The Discourse on the Eighth and the Ninth (NHC VI,6), the Prayer of Thanksgiving (NHC VI,7), and the Asclepius (NHC VI,8): Hermetic Texts in Nag Hammadi and Their Bipartite View of Man

Lautaro Roig Lanzillotta | ORCID: 0000-0002-5945-554X

Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen,
The Netherlands

f.l.roig.lanzillotta@rug.nl

Abstract

In an article from 2017, I introduced the study of the anthropological framework of Nag Hammadi texts and established the existence in this corpus of two anthropological patterns, the bipartite and tripartite. The present study continues the analysis by means of an exhaustive investigation of the evidence provided by the three Hermetic treatises included in Nag Hammadi Codex VI, namely, the Discourse on the Eighth and the Ninth, the Prayer of Thanksgiving, and the fragment of Asclepius. It concludes that, far from presenting a tripartite anthropological framework, “die für die Gnosis typische trichotomische Anthropologie,” in the words of Karl-Wolfgang Tröger, these three Hermetic treatises only include a bipartite of view of the human being.

Keywords

bipartite and tripartite anthropology – Nag Hammadi – Hermetic treatises – Discourse on the Eighth and the Ninth (NHC VI,6) – Prayer of Thanksgiving (NHC VI,7) – Asclepius 21–29 (NHC VI,8)

1 A New Approach to the Anthropology of the Hermetic Treatises in Nag Hammadi

The intention of this paper is to present the preliminary results of my work-in-progress over recent years, the goal of which is an exhaustive study of the

anthropological frameworks behind the Nag Hammadi treatises. The frequent claim that a trichotomous anthropology is the only one at work in Gnostic writings, as the anti-heretical writers affirm and some modern scholars also seem to assume, is more than questionable. This is the problem I tried to clear up in 2010, in a paper presented at the Themes in Biblical Narratives conference held in Groningen, the written version of which appeared in 2016.¹

At that time, my intention was, first, to disprove Alastair Logan's statement that Gnostics had a "bewildering variety" of anthropologies and, second, to affirm that the Nag Hammadi texts, as far as I can see, exclusively offer two possibilities, namely, a bipartite or a tripartite anthropology.² At the same time, I affirmed that the fluctuation between the two anthropological schemes that we find in this corpus is not due to erratic opinions but simply reflects the similar variation we see in Middle Platonic anthropology. Indeed, under the influence of Aristotle, some Middle Platonists add a third constituent to Plato's inherited bipartite soul-body scheme, namely, the intellect, which from that point on is no longer seen as a part of the soul but as an element in its own right.

That the issue was hotly debated in Middle Platonism might be seen in Atticus's strong opposition to the "Aristotelians," who in his view wrongly transposed to the intellect all the functions Plato had allotted to the soul.³ Both positions can also be found in most Nag Hammadi texts: while a group of texts includes the classical Platonic view of the human being, simply opposing spiritual and material aspects, a larger group appears to distinguish three elements. Despite their common visceral contempt for the material side of the human, both anthropological patterns in fact imply rather diverse conceptual schemes.⁴

The present article is the second in a series of five that intend to scrutinize all of the evidence on anthropological matters provided by the Nag Hammadi corpus. An introductory article published in 2017 established the existence of the two anthropological patterns.⁵ The intention of the present study is to continue the analysis, approaching the anthropology at work behind the Hermetic treatises included in the Nag Hammadi corpus and, more specifically, in Codex VI. According to a famous analysis by Karl Wolfgang Tröger, we should expect here the same trichotomous view we find in "die für die Gnosis typische

1 Roig Lanzillotta 2016, 136–53.

2 According to Logan, Gnostic texts alternate between bipartite and tripartite views, and even fourfold anthropologies. Cf. Logan 1996, 168, 196–197.

3 Att., fr. 7 des Places (in Eus., *Praep. ev.* 15.10), with Merlan 1967, 73–75.

4 Cf. Roig Lanzillotta 2017, 15–39.

5 Cf. previous note.

trichotomische Anthropologie.⁶ My intention in this paper will be to show that, far from this, the three Hermetic treatises preserved in the Nag Hammadi corpus in fact exclusively include a bipartite anthropology.

2 Anthropology, Gnosticism, and the Bipartite and Tripartite Anthropological Schemes

Anthropology is the cornerstone upon which the whole edifice of Gnostic thought is built.⁷ The complex of theological, cosmological, and soteriological myths results from various attempts to provide a consistent, albeit mythological, account of the nature and position of human beings in the world.⁸ Gnostic myths are ready-made mythological accounts, allegorical narrations that, much in the same way as Plato's mythological creations or Plutarch's allegorical conflation, were shaped by Gnostic mythopoeists in order to provide answers, although allegorical, to the riddles posed regarding the meaning, nature, and goal of human existence.⁹ In this sense, interpreting Gnostic myths is not a matter of unraveling underlying or latent truths but of trying to decode the basic conception they intend to convey.

At the center of Gnostic mythology, we find the conviction of the consubstantiality of human spiritual being with God. Whether the texts express this by means of the myth of the descent of Man, of the God Man, the Primal Man, or Son of Man, or whether this archetypal human did not descend at all but was reflected on the waters, or whether our divine nature was planted as a seed by God, or whether we received it as a divine spark – whether as the Aristotelian *nous thurathen* or extrinsic intellect, or granted as a gift by God's grace – all of these possibilities are of secondary importance from an anthropological perspective.¹⁰ In the final analysis, all these metaphors revolve around the same basic idea, namely, that our real self is not our body but is instead our

6 Tröger 1971, 89. This view is also endorsed by Mahé 1978, 124–25, who compares the anthropology of the Hermetic treatises of Nag Hammadi with the tripartite view of the human being in *Silv. NHC VII,4* 92.19–25.

7 In this line of thought, Dahl 1981, 689–712 (here 695–97), who rightly points out that the main interest of the myths of *Orig. World*, *Hyph. Arch.*, and the *Apoc. John* is the story of the creation of humanity.

8 Cf. Böhlig and Wisse 1975, 25.

9 Cf. Luttikhuisen 1997, 89–101. Such as expressed by Clem., *Exc.* 78.2: “Who were we? What have we become? Where were we? Into what place have we been cast? Whither are we hastening?”

10 On the scholarly discussion of the issue, see Logan 1996, 169–73.

mind or our soul, and that this real self of divine origin is alienated in its present degraded condition.

For our present inquiry, however, it is essential to determine whether the spiritual part of human beings is their intellect, conceived of as a separate entity, or instead the rational part of their soul. While the difference might seem trivial, it is in fact central, since it reveals rather discordant views regarding the origin, character, function, and destiny of the soul after death, which in turn reflect rather diverse cosmological frameworks.¹¹ Moreover, it goes without saying that differences at the level of anthropology and cosmology will also necessarily affect soteriology and eschatology.

The bipartite and tripartite anthropological schemes that we find in Gnostic texts clearly reveal the Greek origin of the Gnostic views of the human being, since, as stated above, Plato and Aristotle are at the origin of both anthropological frameworks, despite the efforts of some scholars to dissociate Gnosticism from Greek philosophy or to minimize the influence of the latter on the former.¹² However, in addition to this, Gnostic texts also reflect the interschool polemics regarding human nature, as attested to in contemporaneous philosophical texts. In the same way that late Stoics such as Seneca and Marcus Aurelius gave up the monistic anthropology of the Stoa in adopting the bipartite and tripartite schemes, respectively, Christian Gnostics departed from the monism we find, for example, in the Synoptic Gospels and their Jewish antecedents in order to embrace either or both anthropological patterns of Hellenism.¹³

In shaping their myths to convey their religious or metaphysical views, however, diverse groups of Christian Gnostics logically made use of the elements they had at their disposal or with which they were acquainted. Those with a Jewish background mainly expressed these basic anthropological patterns by means of myths familiar to them, namely, Genesis stories or speculations on Sophia, while those with a philosophical background tended to make use of the cosmogonic and anthropogonic myths of the *Timaeus*, be it in its pure

11 Cf. Roig Lanzillotta 2017, 25, 30–32.

12 E.g., Armstrong 1978, 101: “I think, then, in general, that any influence which may have been exerted by any kind of Greek philosophy on Gnosticism was not genuine but extraneous and, for the most part superficial. We are dealing with the use of Greek ideas, often distorted or strangely developed, in a context which is not their own, to commend a different way of faith and feeling, not with a genuine growth of any variety of Gnosticism out of philosophy, whatever some ancient heresiologists may have thought.”

13 Cf. Sen., *Ep.* 65, for the bipartite scheme, and M. Ant., *Med.* 3.16 and 12.3, for the tripartition of human being in the Stoic context. Cf. Roig Lanzillotta 2017, 20–21.

form or with additions from Aristotle's noetics.¹⁴ It seems obvious, however, that while these are general tendencies, internal discussions and polemics among different groups made borders among them more fluid than what my schematic exposition seems to imply.

3 The Anthropological Framework of the Hermetic Treatises in Nag Hammadi

In the corpus of Nag Hammadi, there are in total three Hermetic treatises: the Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth (NHC VI,6), the Prayer of Thanksgiving (NHC VI,7), and the fragment of Asclepius (NHC VI,8). While all three texts have received considerable scholarly attention, there is no systematic analysis of the anthropological background behind these texts as far as I am aware. In what follows, consequently, I intend to provide such an analysis, focusing exclusively on their views on the human being.

