

CHAPTER 6

Uncovering Adam's Esoteric Body

IT IS NOT UNUSUAL TO FIND SPECULATION IN THE SECOND AND THIRD centuries regarding the creation of human being.¹ It seems that the creation of the world in Genesis was the starting point for exploration into both cosmology and anthropology. The subject of this paper, however, is not the exegesis of Genesis 1 and 2, but a derivative topic: the formation of Adam's body. Quite by accident, while working on both Sethian Gnosticism and Origen at the same time, I realized that in two texts alone (at least so far) there was a discussion of the formation of the parts of Adam's body. There is no reason to think that these texts are related, or that one has any dependence on the other, so the differences and similarities of interpretations of what seems to be the same tradition regarding the formation of Adam's body were noteworthy.

The first text is *The Apocryphon of John*, where the discussion of the formation of Adam's body takes place in the context of an exegesis of Genesis 1:26. The second text is the middle section of Origen's *Dialogue with Heraclides*, where the discussion relates to the exegesis of Leviticus 17:11 ("the soul is the blood"). In both of these contexts there is a concern for describing the formation of the human body by listing various body parts. Each body part, in turn, is given an abstract quality or an ascetical significance. It seems likely that this represents a tradition of interpretation that is not necessarily related to the exegesis of Genesis 1:26, but rather to an independent tradition regarding Adam's body. The nature of the material, moreover, seems to point to an esoteric tradition of interpretation.

1. In thanksgiving for George MacRae, SJ.

The purposes of this chapter are to present an exegesis of the traditions of the formation of Adam's body in *The Apocryphon of John* and in Origen's *Dialogue with Heraclides*, then to compare them so as to discover the manner in which these traditions were functioning in different environments, and finally to speculate regarding the means of uncovering esoteric tradition.

APOCRYPHON OF JOHN

The Apocryphon of John (*ApJohn*) exists in four manuscripts and in two versions: two manuscripts contain the shorter version (Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae 8502 [BG] and Nag Hammadi Codex III [CG III, 1]) and two the longer version (CG 11,1 and IV,1).² The shorter version seems on form-critical grounds to be the earlier and to date from the second century with editorial expansions, which continued until the longer version was formed. A comparison of the longer with the shorter version shows the manner in which an earlier revelation dialogue was expanded to produce a very complex text.

The section of revelation dialogue that presents Adam's body begins in BG 8502 at line 45.1 with the statement and question regarding the Mother's agitation, and it ends at 52.12 with the creation of the woman. There are five parts to the structure of the pericope:

- (1) The correction of the Mother's error [45.1–47.15]
- (2) The forming of Adam [47.16–49.9]
- (3) The creation of soul-substances [49.10–50.14]
- (4) The raising of Adam [50.15–51.20]
- (5) The demotion of Adam [52.1–52.18]

I will argue that section three is an interpolation into an earlier mythology and that the speculation regarding the psychic Adam was a later, esoteric expansion of an originally bipartite anthropology into a tripartite.

2. The translation of *The Apocryphon of John*, the shorter version, is that found in Foerster: *Gnosis*. There is another translation of the shorter version in Grant: *Gnosticism*. For a comparison of the two versions see Krause and Labib: *Die Drei Versionen des Apokryphon des Johannes* For the Coptic text, see Till and Schenke: *Die Gnostischen Schriften*.

The first section presents the mythological explication of the formation of Adam in direct response to the issue at hand in the revelation dialogue material. The dialogue concerns the occasion for the Mother's agitation: the formation of Adam soteriologically rectifies the Mother's error.

