato and the Platonic tradition, might therefore contend that this section intends to activate the dualistic anthropological traditions that had existed as part of the cultural archive for approximately seven hundred years.[39] In this case, the text would appear to highlight difference rather than similarity: Christians are *not* like pagans and Jews in the same way as the soul is of a different quality than the body/flesh and therefore displays different

36. Lieu, *Neither Jew Nor Greek*, 182.

37. Lieu, *Neither Jew Nor Greek*, 183.

38. It is quite likely that even more comprehensive Christian apologies were not intended for pagan audiences. See David A. Lopez, *Separatist Christianity: Spirit and Matter in the Early Church Fathers* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 109–33; Frances Young, "Greek Apologists of the Second Century," in *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, ed. Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman, and Simon Price (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 82–92; Tessa Rajak, "Talking at Trypho: Christian Apologetic as Anti-Judaism in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*," in *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, 75–80; Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire (A.D. 100–400)* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984). However, Helen Rhee (*Early Christian Literature: Christ and Culture in the Second and Third Centuries* [London and New York: Routledge, 2005], 28) has recently challenged this consensus.

39. Paul-Hubert Poirier, "Les chrétiens et la garde du monde à propos d'*Ad Diognetum* VI," in *Les apologistes chrétiens et la culture grecque*, Théologie Historique 15 (Paris: Beauschesne, 1996), 177–86; R. G. Tanner, "The Epistle to Diognetus and Contemporary Greek Thought," *SP* 15 (1984): 495–508; Robert Joly, *Christianisme et philosophie: Etudes sur Justin et les apologistes grecs du deuxième siècle* (Brussels: Editions de l'Universite de Bruxelles, 1973), 199–226. Joly disputes the opinion that the *Epistle* displays a Stoic background, as argued by Marrou, *Diognète*, 137–46 (and more recently, Hill, *From the Lost Teaching*, 155). Instead, he contends that it follows the traditions of Orphic-Pythagorean mysticism and Platonic anthropology. Poirier concurs with Joly, giving special attention to passages from the *Apology* and *Phaedo* as well as Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* and Epictetus's *Dissertations*.

motivations than it.[40] To make this point explicit, this meditation ends with the Platonic assertion that God has given the Christians a special task in the world to act as a corrective to non-Christian *mores*, a position that informs their new and better way of life and offers a palpable alternative to the social patterns of the pagans and Jews.[41]

Invested with a knowledge that stems from divine rather than human origins, the author argues that "God himself . . . set up and established in their hearts the truth and the holy word from heaven" by sending them his son (7.2; LCL 25:145). The Christian character is thus permeated by the divine message received from Jesus. As a result, they evince no concern for worldly matters and eschew death, seeking only to live lives of righteousness and piety grounded in a care for others. This ethic, which contrasts sharply with the slanderous accusations surrounding Christianity among pagan audiences, reflects the author's conscious effort to reimagine that Christianity and the Christian life corresponds to a heavenly model.[42] As imitators of God and as gods themselves, they perceive God's salvific plan by virtue of a spiritual change that enables them, even while on earth, to "come to know the true life of heaven," and "despise that which merely seems to be death." This, in turn, produces a revulsion for "the deceit and error of the world" and a desire to live according to alternative principles that, in a paradoxical and "mysterious" fashion, coalesce to sustain the world (10.7; LCL 25:153–55).[43]

These observations suggest that the letter is thoroughly engaged in the rhetorical construction of a Christian identity that critiques and exhorts the world while remaining immune to its dangers. Within this discourse,

40. This point underscores the author's earlier contention (2.4–5) that the pagan worship of idols leads to lifelessness.

41. Poirier, "Les chrétiens," 184.

42. Brändle (*Ethik*, 171), commenting on the *Epistle's* declaration that Christians display a love for others and imitate God (10.6), states: "In diesen Worten äussert sich ein soziales Gefühl, das radikal neu ist gegenüber der antiken Umwelt." Moreover, in contrast to Hill (*From the Lost Teaching*, 102), who finds "no refutation of the common slanders against Christianity," Brändle (*Ethik*, 26–47) argues that the author of the *Epistle* is aware of and seeks to dispel four accusations leveled against Christianity: 1) atheism; 2) its infamous "Thyestean feasts" and "Oedipal intercourse"; 3) its hatred of the world; and 4) the novelty of the faith. This observation demonstrates the importance of identity in the *Epistle*: the author seeks to undermine pagan impressions of Christianity by (re)defining the religious tradition and its adherents as faithful to a heavenly model while simultaneously attacking his opponents for their misinformed religious practices and corrupt way of life.

43. Brändle (*Ethik*, 179) notes that the Christian perspective toward the world is simultaneously characterized by superiority and obligation.

the author deploys the soul as a metonym for "Christian" and allows its philosophical accents to advance the position that while Christians may live in the realm of materiality, they have nevertheless reconfigured their existence according to a divine pattern. The author has conceptualized, then, in a rather sophisticated manner, a transformation of space into place: Christians inhabit the world, but not in a simplistic way—they are *in* rather than *of* it, living according to the dictates of heaven rather than the human practices found in the world.[44] With this assertion, the author's geographical imagination has constructed the Christian way of life as "natural," while simultaneously marginalizing the social and religious worlds of pagans and Jews as not simply misguided, but outside of the divine economy. Gauging the success of this presentation is of course difficult,[45] but this observation should not minimize the author's attempt to construct "real" social boundaries.

The "Real" Soul in Identity Formation

If the *Epistle to Diognetus* employs the soul metaphorically to distinguish Christians from pagan and Jews and to cast the former as people of God, Tatian and Tertullian investigate the nature of the "real" soul as a strategy for constructing a Christian identity and establishing social boundaries with other forms of religious belief and practice.

Tatian, Oratio ad Graecos

The *Exhortation to the Greeks*,[46] Tatian's best-known work, presents another use of soul for defining Christianity vis-à-vis its religious rivals.[47] In this address, Tatian engages in a scathing critique of Hellenistic culture in his attempt to define the identity of the "Greeks" and "Romans" and compel his audience turn to the Christian faith (11.2, 18.2, 19.1; Whittaker,

44. Brändle, *Ethik*, 167–71.

45. Hill (*From the Lost Teaching*, 165) thinks that the author failed in his efforts to convert Diognetus. Whether this exhortation had more success in fortifying the boundaries among insiders, however, is another question, yet the fact that ancient and medieval authors do not cite or allude to the text may indicate its lack of appeal for Christians. On the textual history of the *Epistle*, see Hill, *From the Lost Teaching*, 107; Marrou, *Diognète*, 5–33; Meecham, *Epistle*, 3.

46. Critical editions include Miroslav Marcovich, ed., *Tatiani Oratio ad Graecos* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995); Molly Whittaker, ed. and trans., *Tatian: Oratio ad Graecos and Fragments*, OECT (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

47. On the genre of the *Oratio*, for which no consensus exists, see Laura Nasrallah, "Mapping the World: Justin, Tatian, Lucian, and the Second Sophistic," *HTR* 98 (2005): 300 n. 75.

Tatian, 23, 37–39).[48] As in the *Epistle to Diognetus*, identity is both binary and relational: the beliefs, practices, and institutions of the Greco-Roman world represent the inverse of Christianity and the Christian life of truth, and Tatian elaborates upon the former in order to clarify the latter.

Tatian begins his attack on Greco-Roman culture by emphasizing its derivative nature, not only through its imitation of ancient religious practices such as divination, cult sacrifice, and magic, but also through its appropriation of the arts—sculpture, history, and music—from "foreigners" (1.1–2; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 1, 3). Moreover, the corruptions in the Greek language itself are so great that Tatian exclaims, "I do not know whom to call a Greek" (1.3; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 5). Despite this protestation, the rest of the address demonstrates that his construction of the "Greeks" centers on including them within the orbit of "barbarian" cultures.[49] By asserting their "hybridity," he thus deprives Greeks of the primary foil they used to distinguish themselves from "others." Yet identifying the Greeks with barbarians is only the first step in his process of identification, for this is a term he also applies to Christianity. To make the distinction between the two clearer, Tatian subsequently devalues and ridicules all aspects of Greek culture (and their Roman offshoots) as vain, empty, and irrational. The philosophers' pride in their outward appearance and (so-called) wisdom only serve to reveal their arrogance and contradictory teachings. Likewise, the tales of the Greek gods proclaim contradictory teachings, and astrological practices reflect degenerate forms of religious expression. These errors in thought manifest themselves on a practical level through the errors propounded by Greek medicine, which mistakenly places trust in material cures.[50] By following nonsense and human opinion, the Greeks "divide up wisdom" and "cut [themselves] off from true wisdom" (26.2; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 51; see also 9.4, 26.1–27.3).

This pejorative rehearsal of Greek culture provides a springboard for Tatian's construction of Christian identity, which is as positive as his view of Hellenistic civilization is negative. Indeed, he claims that Christians, who "are not fools" and do not "talk nonsense," reject the "arrogant and crazy talk" of the philosophers (3.3, 21.1–2, 22.1; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 9,

48. All citations of this text come from Whittaker's critical edition, with minor alterations (see n. 46, above). See also Michael McGehee, "Why Tatian Never 'Apologized' to the Greeks," *JECS* 1 (1993): 151–52.