3.1 *The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth (NHC VI,6)*

The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth is the sixth treatise of Nag Hammadi Codex VI, where it occupies pages fifty-two to sixty-three. In the opinion of Karl-Wolfgang Tröger, the Discourse is the most important discovery of the twentieth century with regard to Hermetica.¹⁵ After some initial indifference, recent decades have seen a renewed interest in the text.¹⁶ The Discourse takes the form of a dialogue between teacher and pupil, which intends to show the initiate the way of attaining the Eighth and the Ninth spheres in order to achieve the ultimate vision of God (probably in the tenth heaven).

The name of the treatise obviously derives from the cosmological framework behind the text, which presupposes, in addition to earth and the firmament (probably), the seven heavens of the hebdomad or *heimarmene* as well. Apart from the Eighth and Ninth, the text also probably implies a tenth sphere in which the divine abides, as does the Apocalypse of Paul (NHC V,2) explicitly and Poimandres implicitly.¹⁷ It is interesting to note that in contrast

14 It is not surprising, therefore, that van den Broek 1986, 190–203, has claimed the existence of a Platonized Jewish-Gnostic myth of both Anthropos and Sophia underlying not only Eugn. and the Apoc. John but also Valentinianism.

15 Tröger 1973, 497. See also, Hanegraaff 2008, 151. In addition to the already mentioned work by Tröger, see Mahé 1974, 54–65; 1978, 29–134; 1998, 79–86.

16 See Camplani 2000; Förster 2004, 723–37; Mahé 2006, 557–66; 2007, 935–71; van den Broek 2006, 234–45, 327–50; Bull 2018, 316–71.

17 Cf. Roig Lanzillotta 2020, 110–31; 2019, 934–38.

to other Hermetic treatises such as *Poimandres*, the ascent of the soul is not postmortem but seems to be the result of a mystical experience during the life of the neophyte. Consequently, in order to attain this, individuals need to enact in a “non-natural way” what they would normally only attain after death. In order to be able to trespass through the realm of fate while in the body, individuals need to achieve an important transformation of their human nature; they need to “practice death,” to use Socrates’s words in the *Phaedo* (81A, μελέτη θανάτου).¹⁸

3.1.1 Anthropological Elements in the Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth

To understand the process by which this transformation is achieved, we need to take a look at the anthropological views of the text. How then does the Discourse actually conceive of the human being? The answer to this question is not as simple as it may seem. The focus of the text is not so much human beings themselves but their communication with the divine, and consequently anthropological references are scarce. We must therefore try to discern anthropological views from the description of the transformation of human beings and their communication with the divine.

In so doing, however, caution is necessary so as not to fall into preconceptions that may falsify the text’s anthropological views. While previous scholarship too readily admitted the existence in our treatise of a tripartite scheme differentiating body, soul, and spirit or intellect, the evidence to support this analysis is meager.¹⁹ In my view, the only thing we can affirm with certainty is that our text conceives of human nature as being “mixed.” It distinguishes in humans a material part belonging to the four elements and subject to the *heimarmene* (below) and another part, the soul, which elevates them above the rest of creation, bringing them closer to the gods. This reflects a bipartite rather than a tripartite scheme.

The Body. With regard to the first part, the human body is almost completely neglected by the Discourse. In fact, the term “body” (σῶμα) appears on only one occasion in the text, and then only to refer to the desired day on which humans will dispose of it: “the day to quit the body.”²⁰ This neglect is not surprising, however, since the focus on the Eighth and the Ninth that precedes the vision of God implies a necessary process of detachment from all material

18 Cf. Filoramo 1999, 137–49; also Mahé 2006.

19 Tröger 1973, 497.

20 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 60.5–6. All English translations of the Coptic text are according to Dirkse, Brashler, and Parrott 1979a, 341–73.

accretions that may hinder this.²¹ Those who have already fulfilled this process indeed say: “We have already advanced to the seventh, since we are pious and walk in thy law.”²² By means of this gradual process of purification, the individual learns to oppose the “acts of fate” (εἰμαρμένη)²³ from then onwards:

ΕΤΕΦCΥΝΕΙΛΗCIC ΤΟΥΒΑΕΙΤ ΕΡΟΥ· ΕΦ ΕΙΡΕ ΔΝ ΝΛΑΔΥ ΝΡΩΒ ΕΦΩΛΛΕΦ·
ΕΦΡCΥΝΕΥΔΟΘΕΙ ΔΝ ΝΗΜΑΦ· ΑΛΛΑ ΚΑΤΑ ΒΑΘΜΟC ΕΦΜΟΟΨΕ ΕΦΝΗΗΥ
ΕΖΟΥΝ ΕΘΗ ΝΤΗΝ ΤΑΤΜΟΥ·

His conscience is pure within him, since he does not do anything shameful, nor does he consent to it. Rather, by stages he advances and enters into the way of immortality.²⁴

The body is clearly seen as an obstacle to the higher achievements of individuals and, in any case, to their search for God. This does not necessarily mean, however, that we are dealing with an anti-cosmic kind of dualism here that equates the body with perdition.²⁵ As a matter of fact, we may instead describe this as a mild form of dualism, a worldview in which matter has not yet developed into something very negative and which as such should be avoided at all costs. This fits very well with the clear theological monism of the text, which attributes to the one and only God the creation of both the body and the physical world, since “His providence (πρόνοια) extends to everyone ... begets everyone.... He created everything.”²⁶ As the neophyte’s hymn states:

ΜΑΡΝΩΛΗΛ Ω ΠΑΕΙΩΤ †ΡΕΠΚΑΛΕΙ ΜΗΟΚ ΠΕ ΤΑΜΑΖΤΕ ΕΧΝ ΤΗΝΤΡΡΟ
ΝΤCΟΜ· ΠΑΙΕΤΕ ΠΕΦΛΟΓΟC ΩΠΕ ΝΧΠΟ ΝΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΝΕΦΩΔΧΕ ΔΕΖΕΝΑΤΜΟΥ
ΝΕΖΕΝΩΔ ΕΝΕΖ ΝΕ ΝΝΑΤ ΩΙΒΕ· ΠΑΙΕΤΕ ΠΕΦΟΥΩΩ ΧΠΟ ΜΠΩΝΖ ΝΝΙΝΕ ΖΜ
ΜΑ ΝΙΜ· ΤΕΦΦΥCIC ΜΟΡΦΗ ΝΤΟΥCΙΑ·

Let us pray, O my father: I call upon thee, who rulest over the kingdom of power, whose word comes as (a) birth of light. And his words are immortal. They are eternal and unchanging. He is the one whose will begets life for the forms in His nature give form to substance.²⁷

21 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 58.27–29.

22 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 56.27–57.1.

23 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 62.27.

24 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 63.6–11.

25 See also Mahé 1978, 52–53.

26 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 56.4–6.

27 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 55.23–33.

The Soul. With regard to the second element of the human complex, the soul (ψυχή) represents, in the first place, human interiority, and it occupies the higher place in the human hierarchy. If the body is considered to be the outer human being, the soul represents the human's inner dimension and can therefore be equated to the heart.²⁸ In fact, more than once the Discourse uses the expression "heart and soul" to refer to the human being's inner realm, to that part by means of which a human prays to God, such as in the following passage:²⁹

... ΔΕΙ ΝΝΛΟ ΓΕΙΚΗ ΘΥCΙΑ ΝΤΟΟΤΝ· ΝΑΙ ΕΤΝΤΝΝΟΟΥ ΜΜΟΟΥ ΝΑΚ ΕΖΡΑΙ·
 ΖΜ ΠΝΖΗΤ ΤΗΡΪ ΜΝ ΤΕΝΪΥΧΗ ΜΝ ΤΕΝCΟΜ ΤΗΡC· ΜΑΤΟΥΧC ΠΕΤ ΩΟΟΠ
 ΝΖΗΤΝ ΝΓ † ΝΑΝ ΝΤCΟΦΙΑ ΝΝΑΤ ΜΟΥ·

Receive from us these spiritual sacrifices, which we send to thee with all our heart and our soul and all our strength. Save that which is in us and grant us the immortal wisdom.³⁰

However, partaking in this interior realm, namely, having a share in a soul as does every other human being, is not sufficient to attain the *ogdoad* and, with it, the subsequent vision of God. Rather, the initiate needs to follow an important process of purification, the first stage of which seems to consist in following a strict, pious, and ascetic way of life, which the text cryptically describes as the previous "steps" or "stages" (*bathmos*).³¹ When the disciple asks his master to fulfill his promise of bringing him first to the Eighth and then into the Ninth, the latter answers:

ΠΕΡΗΤ ΔΕ ΔΥΩΩΠΕ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΗΝ ΤΡΩΜΕ· ΔΕΙΧΟΟC ΓΑΡ ΝΑΚ ΝΤΑΡΙΡΑΡΧΕΙ
 ΜΠΕΡΗΤ· ΔΕΙ ΧΟΟC ΕΩΧΕ ΚΡ ΠΜΕΕΥΕ Μ ΠΟΥΑ ΠΟΥΑ ΝΝΒΔΟΜΟC·

The promise was according to human nature. For I told you when I initiated the promise, "If you hold in mind each of the steps."³²

This process is crucial, since it determines the right preparation of the soul. "This is what you call the beauty of the soul, the edification that came to you

28 See Roig Lanzillotta 2007, 418–19.

29 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 55.13–14; 57.23–24; 60.13; 60.18.