"The Mother now began to be agitated, knowing her deficiency, since her consort had not concurred with her when she was degraded from her perfection." But I said: "Christ, what does 'be agitated' mean?" He smiled and said: "Do you think that it is as Moses said, 'over the waters?' No, but she saw the wickedness and the apostasy which would attach to her son. She repented, and as she went to and fro in the darkness of ignorance she began to be ashamed and did not dare to return, but went to and fro. Her going and coming is 'to be agitated.' Now when the Self-willed had received a power from the Mother, he was ignorant of a multitude which are superior to his mother. For he thought of his mother that she alone existed. He saw the great multitude of angels which he had created, and exalted himself above them. But when the Mother recognized that the abortion of darkness was not perfect, because her consort had not concurred with her, she repented (and) wept bitterly. He heard the prayer of her repentance, and the brethren prayed for her. The holy invisible spirit assented. Now when the invisible spirit assented, he poured upon her a spirit from the perfection. Her consort came down to her in order to put right her deficiency through a Pronoia, and she was not brought up to her own aeon, but because of the great ignorance which had become manifest in her she is in the nonad until she puts right her deficiency. A voice came to her: 'Man exists, and the Son of man.'" (45.1—47.15)

The Mother's self-will led the holy invisible spirit to send his spirit upon her and to send her a consort. This redemptive act is a providential one: the soteriology demands that the self-will of the Mother be rectified by the Spirit's providence, i.e., that Adam must undo the work of Ialdabaoth. The creation of humanity has a positive and salvific role: Man becomes the agent of salvation in that what was originally done in error now is part of the Spirit's Pronoia. This positive role of humanity answers the question regarding the Mother's agitation and, therefore, seems to be a part of the revelation dialogue and the earliest stratum of the text.

The second section describes the archons' formation of Adam in the context of Ialdabaoth's confusion. The archons are not portrayed as performing a negative deed: they are carrying out the task as part of redemption.

The first archon, Ialdabaoth, heard it (and) thought that the voice [came from his mother]. The holy perfect Father, the first man, [taught] him in the form of a man. The blessed one revealed to them his face. And the whole archon company of the seven powers assented. They saw in the water the likeness of the image. They said to one another: "Let us make a man after the image of God and his likeness." They created out of themselves and all their powers. They moulded out of themselves a creature, and each one of the [powers] [created out of its] power [a soul]. They created it after the image which they had seen; in imitation of him who exists from the beginning, the perfect Man. They said: "Let us call him Adam, that his name and his power may become for us light." (47.16–49.9)

The exegesis of Genesis 1:26 insists that the archons are copying an image that they see in the water—this certainly implies that it is a *physical* image that they are copying: the image is the physical image of the "holy perfect Father" who used it to teach Ialdabaoth. The Father was "in the form of a man," and the archons' physical creation, Man, imitates that divine image and likeness of the Father. All of these details point to a very positive, soteriological role for Man's body, even though it was created by the archons out of themselves.

The third section presents the creation of soul-substances by the "powers" and "angels."

And the powers began from below. The first is Divinity, a bone-soul; the second is Lordship, a sinew-soul; the third is fire, a flesh-soul; the fourth is Pronoia, a marrow-soul, and the whole structure of the body; the fifth is the Kingdom, a [blood-] soul; the sixth is Insight, a skin-soul; the seventh is Wisdom, a hair-soul. And they adorned the whole body. And their angels stood by them. (They created out of the souls), which had first been prepared by the powers, the soul-substance, the arrangement of the limbs (and) the joints. And they created the whole body, which was fitted together by the multitude of angels which I have already mentioned. (49.10–51.14)

The active characters change in this section. The “archons” of the previous section have become “powers” in this section, and the “angels” mentioned in 46.6–7 as Ialdabaoth’s creations are doing the actual work of putting the body together. This seems to indicate that we are to identify the work of archons with the work of the powers and that of the angels. It blurs the clarity of the creative process that has just been described. Since the creation has already been presented, this section with its change of characters and expansion of the process seems to be an interpolation.

The soteriological motivation of the material from the revelation dialogue, moreover, seems no longer to be a concern. There has been a shift from a focus on the *function* of the creation of Man to a focus on *the body itself*. The parts of the body are enumerated, given an abstract quality, and identified with a soul-substance—none of these elements are related to the soteriology of the myth. Adam’s body had become a subject for speculation on its own, and it has been interpolated into the text at this point to extend the significance of the creation of humanity. The fourth section presents the raising of Adam.