49. Antonova, "Barbarians," 72–73. Also important is Tatian's argument (31, 35–40) that Christian wisdom, through its Jewish heritage, antedates the emergence of Greek culture, and thus that the latter is derivative.

50. Philosophers: 2.1–3.4, 25.1–2, 32.1; Greek myth and astrology: 8–11, cf. 14.1, 22.1–3, 24.1; Greek medicine: 17.2–18.2.

43–45). Instead, they prefer to worship the true God, proclaimed with a simplicity unknown to the Greek intellectual tradition (4.1–5.1, 19.4; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 9–11, 41). In addition, their religious practices are consistent with the correct belief in a supreme God whose work is creation but who does not pervade creation. They thus recoil at the sight of Greek religious processions and festivals, and when sick they "follow the power of the Word," eschewing Greek pharmacology for the "breastplate of heavenly spirit."[51]

Within this typology, Tatian includes a discussion of the soul to distinguish further the identities of Greeks and Christians. The created world, he asserts, is infused with a "material spirit" (πνεύματος . . . ὑλικοῦ), although some parts of the cosmos are superior to others (12.1–5; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 23–25; see also 4.2). In a similar fashion, God originally invested human beings with two kinds of "spirits" (πνευματῶν): the "soul," and that which is "greater than the soul," which he equates with the "image and likeness of God" (12.1; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 23; see also 7.1). Yet humans lost this original connection to God because of sin, which caused the soul to cast away its "wings" (i.e. its spirit), and descend into materiality. Although the soul retained a spark of the original spirit, its condition within the body led it astray, so that "in its search for God . . . [it] fashioned a multitude of gods, following the demons and their hostile devices" (7.2–3, 12.4, 13.1–2, 20.1; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 13–15, 25–27, 41).

While this description of the soul's original condition and fall echoes the account in Plato's *Phaedrus*,[52] Tatian insists that the soul is mortal, by nature "dark," and its future existence dependent upon its capacity to activate its fragmentary spirit and return to its previous "knowledge of God" (τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ θεοῦ) (13.1; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 27). Consequently, while the *psychē* that remains ignorant of God will suffer death with the body prior to the immortal punishments that come at the final judgment, the soul that knows God "gains union (συζυγίαν) with the divine spirit . . . mounts to the realms above where the spirit leads it" (13.2; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 27). For Tatian, the ignorance of the Greeks clearly places them in the category of those souls destined for everlasting punishment: their entire belief system is characterized by "old wives' tales" (γραολογία), "story telling" (λόγων), and "error" (πλάνη) rather than "an orderly exposition

51. Criticism of Greek religious festivals: 22.1–3; Christian approach to sickness: 16.3, 18.1–2.

52. Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*, trans. Michael Steinhauser, ed. Marshall D. Johnson (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 286.

of the truth" (ἀληθείας διακόσμησις) (3.2; 27.2; 29.1; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 7, 53–55). Imitating "irrational animals," they remain "psychic beings" (ψυχικοί) captivated by the demons who pervert their thoughts and prevent them from rising "aloft for the heavenly journey."[53] On the other hand, the souls of Christians, inspired by prophetic voices, renounce human opinion and activate the fragmentary spirit that remains in their soul. In the process, they strip themselves of their deception, reunite the soul with the spirit, and recover from their original "error" (πλάνη) of sin to attain a spiritual maturity (13.3, 29.2–30.1, 32.1; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 27–29, 55, 59).[54]

The boundary markers that this oration creates benefit from the concept of the soul's relation to the spirit. According to Tatian, becoming "spiritual persons" entails the rejection of everything connected with Greek culture: "[r]ecognizing you for what you are," he informs his opponents, "we have abandoned (καταλελοίπαμεν) you and cut off contact (οὐκέτι ψαύομεν) with you; we follow God's word" (26.3; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 51). The social boundaries that Tatian sets up to distinguish insiders and outsiders benefits from a further spatial argument: the ignorant ones remain connected to the world of materiality, while those who have attained knowledge become aware of their connection to the heavenly realm and consequently reject "earthly talk" (λόγου . . . ἐπιγείου) (32.1; Whittaker, *Tatian*, 59).[55] Imagining geography in this way, Tatian argues that the doctrines of Christians are "above worldly comprehension" (ἀνωτέρω τῆς κοσμικῆς καταλήψεως), and those who follow them possess the power to transcend the demonic powers

53. Irrational animals: 25.1 (ed. Whittaker, *Tatian*, 47, 49); *psychikoi*: 15.3; 16.2 (ed. Whittaker, *Tatian*, 31, 33); demonic possession and heavenly journey: 16.1 (ed. Whittaker, *Tatian*, 33). Emily J. Hunt (*Christianity in the Second Century: The Case of Tatian* [London: Routledge, 2003], 141) thinks that the spiritual elite refers to the prophets, while the *psychics* are "an ordinary class of Christians." Yet the tenor of the text does not focus on distinctions among Christians, but rather between Christians, who worship the true God and exist above Fate (cf. 9.2; 10.1; 29.2), and their Greek opponents, who worship demons and thus remain alienated from the true God and his spirit (7.3–8.1, 12.4, 20.1). For the use of *psychikos* to distinguish between Christians and non-Christians, see also Or. *Cels*. 6.71; *Comm. Rom*. 2.14.15; Meth. *Symp*. 8.6.

54. Nasrallah ("Mapping the World," 304) understands both references to "error" in 29.1–2 to refer to Tatian's fruitless experiences with the Greek philosophical tradition. Yet the passage containing the second *planē* seems to make better sense if it is connected with the idea of the soul's separation from and eventual reunion with the spirit. See also Robert M. Grant, *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1988), 128.

55. Tatian "tours" the social world of the Greeks to illustrate this point, as Nasrallah ("Mapping the World," 298–306) demonstrates.

of Fate.[56] A Christian cartography is thus not concerned with mapping the terrestrial world, as the Greeks do; rather, it focuses on the vertical axis and imagines a life lived in the heavens. With the union of spirit and soul solidified, Christians look forward to the moment when they "obtain the heavenly garment of mortality [which is] immortality . . . and race back to [their] ancient kinship" (τὴν συγγένειαν τὴν ἀρχαίαν) (20.2–3).[57]

Tertullian, De anima

If Tatian unpacks the relationship between soul and spirit to distinguish between Christians and pagans, Tertullian's *De anima*[58] engages in a forensic defense of the soul, not as a purely academic exercise along the lines of Aristotle's treatise of the same name, but in order to refute rival forms of Christianities that threaten to weaken the resolve of faithful Christians (3.3).[59] Tertullian's examination of the condition, development, and destiny of the soul[60] should thus be read within the context of his broader program of identifying and fortifying the boundaries between "orthodoxy" and "heresy."[61]

56. Christian doctrine: 12.5 (ed. Whittaker, *Tatian*, 25, 27); transcending Fate: 9.2, 10.1 (ed. Whittaker, *Tatian*, 19, 21).

57. Tatian believes that "everyone" (παντί) has this opportunity (ed. Whittaker, *Tatian*, 43).

58. For a critical text and commentary, see J. H. Waszink, *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani De Anima: Edited with Introduction and Commentary* (Amsterdam: J.M. Meulenhoff, 1947). For an English translation, see Edwin A. Quain, trans., *On the Soul*, in *Tertullian: Apologetical Works, and Minucius Felix: Octavius*, trans. Rudolph Arbesmann, Emily Joseph Daly, and Edwin A. Quain (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1950).

59. On the genre of the text as a forensic speech, see Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 111–12; Timothy David Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 206. Barnes (*Tertullian*, 44–48) and Waszink (*De Anima*, 5–6) assign the text to the early second century.

60. Tertullian had already addressed the question of the origin of the soul in his *De censu animae*, another polemical treatise (now lost) directed against Hermogenes. Tertullian references this text nine times in *De anima* (1.1, 3.4, 11.2, 21.6, 22.1, 24.2, 24.10, cf. 4, 6.3).

