

Matthijs den Dulk, *Between Jews and Heretics: Refiguring Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho* (Routledge Studies in the Early Christian World), London and New York: Routledge 2018, viii + 174 pp., ISBN 978-0-815-37345-2, £ 115 (hb).

*Between Jews and Heretics* advances a close reading of Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* as foundational both for the relation between early Christians and Jews and for the development of second-century Christian heresiology. In an overt resonance with the methodological innovation of Michael A. Williams' 1996 crucial *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category*, which suggested the label of "biblical demiurgical traditions" to describe the Nag Hammadi texts, Den Dulk proposes the term "demiurgical Christians" (or "demiurgists"), as a "heuristic device" to designate the main target of Justin's heresiological discourse (p. 114). Although Den Dulk regards Marcion of Synope as chief among the demiurgists, according to Justin, he also includes a cluster of groups, such as the Valentinians, Basilidians, and Saturnilians, who regarded the Jewish divinity as an inferior Demiurge. The author outlines the main features of these groups by corroborating Justin's own references in the *Dialogue* (*Dial.* 35.5 and 80), with mentionings by later heresiologists, such as Irenaeus of Lyon and Tertullian, and with a few Nag Hammadi texts, such as the *Apocryphon of John*.

Chapter 1, "Justin Martyr, Heresy Hunter," identifies the Christian apologist's heresiological endeavors, directed against the demiurgists, as early as in his *First Apology*, composed soon after 150 CE. Den Dulk suggests reading Justin's mention of the "so-called" Christians (1 *Apol.* 16.8-14) as a request to the imperial authority for their "prosecution or even persecution." He connects it directly to the short heresiological sketch of 1 *Apol.* 26 and its reference to Justin's earlier work on heresies, the *Syntagma*, now lost. What unites 1 *Apol.* 26 and the *Syntagma*, whose content the author partially reconstructs from Irenaeus' *Against Heresies* 1.30, is not only Justin's denouncement of Marcion's atheism, but more importantly, the red thread of divine imbalance, connecting Simon and Marcion to the Valentinians, and holding "that the Demiurge was not the Supreme God" (p. 25).

Moving to the *Dialogue with Trypho*, composed about a decade after 1 *Apol.*, the author takes up the question of its audience in Chapter 2 ("The Case for an Internal Audience"). Den Dulk revisits previous hypotheses regarding the intended readership of the *Dialogue*. He finds the "pagan hypothesis" to be irrelevant and he holds the "Jewish hypothesis," proposed by Theodore Stylianopoulos, to be insufficient. Without completely excluding the possibility of a Jewish readership, Den Dulk settles on the "Christian hypothesis," together with Tessa Rajak, but he narrows the intended readership to an "internal

audience,” possibly “a close-knit philosophical community” of students in Justin’s school. Den Dulk supports his argument with data from recent studies on ancient book history, to suggest that a work of the *Dialogue*’s considerable length must have been not only reproduced in small numbers, but also circulated in restricted, most likely, Christian circles. Following up, Chapter 3 (“The *Dialogue* as an Anti-heretical Text”) explores Justin’s debate with the “demiurgists” by comparing his composition to Book 4 of Irenaeus’s *Against Heresies*. Even when not referring directly to the “demiurgists,” the author argues, the parallels to their overt refutation in Irenaeus suggests that Justin’s selection of theological issues in his discussion with Trypho built up to the critique of “demiurgical exegesis” (p. 58).

The last two chapters prove seminal in Den Dulk’s understanding of Justin as full-blown heresiologist. Chapter 4 (“‘Heresy’ and the Composition of the *Dialogue*”) complicates the matter of a small, internal Christian audience by highlighting two related goals of Justin’s work: “evangelize Jews and attack demiurgists” (p. 69). Den Dulk aims at decreasing the tension between reading the *Dialogue* as an exclusively conversion textbook and regarding it as a Christian intra-debate by arguing that the “proof-from-prophecy” argument was relevant to both goals. The author supports his claim by exploring seemingly disparate features of the *Dialogue*. For instance, Justin’s unsuccessful attempts at converting his Jewish opponents are determined by Roman hostility, the influence of Jewish teachers, and by the wrongful appeal to conversion made from within the demiurgical camp. To the above, Den Dulk adds the role philosophical schools play in the *Dialogue*, alluded to but rejected due to the very Platonic structure of demiurgical argumentation. The most detailed and well-articulated part of the book, Chapter 5 (“In Favor of Heresiology”) presents Justin’s treatment of the “demiurgists” in *Dial.* 35.5 and 80.4 against the background of Greco-Roman notions of unity and dissent. Den Dulk holds that Justin regarded heresiology, in its anti-demiurgical attire, as the best suited way to convert Trypho and his friends to a version of Christian practices, palatable for a Jewish audience. The author justifies Justin’s choice of the heresiological discourse to appeal to Jews by presenting heresy not only as the fulfillment of a prophecy but also as similar, in its social structure, to the multiplicity of the philosophical schools and to seven previous Jewish heresies. Den Dulk further argues that pre-Justin Jewish heresiology is a Christian construct, most likely derived from the *Book of Acts*. In presenting Justin’s heresiology both as an apologetic project and as a hermeneutic device for converting Jewish audiences, Den Dulk depicts the Christian writer as a proponent of strictly exclusionary definition of *haireisis*.