And it lay for a long time without moving, since the seven powers were not able to raise it up, nor were the 360 angels who fitted together [the joints. The Mother wanted to recover again] the power which she had given to the archon in compulsive desire. She came in innocence and prayed the Father of the All, whose mercy is great, and the God of light. He sent, by a holy decree, the Self-originate and the four lights in the form of angels of the first archon. They gave him advice, so that they might bring out of him the power of the Mother. They said to him: “Breathe into his face something of the spirit that is in you, and the thing will raise itself up.” And he breathed into it of his spirit—which is the power of the Mother—into the body, and it moved at [once]. (50.15—51.20)

The creation of Man resulted in an inert body. The soteriology demands that the spirit be removed from the erroneous Ialdabaoth to the new creation. This is accomplished through the will and design of the Father. The Mother’s spirit is no longer trapped in the error of her self-will, and the Father’s will has been accomplished. The creation of Man was the medium for the restoration of the Mother’s fall. Adam’s body parts do not play any role in this restoration, and, therefore, they are not apparently related to the soteriological aspect of the myth.

The fifth section presents the demotion of Adam as a result of the archons' jealousy.

[And] immediately [the rest of the] powers became jealous, because it came into being from them all and they gave to the man the powers which derive from them; and he bore the souls of the seven powers and their abilities. His understanding became far stronger than all of them, (stronger) than the first archon. But they recognized that he was free from wickedness, since he was more clever than they and had come into the light. They took him and brought him down to the regions beneath all matter. (52.1—52.18)

The archons became jealous because their creation, although derivative from them, has been given greater power. There is no specific reference to the soul-substances or the parts of the body—but only reference to the fact of a derivative creation. This jealousy is the means whereby the myth may be continued: it becomes the motivation for the oration of Zoe in the next section of the myth. The soteriological myth, then, becomes: the Mother falls through her own self-willing and bears a son; the Father wishes to rectify the Mother's error; he sends the spirit to produce a licit son by the Mother into whom the spirit in the fallen son will be put in order to release the Mother's spirit from bondage. By combining the physical image of the Father (*sōma*) and the Mother's spirit (*pneuma*), the human being restores the Mother's self-willed error. The formation of Adam's body by the powers, however, does not fit the soteriological perspective of the remainder of the pericope. The myth relates the somatic and pneumatic aspect of the creation of Man, while the powers and the angels add the psychic. Each part of the body is given a different psyche:

First	Divinity	bone-soul
Second	Goodness	sinew-soul
Third	Fire	flesh-soul
Fourth	Providence	marrow-soul
Fifth	Kingdom	blood-soul
Sixth	Understanding	head-soul
Seventh	Wisdom	hair-soul

The mythic structure only requires the existence of a body. The body parts do not relate either in order or qualities to the soteriology or to the

anthropology of the myth. It seems as though this section is an independent piece of tradition. If this is so, then the mythic element should be able to stand without this interpolation; it does, in fact, seem to do so. Here is my reconstruction:

They moulded out of themselves a creature, and each one of the [powers] [created out of its] power [a soul]. They created it after the image which they had seen; in imitation of him who exists from the beginning, the perfect Man. They said, "Let us call him Adam, that his name and his power may become for us light." . . . And it lay for a long time without moving, since the seven powers were not able to raise it up. . . . The Mother wanted to recover again the power which she had given to the archon in compulsive behavior . . . etc.

The parts of the body can be deleted without any change in the myth or in the structure of the section.

There is really no clue given in the listing of abstract qualities and soul-substances as to their significance or meaning. That the elements are numerically sequential indicates that there is some sort of progression from one to seven, but the nature and purpose of that progression is unexplained. There also may be a movement from the inner (bone-soul) to the outer (hair-soul), but that too is left unexplained. We are simply not given any clue as to the purpose, setting, or significance of the list except that it is placed in the context of the salvation myth of the Sethian Gnostics.