61. For a discussion of Tertullian's rhetorical strategies for defining orthodoxy and heresy, see Geoffrey D. Dunn, "Tertullian's Scriptural Exegesis in *de praescriptione haereticorum*," *JECS* 14 (2006): 141–55. Like Irenaeus's *Adversus haereses*, which Tertullian uses as a source (see Waszink, *De Anima*, 45–46), the *De anima* tends to classify many diverse thinkers (e.g. Menander, Apelles, Marcion, Valentinus, Carpocrates) together under the category "gnostic." As King (*What Is Gnosticism?*, *passim*) has shown, this technique enabled proto-orthodox writers to define themselves as "pure" Christians by classifying and marginalizing their opponents as syncretistic or "hybrid" thinkers. The legacy and implications of "gnosticism" as a rhetorical construction has come under scrutiny, not only in King's work, but also in Michael

In the *exordium* (chapters 1–3), the contours of the identities that Tertullian will construct begin to take shape.[62] The initial targets for his criticism in this section are the Greek philosophers, particularly Socrates and his teaching of the soul found in the *Phaedo*. This account of Socrates' last moments before death, Tertullian claims, cannot reflect an accurate understanding of the soul, because his impending death must surely have affected his judgment "to think calmly of anything but what would console him in his misfortune" (1.2; Waszink, *De anima*, 1–2; Quain, *Tertullian*, 180). What better consolation is there, Tertullian wonders, than for a philosopher to rob his opponents of victory by arguing for the immortality of the soul? Not only does this strategy show contempt for their judgment, but it also brings glory to Socrates by overcoming the unjust actions of Anytus and Melitus (1.2–3; Waszink, *De anima*, 1–2; Quain, *Tertullian*, 180). Yet these motivations, inspired as they were by Socrates' *daimon*, do not lead him to knowledge of the "solemn truth" (*veritatis*), but only to a temporary state of equanimity (1.4; Waszink, *De anima*, 2; Quain, *Tertullian*, 180).

Having questioned the intellectual foundations for later philosophical teachings on the soul, Tertullian next implicates the philosophical method for the inconsistencies that appear among the philosophical schools: through its sophistry, philosophical dialectic "makes incertainties out of certainties . . . grant[ing] nothing to divine power and treat[ing] its own private interests as if they were laws of nature" (2.2; Waszink, *De anima*, 3; Quain, *Tertullian*, 182). As a result, the doctrines of the philosophers are rarely in agreement with one another, let alone divine truth (2.1, 3–4; Waszink, *De anima*, 3; Quain, *Tertullian*, 182–83). In contrast, however, to the confusion found among the philosophers, "[t]he wisdom of the school of Heaven" provides Christianity with a simple and unchangeable source for divine truth. In place of Socrates' *daimon* are God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, who destroy the old gods and lead the Christian to truth (1.4; Waszink, *De anima*, 2; Quain, *Tertullian*, 180). Moreover, while the wisdom of the Greeks only succeeded in corrupting the youth, the teachings of Christianity train people in "goodness and purity" (1.6; Waszink, *De anima*, 2; Quain, *Tertullian*, 181). For Tertullian, then, any study of the

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A. Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996). This paper only uses the term gnostic when describing Tertullian's conception of his opponents, and notes relevant parallels with Irenaeus to broaden the view of the proto-orthodox critique.

62. The following observations are indebted to Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 101–11.

soul must recognize that pagan wisdom is hopelessly corrupt, for appeals to human knowledge will inevitably lead to error. The only hope is to seek answers that are "in accordance with the teachings of God" (1.6; Waszink, *De anima*, 2; Quain, *Tertullian*, 181).[63]

The philosopher-Christian binary that Tertullian introduces in this introductory section frames the construction of true and false Christians. Indeed, as the treatise progresses, it becomes clear that this initial critique of philosophy is essential for Tertullian because of his contention that these traditions inspired heretical thought. Despite the fact that heresies clothe themselves in Christian vocabulary, the substance of their ideas, he asserts, nevertheless stems from the philosophers, those "patriarchs of the heretics" (*patriachis . . . haereticorum*) (3.1, 3.3; Waszink, *De anima*, 4–5; Quain, *Tertullian*, 185–86). By striking at the root of error, Tertullian intends to destroy its corrupt branches, the mistaken theologies found among his opponents (3.1, 18.1, 18.4, 23.5–6, 24.12; Waszink, *De anima*, 4, 24, 31–32, 34; Quain, *Tertullian*, 185, 218–20, 232, 236).[64] Conversely, the genealogical relationship between God, the only source of truth, and Christians establishes Christianity's divine pedigree. By following God's word found in the Scriptures, he assures his readers that they will find protection from the poisons disseminated by the heretics.[65] Although Tertullian recognizes that relying on scriptural authority alone may occasionally mean that some questions remain unanswerable, he insists that not knowing is always better than following incorrect teachings: "[i]f we are ignorant (*ignorare*), let us be content. It is safer and better to be ignorant (*nescire*), if God has not revealed (*revelaverit*) it, than to know (*scire*) something which human presumption has discovered" (1.6; Waszink, *De anima*, 3; Quain, *Tertullian*, 181–82). With this statement, Tertullian taps into a well-worn Christian argument, namely, that the wisdom of the simple person who displays faith in God is superior to that of the philosopher-heretic.[66] By formulating the categories "heretic" and "Christian" in this fashion, Tertullian seals off Christianity from the cumulative body of Greek learning. In addition, he positions himself as an authority who possesses a knowledge his opponents lack in order to erect

63. On the rule of faith in Tertullian, see Dunn, "Scriptural Exegesis," 147–48.

64. See also *Praescr.* 7; *Marc.* 1.13; *Herm.* 8.

65. Tertullian appeals to the authoritative nature of scripture in 1.6, 2.5, 2.7, 21.5, 26.1, 50.5.

66. Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 105, 126. On this rhetorical position as a feature of early Christian discourse, see Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*, 27–28, 33–37, 85, 95, 111–12.

impermeable walls between real Christians and his heretical opponents: Athens and Jerusalem are on separate tracks that can never meet.[67]

With this framework established, Tertullian turns to his analysis of the soul. Recalling a position adopted in *De censu animae*, Tertullian begins by affirming that the soul originates "from the breath of God," and thus is a created essence (4; Waszink, *De anima*, 5; Quain, *Tertullian*, 187).[68] He then explores its compositional nature. This discussion starts with the demonstration of the corporeality of the soul, an argument directed at the Platonic (and apparently heretical) notion of incorporeality (5–9; Waszink, *De anima*, 6–11; Quain, *Tertullian*, 187–99).[69] Thereafter, he turns to four interrelated issues that coalesce around his main proposition that the *anima* is "simple" (*simplicem*) and "uncompounded" (*uniformen*):[70] the soul's relationship to the 1) "spirit" (*spiritus*) and 2) "mind" (*animus*); 3) the value of the senses; and 4) the connection between the intellect and the body.

Tertullian addresses the first problem, the soul's relationship to spirit, because "some" had argued that the two were distinct entities. To refute this claim, he conflates, in a rather tortured way, the terms *spiritus* and "breath" (*afflatus*) in order to state that the soul and spirit are the same.[71] Because breathing and respiration (*spirare*) are signs of life, and both fall under the operations of the soul, the two must be the same (10.2–9; Waszink, *De anima*, 12–14; Quain, *Tertullian*, 199–202). It is no more possible that the two could be separated from the soul than there could be a union of life and death: "the soul is the breath (*ipsa erit anima spiritus*). . . . [For] there is no difference between a being and that by which it is a being" (10.9; Waszink, *De anima*, 14; Quain, *Tertullian*, 202). If the soul is a spirit, when spirit is understood as God's breath, it does not possess an additional spiritual element from its origins, as some heretics propose when they maintain that Sophia gave humanity a "spiritual seed" (*spiritale semen*) without God's knowledge. Rather, the spirit (whether divine or demonic) enters into humans later, when God chooses to impart this

67. The irony of this position, of course, is that Tertullian advances his arguments by borrowing ideas from Greco-Roman philosophy, especially Soranus's *De anima*. See Waszink, *De Anima*, 22–47. He also can accept and reject the same philosophical position, as Nasrallah (*Ecstasy of Folly*, 117) observes.

68. This point is important in order to protect the transcendence of God.

69. Tertullian advances this position through a combination of Stoic philosophy (5–6), scriptural proof (7.1–3, 9.4, 9.8), and anecdotal evidence (8.4–5, 9.4–7).

70. Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 116–17.

71. This argument represents an exegetical interpretation of Gen 2.7. See also Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 131–32.

special gift. It is thus not an original part of the soul but an *accidens*, an argument that Tertullian supplements with an appeal to Paul's belief that the "natural" (*animale*) precedes the "spiritual" (*spiritale*) (11.3, 21.2–3; Waszink, *De anima*, 15, 29–30; Quain, *Tertullian*, 203–4, 228; cf. 1 Cor 15.46).

Similarly, Tertullian uncovers difficulties with the claim that the soul and mind are two different substances. Derived from Aristotle,[72] this position argued that the different natures of the two substances made it impossible for them to unite. Yet Tertullian observes that the soul apprehends its emotions through the mind, so that the mind must be the faculty of the soul that affects its capacity to know, feel, and move (12.3; Waszink, *De anima*, 16; Quain, *Tertullian*, 205–6). He thus concludes that the mind is a "faculty which is inherent and implanted in the soul and proper to it by birth (*ingenitum et insitum et nativitus proprium*) and by which the soul acts and gains knowledge" (12.1; Waszink, *De anima*, 16; Quain, *Tertullian*, 205). Moreover, the soul's superiority to mind finds confirmation in the Scriptures. Not only does one discover there that the soul, not mind, appears as a synecdoche for "human being," but God repeatedly speaks to human souls, which activate minds to turn toward him (13.1–3; Waszink, *De anima*, 17; Quain, *Tertullian*, 207; see also 15.4–5).