30 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 57.18–25.

31 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 52.13.

32 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 52.9–13.

in stages (βαθμός)" (τῶνδε ἐποὶ δε παναῖ ἢ τῶνδε πικωτῶ ἐρωῶ πε νακ κατα βαθμος).³³ Now, what are these steps exactly? In her comments on the *heptaporou kata bathmidos* of the *Chaldean Oracles*, Ruth Majercik mentions Hans Lewy's translation of the "sevenfold ladder" in reference to the *klimax heptapylos* of the Mithraic mysteries.³⁴ She also notes Lewy's view that in the context of the *Oracles* this mention could either be a metaphorical description of "an intellectual ascent to the apprehension of the noetic world" or a reference to a "specific practice in the celebration of the mystery" that represented an ascent through the spheres.³⁵

In the context of the Discourse, however, the reference to the "stages" or "steps" leaves, in my view, no room for hesitation. As already mentioned, notwithstanding the fact that the body is not put in a very negative light, it certainly does represent an obstacle to the individual's aspirations for a reunion with the divinity. The Discourse clearly delineates three important steps that individuals need to complete in order to reach the vision of God. Due to its being exposed to the influence of the body and the world, the soul seems to have acquired numerous undesirable accretions originally alien to it. As a result, the soul is deadened and needs first of all to be cleansed of all external pollution. This is the first step in the process. The reference to the hebdomad as that which each individual has left behind before being worthy of receiving the teaching that will allow them to achieve the ogdoad seems to imply the shunning of the passions normally associated with the seven planets or heavens of the realm of fate:

ἩΔΗ ΔΑΝΡ ὧΡΠ ΜΠΩΖ ΕΘΕΒΔΟ ΜΑΣ ΕΝΟΕΙ ΝΝΕΥΣΕΒΗΣ ΕΝ ΡΠΟΛΙΤΕΥΕΣΘΑΙ
 ΖΜ ΠΕΚΝΟ ΜΟC· ΔΥΩ ΠΕΚΟΥΩ ΤΝΧΩΚ ΜΜΟΥ ΕΒΟΛ ΝΟΥΟ ΕΙΩ ΝΙΜ·
 ΑΝΜΟΟΥΕ ΓΑΡ ΖΝ [ΤΕΚΖΙΗ ΔΥΩ ΔΝ]ΚΩ ΝCΩΝ [9 ±]ΝΤΡΕCΩΠΕ [Ν61]
 ΤΕΚ[ΘΕΩ]ΡΙΑ·

We have already advanced to the seventh, since we are pious and walk in thy law. And thy will we fulfill always. For we have walked in [thy way, and we have] renounced [], so that thy [vision] may come.³⁶

33 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 54.26–28.

34 Majercik 1989, 203 (fr. 164); Lewy 1978, 294n133, 414n50.

35 Majercik 1989, 203.

36 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 56.27–57.3. See Festugière 1960, 48 on *Poimandres* 25. See also Festugière 1967, 126; Mahé 1978, 1:39–40.

After this purification has been fulfilled, the soul may proceed to the second step, which is more important than the first, since it will provide it with the necessary knowledge to activate the rational part of the soul that permits “understanding.” Up to now, the soul has followed the right track. However, it is still ignorant and can therefore be compared to a small child:

ΑΥΩ ΟΥΜΕ ΠΕ [ΝΑΚ] ΔΤΡΕΚΡ ΠΜΕΕΥΕ ΝΤΠΡΟ ΚΟΠΗ ΕΡΩΩΠΕ ΝΑΚ ΝΤΜΗ
ΤΡΜΝΖΗΤ ΖΝ ΝΧΩΜΕ· Ω ΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΤΝΤΩΝΚ ΕΤΩΟ ΡΠ ΝΖΗΛΙΚΙΑ· ΝΘΕ
ΝΝΙΚΟΥ ΕΙ ΔΚΧΩ ΝΝΙΠΡΟΒΛΗΜΑ Ν ΝΑΘΗΤ ΝΝΑΝΟΗΤΟΝ:

And it is right [for you] to remember the progress that came to you as wisdom in the books. O my son, compare yourself to the early years of life. As children (do), you have posed senseless, unintelligent questions.³⁷

Regardless of the will to attain the ogdoad, and despite being pure of external accretions and of passions, after the first step, the soul finds itself in an incipient stage of development. The second step, the process of learning the knowledge of the books, however, will gradually form the soul, developing it into something new.³⁸ It is only after the soul's edification, mentioned above, and the knowledge acquired from the books that “understanding” may appear in the soul, manifesting itself as the actualization of something that the soul already possessed but in a dormant way.³⁹ However, this is not taken for granted: “May the understanding come to you, and you will teach” (ΜΑΡΕΤΝΟΗΣΙΣ ΩΩΠΕ ΝΑΚ ΔΥΩ ΚΝΑΤΣΕΒΟ).⁴⁰

After this step, the soul is not only ready to transmit this knowledge to others but also, and especially, to receive the “power of the discourse” from the master.⁴¹ This is the beginning of the third and final step in the process, at the end of which the soul receives its illumination from God and is able to completely develop that which may make it immortal. The master functions as a mediator between disciple and God in this process. While the pupil prays to God for understanding, the master does the same “to deliver the discourse from the fountain that flows to” him.⁴² It is the master who first transmits the divine power or *dynamis* that will enlighten the soul, transforming it and making it

37 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 54.6–13.

38 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 54.23–26.

39 The presence of Aristotelian elements has already been noted by Dirkse, Brashler, and Parrott 1979a, 342–43.

40 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 54.28–30.

41 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 55.7–8.

42 E.g., Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 55.10–22.

immortal. The Discourse devotes a good deal of attention to this process of illumination. For our present enquiry, however, it is more interesting to focus on the implicit consequences of this for the conception of the human being.

3.1.2 The Bipartite Anthropology of the Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth

Given the external intervention that enacts the exercise of rationality, and given the fact that this intervention activates a part of the soul, namely, the rational part that the soul already possesses, albeit in a dormant state, I think we can safely affirm that the anthropology of the text is clearly bipartite. Apart from body and soul, there is actually no evidence of a third human element. The Discourse opposes outer and inner being and conceives of the latter as that by means of which individuals may attain the vision of God. In order to do that, however, individuals need to develop their inherent capacity; they need to sharpen the sight of the soul's eye, to use the well-known Platonic expression. There is no reference to a third separate or independent human element – whether that be *nous*, meaning “intellect, mind,” or *pneuma*, meaning “spirit.”

Regarding the former, the term “Mind” (*nous*) appears ten times in the Discourse, and, if we exclude its use in two expressions, it exclusively refers to the divine Mind, either in itself or when shared with human beings.⁴³ Mind is the divine overseer of everything that happens in the world (ΠΝΟΥΣ ΓΑΡ ΟΥΔΑΥ ΝΤΑΥ ΘΩΠΕ ΝΝΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΝΝΑΙ).⁴⁴ It is the Mind “who has the power (δύναμις) of them all, creating those <that are> in the spirit (πνεῦμα)” (ΕΡΟQ ΕΥΝΤΑΥ ΝΝΑΥ ΝΤΕΥ ΔΥΝΑΜΙΣ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΕΙΣΩΝΤ Ν<ΝΕΤ>ΞΜ ΠΠΝΑ).⁴⁵ God grants His life to everyone and His providence protects them.⁴⁶ Humans obtain a share of this Mind in the rare moments when they reach the Ninth and experience unity with the divine Nous. Chapter 58 describes this experience in precise detail. The father or master first reaches the state of communion with the divine. He repeats up to three times that he is Mind and is now able to “understand.”⁴⁷ The same statement by the son follows.⁴⁸ Once they receive the illumination and the vision of the Eighth and the Ninth, a blurring between subject and

43 I am referring to the expressions “if you hold in mind” (52.12, ΕΩΧΕ ΚΡ ΠΜΕΕΥΕ) and “with all our mind and all our heart and all our soul” (55.11–13, ΞΜ ΠΕΝΗ[Ε] ΕΥΕ ΤΗΡQ ΜΝ ΠΕΝΖΗΤ ΤΗΡQ ΜΝ ΤΕΝΥΧΗ). Cf. Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 52.3, 55.12, 58.4–5, 58.15, 58.21, 58.27, 58.28, 60.27, 60.30, 61.31.

44 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 61.31–62.1.

45 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 59.33–60.1.

46 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 59.1–7.

47 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 58.4–5, 15–16, 21–22.