Although it may seem somewhat speculative, there is one clue that may indicate the function of the listing of the parts. That clue is the statement that forms the point at which the parts are included in the text: "Let us call him Adam, that his name and his power may become for us light." Adam's name and power are a light: he is functioning as a guide. It is possible that Adam is the guide for Gnostics and that the soul-substances are a kind of index of body-parts that the Gnostic manipulates in order to achieve certain ascetical states (divinity, understanding, wisdom; but fire?). Adam in his psychic dimension guides the Gnostic toward the inner (divine) and fundamental (bone-soul) person.

What is clear, however, is that originally the anthropology of the myth of the Mother was bipartite (*sōma* and *pneuma*) and that it functions well and reasonable as that. The addition, through the interpolation, of *psyche* creates a tripartite anthropology. This is rather surprising because

it causes the distinction between Ialdabaoth and Adam to be diminished. They both resulted from the Mother, one licitly, one illicitly; they both had the Mother's spirit within them; they both functioned within the myth as important primordial personalities. Their significance arises, then, entirely in their role in the soteriological myth of the Mother's restoration. There is no indication of a negative attitude toward creation, body, or the sphere of created elements.

The inclusion of the parts of Adam's body with the abstract qualities and soul-substances may reflect an esoteric or magical understanding of the nature of human existence. Certainly the longer version continues at this point in the text to insert esoteric and magical material of a similar nature related to parts of the body: parts of the body are identified with particular creative powers (CG 11,1. 15:29ff.), the rulers of the seven senses (17:29ff.), the four elements (18:2ff.), and the human emotional structure (18:15ff.). The longer version seems more interested in the "psychological" dynamic of human existence, while the interpolation in the shorter version can be characterized as more ascetically oriented.

DIALOGUE WITH HERACLIDES³

There are only a few places where Origen discusses the issue of "is the soul the blood?"⁴ They are notably in *De principiis* II. 8.1 and 2 and in the *Dialogue with Heraclides*.⁵ Only in the *Dialogue* is there any reference to the formation of Adam's body. All other references discuss the creation of Adam, or the relationship of soul to body, but not through the medium of the parts of Adam's body.

The *Dialogue*⁶ is a most unusual patristic work because it is a transcript of an actual meeting, which took place probably in Arabia sometime

3. My thanks to the Patristica Bostoniensis for their helpful discussion of this section of my paper, and especially to the Rev. Lloyd Patterson and The Rt. Rev. Demetrios Trakatellis. The final product, with all its arguments and conclusions, however, is entirely my own responsibility.

4. See *Biblia Patristica*.

5. There are not many places extant in the literature of the period that parallel the enumeration of body parts. The only serious possibility is Philo's *Questions and Answers on Genesis* II. 17, where Noah's ark is modeled on the parts of the human body and assigned some allegorical significance.

6. The Greek text of the *Dialogue* is that of Scherer, *Entretien d'Origene*. There is an English translation by Henry Chadwick, which I am using throughout this paper. See Chadwick, *Alexandrian Christianity*, 437–55.

between 239 and 244 CE.⁷ Origen was brought into Arabia to evaluate the orthodoxy of a local bishop. The *Dialogue* takes up three separate issues: the faith of Bishop Heraclides, a question concerning the soul, and finally a discussion about immortality. It is the second issue, which is discussed at more length than the others, that relates to our discussion of Adam's body.

The structure of the argument in the second section of the *Dialogue* reveals an intricate concern. It is not written as a treatise, nor is it a piece of work that has been thoroughly reworked: it is a dialogue in which the argument is primarily verbal, and hence less literarily structured. There are three major segments: a lengthy preliminary argument, the discussion of the formation of the human being, and a conclusion. The outline of the argument would be:

- I. Preliminary argument [144–54]
 - A. Dionysius asks the question
 - B. Definition of the problem
 - C. The key to understanding it
 - D. Creation of the human being in image
 - E. Origen's disclaimers
 - F. An exhortation to transformation
 - G. Summary of the introductory material
 - H. Further disclaimers
- II. The creation of the human being [154–64]
 - A. Creation in the image
 - B. The inward and outward human being
 - C. The parts of the body
- III. The Conclusion of the Argument [164–66]

This outline shows that the weight of the argument is really on the preliminary material and it seems somewhat defensive. Clearly Origen senses that the question needs careful articulation and definition.⁸ The definition of the problem is related to passages of scripture, but not exegetically:

7. Nautin, *Origene*, 388–89.

8. It might be suggested that Origen is simply playing to the crowds as a great city preacher and teacher appearing in a rural environment. The great length, however, that Origen takes to organize and define the problem seems to indicate that he wants the question articulated very carefully and deliberately: he is dealing with a Gnostic or at

Accordingly, the question posed by the beloved Dionysius forces our hand. I shall first set out the passages which trouble them, lest any one of them be omitted, and by God's permission we will answer each one of them in accordance with your request. The disturbing passage is as follows: "The soul of all flesh is blood" (Lev 17:11-12). This text has terribly distressed those who have not understood it. Also, "Ye shall not eat the soul with the flesh; pay strict heed to see that you eat no blood; ye shall not eat the soul with the flesh" (Deut 12:23). The disturbing text is this one. For the other distressing texts are far less emphatic in expressing the idea suggested here. (144-46)

The difficulty is not in the interpretation of the texts, but in the anthropological significance of that interpretation. The key to understanding those texts rests in an abstract principle.

For my part according to my measure of understanding, and praying for assistance in reading the divine words (for we are in need of help lest our minds should conceive ideas diverging from the truth), I have found that incorporeal things are given the same names as all the corporeal things, so that just as corporeal things apply to the outer man, those which are given the same names as corporeal things apply to the inner man. The Bible says that man is two men: "For if our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day," and "I rejoice in the law of God after the inward man" (2 Cor 4:16 and Rom 7:22). These two men the apostle everywhere shows to be distinct. In my judgment he would not have ventured to invent this notion out of his own head, but rather said this because he had clearly understood statements in the Scriptures which are obscurely expressed. (146)

The key to understanding the argument is twofold: to understand that there is a correlation between the inner and the outer human being, and that this also correlates to the inward and outward human being of the Pauline writings. Once this key has been given, then the interpretation of the creation of Adam follows.

Some people imagine that there is a mere repetition when in the story of the creation of the world after the creation of man we read "God took dust of the earth and formed man" (Gen 2:7). The cor-

least an esoteric doctrine from which he wishes to distance himself publicly. It is a serious question that Origen takes seriously and that he answers carefully.

ollary of this interpretation is that it is the body which is the part “after the image” (Gen 1:26), and that God is given a human form or that the form of God is shaped like the human body. But we are not so crazy as to say either that God is composed of a superior and an inferior element so that that which is in his image is like him in both elements, which constitute God in his completeness, or that that which is in his image consisted rather in the inferior part and not in the superior. (146–48)

There then follows two rather long disclaimers: one negative and the other positive. The negative disclaimer is a topos about not giving sacred material to those who are unworthy. The positive topos is a call to purity to receive right doctrine. These disclaimers are followed by an extensive exhortation that the listener be transformed. This call to transformation implies that a person is able to change nature to be “changed from being a swine to being a man,” or that repentance effects a real change in a person’s being. Such repentance is, in fact, necessary for receiving the orthodox teaching regarding the blood and the soul. It is here that the defensive tone of the argument becomes most obvious.