The following two issues, the reliability of sense impressions and the relationship between intellect and body, build upon these assessments. According to Tertullian, the Platonic tradition, which identifies the intellect rather than the senses as the vehicle for apprehending true knowledge, devalues the senses as the source of intellectual deception. Tertullian, on the other hand, rehabilitates the role of sense impressions by stating that they originate in the soul, and that any intellectual errors that occur are the result of various intermediary causes (e.g., water, air) rather than the defective nature of the senses themselves (17.5–10; Waszink, *De anima*, 22–23; Quain, *Tertullian*, 215–17). He further preserves the reliability of the senses by dismantling the Platonic notion that the intellect perceives truth without the assistance of the body. On the contrary, based upon the nature of the objects perceived, the soul may receive either corporeal knowledge (from the body) or spiritual knowledge (from the mind) (18.6–9; Waszink, *De anima*, 25–26; Quain, *Tertullian*, 220–21).[73] While the latter may reflect a deeper sort of understanding, it is, like corporeal knowledge, a function of the soul. Consequently, Tertullian denies the

72. See Waszink, *De Anima*, 201.
73. See Waszink, *De Anima*, 261–65.

intellect an *a priori* superiority over or independence from the senses (18.13; Waszink, *De anima*, 26; Quain, *Tertullian*, 223).

Arcane as they are, these four issues are the necessary foundation upon which Tertullian builds his attack against his opponents' theologies. It is thus not simply their psychological theory he disputes, but rather the implications that these psychologies have for broader questions within the fields of physics, logic, and ethics.[74] Within the field of cosmology, Tertullian's argument that the soul ascertains knowledge from sensory impressions validates the material realm and saves it from the denigration it suffers at the hands of his "gnostic and Valentinian" opponents. The psychology of the unified soul thus renders indefensible the division between *sensus* and *intellectuales*, "the source of all their heretical ideas and their aeons and genealogies" (18.4–5; Waszink, *De anima*, 24–25; Quain, *Tertullian*, 219–20).

Tertullian also recognizes the implications that his understanding of soul has for epistemology. Because the soul possesses the capacity to attain knowledge through both its intellectual faculties (spirit and mind) and the sense impressions, the events of the world must be affirmed as real. To state otherwise would call into question the seminal events in Jesus' story, and indeed the reality of Jesus himself (17.13–14; Waszink, *De anima*, 23–24; Quain, *Tertullian*, 218).[75] The foundations of Christian teaching thus require that the world exists as a source of accurate knowledge. A unified soul stemming from the "breath of God" also dismantles two prominent features of Valentinianism (at least as he presents them): the myth of Sophia, who imparted a spiritual element into humanity without God's knowledge, and the division of humanity into superior and inferior classes based upon their reception of this higher faculty of spirit (11.3, 21.4; Waszink, *De anima*, 15, 30; Quain, *Tertullian*, 203–4, 228–29).[76] For Tertullian, the soul's unity means that Adam, and by extension all

74. Any comprehensive philosophical system in the Hellenistic world had to develop a coherent explanation of physics (under which was classified psychology), logic, and ethics. All three were interrelated. See, for instance, John Dillon, trans., *Alcinous: The Handbook of Platonism*, Clarendon Later Ancient Philosophers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

75. The unreliability of the sensory world would cause Christians to doubt, for instance, that Christ witnessed Satan fall from heaven or heard God testify to him. It would also lead to an acceptance of Marcion's docetic Christology. On the negative influence that Marcion's docetism has on the doctrine of the resurrection and individual salvation, see *Marc*. 3.8.

76. See also *Val*. 29.1–3. This is admittedly a caricature of Valentinian Gnosticism, found also in Iren. *haer*. 1.6.1–4, 2.19.7.

humanity, is a combination of body and soul alone, by nature "psychic" (21.1–3; Waszink, *De anima*, 29–30; Quain, *Tertullian*, 228).[77] Whatever differences arise among humans cannot, therefore, stem from ontological distinctions inherent in the *anima*, but must be the product of later human experiences (21.4; Waszink, *De anima*, 30; Quain, *Tertullian*, 228–29).

These arguments also deal a blow to the ethical teachings that Tertullian feels emerge from heretical psychologies. Specifically, because the unified soul is the source of knowledge and uses this information to move the body, it is responsible for its actions (6.3; Waszink, *De anima*, 7; Quain, *Tertullian*, 190). No one can therefore claim immunity from adhering to basic ethical modes of conduct. Yet the heretical denigration of materiality and its tripartite classification of humanity threaten nothing less than the moral order of human existence itself. As he exclaims,

> Do you not see that your assertions would destroy the normal conduct of human life and the very order of nature? . . . Is not all life dependent upon the senses? Are not our senses the second source of knowledge with which we are endowed? Whence, do you think, come the various arts, the ingenious developments in business, politics, commerce, medicine? Whence the technique of prudent advice and consolation, the resources that have made progress in all phases of human life and culture? Without his senses, human life would be deprived of all joy and satisfaction, the only rational being in creation would thus be incapable of intelligence or learning. (17.11; Waszink, *De anima*, 23; Quain, *Tertullian*, 217)[78]

Without a proper understanding of the soul, Tertullian imagines an ethical chaos akin to Hobbes's barbaric "state of nature."[79]

In addition to these practical problems, Tertullian warns that non-Christian teachings on the soul lead to other doctrinal errors. For example, heretics who believe in the uncreated nature of the soul fall victim to a Greek philosophical reflection known as the journey of the soul, which contends that the spark of life that inhabits the body is divine and superior to the daimonic powers of the world, and that humans realize this when they "remember" their divine origins (23–24; Waszink, *De anima*, 31–34; Quain, *Tertullian*, 231–36).[80] Tertullian's critique of *anamnēsis*, however, leads him to the conclusion that the entire body of teachings

77. See also Iren. *haer.* 5.12.2.

78. Tertullian directs this statement against the Academics, but his belief that philosophy is the forerunner of heresy makes this equally serve as a polemic against his opponents. See, for instance, *Val.* 30.

79. For further description of the inappropriate lifestyles of the gnostics, see also *Praescr.* 41; Iren. *haer.* 1.6.3–4, 2.14.5, 32.2.

80. See also Iren. *haer.* 1.24.1, 5.19.2.

connected to the journey of the soul—the soul's uncreatedness, its origins in the heavens, its descent into the body, and its subsequent recollection of its original condition—collapses upon itself (24.12; Waszink, *De anima*, 34; Quain, *Tertullian*, 236).

The related theory of transmigration also comes under extended criticism (28–33; Waszink, *De anima*, 39–49; Quain, *Tertullian*, 245–60), for Tertullian detects traces of it in the story of Simon Magus and Helen, the teachings of Carpocrates, and in the gnostic exegesis of New Testament passages such as the return of Elijah (34–35; Waszink, *De anima*, 49–52; Quain, *Tertullian*, 260–65).[81] To counter these fantastic arguments, Tertullian insists that humans do in fact die (once), and that at death all souls descend to the underworld, where they receive rewards or punishments until the time of the resurrection and final judgment (58.1–4, 8; Waszink, *De anima*, 78–80; Quain, *Tertullian*, 307–9).[82] In this scheme, various heretical beliefs and practices are summarily dismissed: for example, Menander's claim that he and his disciples will escape death, the contention that souls do not descend to the underworld because Christ's descent made this unnecessary, and the necromancy of Simon Magus and his followers (50.2, 55.3, 57.6–12; Waszink, *De anima*, 67–68, 73–74, 77–78; Quain, *Tertullian*, 289, 298–99, 304–6).

In his recapitulation and rejection of the philosophical and heretical views of the soul, Tertullian seeks to assert the Christian view in order to insulate his audience from ideas that would lead them astray from the true faith.[83] The *De anima* is thus not a dispassionate reflection on the soul, but a text written within the context of conflict and controversy. As such, it may be read as an attempt to establish a Christian identity and circumscribe boundaries around an "orthodox" community by identifying "others" whose alternate views of the soul signify "difference." At the same time, when Tertullian remarks that "approved doctrines . . . demand the existence of heresies," he acknowledges the dialectical relationship between identity and difference that contemporary theorists have advanced (3.1; Waszink, *De anima*, 4; Quain, *Tertullian*, 185).[84] The soul thus acts as a

81. For another critique of Carpocrates' views of transmigration, see Iren. *haer.* 1.25.4.

82. The only exceptions to this rule are the martyrs, whose souls immediately ascend to paradise after death (55.5).

83. Irenaeus (*haer.* 5.prol.) also believes that his work can be used to "bring back wanderers and convert them to the church of God" ([ed. and trans. Adelin Rousseau, *Irénée de Lyon: Contra les hérésies*, SC 153 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1965], 13).

84. Heresies must exist for Tertullian because they were announced in the New Testament (*Praescr.* 1, 4, 30).

symbol of identity to illustrate distinctions with heretics and to fortify the walls of separation between "true" and "false" Christians.