48 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 58.27–28.

object is described by the Platonic metaphor in which God's spirit is the plectrum with which He plays the instrument of the soul:

ΕΤΒΕ ΠΑΙ ΠΑΝΟΥΣ ΟΥΩΩ ΡΕΥΜΝΕΙ ΕΡΟΚ Μ ΜΗΝΕ· ΔΝΟΚ ΠΕ ΠΟΡΓΑΝΟΝ
ΜΠΕΚΠΝΑ· ΠΝΟΥΣ ΠΕΚ ΠΛΗΚΤΡΟΝ· ΠΕΚΦΟΧΝΕ ΔΕ ΡΨΑΛΛΕΙ ΜΜΟΕΙ· †ΝΔΥ
ΕΡΟΕΙ ΔΕΙΧΙ ΒΟΜ ΝΤΟΟΤΚ Δ ΠΕΚΜΑΕΙΕ ΓΑΡ Τ[Ε]ΖΑΝ

Therefore my mind wants to sing a hymn to you daily. I am the instrument of thy spirit; Mind is thy plectrum. And thy counsel plucks me. I see myself! I have received power from thee. For thy love has reached us.⁴⁹

With regard to the second term, “spirit” or *pneuma* is recurrently used to describe the medium by means of which God enacts His activity in the world, the means through which God's *dynamis* reaches the individual. God is consequently at the same time *causa efficiens* and *causa finalis*.⁵⁰ On the one hand, He attracts the reality below Him, as the Aristotelian Unmoved Mover. On the other hand, He reaches the furthest corners of the world with His energy (*dynamis*), granting life to everything, and protecting the world with His providence (above). In this sense, we can safely affirm that there is no actual third element in the human being. Both mind and spirit are exclusive attributes of the divine, and if humans attain them it is only because of divine grace.

Other aspects of the Discourse also show that the text presents a clear bipartite anthropology. As I just mentioned, the term *nous* is reserved for the divine Mind. Furthermore, I should add that in a couple of passages the Discourse refers to *souls that have attained the ogdoad*.⁵¹ This is something one does not expect in a tripartite context, where only intellects are accepted into the divine realm, while souls remain in the heavenly sphere.⁵² As I have explained elsewhere, bipartite and tripartite views of the human being imply quite different conceptual backgrounds.⁵³ Most importantly, tripartite anthropologies oppose the intellect to the complex body-soul: while the former, in line with Aristotle, is divine and everlasting, the latter cluster is subject to processes of generation and corruption and dissolves after death. Given its change in status, the soul is no longer that which allows individuals to reach God but, more often than not, the obstacle that hinders human aspirations to the divine. In their ascent

49 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 60.27–61.2. See Plut., *Def. orac.* 436F; *Pyth. orac.* 402B in reference to SVF I, 502.

50 See Roig Lanzillotta 2014, 345–367.

51 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 56.1–2, 59.29–30.

52 See Roig Lanzillotta 2020, 120–21.

53 Roig Lanzillotta 2017, 26, 32–33, 33n72–n73.

during life or after death, consequently, souls do not trespass the hebdomad but dissolve in advance, either on the moon or in the astral sphere.

In addition, the cosmology of the text seems to support the bipartite interpretation of its anthropology. Even if distinguishing between a physical realm, the hebdomad, and a divine realm, the Discourse actually groups these three realms into two basic regions. The lower realm is described as the realm of the four elements;⁵⁴ the intermediate region of the *heimarmene* is the realm of the seven *ousiarches* or “seven rules of substance” in the translation of Dirkse, Brashler, and Parrot, while the divine region is the ogdoad and the Ninth.⁵⁵ However, it seems clear that the lower realm and hebdomad are grouped together and conceived of as belonging to God’s creation.⁵⁶ Consequently, there is no opposition between the earthly and celestial realms, which is characteristic of tripartite schemes. In fact, both regions are seen as a continuum and are only contrasted with the divine above. In this sense, cosmology exactly replicates anthropology.

3.2 *The Prayer of Thanksgiving (NHC VI,7)*

Immediately following the Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth, the Prayer of Thanksgiving is a short text that occupies pages sixty-three to sixty-five of the same Nag Hammadi Codex VI. In addition to the Coptic translation of the Prayer, we also have preserved Greek and Latin versions.⁵⁷ The Greek text is included in what is called the Papyrus Mimaut (Paris, Louvre, Papyrus 2391) col. XVIII, 591–611 (*PGM* III 591).⁵⁸ The Latin text appears as a conclusion of the Latin version of Asclepius (41b) of the Corpus Hermeticum, which according to Mahé can be considered a paraphrase of the Perfect Discourse, the name by which both Lactantius and Stobaeus knew this text.⁵⁹ Mahé published a synoptic edition of all three versions of the text that facilitates comparison.⁶⁰

In contrast to the previous text, the Prayer is preserved almost completely and includes, as its incipit announces, a prayer of thanksgiving for the gift of a revelation similar to that described in the Discourse. Despite the independent text’s transmission, we may consequently expect a conceptual relationship between both the Discourse and the Prayer, and this is indeed what happens.

54 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 63.17–19.

55 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 62.27. See Festugière 1967, 121–130. Dirkse, Brashler, and Parrott 1979a, com. ad 63.19.

56 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 57.14–18.

57 Tröger 1973, 497.

58 Preisendanz 1973, 56–59.

59 Mahé 1974, 54.

60 Mahé 1978, I: 157–67.

The very first lines of the Prayer already refer to souls being lifted to God (“lifted to Thee”), which seems to imply an anthropological framework in which souls, and not intellects or spirits, are allowed into the divine abode. From the outset, this seems to imply a bipartite rather than a tripartite anthropology.⁶¹

The Prayer of Thanksgiving is interesting because it may help us to complete numerous aspects not included in the Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth. Whereas the latter text focused especially on the soul and the laborious process of purification that prepares it for revelation, the Prayer focuses on what precedes and follows the revelation proper, in this way shedding important light on aspects that were not specifically dealt with in the Discourse. Thus, for example, the Prayer explicitly emphasizes that God is not only *causa finalis* – the divinity toward which all reality tends – but also as *causa efficiens*, since it is God’s love, affection, and goodness that explain the gift He liberally grants the neophyte:

ὦ ΠΑΡΑΝ ΕΥΡΕΝΩΧΛΕΙ ΝΑΨ ΑΝ· ΕΥΤΑΕΙΑΕΙΤ ΖΝ ΤΟΝΟΜΑCΙΑ ΜΠΝΟΥ[Τ]Ε·
 ΑΥΩ ΕΥCΜΟΥ ΕΡΟΥ ΖΝ ΤΟΝΟΜΑCΙΑ ΜΠΩ[Τ] ΧΕ ΨΑ ΟΥΟΝ ΝΙΜ· ΑΥΩ ΨΑ
 ΠΤΗ ΡΨ· ΤΕΥΝΟΙΑ ΜΠΕΙΩΤ ΜΝ ΠΜΕ ΜΝ ΠΟΥ{ΟΥ}ΩΨ· ΑΥΩ ΕΨΧΕ ΟΥΝ
 ΟΥCΒΩ ΕCΖΑΛΕC ΕCΟ ΝΖΑΠΛΟΥC· ΕCΡΧΑΡΙΖΕ ΝΑΝ ΜΠΝΟΥC ΜΠΛΟΓΟC Ν
 ΤΤΝΩCΙC ...

O undisturbed name, honored with the name, “God,” and praised with the name, “Father,” for to everyone and everything (comes) the fatherly kindness and affection and love, and any teaching there may be that is sweet and plain, giving us mind, speech, and knowledge ...⁶²

It is His goodness and gracious sharing that allows people to come to know Him, by providing rationality in the form of understanding, speech, and knowledge.⁶³ Moreover, this is so because the text clearly conceives of God as “intellectual light.”⁶⁴

3.2.1 Anthropological Elements in the Prayer of Thanksgiving

As far as the anthropology of the text is concerned, the Prayer is comparable to the Discourse. The text establishes a sharp distinction between the body,

61 See on the issue, pp. 11–12 above. See also Roig Lanzillotta 2020, 25–27.

62 Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 63.36–64.10 Translation according to Dirkse, Peter A., and James Brashler 1979b.

63 Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 64.30, 64.9–14.

64 Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 64.23.

which is seen as the visible and external personality, and the soul, conceived of as the human being's interiority.

The Body. The physical body clearly forms an obstacle to the knowledge of God. The text praises God for granting knowledge of Him even while the individual is still in a body:

τῆρα γε νταρῆχι οὐοειν εἴν τεκνῶσις· τῆρα γε δε ἀκτσεβον εἶοκ·
τῆρα γε δε ἐνεῖν σῶμα ἀκααν ἡνοῦτε εἴν τεκνῶσις

We rejoice, having been illumined by Thy knowledge. We rejoice because Thou hast shown us Thyself. We rejoice because while we were in (the) body, Thou hast made us divine through Thy knowledge.⁶⁵

We may say that the text clearly conceives of this revelation as an out-of-body experience. What was implicit in the Discourse is explicitly stated here with an exclamation of joy: "We rejoice because while we were in (the) body, Thou hast made us divine through Thy knowledge."⁶⁶ This expression of joy is similar to that we find in the Corpus Hermeticum 13.8: "To us has come knowledge of god, and when it comes, my child, ignorance has been expelled. To us has come knowledge of joy, and when it arrives, grief will fly off to those who give way to it."⁶⁷ In the Prayer, assimilation to the divinity, divinization, is equated to the uninterrupted possession of this knowledge of the divine, something which is apparently not granted automatically or forever. At least this is what one may conclude from the petition included later on in the Prayer:

οὐω γε οὐωτ πετῆραιτεῖ ἡμοῦ· ἐνοῦω εἶρεῦ τῆρει ἡμον εἴν
τῆνωσις· οὐαρεῖ δε οὐωτ πετεν οὐωῦ εἶτῆρενσλαατε εἴν πειβιος
ντ[μ]ινε·

There is one petition that we ask: we would be preserved in knowledge. And there is one protection that we desire: that we not stumble in this kind of life.⁶⁸

65 Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 64.15–19.

