

Tamás Adamik

L. Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius: *About the head of man*
(*De opificio Dei*, 8-10)

Lactantius' *De opificio Dei* is the first Christian anthropology; it was written about 303-304. In one book, it contains 20 chapters. The first chapter is the introduction, the last one the conclusion; both are addressed to Demetrianus, pupil of Lactantius. He explains his topic in five parts: 1. the special features of human nature, its weakness (2-4); the corporeal building of men and animals (5-7); the description of the head and the chest of the man (8-10); 4. the viscera, the sexual organs (11-14); the human speech, intellect and soul (15-19). Before describing the head, Lactantius declares, that God had created the man in such a way that he gave him two legs up with an upright waist, in order to gaze upon the heaven (8). His intellect which is just divine resides in the upper part of his head. His head has spherical form; the sphere is namely the criterion of perfect intelligence and form. Its frontal part is the face which is provided with the organs of sense: eyes, ears, nose, teeth, tongue (9-10). In the *De opificio Dei*, Lactantius attempts to prove the existence of divine providence based on the evidence of design in the human body. His sources are Cicero, Varro, Lucretius, Seneca, Pliny the Elder, perhaps the pagan Hermetic literature, the Stoic philosophy, the Neoplatonism, and the medical literature. In my paper, I quote the Latin text of the *De opificio Dei* from the following edition: Lactance: *L'ouvrage du Dieu créateur*. Tome I. Introduction, texte critique, traduction par Michel Perrin. Sources Chrétiennes 213. Paris 1974.

Emese Berzsenyi

How does the teaching of Christianity change the view of disabled people and disability in contrast with the practice of the Roman Empire?

Even in the beginning, the culture of the Roman Empire was greatly influenced by Hellenistic traditions. A man's worth was not only measured by his looks and physical abilities, but he also had to earn the respect and appreciation of the community with his work and knowledge. The ideal democratic picture of a citizen was never developed; the members of the different groups and strata of the society were never equal.

Acceptance and being accepted depended on one's achievements. For those who lacked the physical or mental abilities, succeeding was nearly impossible. For a state apparatus that sorely depended on its military conquests usefulness was so vital that the notions of mercy, love and acceptance were hardly entertained even in the inner circles of family.

Due to the teachings of the Gospels, Early Christian communities believed in equality, deliverance and Christian love, and this belief shook up the order that prevailed for hundreds of years. Virgil's doctrine that said "ability is more pleasing in a beautiful body" was substituted with the inner, godly virtues of men; authority embodied in strength was replaced by love.

Christianity defied Roman law, the common practice of everyday life and the liberal arts' ideals of beauty. It changed the relation between God and men because the idea of "do ut des - I give so that you will give" only expected service, Christianity however, called on faith.

In my doctoral dissertation, I explore the history of disability in my own field, from the perspective of a historian of religion. My topic is "The representation of the historical development of disability in major religious groups". I examine that representation as a historian of religion, in the context of social science and religious studies and in light of the different cultures of the civilizations influenced by major religious groups.

István Baán

„When you fast, anoint your head…” (Mt 6,17). Public and individual fasting in the forth-fifth centuries.

The Church after the Constantinian turn encountered the problem how to fit the local liturgical customs and related public lenten practice into a by and large unitary framework. These was based on the diet of the poor people which has given a pattern for the monastic communities in formation. The eschatological dimension of fasting was connected tightly with the Eucharist, while the slow development of an individual penitential discipline has given a chance to interpret and to apply the lenten customs. The fasting related to a penitence was influenced considerably by medical knowledge and theories of the Antiquity.

István M. Bugár
Melito and the Body

Melito of Sardis is a key figure in the history of the theological treatment of body. Firstly, he is one of the first genuine *theologians* of Incarnation. Secondly, he has been accused by Origen as having stated that God is of bodily nature. Thirdly, he has composed an oration *On Body and Soul*. In my paper I attempt at a clarification of the emerging questions on the basis of available textual evidence. Besides the Paschal homily and the fragments of Melito, I discuss in detail the Syriac “apology” preserved under the name of “Melito the philosopher”. As far as Origen’s statement is concerned, in my argument I partly follow the suggestion made by G. Florovsky, who saw in this debate a preenactment of the late fourth-century “anthropomorphite” controversy, and this in the sense as being a contest about the question of what it means for humans to be an image of God. Alexandrian theology insisted that this can be referred to human intellect alone, while for Irenaeus of Lyons the image has also a body. Since Irenaeus and Melito are linked in many different ways, it is hardly surprising the two agree on this point as well. It is also telling that, by contrast, the Syriac apology of debated authenticity sides with Alexandrian theology in this issue. At the same time, by reconstructing Melito’s *On Body and Soul*, I point to other features of Melito’s theology that may have lead to Origen’s misunderstanding it.

Cyril of Jerusalem and the Arianism

Ildikó Erdei

Cyril of Jerusalem, the bishop of Jerusalem in the fourth century, was not one of the great thinkers of his era. According to the general opinion he did not have original ideas or new solutions for theological problems, rather he just summarized the main theological lines of the fourth century. At the same time, it was him who left behind the oldest existing catechetical speeches, which provide important insight for understanding the period between the two great universal synods. Scientists have always examined Cyril's work mainly from theological point of view. It remains an open question what kind of Septuagint the bishop used, because the text he refers to is not the same as the Septuagint is known today. Researchers also debate on the relationship of the Jerusalem Creed, phrased by the catechist, with other creeds.

The most controversial issues are related Cyril's attachment to Arianism. Cyril was ordained by the Arian Acacius, who sent the bishop into exile later. Jerome leaned toward an opinion that the bishop of Jerusalem was Arian, and it is true that in his Catechesis he deliberately avoided the obligatory term *homousios* of the Council of Nicaea. It is obvious even from the bishop's incomplete biography that he had semi-Arian friends, however, the Council of Constantinople in 381, in spite of all Arian charges, pronounced him as a brave fighter against Arianism.

In my presentation I would like to join the discourse which seeks to examine the relationship of the bishop with Arianism. I hope that we will get a more detailed picture of the fourth century than what we usually receive from simplified history. If we look at the individual and not only the distant history we can see that a flesh and blood human - at best - never works according to historical and theological stereotypes but his personality constantly changes and develops. In my opinion, it is particularly easy to trace this constant change in the life of Cyril of Jerusalem.

Cicero Christianus as a self-image in Lactantius
Gábor Kendeffy

The first part of this paper focuses on the question how Lactantius uses, modifies or criticizes some ideas of Cicero's philosophical writings to persuade educated pagans that Christianity is both true wisdom and true religion. The main topics to be investigated with regard to Lactantius' use of texts of Cicero are the following: 1) Kinship between God and man. 2) In what does justice consist and what are its main aspects? 3) Religion as the distinctive character of the human being. 4) Is it philosophy or something else that deserves such qualifications as dux/magistra/magister/disciplina/vitae/virtutis/veritatis?

The second part is devoted to showing that the image of Cicero Christianus, occurring explicitly first in a writing of Pico della Mirandola, was indirectly proposed by Lactantius himself. He draws a parallel in several passages of the Divine Institutes between himself and the father of Roman eloquence. In addition, in several points he does not simply corrects or criticizes Cicero but, doing so, emulates him. To sum up, as Lactantius considers philosophy to be a deceptive image, a counterpart, an umbrage of wisdom, that is Christianity, he regards Cicero as his own unperfect prefiguration.

Andor Kelenhegyi

The king shepherding his flock and the shepherd instructing the sheep: The shepherd-exegesis of Philo of Alexandria between Jewish and Christian tradition

One of the most prevailing paradigm in the metaphoric language of Old Testament literature (which is based both on economic realities, and the literary topoi of neighboring cultures) is the one which displays the community of Israel as a sheep, while describing God or the ruler of the community as a shepherd. And although the exact nature of interrelations and hierarchy between these two entities is not entirely unified in the Old Testament, this *topos* is so prevalent on all levels of the corpus, that its exegesis is a necessity for any interpreter of Biblical tradition. The two major literary domains for its interpretation are, on the one hand, the tradition of Rabbinic *Midrashim*, and on the other hand, the body of New Testament texts and patristic exegesis, which is based partly on the latter. While these traditions show striking similarities, their emphasis is essentially different in delineating the relationship of the shepherd and the flock. The *Midrashim* depict the shepherd as a political agent with actual and decisive power, whose major duty is maintaining the physical welfare of the, strictly ancestry-based, community. The Christian tradition, which is, first and foremost, known from the Gospel of John, portrays the shepherd rather as a spiritual leader, who with the help of his moral guidance, in fact allows individuals to become members of the flock. Behind the different readings, there is a major shift in the exegetical perspectives. I suggest that this shift originates within the boundaries of Jewish tradition. I also believe that the reinterpretation of the Old Testament concept of political leadership, is due principally to Philo of Alexandria, who - relying on Platonic concepts - has regarded the *topos* of shepherding as a narrative of individual development. Thus, he enabled the formulation of the shepherd-Christ metaphor of the New Testament and of Christian tradition. In my paper, I will first overview the Old Testament metaphor, its rabbinic interpretation. Then, after a comparison of Philo's work and the New Testament, I will arrive to the major authors of Christian exegesis in the first four centuries CE. I hypothesise that an analysis of the Biblical loci and their interpretations might successfully prove that in the case of these two, seemingly contradictory interpretative traditions (Jewish and Christian), the figure of Philo and the Biblical exegesis created by him is indeed a point of interrelation and also a turning point in exegesis.

Dániel Attila Kovács
The Angels and the „nothing”
Evil as privation in the metaphysics of St. Augustine

In this talk, I will speak about that peculiar augustinian thesis, which he adopted having abandoned the dualistic world-view of the Manicheans. According to this, evil is not a positive type of reality, but an absence of good or being, that is, privation. It is well known, that this view is of neoplatonic origin. Some interpreters even hold, that as a matter of fact, we are only dealing with some „neoplatonic commonplace” which he simply transposed into the context of his christian outlook. Contrary to this, I will argue, that Augustine develops his very own version of the privation-theory, not only in the theological, but also in the philosophical sense.

I will compare Augustine’s position with that of Plotinus, which is expounded in his treatise on evil (I.8), and pinpoint the most important difference between the two theories, which stems from the facts, that the augustinian concept and plotinian concepts of matter significantly differ from eachother.

Moreover, I will also deal, with two difficult theses of Augustine, which I present according to the twelfth book of De Civitate Dei. The one is, that the evil will of fallen creatures has no cause and the other, that still, the fact that God created them from nothing, in some sense explains their fall. These theses I will interpret on the basis of those elements of Augustine’s metaphysics which I expounded in comparison to the plotinian view.

Levente Nagy

Pictorial messages of sinners, victims and heroes. Naked bodies in the iconography of the IV century.

The paper deals with the analysis of naked bodies of Adam, Eve, Daniel and Isaac in fourth century Early Christian iconography, compared with dressed images in cases of latter (Daniel and Isaac) depictions. I try to decode the messages of the images regarded as media of communication for fourth century viewers on the basis of extant biblical and patristical texts and of their original (archaeological) context and function.

László Perendy
The Value of Bodily Existence in Tatian's Anthropology

Tatian was condemned by several writers of Christian antiquity (Irenaeus, Eusebius, and Epiphanius) for his alleged Gnostic ideas. Robert Grant (1954) tried to demonstrate that he was a Valentinian. In Tatian's only extant work (*Cohortatio ad Graecos*), however, we find virtually no sign of holding the human body in contempt. The examination of the words *sarx* and *soma* shows that in his opinion not the body is the cause of sin, but the *pneuma* of a lower order. He points out that at the resurrection salvation is achieved through the union of soul and body. The *pneuma* is not immortal in itself, either. Emily Hunt (2003) believes that in Tatian's mind the capability of becoming immortal is characteristic also of the body. The bodies of some persons can become the dwelling place of the divine *pneuma* already in this world, and human body was actually its home before man committed the original sin. When this world passes away, through the moving in of God's spirit man becomes again the image of God. So both in the initial and in the final, blessed state of man the body and the *pneuma* exist in close unity. This unity was broken in the wake of the free decision of man, which caused his fall. The unity of man with the divine pneuma can be attained again also as a result of man's free decision. In order to reconstruct Tatian's anthropological ideas, the examination of the contemporary philosophical currents is indispensable. In order to resolve the question if he can be accused of Encratite notions with a heretic colouring it is worth examining some characteristic literary works of Syrian Christianity, in which the ascetic features of Tatian's theology are demonstrable.

Marianne Sághy
The Holy Body

Classical and Christian ideas about the body are separated by the huge chasm of the Incarnation. While polytheists saw in the body „the prison of the soul”, Christians honoured it as the „temple of God”. Soul and body are in inseparable interaction in the Christian conception: the soul works on the body and the body prepares the salvation of the soul. The greatest perfectioners of the body are the Christian ascetics, whose body, alive or dead, came to be venerated in Late Antique society.

This paper deals with the representation of the „holy body” in Late Antique martyr acts, apophthegmata and hagiography to see what is the holy body like. Is there a difference between male and female holy body? How do saints work on their bodies so as it become the tool of salvation? How does society react to the holy body in life and in death?

Csaba Ötvös

The created human body.

Anthropological concepts in the Ancient Gnosticism.

The ancient texts - labelled as Gnostic in the modern literature - present two extremities or rather a two different opinions concerning the human body. One of them describes the human body with radical hostility as perishable and weak. The other concept tell us how anyone should transform or sanctify the body with its divine element.

The source of both concept is the creation's story, since (the psychical and) the material body was fashioned by the theriomorphic archons (the rulers of this word) with the heavenly (human) likeness.

In my planned lecture I would analyse some passages from the tractates of the Library of Nag Hammadi and made an attempt to shed light on the connections between the terminology and symbols used by the authors and the aforementioned theological concepts of the human body.

Public bath as haunted place in the pagan and Christian texts of the Roman Empire

Anna Tóth

Several Christian and pagan texts of the last centuries of Rome tell stories about public baths that were haunted by demons, e.g. the apocryphal Acts of John, Eunapius' Life of Porphyry etc. In the most elaborate stories a demon dwelling in the bath strangles young people at regular intervals. The intercession of the saint put an end to the murders and he resurrects the last victim. In one case the demonic attack is the consequence of an earlier foundation sacrifice. The source of the motif is unclear; probably it spread from the oriental regions of the empire, but a Greek origin cannot be excluded, either. The water nymphs of Greece became more and more dangerous in the course of time and water was always associated with chthonic powers.

The texts themselves provide different explanations for the question why demons like public baths: a murder was committed in the building, demons like moisture and darkness, a previous crime made the victim vulnerable to the demonic attack.

Demons of baths are known well outside Rome, especially among Slavs and Finns, where the supernatural beings can haunt bathhouses or saunas. A possible cause behind the frequent occurrence of the motif can be an atavistic fear of water supplies. Nevertheless, the Late Antique incidences need an explanation. In my paper I interpret the stories as an attempt to resacralize the urban area, but in a negative sense. In the Classical Antiquity a characteristic dichotomy existed between our world (which is rational and secure) and the area outside the city: woods and mountains, where it is possible to meet gods or nymphs, which is the place of magic. This structure of the sacred place disappeared, but the result was not the victory of a purely rational approach; instead, the demonic sphere infiltrated into the heart of the city.

Tamás Zoltán Tóth

The conception of sexuality and relationship of »*psyche*« and »*pneuma*« in Simoninism

In my present paper I am going to attempt to prove the historical reality of the Simonianism, a heresy of the Ancient Christianity referring to the figures of Simon Magus and Helen. Some researchers regard these heresy as a mythical sect, created by heresiological actors from the attributes of later heresies (e.g. the life-style of the Carpocratians and the also strongly criticized doctrine of the Basilidians).

I also aim at comparing Simonian libertinian sexual ethics with other libertinian sexual ethics of Ancient-Christian heresies (e. g. the Carpocratian libertinism). A highly debated point is whether the sexual ethics of Simonianism meant “free love” in its true sense or “only” a lesser type of promiscuity in connection with initiation-rites? The Simonian sexual libertinism did certanly not imply homo- or bisexual acts.

My paper is also devoted to analyzing the historical sources of Simonianism and to setting forth phraseological and contextual arguments for the Simonian origins of *Explanation of the Soul*, found in Nag-Hammadi. I will quote texts from bokk 6 of Hippolytus’ *Refutatio* and from the *Explanation of the Soul*, where the »*psyche*« is considered as a substance of higher rank (equal with human existence), whereas »*pneuma*« is regarded as a purely material phenomenon - a kind of wind - or even as an “evil” substance, used by “evil angels” to inspire the prophets of Old Testament.