At an anthropological level, then, Tertullian seeks to explicate the nature of the "real" soul and its function within the human being. Yet these conclusions also have implications for the social body, for a "correct" understanding of the soul will intersect with a proper worldview (i.e. cosmology) and way of life (i.e. ethics). In this way, Tertullian places his treatment of the soul neatly within a larger framework of commitments that the true Christian must affirm for inclusion into his imagined community: for example, a trust in God, the authority of scripture, the establishment of tradition and the transmission of authoritative teachings, and the rule of faith.[85]

With these rhetorical moves, Tertullian enters into a contest over power and knowledge, in relation to both insiders and outsiders. For Tertullian's audience, circumscribing boundaries according to these criteria places a heavy demand on individual examination, and ensures that identity is never really secure, for the pervasiveness of "foolish and idle speculations" requires Christians to remain anxious about their fate until the final judgment, which they await with fearful anticipation (33.11, 58.9; Waszink, *De anima*, 49, 80; Quain, *Tertullian*, 260, 309). It also, however, represents an attempt to name those who do not deserve inclusion into the Christian fold. Indeed, heretics become non-Christians because of their decision to find inspiration in the Greek philosophical schools and individual "choice" (*hairesis*) rather than in the authority that stems from the teachings of Christ.[86] Faced with the "vagaries of human opinion" found among the philosophers and heretics, Tertullian opts to nestle himself (and Christianity) securely within the boundaries established in the uniformity and truth of Scripture (26.1; Waszink, *De anima*, 37; Quain, *Tertullian*, 240–41).[87]

85. Trust in God: 1.6–7 (see also Iren. *haer*. 2.28.2); authority of scripture: 1.7, 3.3, 9.3, 15.3, 21.5, 26.1 (see also Iren. *haer*. 2.28.3); tradition and transmission of authoritative teachings: *Praescr*. 6 (see also Iren. *haer*. 3.prol., 1.1, 3.1–2, 4.1–2, 4.26.1–2); rule of faith: *Praescr*. 13–14, 19 (see also Iren. *haer*. 1.9.4, 1.22.1–2, 4.35.4).

86. For example, *Praescr*. 37. See also Irenaeus, who places gnostics outside of the divine economy (*haer*. 3.16.8, 5.2.2, 13.2, 14.2, 19.2).

87. See also Irenaeus (*haer*. 4.33.8), whose revaluation of "*gnōsis*" according to "orthodox" principles includes the affirmation of the scriptures as a "complete collection allowing for neither addition nor subtraction" and an interpretation of the scriptures that is "legitimate, careful, without danger or blasphemy" (trans. Rousseau, *Irénée de Lyon*, 821).

PSYCHIKOS IN INTRA-CHRISTIAN DEBATES ON IDENTITY

When Tatian referred to his Greek opponents as *psychikoi*, in contrast to spirit-filled Christians, and Tertullian argued against the Valentinian tripartite anthropology (i.e., pneumatics, psychics, and hylics), they echoed and expanded upon earlier writers who had recognized the value of psychological vocabulary for engaging the problem of Christian self-definition. Indeed, equating *pneumatikoi*, *psychikoi*, *sarkikoi*, and other anthropological terminology with specific kinds of people or groups emerged as a linguistic innovation in the early Christian "social dialect."[88] Whether employed to characterize Greeks, as in Tatian, or, as was more often the case, to describe and marginalize different types of Christians, the appropriation of such terms are examples of power-laden language at work in the formation of Christian identities and the establishment of their geographic "place" in the world.

Approximately one hundred years before Tatian, the Christians in Corinth were the first to appropriate *pneumatikos-psychikos* terminology as a means for exploring the issue of identity. The background for this speculation derives from their exegesis of the creation of humanity as described in Gen 1.26–27 and 2.7.[89] Based on Paul's argumentation in 1 Cor 15.44–49, it appears that the Corinthian elites[90] imagined two creations that produced two categories of humans, the spiritual person possessing the "image of God," and physical individual molded from the dust of the

88. John M. G. Barclay, "Πνευματικός in the Social Dialect of Pauline Christianity," in *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins: Essays in Honor of James D. G. Dunn*, ed. Graham N. Stanton, Bruce W. Longenecker, and Stephen C. Barton (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 162. See also Richard A. Horsley, "Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos: Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians," *HTR* 69 (1976): 269–88.

89. Gregory E. Sterling, "'Wisdom Among the Perfect': Creation Traditions in Alexandrian Judaism and Corinthian Christianity," *NT* 37 (1995): 355–84. Sterling's analysis places the Corinthians' interpretation of Gen 2.7 within broader patterns of exegesis found within Hellenistic Judaism. See also Horsley, "Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos," 280; Birger A. Pearson, *Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians: A Study of the Theology of the Corinthian Opponents of Paul and Its Relation to Gnosticism*, SBLDS 12 (Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973), 17–26, 51–81.

90. For treatment of class distinctions in Corinth, see Robert S. Dutch, *The Educated Elite in 1 Corinthians: Education and Community Conflict in Graeco-Roman Context*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 27 (New York: T&T Clark International, 2005); Dale B. Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 126–29.

ground. The Corinthians then applied this anthropological assertion to their understanding of the different levels of Christian perfection. Drawing again on Paul's vocabulary and pattern of argumentation in 1 Cor 2.6–3.4, the elites made a distinction between themselves, the "spiritual" (*pneumatikoi*) or "strong" Christians, and their less enlightened, "natural" (*psychikoi*) or "weak" neighbors (1 Cor 2.13–14). At the heart of this distinction was the strong's claim to have access to the "wisdom" (σοφία) of God unavailable to the rest of the members of the community (1 Cor 2.6–7, 2.10–12). As a result, they imagined themselves as "perfect" (τέλειοι), so spiritually "rich" that they lived like "kings" (1 Cor 2.6, 4.8).

The contours of community life become clearer when the Corinthians applied this theological position to the rhythms of community life. In practical terms, the differences in status emerged through baptism and revealed themselves most prominently through their expression of spiritual gifts.[91] Specifically, the elite's rhetoric of spiritual superiority—that they possessed a "knowledge" (γνῶσις) through their perception of the "mysteries" and "the depths of God" (τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ)—became especially apparent through their insistence on giving a pre-eminent place to prophecy and glossolalia. The practice of both these charismata served to confirm, in their minds, their position as *pneumatikoi*, as individuals created in God's image.[92]

While the strong Corinthians may have imagined themselves as models for their less advanced brethren, Paul identifies their theology as the source of division within the community and seeks to repair the damage by reformulating the *pneumatikos-psychikos* distinction. In contrast to the Corinthians' categorization of spirituals and naturals, Paul asserts that the psychic state is the fundamental condition of all humanity. An "upgrade" to the pneumatic elite occurs only after receiving God's true wisdom. Seen from this perspective, the Corinthians are clearly not spirituals, and yet neither does Paul concede to them the category of psychics. Instead, he asserts that these so-called elites remain mired in the lowest

91. For a discussion of the Corinthian practice of the *pneumatika*, see Antoinette Clark Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets: A Reconstruction Through Paul's Rhetoric* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 135–58.

92. Sterling ("'Wisdom Among the Perfect,'" 378) notes that Paul discussion of the image of God in 1 Cor 11.7 excludes "women" (γυνή). John Painter ("Paul and the Πνευματικοί at Corinth," in *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C. K. Barrett*, ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson [London: SPCK, 1982], 242–45) sees the Corinthians' elitist attitude toward glossolalia behind 1 Cor 12–14, particularly 14.2 and 14.20–25. On the prestige accorded to glossolalia in Corinth, see Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 87–92.

level of spirituality: they are "infants" (νηπίοι) and "people of the flesh" (σαρκινοί/σαρκικοί) who were ill-prepared for the true mysteries of God when he first encountered them (1 Cor 3.1–3), and whose various behaviors since he departed—illicit sexual relationships, disputes over eating meat, problems arising at communal meals, improper use of charismatic gifts, and an incorrect understanding of the resurrection—all demonstrate an arrogance bred from a fundamental misunderstanding of wisdom, knowledge, and the spirit.

For both the Corinthian elites and Paul, the controversy was a debate over identity and authority. To think through these problems, the Corinthians appear to have introduced *pneumatikos-psychikos* terminology into their lexicon as terms whose elasticity allowed them to reflect upon both their anthropological and eschatological condition.[93] As those who basked in the image of God, these elites saw themselves as different from those "others" who were "born out of the dust." At the same time, they appear to have connected their anthropological status to their understanding of their spiritual perfectionism, that is, the belief that they had already attained salvation. In this way, then, the categories "spiritual" and "unspiritual" elide from ontology to eschatology in a circular manner, with each category simultaneously proving and reinforcing the other.