66 Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 57.28–30.

67 Cf. Bull 2018, 272; Cumont 1973, 2:154, who compares it to Mithraic exclamation made to a newly initiated "bridegroom" (nymphus), the second initiatory grade: "Hey, bridegroom! Rejoice, bridegroom! Rejoice, new light!"

68 Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 64.31–65.2.

seat of mind, speech, and knowledge. However, it is also the seat of the passions that inhabit the irrational part and may endanger reason's control. If the soul's internal structure is in good balance, rationality maintains control without problem. Passions, however, may break this balance, thereby risking the individual's spiritual achievements.

On the other hand, there is an external threat, namely, a combination of both physical urges and influences from the world. As we will see in Asclepius, passions have their origin in matter and the latter's connection with the body exposes the soul to continuous pressure. The inflow proceeding from the outside can endanger the soul's natural or achieved internal balance and rationality's leading role in the choice of what is good for the individual.

3.2.2 Bipartite Anthropology in the Prayer of Thanksgiving

From an anthropological perspective, it seems obvious that the capacity for understanding, sometimes called *nous* or "intellect," should not be seen as an independent human part or element in its own right. Rather, it is a part of the soul that is activated by means of divine intervention, by means of *pneuma* or "spirit" spreading divine *dynamis* in the world and bringing it to the initiated. It is God's gift that allows humans to develop that which can make them divine. This process of divinization by means of divine knowledge elevates the status of the soul, allowing it to reach God. Admittedly, the body and the world can frustrate this promotion, but this does not amount to a complete rejection of matter.

Despite the fact that both body and the world may endanger the individual's spiritual achievements, the Prayer is far from presenting an anti-cosmic dualism condemning matter. Rather, it is a mild form of dualism, as can be seen in the fact that divine knowledge can even reach individuals while still in their body, despite the latter having an obvious secondary nature.⁷⁴ This mild dualism is in accordance with the fact that God is considered Father and creator of every creature. God's physicalist description as a "womb," pregnant with everything that exists, including the cosmos and the nature of the Father, seems to imply a cosmological monism with no room for a condemnation of matter:

Ω ΤΗΗΤΡΑ ΝΧΟ ΝΗ ΔΝΟΥ ΩΝΕ Ω ΤΗΗΤΡΑ ΕΤΧΠΟ ΖΝ ΤΦΥCΙC ΜΠΩΤ
ΔΝΟΥΩ ΝΕ Ω ΠΜΟΥΝ ΕΒΟΛ ΩΔ ΕΝΕΖ

74 Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 64.18–19; Mahé 1978, 1:148.

O womb of every creature, we have known Thee. O womb pregnant with the nature of the Father, we have known Thee.⁷⁵

This monism coincides with the cosmological background we described in the analysis of the Discourse. There is no opposition between divine and earthly regions, since the goodness of the Father reaches even the remotest corners of creation.

3.3 *Asclepius* (NHC VI,8)

The fragment of *Asclepius* (21–29) is the eighth text in Nag Hammadi Codex VI, where it occupies pages sixty-five to seventy-eight. Of the three Hermetic texts included in the codex, its material condition is the worst.⁷⁶ It includes the Coptic version of chapters 22–29 of *Asclepius*, or *Perfect Discourse*, a text originally written in Greek but preserved in complete form only in an expanded Latin translation. Together with the Latin version, we also have three Greek fragments. The first is preserved by Lactantius and provides a parallel to *Asclepius* 73.23–74.2;⁷⁷ the second appears in Stobaeus, who includes a fragment of *Asclepius* 72.2–15;⁷⁸ the third is preserved both by Lactantius and Cyril of Alexandria and offers an addition to *Asclepius* 78.43, also preserved in paraphrase form in the Latin *Asclepius*.⁷⁹

Asclepius includes a dialogue between the neophyte, *Asclepius*, and *Hermes Trismegistus* that shows similarities with the text of the *Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth*, in the sense that it also provides instructions in cultic practice. The text begins with a comparison of the mystery with sexual intercourse. Contrary to what one might expect for a text included in the Nag Hammadi corpus, *Asclepius* presents a rather positive view of sexuality, inasmuch as the exchange between parties involves each one giving something and receiving something.⁸⁰ At the same time, *Asclepius* presents a strong dualistic worldview. Even if the cosmos is the product of the one loving God and as such is a clear unity, numerous binaries structure the author's conception of the world.⁸¹ Gods/humans, pure matter/simple part of matter, mortal/immortal, good/evil, words/deeds, pious/impious are only some of the frequent pairs of

75 Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 64.25–28.

76 Dirkse and Parrott 1979c, 395.

77 Lact., *Inst.* 7.18.4. See Mahé 1978, II: 147.

78 Stob. 14.52.47 = Asc. NHC VI,8 76.2–15. Mahé 1978, II: 147–48.

79 Lact., *Inst.* 2.15.6; Cyril Al., *Contra Iulianum*, p. 130 E, PG 76, 701. See Mahé 1978, II: 148.

80 Asc. NHC VI,8 65.15–34; DeConick 2001, 225–61 (here 250–52).

81 Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 72.10–11; 73.23–30.

contraries by means of which the author presents his view of reality.⁸² As was to be expected, the binary approach also dominates the anthropological views that one can extract from the text.

When compared to the anthropology of the two previous texts analyzed in this study, things do not change much, since the anthropological views of Asclepius are clearly bipartite. The text declares this openly, distinguishing humans from the Gods as having a dual nature. Humans are both mortal and immortal: mortal because of the body and immortal because of the soul. As the Coptic Asclepius states: “For He (God) created a two-fold nature for him (man): the immortal and the mortal” (ⲁⲩⲧⲁⲙⲓⲉ ⲫϣⲥⲓⲥ ⲙⲓⲛⲧⲉ ⲅⲁⲣ ⲛⲁⲩⲧⲁⲧⲙⲟⲩ ⲁⲗⲱ ⲧⲉⲧⲉⲣⲱⲁⲥⲙⲟⲩ).⁸³ Even more explicitly, the complete Latin version of the Asclepius in the Corpus Hermeticum describes the former as the “material part” (ὕλικός), which is formed out of the four elements, and the latter as the “essential” (οὐσιώδης) part, which is simple and divine:⁸⁴

Solum enim animal homo duplex est; et eius una pars simplex, quae, ut Graeci aiunt, οὐσιώδης, quam uocamus diuinae similitudinis formam; est autem quadruplex, quod ὑλικόν Graeci, nos mundanum dicimus, e quo factum est corpus, quo circumtegitur illud, quod in homine diuinum esse iam diximus, in quo purae mentis diuinitas tecta sola cum cognatis suis, id est mentis purae sensibus, secum io ipsa conquiescat tamquam muro corporis saepta.

Mankind is the only living thing that is twofold: one part of him is simple, what the Greeks call *ousioudes*, what we call a form of divine likeness. What the Greeks call *hulikos* and we call earthly is fourfold. From it is made the body that covers over what we have already termed divine in mankind; it covers the divinity of pure mind, which rests alone with its kindred, the thoughts of pure mind, at peace with itself as if sheltered by a wall of body.⁸⁵

82 Asc. NHC VI,8 69.23–27 (Gods/humans); 69.13–19 (matter); 67.32–34, 68.4–5 (mortal/immortal); 73.28–30 (good/evil); 65.36 (words/deeds); 66.2–4 (piety).

83 Asc. NHC VI,8 67.32–34.

84 See Nock and Festugière 1960, 256–401. Man's duality in Asc. 7 (304.2–6 N-F); 8 (305.15–306.2 N-F); 11 (309.5–6 N-F); 22 (324.18 N-F).

85 Copenhagen 1992, 70–71.

3.3.1 Anthropological Elements in Asclepius

The Body. Unlike the soul, the body attaches humans to the earth and is that which distinguishes mortals from immortals. While Gods are heads only, humans also need to cope with a body formed by several members that keep them attached to the physical world and have a heavy influence on their souls.⁸⁶ This is due to the passions, which according to Asclepius do not have their origin in the soul, but in the body. If Gods are made of pure matter, humans are made out of simple, defective matter, to which passions intrinsically belong.⁸⁷ However, in addition to this, as material creatures, humans necessarily need to feed themselves from matter, and this dependence creates a vicious circle at the level of the body, one that initiates the never-ending chain of inopportune desires:

[αϣκω θ]υλ[η] εζοϋν επταμιο μ[πρω]με μ[π[...].με· ωρεμ[μ]π[αθo]
 c ωω πε ρραϊ ν̄ρητ̄c· εβολ ρ̄μ παϊ ωαρωγρε̄τε ερραϊ εχ̄μ πεq cωμα·
 νεφναωωπε γαρ αν̄ κερητε ει μητι xε qχι ν̄τεϊ τροφη ν̄σι πεϊζωον
 ρωc εγρεqμοϋ πε· ταναγκη τε ετρεzenκεεπoθμια ωωπε ναq
 ν̄νατογοειω εγρ̄ ρ̄βλαπτεi

[Since] matter is involved in the creation of [man] of [], the passions are in it. Therefore they continually flow over his body, for this living creature would not exist in any other way except that he take this food, since he is mortal. It is also inevitable that inopportune desires, which are harmful, dwell in him.⁸⁸