The summary of the preliminary material presents in short order all elements of the argument. It is a very curious sort of exposition that has been going on: exhortation, the abstract key to the argument, the question itself are all a very peculiar preface to the actual explanation. Origen’s brief summary of his argument is this:

Since it is our task to speak about man, and to inquire whether the soul of man is not blood and since this subject required us to discuss in detail the doctrine of the two men and as we have come to a mysterious subject [*logon mystikon*], I beseech you that you do not cause me to be accused of casting pearls before swine, of throwing holy things to the dogs, of flinging divine things to serpents, of giving the serpent a share in the tree of life. That I may avoid this accusation, be transformed, put off evil, quarrelling, wrath, strife, anger, division of opinion, that there may not be any further schisms among you but that “you may be firmly established in the same mind and the same judgment” (1 Cor 1:10). (152)

The discussion seems to revolve about two aspects of the discussion of “is the soul the blood?”: first, the *logos mystikos* of the two men; and second, the exhortation to avoid evil and to be united in order that Origen not be

accused. It does seem peculiar that Origen describes the doctrine as a *logos mystikos*: there can be no doubt that in Origen's mind the argument is characterized as esoteric or secretive. The esoteric nature of the material is further emphasized by the hortatory sections. The teaching is intended for the few, the worthy, and the select, and it cannot be taken lightly. The key to this esoteric doctrine is the discourse concerning the two men.

This leads directly to the explanation of the creation of the human being: there is the Adam "in the image" and the hylic Adam. This represents a strictly bifurcated hylic (made of earth) and eikonic (made in the image) human being.

At the creation of man, then, there was first created the man that is "after the image," in whom there was nothing material. He who is in the image is not made out of matter. "And God said, Let us make man in our image and likeness, and let them have dominion" and so on. And when God made man he did not take dust of the earth, as he did the second time, but he made him in the image of God. That that which is in the image of God is understood as immaterial and superior to all corporeal existence not only by Moses but also by the apostle is shown by his words as follows: "Putting off the old man with his deeds and putting on the new which is renewed in the knowledge of him who created him" (Col 3:9). (154)

This bifurcated human being leads to the doctrine of the two men that allows there to be relationship between them.

Therefore in each one of us there are two men. Why does Scripture say that the soul of all flesh is blood? It is a great problem. Just as the outward man has the same name as the inward man, so also this is true of his members, so that one may say that every member of the outward man has a name corresponding to what is true of the inward man. (154)

It is the same name that holds together the eikonic and hylic human being, and the name allows a human being to move from the hylic to the eikonic part of his being. The parts of the body are then listed with their correlative significances. The correlation is developed by references to scriptural passages, so that each bodily part has an inner and an outer meaning (an eikonic and a hylic meaning), as well as an inner and an outer significance, which is developed through the scriptural proof-text. The

parts of the body relate mostly to the senses (eyes, ears, nostrils, taste [tongue], hands [touch]) although there are also the fine parts, the heart, and the hairs.

The conclusion of the argument rests on the correlation between hylic blood and the eikonic soul. Just as the blood enlivens the body, so does the soul enliven the inner human.

Thus you have all the parts of the visible body in the inner man. Do not doubt, then, concerning the blood also because it has the same name as physical blood, like the other members of the body. It is that which belongs to the inner man. . . . if one comprehends what the soul is, and that it belongs to the inner man, and that it is in that part there is the element which is "in the image," it is clear that Paul was right when he said: "For it were better to depart and to be with Christ" (Phil 1:23) (164)

This conclusion brings us back to the beginning of the argument: the blood is the vital power of the soul. The soul is the blood, and therefore at death the body does not contain the soul.

The argument of this section of the *Dialogue* presents a bipartite hylic and eikonic anthropology. It is interesting that the anthropology is not explained in the traditional language of body and soul (found in *ApJohn*), nor is there any reference to the psychic dimension of humanity. This doctrine also is presented with polemical overtones: the identity of the eikonic human with the physical image of God (accepted in *ApJohn*) is rejected without discussion. The relationship of inner/outer, hylic/eikonic is through an esoteric doctrine of the two men. This doctrine permits the identification of one part with the other, a movement from the hylic body to the eikonic being. This movement through the identification of physical to spiritual elements seems to have an ascetical orientation. By moving beyond the outer, the hylic, a human being is able to progress to the image of God, to the eikonic level of existence. The ascetical orientation is further supported by the hortatory material and the focus on transformation and repentance.

GENERAL COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS

There seems to have been some common intellectual tradition of anthropological speculation about the formation of Adam in the image of God. Originally this anthropology was totally bipartite as it remained in

Origen's *Dialogue*, but was changed in *ApJohn* with the addition of the psychic parts of Adam's body. In *ApJohn* this speculation takes place in a mythological system wherein the parts of the body are merely enumerated with their abstract quality. In Origen this speculation takes place in a philosophical environment in which the psychological and spiritual key to understanding the relationship of the inner to the outer parts is set forth.

The tradition itself seems to have had a recognizable form which, in fact, derives from the exegesis and commentary on the phrase "in the image." This phrase is the heart of the form:

- (1) the formation of Adam in the image
- (2) the elaboration of the body parts
- (3) the spiritualization of the body parts

In these texts there may be three stages in the development of this traditional form. First, the original level of the exegesis in *ApJohn* was a mythological exegesis of the creation of Adam. Second, the soteriological myth was expanded in *ApJohn* with a section that speculated on the body parts and applied theological, ascetical significance to those parts. Third, Origen takes that same esoteric tradition and reinterprets it so that the distinction is made between inner and outer bodily significances. The history of the tradition is, thus, from (1) the mythic powers who create Adam, to (2) the speculation on the body parts, and finally, to (3) the reinterpretation toward inner/outer body parts.

The life-situation, or function, of the form, judging from its attestation in Origen, is in personal asceticism. Cynic and Stoic asceticism consisted of practices for the development of virtue and elimination of vice. Christian asceticism, developing from there, posited a spiritual or pneumatic state superior to the physical, which was to be made manifest in the physical life. Christian asceticism became thus a transformative asceticism.⁹ Both Origen and *ApJohn* are presenting the means to that

9. The classical example of this is chronologically later in Cassian's *Institutes*, where he discusses the eight principal faults. The vivid description of the physical phenomena and manifestations of the fault are intended to assist the ascetic to recognize the fault in its most concrete manifestations. The objective, then, became the transformation of that fault in the physical life so that it reflects the divine virtue. The physical level is intended to assist in transformation or reformation of life.

transformative asceticism. The teaching is such that ascetical theological categories are tied to body parts so that by focusing on a body part, attainment of an ascetical ideal correlative to that body part is made possible. If an ascetic knows the *key*, he may achieve the ascetical goal. By its nature such teaching would not be appropriate to the general public. Origen's hesitance to give the information would then be logical: such a *mystikos logos* is only for those who are in training to know. It can then be surmised that this form not only functioned in personal asceticism, but also in an esoteric environment.

The distinction between exoteric and esoteric thought is an important one. Exoteric thought or teaching is one that is intended to be appropriated by anyone. It is, hence, an open system that employs language in the traditional manner, using the commonly understood meaning and usage of words. It is thus directed at the broadest base of communication, and it is founded upon the use of reason to facilitate understanding and upon rational discourse as the educational norm. The object of exoteric thought is to communicate so as to pass on information, or convince, or please.

Esoteric thought, on the other hand, is by its nature a closed system. Language is used in a special way and is directed to the few, a select group of initiates or knowledgeable people who are given the key to the special language so that they and only they can understand. A key is necessary to understanding the system. This happens because the relationship of elements (symbol to referent, or concept to concept) is not one that grows out of the inherent meanings of the words or common use of language, but is an assigned or more arbitrary relationship of parts. The access to the system is limited.

The formation of Adam's body in *ApJohn* clearly is an esoteric system. Origen, however, is caught in the process of making an esoteric system exoteric: he is giving away the key to the system and is thus opening it for anyone to understand. It is this opening that gives us an entry into the ascetical nature of the material in *ApJohn*, and helps us to discover what is the nature of the speculation found there. Although this one traditional form is found in two very different environments, the uncovering of Adam's body helps us to understand the asceticism and speculation of the second and third centuries and to see the continuance of a bipartite anthropology in speculative, esoteric environments.