Adopting their language, Paul deploys a series of shrewd rhetorical moves in an attempt to reinscribe the community's boundaries around his personal authority.[94] Through a series of binary formulations, the apostle delineates those who are inside and outside the economy of God. The former accept God's wisdom and acknowledge the kerygma as the power of God, which moves them toward salvation. By contrast, the latter base their hopes on human wisdom manifested through ecstatic speech, reject the proclamation of Christ as foolishness, and, consequently, are in the

93. As Barclay ("Πνευματικός," 166) contends, "the use of this linguistic apparatus creates conceptual categorizations which serve to *constitute* the worldview of Pauline Christians." For Sterling ("'Wisdom Among the Perfect,'" 372), the Corinthians understood *pneumatikos* as an ontological term. For Barclay ("Πνευματικός," 161), on the other hand, it originally bore an eschatological meaning. My reading attempts to demonstrate that the Corinthians probably saw no sharp divisions between the two categories, so that *pneumatikos* (and *psychikos*) could act as a bridge connecting views of self (ontology) with views of spiritual status (eschatology). This need not mean, of course, that the Corinthians had developed a deterministic understanding of the human condition, or that they were "gnostics" (or "proto-gnostics").

94. The following observations draw on Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 70–94; Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse on Power* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 97–115.

process of self-destruction. The effect of this argument is to undercut the epistemological claims the Corinthians advanced by virtue of their *pneumatika* and to elevate Paul's own status as the only true spiritual, a figure of power whom the Corinthians must imitate in order to attain a proper understanding of God.[95]

The use of *pneumatikos-psychikos* language to capture the nature of individual and communal identity and to summarize competing claims to knowledge and power appear for the first time in Corinth. Yet later authors recognizing the value of this terminology for reflecting upon social boundaries and authority eagerly incorporated it into their discussions about Christians. Stripped from its Corinthian context, *pneumatikos* and *psychikos* could function to describe virtually any individual or group behavior marked out for praise or blame. As such, they become valuable conceptual tools for thinking through the perennial problem of identity and difference.

Within the New Testament, the letters of James and Jude both demonstrate how classifying certain people as unspiritual could clarify the boundaries of their communities. The primary purpose of James is to offer moral instructions for the attainment of true wisdom, which leads to the perfect and good life (1.4–5, 3.2, 3.13). The author therefore employs protreptic discourse to encourage his audience to display a consistency between their beliefs and actions: to become "doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves" (1.22).[96] To this end, he exhorts his community to ensure that their faith manifests itself through deeds: "[s]how by your good life," the author pleads, "that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom" (3.13). Thus humility, the main vehicle for attaining salvation, must be actualized through works such as charity and service to others. As a result, James advocates generous acts of giving, which have their origins in the Father and thus "come down from above" (ἄνωθέν ἐστιν καταβαῖνον), a dissolution of status markers between rich

95. See, for instance, Paul's persistent devaluation of glossolalia in 1 Cor 12.8–10, 12.28, 14.5 (in contrast to his own practice of tongues, 1 Cor 14.18). Paul also makes himself an object of imitation in 1 Cor 4.16, 11.1, effectively placing himself in a hierarchy between the Corinthians and Christ.

96. Numerous problems in James remain disputed (e.g. authorship, provenance, date, relationship to Paul, etc). Yet Luke Timothy Johnson (*Brother of Jesus, Friend of God: Studies in the Letter of James* [Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004], 43), lists the protreptic quality of the letter as one of the issues that has garnered a scholarly consensus. On the genre of James, see also Patrick J. Hartin, *James*, Sacra Pagina 14 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003), 10–16.

and poor, and, in general, a spirit of community concord that rejects the temptations of the world.[97]

To drive home this point, James unpacks the nature of two different forms of wisdom and the divergent attitudes they produce. On the one hand, true wisdom is "from above" and bears divine-like qualities: it is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy" (3.17). Acquiring this wisdom, the author contends, will lead to virtue and place the individual in friendship with God. On the other hand, the type of wisdom that "does not come down from above," is "earthly" (ἐπίγειος), "unspiritual" (ψυχική), and "devilish" (δαιμονιώδης), causing people to display "bitter envy and selfish ambition" so that they become "boastful and false to the truth" (3.14–15). Not surprisingly, such individuals do not promote community concord but instead foster "disorder and wickedness of every kind" (3.16).

Although this section provides a fairly generic description of two different categories of people, its vocabulary, when linked with other passages in the letter, provides some suggestive clues for assessing the author's rhetoric of identity.[98] An initial clue derives from the author's decision to link those who possess the defective brand of wisdom with "disorder" (ἀκαταστασία). Elsewhere, this quality describes the person who doubts God's power to provide wisdom: this one, the author states, should not expect any divine favors because he is "double-minded (δίψυχος) and unstable (ἀκατάστατος) in every way" (1.8). Consistent with his belief that one's inner disposition produces like actions, James links his opponents' spiritual wavering with communal dissention. This hypothesis receives added force through James's use of "selfish ambition" (ἐριθεία) and "impartiality" (ἀδιάκριτος). James connects bitter envy with *eritheia*, a trait traditionally attributed to political leaders responsible for factionalism or strife.[99] These qualities, so James contends, are the source of the "conflicts and disputes" that threaten the peace of the community. In practical terms, this dissention arises when such figures refuse to act with impartiality. To be impartial, in James's mind, is to treat all members of the community equally. It is this quality, however, that his status-conscious opponents lack, for during worship services they

97. Humility: 1.21, 4.6–7, 4.10; charity: 1.17; rich and poor: 2.7–9, 4.13–5.6; temptations of the world: 4.1–4.

98. For more on the following observations, see William F. Brosend II, *James and Jude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 102. For rhetorical analyses of 3.13–4.10, see Johnson, *Brother of Jesus*, 182–201; Hartin, *James*, 203–17.

99. Martin Dibelius, *James: A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, trans. Michael A. Williams (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1976), 209–10.

give seats of honor to the rich and marginalize the poor: in response, the author asks, "have you not made distinctions (οὐ διεκρίθητε) among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?" (2.4; cf. 4.11–12, 5.9).[100] Through these actions, these divisive figures remain, in James's symbolic world, friends with the world rather than God.

As in Corinth, where the community and apostle argued over wisdom, knowledge, and the nature of the Christian life, so to in James do epistemological and ethical issues lie at the heart of the debate over self-definition. Paul and James share a general concern for members of the community who cause division, and they address this problem through a discussion of wisdom. Yet in James, the spatial emphasis receives more extensive treatment than found in 1 Corinthians. True wisdom comes from above, the world of God, while human wisdom and those who, by extension, adhere to it, are not just earthly and unspiritual, but also devilish. James's articulation of identity thus involves the identification and demonization of an "other" who can stake no claim to knowledge, remains alienated from God, and by consequence, is impotent. By circumscribing the community boundaries in this fashion, James makes a clear dividing line between people who line up on God's side and those who ally with the demonic, and contends that the former have become participants in a reconfigured social world where generosity is the sign of the divine presence in the community, equality replaces favoritism, and the wisdom implanted in the soul has a salvific power. In effect, James imagines a community that has abandoned the worldly conventions (the "cycle of nature") for a proleptic taste of paradise.

If James characterizes those outside the communal boundaries as possessing a "psychic" wisdom, Jude, echoing the argumentation found among the Corinthians,[101] refers to his opponents as *psychikoi* in an attempt to clarify the nature of the true community of believers.[102] As with previous

100. For a discussion of the relevance of the honor/shame model for 2.1–13, see Hartin, *James*, 140–48.

101. Commentators have speculated that Jude's opponents display an affinity for the antinomian theologies Paul combated. See Donald P. Senior and Daniel J. Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter*, Sacra Pagina 15 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2003), 181–82 (Harrington is responsible for the commentary on James); Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary 50 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 12.

102. Although it is clear that the author writes the letter to urge his audience to remain steadfast in the faith (v. 3), issues such as authorship and dating remain unresolved. For treatments of these issues, see Senior and Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude*, 175–83; Bauckham, *Jude*, 3–17.

authors, Jude develops a series of binary oppositions to distinguish outsiders from insiders: the opponents are "intruders" (παρεισέδυσαν . . . τινες ἄνθρωποι), "ungodly" people who have strayed from the divine, while the true community represents the elect who are on the side of God and Jesus (vv. 1, 4).[103]

The Opponents	*True Community*
the ungodly	those who are called
pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness	beloved in God the Father
deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ	kept for Jesus Christ

The polemic heats up as the letter progresses, with Jude maligning his opponents with various slanders. He begins by chiding them for their confidence in ecstatic prophecy, and claims that they "defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the glorious ones" (i.e. angels) (v. 8).[104] At the same time, "these people" are guilty of a variety of other mistakes: they slander whatever they do not understand (a characteristic that will ultimately lead to their demise), display gratuitous self-interest during *agapē* meals, speak in a bombastic style, indulge their lusts, and, ultimately, cause divisions within the true community (vv. 10, 12, 16, 19). At the end of the letter, Jude makes explicit that these beliefs and practices are at odds with the perspectives and activities of his "beloved" community (vv. 20–23). The result is a further explication of perverse and legitimate representations of Christian identity.[105]

"These" Opponents	*The "Beloved"*
cause divisions	build themselves up on holy faith
grumble and are bombastic in speech	pray in the Holy Spirit
indulge their own lusts	keep themselves in the love of God
are destroyed and will perish	look forward to mercy leading to eternal life
show partiality and flatter others for their own gain	have mercy on those who are wavering

103. Brosend (*James and Jude*, 170–71) has also noticed the tripartite structure that Jude uses to compare the status of its opponents and its community.