Due to the continuous commerce with the body, passions and desires arise in the soul. It is humans' defective nature, the mortal part, that generates these passions and desires in such a way that they also manifest themselves in the irrational part of the soul. The first consequence of these the passions is the appearance of wickedness in the soul. The body, in this sense, is negative, but only insofar as it is responsible for the origin of the passions. We do not see here an extreme form of dualism that proclaims the annulment of the body. Rather, the focus of Asclepius is the healing of the soul, which is enacted by the curative function of learning and knowledge. As the text puts it: "Knowledge of the things which are ordained is truly the healing of the passions."⁸⁹

86 Asc. NHC VI,8 69.13–14, 69.19–22.

87 Stob. 1.49.44.

88 Asc. NHC VI,8 67.1–12.

89 Asc. NHC VI,8 66.9–12.

The Soul. Notwithstanding the positive view of creation and the cosmos, the dualistic undercurrent of Asclepius implies a lower appreciation of the body and the superiority of the “essential” part of the human.⁹⁰ It is this part that brings humans closer to the Gods, or rather what makes them Gods, as the text states.⁹¹ “God has willed that the inner man be created according to his image” (ΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΟΥΩΦΕ ΕΤΡΕΠΩ ΜΕ ΕΤ’ Ἰ ΠΣΑΝΘΟΥΝ ΤΑΜΙΟ ΚΑΤΑ ΠΕΦΤΟΝΤῆ).⁹² In line with the Latin Asclepius, which describes it as “divine,” “eternal,” and “substantial,” and asserts that it is through this part that the human ascends to heaven (parte, qua ex anima et sensu, spiritu atque ratione diuinus est, uelut ex elementis superioribus, inscendere posse uideatur in caelum ...),⁹³ the Coptic text conceives of the soul as the human’s only divine part. This portion makes humans akin to God (*suggenes*).⁹⁴

With regard to the inner structure of the soul, Asclepius makes explicit that which was only implicit in the Prayer of Thanksgiving: the soul consists of rational and irrational parts. While the former is the seat of learning and knowledge, the latter includes the passions that continuously threaten the individual’s wellbeing. In fact, learning and knowledge are divine gifts intended to counteract the influence of passions arising in humans due to their contact with the world and the body: “knowledge of the things which are ordained is truly the healing of the passions of matter.” Therefore, “learning is something derived from knowledge” (ΤΓΝΩΣΙΣ ΓΑΡ ΝΝΕΤΣΜΟΝΤ ΝΑΜΕ ΝΤΟΣ ΠΕ ΠΤΛΩΟ ΝΝΠΑΘΟΣ ΝΘΥΛΗ· ΕΤΒΕ ΠΑΙ ΤΕ ΠΙΣΤΗΜΗ ΟΥΕΒΟΛ Ζῆ ΤΓΝΩΣΙΣ ΤΕ).⁹⁵ Passions are the origin of evil, and lack of knowledge perpetuates its existence both in the world and in the soul.⁹⁶

As was also the case with the Prayer, here we see the echo of the Middle Platonic bipartition of the soul, according to which the rational part needs to maintain control over the irrational in order to avoid further deterioration of both soul and body. According to Asclepius, however, God should not be held accountable for the existence of evil, since he granted humans both learning and knowledge as an antidote to this.⁹⁷ “Wickedness remains among the

90 According to Gersh 1986, 379ff., this is due to Stoic influence.

91 On the Human-God, see 68.18. For human being’s divinization, see also CH 1.26, x.6, XIII.10; Disc. 8–9 NHC VI,6 61.17; Pr. Thanks. NHC VI,7 64.18–19.

92 Asc. NHC VI,8 69.23–25. On the “inner man,” see Dirkse and Parrott 1979c, 416 (note to 69.22–27).

93 Asc. CH 308.22–25 N-F.

94 Asc. NHC VI,8 68.6–12; Asc. CH 10 (309.3 Nock-Festugière), 22 (324.18 Nock-Festugière), 22 (323.25 Nock-Festugière), “divine,” Asc. 8 (CH) (306.4 Nock-Festugière), “eternal.”

95 Asc. NHC VI,8 66.9–11.

96 Asc. NHC VI,8 66.5–8.

97 Asc. NHC VI,8 66.23–24, 67.24–28.

many, since learning concerning the things that are ordained does not exist among them.”⁹⁸ If the soul lacks knowledge, passions persist in it, creating additional problems:

ἔωωπε ΔΕ ΟΥΝ ΟΥΜΝΤ ΔΤΣΟΟΥΝ ΜΝ ΟΥΕΠΙΣΤΗ ΜΗ ΩΟΟΠ ΔΝ ΖΝ ΤΨΥΧΗ
ΜΠΡΩ ΜΕ· ΦΑΡΕΜΠΑΘΟΣ ΩΩ ΝΖΗ ΤΣ ΕΜΝΤΕΥ ΤΑΛΩΟ· ΝΤΕΤΚΕ ΚΑΚΙΑ
ΩΩΠΕ ΝΝΗΔΥ ΜΠ ΣΜΟΤ ΝΟΥΣΑΩ ΕΜΝΤΕΥ ΤΑΛΩΟ· ΠΣΑΩ ΔΕ ΩΑΦΟΥΩΜ
ΝΣΑ ΤΨΥΧΗ ΝΣΡ ΦΝΤ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤΟΟΤΩ Ν ΤΚΑΚΙΑ ΝΣΡ ΣΨΒΩΩΝ·

But if there is ignorance, and learning does not exist in the soul of man, (then) the incurable passions persist in it (the soul). And additional evil comes with them (the passions) in the form of an incurable sore. And the sore constantly gnaws at the soul, and through it the soul produces worms from the evil and stinks.⁹⁹

Paying heed to the passions implies the appearance in the soul of a never-ending chain, a vicious circle in which individuals are continuously urged to placate ever-changing passions without ever finding complete satisfaction. This lack of fulfilment is aptly described as an incurable sore which, after producing worms, also stinks. This idea of the stinking soul, due to contact with the world and the passions, has a long Platonic tradition that can be traced back to the *Gorgias*.¹⁰⁰ As such, it appears for example in Plutarch's *De facie in orbe lunae*, where after their first death, while on the moon, souls release bad odors contracted from the body.¹⁰¹

However, the wickedness of the soul has far more serious consequences, since it may also influence its eschatological destiny. Once the union of the soul with the body ceases (below) and the soul leaves the body to ascend to heaven, a great demon judges them “in the middle of the air” to determine, on the basis of their way of life on earth, whether they deserve salvation or damnation:

ΟΥΝ ΟΥΝΟΣ ΝΔΔΙΜΩΝ ΩΟΟΠ ΔΠΝΟΣ ΝΝΟΥ ΤΕ ΤΟΩΩ ΕΦΕ ΝΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ
ΝΔΙΚΑΣΤΗΣ ΕΧΝ ΜΨΥΧΗ ΝΝΡΩΜΕ· ΔΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΔΕ ΚΑΔΩ ΖΝ ΤΜΗΤΕ ΜΠΑΗΡ
ΟΥΤΕ ΠΚΑΖ ΜΝ ΤΠΕ· ΖΟΤΑΝ ΩΕ ΕΡΕΩΔ ΤΨΥΧΗ ΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΝ ΣΩΜΑ ΤΑΝΔΓΚΗ

98 Asc. NHC VI,8 66.5–8.

99 Asc. NHC VI,8 66.13–22.

100 Plat., *Gorg.* 524DE, where souls in the afterlife show traces of the type of life they carried on earth; *Phaed.* 81B.

101 Plut., *Fac.* 943C, in which souls “purge and blow away the pollutions contracted from the body as from an evil odour.”

TE CNAOTΩHNT̄ EΠEΪ ΔΔIMΩN̄ N̄TEYNOȲ QHATKTE PEΪ N̄QHATOT̄Q̄ ΔΠCMAΤ
 N̄TAQ̄ ΔΔQ̄ Z̄M̄ PEQBIOC̄ EΩΩΠE ΔE EQHABINE M̄MOQ̄ EAQ̄P̄ NEQ̄ Z̄BHOYE
 THPOȲ Z̄N̄ OYMHNT̄ NOYTE N̄TAQEI EΠKOCMOC̄ ETBHHTOȲ. PAΪ QHAKAAQ̄ ...