I will also suggest a relationship between the above mentioned teaching of »*psyche*«, and the Mandean-Sabean gnostic religion of Mesopotamia. This religion taught on a substance called »*rûhe*« (equal with Greek »*pneuma*«), that is the “evil inteligence” of matter and »*nishmethé*«, regarded as the substance of “Light”.

Elvira Pataki

Body, suffering and philosophical life in the epistolography of Gregory of Nazianzus

The paper will consider the notion of the body and corporal existence in the rich epistolography of Gregory of Nazianzus. His highly stylized letters, documents of private relationships yet published by the author, show a large thematic spectrum marked by confessional intentions as well as by the aim of exhortation to engage philosophy. Written in 361-383, they are addressed to family members, to high representatives of the imperial Court and to the leaders of Church, as well as to earlier Athenian condisciples and contemporary pagan intellectuals, both related to Gregory by friendship (*philia*) and culture (*paideia*). The notion of body plays a decisive role not only in his anthropological principles (see the dualism of *sôma* and *pneuma*), but has a central importance in other contexts as well. The body (never associated directly with the notion of sin) as a metaphor stands for the Church (cf. e.g. *Ep.* 41, 184, 219), his notion can be linked to the opposites Pagan and Christian, man and woman, praxis and contemplation, and health and illness (an aspect evidently important for the Father tormented by illness almost all his life). While the Gregorian concept of the body has a rather constant signification in the collection, it is also influenced by the personality of the addressee, and by the experiences of physical *pathos* of the writer (see the sensation of corporal deficiency, weakness and helplessness, which predominates the letters of the last years). The lecture on one hand will concentrate on the classical sources of the notion of body and suffering (see particularly the catalogue of Pagan martyrs in the letters to Philagrios, *Ep.* 31-32). On the other hand, I will analyze why the suffering body can be considered at the same time as both the tool and the obstacle of the philosophical life, how the function of the body in the making and entertaining of friendship and in the works of asceticism can be modified by the torments and passion caused by the illness. Finally, it will be examined how a certain philanthropic attitude seems to balance the excessive and voluntary annihilation of the body (which is never practiced by Gregory).

Róbert Somos, Kidneys in Origen's *Homilies on Psalms*

As it is well known the top significant event of the recent past of the patristic scholarship was the identification of twenty nine Origenian homilies on the Psalms by Maria Molin Pradel whose surmise has been proved by Lorenzo Perrone in several papers.

In my presentation I would like to deal with some passages of Origen's second homily on the *Psalm Fifteenth* which seem to modify the standard scholarly view on the Alexandrine's anthropology before the rediscovering these homilies on the Psalms.

Interpreting Psalm 15:7, *my kidneys also instruct me in the night*, Origen tells us that spiritual kidneys are the places of the seeds and roots of good and bad thoughts and opinions. Thus, according to this account the first phase of the good or bad decision is that the soul investigates these thoughts contained by the kidneys, which are located under the heart from the time of the birth. These are potential issues. When the soul accomplishes this research she is not in direct connection with bad thoughts. Thus, in Christ only the good thoughts "go up" into the heart, that is, into the rational part of the soul. This whole process, which begins with the investigation of the seeds of thought and ends with the action, is the realization of something potential because virtue and ignobility are formed by good or bad actions whose central moment is the decision of the *hēgemonikon*. The basis of the Origenian view is that according to him kidneys are the place of male's sexuality and the spermatogenesis happens in the kidneys. Thus, investigation of the question of kidneys in Origen provides some new evidences on the problem of original sin.

Miklós Vassányi

How does the Word Become Flesh for Maximus the Confessor?

In the proposed paper, I would look into how the great Byzantine theologian conceives of the theory of Incarnation, and into exactly what role he attributes to the living flesh, *sarx* in this process. The textual basis I would inquire into is four short pieces of the corpus designated as *Opuscula theologica et polemica*: No. 17, No. 13, No. 5 and No. 6 (in the chronological order of their presumable date of composition). These pieces belong in the debate around monoenergism and monotheletism. As he argues for the double nature and double will in Christ, Maximus stresses the importance of the corporeality of the Saviour, which is abundantly attested by Scripture. The paper would investigate the dialectical role the living flesh of Jesus Christ plays in the discussion, as we seek an answer to the following questions: What bodily functions in Christ are decisive for Maximus to prove the thesis of double nature? What is the living body's contribution to the theory of *perikhórésis*?