104. On the relationship between "dreaming" and prophecy, see Andrew Chester and Ralph P. Martin, *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 69; Bauckham, *Jude*, 55–56.

105. See Brosend, *James and Jude*, 181.

The vocabulary Jude uses to sketch his opponents illustrates that his primary concern was to shore up the boundaries of his community by demonizing these "others."[106] The reference to the opponents as "intruders" sets the tone for the rest of the letter, connoting as it does a group known for its secrecy and "heretical" teachings.[107] The problem of these "outsiders" becomes especially acute because of their success in "causing divisions" (ἀποδιορίζοντες) or factions based upon their self-professed spiritual prowess (v. 19).[108] Moreover, the fact that they operate within the boundaries of the community through their participation in the *agapē* meal makes their existence particularly insidious. To combat this situation, Jude positions these people as sectarians who belong outside of the walls of the community because they do not adhere to the teachings found within the apostolic tradition. As a result, they cannot claim a pneumatic status, for their deviant beliefs and behaviors demonstrate that they are "ungodly" (ἀσεβεῖς). Furthermore, their alienation from God means they are "devoid of the Spirit" (πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες), and perhaps even individuals whose spiritual status most closely resembles that of the flesh (vv. 19–23).[109] By arguing in this fashion, Jude too seeks to carve out space for its community by shaping the boundaries of the authentic form of Christianity.

The first-century trend of experimenting with *pneumatikos* and *psychikos* in Christian self-definition gained momentum in subsequent centuries. In particular, texts from Nag Hammadi show a willingness to incorporate these terms into their mythological dramas as a way of making sense of their audiences' relationships with others. The Sethian *Hypostasis of*

106. For analyses of Jude's opponents, see Senior and Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude*, 180–82; Chester and Martin, *Theology*, 68–75; Duane Frederick Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style: Rhetorical Criticism of Jude and 2 Peter*, SBLDS 104 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988), 29–30, 43–48, 54–55, 61, 66; Bauckham, *Jude*, 11–13. Watson (*Invention, Arrangement*, 79) concludes that Jude combines deliberative and epideictic rhetoric designed to persuade the community to remain faithful to the truth. See also Stephan Joubert, "Persuasion in the Letter of Jude," *JSNT* 58 (1995): 75–87.

107. See Watson, *Invention, Arrangement*, 46 n. 121; Bauckham, *Jude*, 35.

108. Some have supposed that this information, along with references to the opponents' licentiousness and the reference to *pneuma* and *psychikoi*, indicate that Jude polemicizes against gnostics. This is a problematic assumption, not least because of the difficulty contemporary scholars have had identifying such a group. For a critique of the gnostic thesis, see Michel Desjardins, "The Portrayal of the Dissidents in 2 Peter and Jude: Does It Tell Us More About the 'Ungodly' Than the 'Godly?'" *JSNT* 30 (1987): 93–95.

109. Senior and Harrington (*1 Peter, Jude*, 222) see behind the appearance of *sarx* in v. 23 an attempt to downgrade the spiritual status of the opponents from pneumatic to sarkic.

the Archons,[110] for instance, begins by making a distinction between the "spirit-filled" (ⲡⲡⲛⲉⲩⲙⲁⲧⲓⲕⲟⲥ) aeon "incorruptibility" (ⲧⲛⲡⲧⲁⲧⲧⲉⲕⲟ) and the worldly authorities that simply "possess a soul" (ⲡⲯⲩⲭⲓⲕⲟⲥ ⲛⲁⲣⲭⲉⲍⲉ) (87,11–20; NHS 20:237). This distinction then acts as an identity marker between the authorities, who only manage to create the psychic Adam, and the pneumatic Adam who, after the infusion of spirit, appeared as a living soul (88,3–16; NHS 20:239). As the drama progresses, the text asks its implied audience to imagine itself as *pneumatikoi* who come from the immortal realm and are thus superior to both the psychic authorities who rule the lower world and those who have not acquired this saving knowledge: "You, together with your offspring, are from the primeval father, from above, out of the imperishable light, their souls are come. Thus the authorities cannot approach them because of the spirit of truth present within them; and all who have become acquainted with this way exist deathless in the midst of dying humankind" (96,19–27; NHS 20:257). Once again, the author connects pneumatic and psychic realities that exist in the present world to distinct geographic spaces: the aeons of the *pleroma* and Christians who have learned the truth of the origins of their "souls" (ⲛⲟⲩⲯⲩⲭⲏ) are "from above" (ϩ⟨ⲉ⟩ⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲛ̄ ⲡⲥⲁ ⲛⲧⲡⲉ) and superior to the demonic forces of the world "below" (ϩⲛ̄ⲛⲃⲟⲗ ⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡⲥⲁ ⲛⲡⲓⲧⲏ) (87,18–20; 96,21; NHS 20:237, 257; see also 92,25–26; 93,26–32; 94,8–10).[111]

This exploration of the identity as spiritual, psychic, or material finds fuller expression in the *Tripartite Tractate*,[112] a Valentinian treatise detailing the nature of the cosmic drama in its entirety. In its commentary on the creation of humanity, the Demiurge and Logos combine to form the *psychē*: the psychic and hylic derive from the former, while the latter contributes the pneumatic element by infusing the soul with the breath or spirit (105,10–106,5; NHS 23:283–85). The author then imagines that this tripartite construction explains the differences between three types of human beings in the world (118,14–21; NHS 23:307).[113] Yet the *Tri-*

110. For a critical edition, see Bentley Layton, ed., *Nag Hammadi Codex II,2–7*, NHS 20 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1989).

111. For a more extensive discussion of salvation in this text, see Ingvild Saelid Gilhus, *The Nature of the Archons: A Study in the Soteriology of a Gnostic Treatise from Nag Hammadi (CG II, 4)*, Studies in Oriental Religions 12 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1985), 111–19.

112. For a critical edition, see *Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex): Introductions, Texts, Translations, Indices*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, NHS 23 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985). This paper will follow the translation in this volume by Harold W. Attridge and Elaine H. Pagels.

113. The text refers to "races" (ⲅⲉⲛⲟⲥ) (118,22), "substances" (ⲟⲩⲥⲓⲁ) (106,6–14), and "orders" (ⲧⲁⲍⲓⲥ) (108,32).

partite Tractate shows no interest in imagining these groups as fixed or impermeable, as patristic authors often contend.[114] On the contrary, one's identity is only revealed after the appearance of the Savior.[115] Because all created beings need redemption, all must respond to the Savior in some fashion: the pneumatics instantly recognize and accept him, the psychics hesitate but engage him through faith (rather than knowledge), and the hylics, as aliens to the divine light, reject him completely (118,29–119,13; 124,25–125,5; NHS 23:307, 317).

This observation underscores the fluidity of identity espoused in the *Tripartite Tractate*: all humans must undergo instruction in order to attain salvation.[116] Although the spirituals instantly turn toward the Savior after his appearance (118,29–36; 123,3–5; 126,28–127,8; NHS 23:307, 315, 321), in the world of materiality they nevertheless "share in the passions" and have the capacity to sin (116,20–21; NHS 23:303).[117] Even so, after they receive from the Father "knowledge in the fullest sense," they stoically endure the sufferings of this world, and, it would act as model of emulation for the psychics, whose double nature suggests that they can gravitate either toward good or evil (119,20–121,14; 129,34–138,27; NHS 23:309–11, 325–37). While they remain temporarily outside the "bridal chamber," the psychics rejoice at the pneumatics' union with the Savior (122,12–24; NHS 23:313),[118] yet they also monitor the spirituals, revealing their superior's iniquity to heaven and testing them "eternally" for theological errors. Moreover, as compatriots the psychics also share in the pneumatics' "sufferings and persecutions and tribulations" (135,1–17;

114. For instance, Iren. *haer*. 1.7.5; Tert. *Val*. 29.1–3. See also Harold W. Attridge and Elaine H. Pagels, "Tripartite Tractate: Introduction," in *Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex)*, 184–85; Elaine H. Pagels, "Conflicting Versions of Valentinian Theology: Irenaeus' Treatise vs. the Excerpts from Theodotus," *HTR* 67 (1974): 35–53. On the fluid nature of human beings, see also *Teach. Silv*. 92,15–93,32.

115. Michel R. Desjardins, *Sin in Valentinianism*, SBLDS 108 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987), 84–86; *Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex): Notes*, ed. Harold W. Attridge (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), 446–47; Luise Schotroff, "*Animae naturaliter salvandae*: Zum Problem der himmlischen Herkunft des Gnostikers," in *Christentum und Gnosis*, ed. Walther Eltester (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1969), 65–97.

116. The Father brought the cosmos into being precisely so that human souls would experience trials before achieving redemption. See 98,27–99,4; 104,12–30; 107,27–108,4. In this scheme, even materiality and hylic beings are useful (135,18–136,5; 137,9–19).

117. See also Desjardins, *Sin*, 90–91.

118. Even after death, it appears, the psychics remain separate from the elect, existing in "the aeon of the images, where the Logos has not yet joined with the Pleroma" (122,25–27).

NHS 23:333; cf. 116,18–20).[119] Identity formation is thus a relational affair, with each group discovering its sense of self through its interactions with the "other" and the larger, non-Valentinian social body. Through this process of give and take, the author imagines the formation of a distinct community made up of the spiritual elect, whose baptismal rite and the confession of faith confers upon members a sense of separation from the world, and anticipates an eschatological reunion of pneumatics and psychics: when "all of the members of the body of the Church are in a single place and receive the restoration (*apokatastasis*) at one time, when they have been manifested as the whole body—namely, the restoration into the Pleroma" (123,17–22; NHS 23:315).[120]

In this scheme, the unity of the heavenly church manifests itself in the world through the unity of pneumatic Christianity found within the Valentinian church.[121] Other patristic writers will make the same claims for concord and unity in their own communities, and use *psychikos* in a more pejorative fashion to distinguish those within and outside the divine economy. Thus, for example, both Irenaeus and Tertullian link the psychic person to heresy, while Clement of Alexandria cautions his readers that Christian wisdom should only be passed along to the pure; the unspiritual, who resemble "pigs in their lack of education," are simply not worthy to receive these mysteries.[122] Within the context of specific intra-Christian disputes, Tertullian labels as *psychici* or *animales* a wide swath of opponents, for instance, those who discount prophetic ecstasy, reject the resurrection of the flesh, disapprove of rigorous fastings, forgive sexual improprieties, and insist upon sanctioning multiple marriages.[123] John Chrysostom,

119. See also Attridge, *Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex): Notes*, 480–81, 494.

120. Baptism is a "garment" worn by those who have received redemption (128,19–24), while the confession signifies that the members have "escaped from the whole multiplicity of forms and [moved] from inequality and change" (132,15–20). See Desjardins, *Sin*, 86–87.

121. See Einar Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed: The Church of the 'Valentinians,'* NHS 60 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2006), 52–57.

122. Iren. *haer*. 5.8.3 (SC 153:101); Tert. *Marc*. 2.2.6 (ed. and trans. René Braun, *Tertullien: Contre Marcion*, SC 368 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1991], 29); Clem. Alex. *Strom*. 1.55.1–56.3 (ed. and trans. Marcel Caster, *Clément d'Alexandrie: Les Stromates*, SC 30 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1951], 89–90).

123. Tert. *Marc*. 4.22.5 (ed. and trans. René Braun, *Tertullien: Contre Marcion*, SC 456 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2001], 281); *Res*. 22.1 (ed. J. G. Ph. Borleffs, *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani Opera*, CCL 2 [Turnholt: Brepols Publishers, 1954], 947); *Jejun*. 1 (ed. August Reifferscheid and Georg Wissowa, *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani Opera*, CSEL 20 [Prague: F. Tempsky, 1890], 274); *Pud*. 21.16–17 (ed. and trans. Charles Munier, *Tertullien: La Pudicité*, SC 394 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf,

keeping in step with the increasingly rigorous asceticism of late fourth century, goes further than even Tertullian on the issue of marriage, arguing that anyone who values this union as beneficial for the human race is *psychikos*. Transforming 1 Cor 2.14 to speak to this new situation, the bishop asserts that these people do not accept "what is taught by the spirit of God" and, as a result, have placed their future existence in peril.[124] With assertions such as these, the church fathers ensure that, a few centuries after its emergence as metaphors of identity, *pneumatikos* and *psychikos* would become fully entrenched in a Christian polemical discourse intent upon claiming authority and marginalizing others.

THE DISCURSIVE SOUL

In a world full of gods,[125] early Christianity faced the challenge of introducing and explaining themselves to audiences that were at times hostile, bemused, and, eventually, intrigued by this "new race." Rhetoric, as Cameron has asserted, was central to this program, for the faith's success "lay in its capacity to create its own intellectual and imaginative universe."[126] The communication strategies they chose to produce themselves reflect, unsurprisingly, the assumptions and commitments found in antiquity's symbol system. This point that helps explain, for example, why they placed so much value on the virtue of suffering and alienation, and why sexual morality weighs so heavily in early Christian apologetic and polemic.[127] Developing such themes helped the followers of Jesus clarify certain aspects of their identity, and reveals how this literature intersects with the ancient world's prevailing values. An examination of the concept of the soul in

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1993], 275); *Mon.* 1.1 (ed. and trans. Paul Mattei, *Tertullien: Le marriage unique*, SC 343 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1988], 133). For a more extensive treatment of these passages, see Nasrallah, *Ecstasy of Folly*, 140–48; Andrew McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 164–67.

124. *Virg.* 14.2 (ed. and trans. Herbert Musurillo, *Jean Chrysostome: La virginité*, SC 125 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966], 139).

125. Keith Hopkins, *A World Full of Gods: The Strange Triumph of Christianity* (New York: Free Press, 2000).

126. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*, 6. See also Peter Brown, "The Saint as Exemplar in Late Antiquity," *Representations* 1 (1983): 1: "books . . . were there to *produce* persons" (emphasis mine).

127. For examples of these ideologies and patterns of argumentation, see Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Wimbush, "'. . . Not of This World . . . ,'" 29, 34; Knust, *Abandoned to Lust*, *passim*.

early Christian discourse illustrates another facet in the early Christian use of antiquity's intellectual and cultural lexicon. By thinking with *psychē*, these writers took a term commonly used in the ancient world to refer to the self and applied it to their own struggles at articulating identity and framing social boundaries against external and internal opponents. In other words, the soul helped them make a place for their communities among the myriad groups with which one could have aligned in the first centuries of the Roman Empire.

Yet the texts examined in this study do not simply rehearse ancient understandings of the soul. They reveal creative acts of rhetorical experimentation that contributed to the emergence of a distinct Christian "grammar": speaking of the soul produced specific identities and shaped the contours of each author's imaginative universe.[128] For the author of the *Epistle to Diognetus*, *psychē* acts as a vehicle for meditating upon Christians as a new race of people whose religious commitments are superior to those of its pagan and Jewish neighbors and who are thus clearly set apart from them by God. Tatian too uses the soul to think about the relationship between Christians and Greeks, although in this case it is the Christian *psychē*, reunited with the divine spirit, that makes the follower of Jesus discernibly different from pagans. If these texts find the soul useful for imagining how Christians are different from their non-Christian neighbors, it is more common for Christian writers to deploy soul-language in debates with internal rivals, the proximate "other."[129] In a world in which wolves donned sheep's clothing and seemingly lurked around every corner, *psychikos* functioned as a shorthand way of identifying one's opponents.[130] Classifying groups of people as pneumatic or psychic quickly entered the Christian lexicon, appearing first in Corinth, and then in James, Jude, the Nag Hammadi literature, and various patristic writings to signify those whose beliefs or behaviors were either perfect or defective. In no two cases, however, is the situation that elicits the construction of these "others" identical: whether the issue is baptism and the prophetic gifts (Corinth), the coherence of words and deeds (James), the intrusion of itinerant missionaries (Jude), the possession of a divine knowledge (*Hypostasis of the Archons* and the

128. See Lieu, *Christian Identity*, 147–77; Barclay, "Πνευματικός," 166.

129. As noted by Jonathan Z. Smith ("What a Difference a Difference Makes," in *"To See Ourselves as Others See Us": Christians, Jews, "Others" in Late Antiquity*, ed. Jacob Neusner and Ernest S. Frerichs [Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985], 47), the "other" is "most problematic when he is TOO-MUCH-LIKE-US, or when he claims to BE-US."

130. For instance, Iren. *haer.* 1.prol.1, 3.15.2, 3.16.8; Tert. *An.* 50.5.

Tripartite Tractate), or fasting, sexual immorality, or marriage (Tertullian and John Chrysostom), each author who devalues his opponents as *psychikoi* does so for different reasons and in the process reveals the elasticity and durability of this form of argumentation.

While *psychē* and *psychikos* thus function as identity markers, embedded within these formulations are assumptions about knowledge and power: the elect come from or represent the people of God and belong with him; the opponents, by contrast, represent all that is "other." These imaginative geographies attempt to assert authority and to marginalize those whom the authors view as different, deficient, or in some cases, even demonic. For all of these texts, this fashioning of self through the concept of the soul necessitates categorizing and subordinating all other patterns of selfhood in order to reinforce the conviction that the particular author represents or is the voice of the "truth." It is through this "discursive soul," then, that identities are formed, clarified, and devalued. When imagined within the matrix of identity, geography, and power, the soul does indeed become good to think with, producing "régimes" of truth that provided early Christians with insights into who they were (and were *not*) and where they stood.[131]

David M. Reis is an Assistant Professor of Religion at Bridgewater College

131. For a reading of power that recognizes both its repressive and productive function, see Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power," in *Power/Knowledge*, 109–33.