There is a great daimon. The great God has appointed him to be overseer or judge over the souls of men. And God has placed him in the middle of the air between the earth and heaven. Now, when the soul comes forth from (the) body, it is necessary that it meet this daimon. Immediately he (the daimon) will surround this one (masc.) and he will examine him in regard to the character that he has developed in his life. And if he finds that he piously performed all of his actions for which he came into the world, this (demon) will allow him ...¹⁰²

Salvation is reserved for those who conduct virtuous lives. The souls of those who did not accomplish a pious way of life are not allowed through. Those with a lower degree of injustice are cast down into the region between heaven and earth to be punished, with a view to cleansing them from evil. These types of souls come “into the open sea of the air of the world, the place where there is a great fire, and crystal water and furrows of fire, and a great upheaval ... I will not say this is the death of the soul, for it has been delivered from evil ...”¹⁰³ A much worse destiny, however, awaits those souls that are “filled with much evil”:

M̄YXH ΓAP̄ EYMEZ̄ M̄ΠΩΔ̄ NKAKIĀ CENAΩE EĪ M̄MOOȲ AN̄ Z̄M̄ PAHP̄. AΛΛĀ
 EYNAKĀ ΔȲ Z̄N̄ N̄TOΠOC̄ N̄N̄ΔAIMΩN̄ NAΪ ET̄ MEZ̄ M̄MOKZ̄C̄. NAΪ NOYOEIΩ
 NIM̄ EYMEZ̄ NCNOQ̄ ZĪ ZETBĒ. AYΩ TOȲ ZPĒ ETĒ ΠPIMĒ PĒ M̄N̄ ΠNEZ̄ΠĒ M̄N̄
 ΠAΩEZOȲ. Ω ΠTPICMEICTOC̄ NIM̄ NĒ NAΪ Ω ΔCKΛHΠĒ NETĒ QAȲ MOYTĒ
 EP0OȲ NĒ ΔĒ N̄PEQΩCT̄ NĒ M̄N̄ NETĒ QAYCKOPK̄P̄ N̄N̄YXO0YĒ ZĪ ΔN̄
 NCIBET̄ EΠITN̄. M̄N̄ NETĒ QAȲ M̄ACTIΓOȲ M̄MOOȲ. M̄N̄ NETNOYX̄Ē EΠMOOȲ
 M̄N̄ NETNOYX̄Ē EΠKΩZ̄T̄ M̄N̄ NETĒ QAȲP̄ ZΩB̄ ANMOKZ̄C̄ N̄N̄ PΩMĒ M̄N̄
 NCYMHΦOPĀ.

“For the souls that are filled with much evil will not come and go in the air, but they will be put in the places of the demons, which are filled with pain, (and) which are always filled with blood and slaughter, and their food, which is weeping, mourning, and groaning.” “O Trismegistus, who are these (demons)?” “O Asclepius, they are the ones who are called

102 Asc. NHC VI,8 76.22–37.

103 Asc. NHC VI,8 77.15–27.

stranglers, and those who roll souls down on the dirt, and those who scourge them, and those who cast into the water, and those who cast into the fire, and those who bring about the pains and calamities of men.”¹⁰⁴

The lack of learning and knowledge in this type of soul, so important to control and subordinate the passions of the irrational part of the soul, implies evil's complete rule over the soul. “For such as these are not from a divine soul, nor from a rational soul of man. Rather, they are from the terrible evil.”¹⁰⁵ These souls cannot be saved and are destined to damnation.

3.3.2 Bipartite Anthropology in Asclepius

The anthropology of Asclepius seems to have a clear bipartite character. While it is true that the Latin text does include some references to the intellect and mind, the Coptic version of the text does not include a single reference to them.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, the Latin term *mens*, “mind,” mainly appears in the construction *pia mente*, “pious mind/understanding.” Notwithstanding this, none of the versions of Asclepius conceives of the mind as a separate entity, but rather as that part of the soul that, when properly enacted by divine learning and knowledge, restores the balance within the soul and helps the individual to lead a pious life.

Together with this absence of a third element, we see the polar opposition of soul-body that we saw in the other two Hermetic treatises of the Nag Hammadi corpus. While the soul is that which makes humans divine, the body tends to hinder human development, bringing them closer to the lower animals. This bipartition is also visible in the eschatological views of the text, which discriminate between humans not on the basis of their possessing or lacking an intellect as a third anthropological element, but rather on the basis of the presence or absence of knowledge *in* the soul. Those souls who use knowledge to control the passions and follow a pious life are allowed into heaven. In contrast, those without knowledge may develop a mild form of evil, curable in “the middle of the air,” or a more serious form of injustice, which is not curable and will only receive punishment.

The bipartite character of the text's anthropology, evident throughout the treatise, is also supported by its bipartite cosmology, which distinguishes two

¹⁰⁴ Asc. NHC VI,8 78.24–38.

¹⁰⁵ Asc. NHC VI,8 78.38–42.

¹⁰⁶ The Latin term for mind (*mens*) appears seven times in Asc. CH: 322,1, 324,5, 325,1, 325,4, 327,3, 329,11, 329,13.

basic realms, namely, heaven and earth, and does not refer to a third region between them. The Coptic Asclepius's eschatological views are clear about this cosmological bipartition, since the great demon that judges souls is placed by God "in the middle of the air between the earth and heaven." Only after the positive result will the demon give the soul its free pass to the celestial region, while those who do not achieve it will be cast down and "suspended between heaven and earth" to be punished.¹⁰⁷ Consequently, we see that the bipartite scheme governs not only the anthropology of the text but also its cosmology, eschatology, and soteriology, since it does not include a specific region to house the great demon.

4 Hermetic Anthropology in Nag Hammadi: Bipartite not Tripartite

On the basis of the previous analysis of the three Hermetic texts included in the Nag Hammadi corpus, we can safely affirm that these texts do not have a tripartite anthropology. As a matter of fact, the three Hermetic texts analyzed all include a bipartite anthropology. Tröger's assertion that Hermetic treatises, as a rule, include the same tripartite anthropology as do most Gnostic texts needs to be corrected, as here human beings consist exclusively of soul and body. Admittedly the treatises of the Corpus Hermeticum offer a richer panorama since parts of them include a tripartite pattern as well. However, the well-known third element to which also some Middle Platonists and some Nag Hammadi treatises attest is completely lacking in the Hermetic texts of Nag Hammadi Codex VI.

What previous studies have interpreted as a trichotomy is in fact a development of a basic Platonic bipartition opposing body to soul. As far as the human part that connects them with God is concerned – be it rationality, the intellect, or the spirit – it is clearly conceived of as a part of the soul and not as an element in its own right.¹⁰⁸ In fact, we may even detect the influence of Aristotle's notion of potentiality and actuality, since rationality appears to already exist in the soul but only as potential in need of actualization. The influence of the external realm and of the body is so strong that only divine intervention can awaken the soul from its torpor.

¹⁰⁷ ASC. NHC VI,8 76.22–37.

¹⁰⁸ For a nice description of the Platonic background of the Gnostic tripartite view of the human being with its *nous* or intellect as an element in its own right, see DeConick 2016, 61–62.

As in Plato's view, the body brings individuals closer to the lower animals, while the soul brings humans nearer to God. The difference is, however, that the soul, as such, is no longer enough to assure that human beings partake in the divine. Something extra is needed. Both divine intervention and human effort are now required to help souls attain the degree of perfection or purity necessary for the vision of the divine. This is due to the strong attraction that matter exerts on the soul and to the passions associated with the body, which may distract the soul from its goal, impeding its full development. However, when souls are receptive to the divine intervention, they may develop, by means of divine *pneuma* – as we saw in both the Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth and the Prayer of Thanksgiving, or by means of learning and knowledge in Asclepius – its rational part, such that it may perceive the divine.

The bipartite anthropology of the texts seems to be further confirmed by its bipartite cosmology that distinguishes heaven from earth but lacks a middle region separating them. As is well known from antiquity, anthropology seems to be conceived of in the light of the cosmological framework. Our interpretation of the anthropological and cosmological frameworks also seems to be confirmed by the theological monism of all three Hermetic treatises, which attribute the creation of the universe to one single God. And this also seems to be approved by the eschatology and soteriology of the texts discussed, which also follow the bipartite pattern.

Bibliography

- Armstrong, Arthur H. 1978. Gnosis and Greek Philosophy. Pages in 87–124 *Gnosis. Festschrift für Hans Jonas*. Edited by Barbara Aland. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Assmann, Jan. and Guy G. Stroumsa, eds. 1999. *Transformations of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions*. Studies in the History of Religions 83. Leiden: Brill.
- Bidez, Joseph. and Franz Cumont. 1973. *Les mages hellénisés: Zoroastre, Ostanès et Hystaspe d'après la tradition grecque*. 2 vols. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Böhlig, A. & F. Wisse, eds. 1975. *Nag Hammadi Codices III,2 and IV, 2, The Gospel of the Egyptian. The Holy Book of the Invisible Spirit*. The Coptic Gnostic Library. Nag Hammadi Studies 4. Leiden: Brill.
- Brown, S.K. 1991. "Prayer of Thanksgiving." *Coptic Encyclopedia* 6: 2007.
- Bull, Christian. 2018. The Tradition of Hermes Trismegistus. The Egyptian Priestly Figure as a Teacher of Hellenized Wisdom. Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 186; Leiden: Brill.

- Camplani, Alberto. 2000. *Scritti ermetici in copto. L'Ogdoad et l'Enneade. Preghiera di ringraziamento, Frammento del Discorso Perfetto*. Testi del Vicino Oriente antico; Brescia: Paideia Editrice.
- Camplani, Alberto 2000. Preghiera di ringraziamento. Pages 154–190 in *Scritti ermetici in copto. L'Ogdoad et l'Enneade. Preghiera di ringraziamento, Frammento del Discorso Perfetto*. Brescia: Paideia Editrice.
- Copenhaver, B. 1992. *Hermetica. The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a new English translation, with notes and introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dahl, N.A. 1981. The Arrogant Archon and the Lewd Sophia: Jewish Traditions in Gnostic Revolt. Pages 689–712. in *Rediscovery of Gnosticism*. Volume 2: Sethian Gnosticism. Edited by Bentley Layton. Studies in the History of Religions 41. Leiden: Brill.
- De Santis, C. 1987. “Gli scritti ermetici del sesto codice di Nag Hammadi.” *Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni* 11: 57–65.
- DeConick, A.D. 2001. “The True Mysteries: Sacramentalism in the ‘Gospel of Philip’” *Vigiliae Christianae* 55: 225–261.
- DeConick, A.D. 2016. *The Gnostic New Age. How a Countercultural Spirituality Revolutionized Religion from Antiquity to Today*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dirkse, Peter A., James Brashler, and Douglas M. Parrott. 1979a. The Discourse on the Eighth and the Ninth. Pages 341–373 in *Nag Hammadi Codices V, 2–5 and VI with Papyrus Berolinensis 8502, I and 4*. Edited by Douglas M. Parrott. Nag Hammadi Studies 11. Leiden: Brill.
- Dirkse, Peter A., and James Brashler. 1979b. The Prayer of Thanksgiving: VI, 7: 63, 33–65, 7. Pages 375–387 in *Nag Hammadi Codices V, 2–5 and VI with Papyrus Berolinensis 8502, I and 4*. Edited by Douglas M. Parrott. Nag Hammadi Studies 11. Leiden: Brill.
- Dirkse, Peter A., and Douglas M. Parrott. 1979c. Asclepius 21–29. Pages 395–452 in *Nag Hammadi Codices V, 2–5 and VI with Papyrus Berolinensis 8502, I and 4*. Edited by Douglas M. Parrott. Nag Hammadi Studies 11. Leiden: Brill.
- Festugière, A.-J. 1967, *Hermétisme et mystique païenne*. Paris: Aubier-Montaigne.
- Filoramo, Giovanni. 1999, The Transformation of the Inner Self in Gnostic and Hermetic Texts. Pages 137–149 in *Transformations of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions*. Edited by Jan Assmann and Guy G. Stroumsa. SHR 83. Leiden: Brill.
- Förster, Niclas. 2004. Zaubertexte in ägyptischen Tempelbibliotheken und die hermetische Schrift ‘Über die Achtheit und Neunheit’. Pages 723–737 in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium: Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden 2000*. Edited by Mat Immerzeel and Jacques van der Vliet. OLA 133. Leuven: Dudley.
- Gersh, S. 1986. *Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism: the Latin Tradition*, vol. 1. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

- Hanegraaff, W. 2008. "Altered States of Knowledge: The Attainment of Gnosis in the Hermetica." *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 2: 128–163.
- Howard, C.D.C. 1990. "Prayer of Thanksgiving." *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*: 704.
- Immerzeel, Mat, Jacques van der Vliet, Maarten Kersten, and Carolien van Zoest, eds. 2000. *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium: Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden, 27 August–2 September, 2000*. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 133. Leuven: Peeters.
- Jackson, H.M. 1992. "Thanksgiving, The Prayer of." *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6:441.
- Langerbeck, Hermann. 1967. *Aufsätze zur Gnosis. Aus dem Nachlaß herausgegeben von Hermann Dörries*. AAWG Phil-hist. 3.69. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Lewy, Hans. 1978. *Chaldean Oracles and Theurgy: Mysticism, Magic and Platonism in the later Roman Empire*. Nouv. Éd. Cairo: Institute Français d'Archéologie Orientale.
- Logan, Alastair H.B. 1996. *Gnostic Truth and Christian Heresy: a Study in the History of Gnosticism*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark.
- Luttikhuisen, Gerard P. 1997. "The Thought Pattern of the Gnostic Mythologizers and their Use of Biblical Traditions" Pages 89–101 in *The Nag Hammadi Library after Fifty Years: Proceedings of the 1995 Society of Biblical Literature Commemoration*. Edited by J.D. Turner & A. McGuire. Leiden: Brill.
- Mahé, Jean-Pierre. 1974. "Le sens et la composition du traité hermétique, 'L'Ogdoad et l'Enneade', conservé dans le codex VI de Nag Hammadi." *RSR* 48: 54–65.
- Mahé, Jean-Pierre. 1974. "La prière d'actions de grâces du codex VI de Nag -Hammadi et I^{er} discours parfait." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 13: 40–60.
- Mahé, Jean-Pierre. 1978. *Hermès en Haute-Égypte*. Bibliothèque Copte De Nag Hammadi; Québec: Les presses de l'Université Laval.
- Mahé, Jean-Pierre. 1983 "Hermes Trismegiste et Nag Hammadi." *Histoire et Archeologie* 70: 34–43.
- Mahé, Jean-Pierre. 1991. "La voie d'immortalité à la lumière des *Hermetica* de Nag Hammadi et de découvertes plus récentes." *VC* 45: 347–375.
- Mahé, Jean-Pierre. 1998. A Reading of the *Discourse on the Ogdoad and the Ennead* (Nag Hammadi Codex VI.6). Pages 79–86 in *Gnosis and Hermeticism from Antiquity to Modern Times*. Edited by Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff. New York: State University of New York.
- Mahé, Jean-Pierre. 2006. Accolade ou baiser? Sur un rite hermétique de régénération, ἀπαύξασθαι en NH VI, 57,26 et 65,4. Pages 577–566 in *Coptica – Gnostica – Manichaica. Melanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk*. Edited by Louis Painchaud and Paul-Hubert Poirier. BCHN.É 7. Québec: Les presses de l'Université Laval.
- Mahé, Jean-Pierre. 2007. L'Ogdoad et l'Ennéade. Pages 935–971 in *Ecrits gnostiques: La bibliothèque de Nag Hammadi*. Edited by Jean-Pierre Mahé and Paul-Hubert Poirier. Paris: Gallimard.

- Mahé, Jean-Pierre and Jean-Pierre Mahé, eds. 1996. *Le Témoignage véritable* (NH IX, 3). *Gnose et martyr*. Quebec/Louvain-Paris: Les Presses de l'Université Laval/Peeters.
- Majercik, Ruth D. 1989. *The Chaldean Oracles*. Studies in Greek and Roman Religion, Vol. 5; Leiden: Brill.
- Merlan, Philip. 1967. "From Plato to Plotinus," Pages 73–75 in A.H. Armstrong, *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Nock, A.D. and A.J. Festugière, eds. 1960. *Corpus Hermeticum*, vol. 2: *Traité XIII–XVIII; Asclépius*. Paris: société d'édition Les Belles Lettres.
- Painchaud, Louis, Paul-Hubert Poirier, and Wolf-Peter Funk, eds. 2006. *Coptica, Gnostica, Manichaica: Mélanges Offerts À Wolf-Peter Funk*. Bibliothèque Copte De Nag Hammadi. Section "études" 7. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Parroti, D.M. 1979. The Scribal Note: VI, 7a: 65, 8–14. Pages 389–393 in *Nag Hammadi Codices V, 2–5 and VI with Papyrus Berolinensis 8502, I and 4*. Edited by Douglas M. Parrott. Nag Hammadi Studies 11. Leiden: Brill.
- Preisendanz, K. 1973. *Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, vol. 1. Stuttgart: Teubner.
- Roig Lanzillotta, Lautaro. 2007. "One Human Being, Three Early Christian Anthropologies." *Vigiliae Christianae* 61: 414–444.
- Roig Lanzillotta, Lautaro. 2014. The Divine Father in the Gospel of Truth (NHC I,3): God as *causa efficiens* and *causa finalis*. Pages 345–367 in *The Divine Father Religious and Philosophical Concepts of Divine Parenthood in Antiquity*. Edited by F. Albrecht & R. Feldmeier. Leiden: Brill.
- Roig Lanzillotta, Lautaro. 2016. Anthropological Views in Nag Hammadi: the Bipartite and Tripartite Conceptions of Human Being. Pages 136–153 in *The Development of a Dualistic Anthropology in Early Judaism and Christianity, and their Umwelts*. Edited by J. van Ruiten & G.H. van Kooten. Leiden: Brill.
- Roig Lanzillotta, Lautaro. 2017. "Spirit, Soul and Body in Nag Hammadi Literature: Distinguishing Anthropological Schemes in Valentinian, Sethian, Hermetic and Thomasine Texts." *Gnosis: Journal of Gnostic Studies* 2: 15–39.
- Roig Lanzillotta, Lautaro. 2019. Ciencia y Religión en la Cosmología antigua. El caso del Corpus Hermeticum y de la Biblioteca de Nag Hammadi. Pages 929–955 in *Plutarco, entre dioses y astros. Homenaje al profesor Aurelio Pérez Jiménez de sus discípulos, colegas y amigos*. Edited by F. Martos Montiel. Zaragoza: Pórtico.
- Roig Lanzillotta, Lautaro. 2020. The Apocalypse of Paul (NHC V,2): Cosmology, Anthropology, and Ethics. Pages 110–131 in *Gnostic Countercultures*. Edited by A.D. DeConick and L. Roig Lanzillotta. Leiden: Brill.
- Tröger, K.W. 1971. *Mysterienglaube und Gnosis in Corpus Hermeticum XIII*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.

- Tröger, Karl-Wolfgang. 1973. "Die sechste und siebte Schrift aus Nag-Hammadi Codex VI." *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 98: 495–503.
- Van den Broek, Roelof. 1986. Jewish and Platonic Speculations in Early Alexandrian Theology: Eugnostos, Philo, Valentinus and Origen. Pages 190–203 in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*. Edited by B.A. Pearson and J.E. Goehring. Philadelphia: Fortress.
- Van den Broek, Roelof. 2006. *Hermes Trismegistus. Pimander* 15. Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan.