

Docetism in the Early Church

Edited by
JOSEPH VERHEYDEN,
REIMUND BIERINGER,
JENS SCHRÖTER,
and INES JÄGER

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Mohr Siebeck

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The Quest for an Elusive Phenomenon

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This volume is dedicated to the memory
of our esteemed colleague Maarten J.J. Menken

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Abbreviations

ABG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
AncB	The Anchor Bible
AncBRL	The Anchor Bible Reference Library
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BDAG	W. BAUER – F. W. DANKER – W. F. ARNDT – F. W. GINGRICH, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i>
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETHL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BFChTh.M	Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie. Monographien
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BiTS	Biblical Tools and Studies
BK	Bibel und Kirche
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentary
BU	Biblische Untersuchungen
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	Biblische Zeitschrift
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CChr.SA	Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum
CChr.SG	Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca
CGL	The Coptic Gnostic Library
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
EBR	Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception
EC	Early Christianity
ECL	Early Christianity and Its Literature
EdF	Erträge der Forschung
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
Evangel	Evangel – The British Evangelical Review
EWNT	Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FTS	Frankfurter theologische Studien
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller

HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
Hist	Historia
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNT.S	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament. Supplement
HThK	Herders Theologischer Kommentar
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JAOC	Judaïsme ancien et origines du christianisme
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBTh	Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie
JECS	Journal for Early Christian Studies
JEH	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSNT.S	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
KAV	Kommentar zu den Apostolischen Vätern
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar
KuD	Kerygma und Dogma
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LThK	Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche
MBTh	Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	The New International Greek Testament Commentary
NT	Novum Testamentum
NTS	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NTA	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTAF	The New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers
NTM	New Testament Monographs
NTS	New Testament Studies
NTTS	New Testament Tools and Studies
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PL	Patrologia Latina
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
QD	Quaestiones Disputatae
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
REI	Revue des Études Islamiques
RevSR	Revue des sciences religieuses
RGG	Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SJTh	Scottish Journal of Theology
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum

StNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
StPatr	Studia Patristica
StUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SVF	Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum Neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
TENT	Texts and Editions for New Testament Study
ThHK	Theologischer Handkommentar
ThKNT	Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TWNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament
TynB	Tyndale Bulletin
VigChr	Vigiliae Christianae
VigChr.S	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAC	Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum
ZKG	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde von der Älteren Kirche
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik
ZThK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

Introduction

The present volume brings together a number of essays dealing with the origin and use of the concept of “Docetism” in studying early Christian texts. The larger part of the volume consists of a selection of papers that were read at an international colloquium held at Leuven, December 3–5, 2014. To these were added four essays selected from a two-session seminar on the same topic held at the Oxford Patristic Conference in August 2015. Together, the twelve essays give a fairly complete survey of the major problems at stake in past and current discussions on “Docetism.”

As is well-known, Docetism is an often used concept in scholarly literature for denoting a number of loosely connected or even quite different phenomena or doctrines mentioned in Christian writings of the first and second century (and later) that all have to do with defining the nature of Christ and the reality of the incarnation and of the passion of Jesus. “Docetists” is the name given by Ignatius of Antioch to such people that, in his opinion, ignore or deny the reality of the passion or the incarnation. However, the situation is more complex than that. The origins of the concept and the phenomena that hide behind it or are referred to with this term are diverse and often not easy to grasp. Thus, it is not certain that Ignatius was aiming at a particular group, nor that he used the label appropriately. Further, it is far from certain that there really existed anything like a docetic movement or tendency in earliest Christianity. A somewhat “under-developed” Christology (to our standards) does not for and by itself of necessity have to be “docetic.” This has led to “heroic” debates on whether particular ancient texts are or are not “docetic?” or may have in view such tendencies or opponents. Some scholars have argued that there never existed such a thing as Docetism and that it is all a modern construct. Others have argued for the contrary, often on the basis of the very same documents. In light of this, it is remarkable that until very recently there was monograph surveying early Christian literature apart from an unpublished PhD dissertation of almost sixty years ago. It is remarkable and in a sense also explainable, for what to look for in hunting down “Docetism” and where to start.

The colloquium addressed the topic mainly by focusing on the ancient documents themselves instead of staying on a purely theoretical or dogmatic level and by critically re-examining the historical contexts in which these were produced. In more than one instance this has once again revealed the hidden agendas that have guided modern scholars in their discussion of the phenomenon.

The opening paper by Allen Brent (King's College London) deals with methodological issues, in particular the question whether a minimalist or a maximalist approach should be favoured in defining ancient "Docetism." The former aims at minimising the effect Docetism may have had in early Christian debates, the other inversely tries to trace it in numerous documents, often finding evidence in places where many other scholars do not see a hint at Docetism. It says a lot on the evasive character of the phenomenon itself. Jörg Frey (Zürich) offers a very broadly documented survey of the many problems involved, starting from the role the concept played in Johannine studies and the problems of its definition, to continue then with a look at the assumptions that lie behind early Christology and how these are reflected in second-century writings. The second part of his essay critically presents various modes or forms of "docetic-like" Christology, including Pneuma Christology, Logos Christology, angelic and angelomorphic Christology and the partially related concepts of polymorph Christology and metamorphosis.

The majority of the speakers dealt with specific texts or texts corpora. Five essays have to do with biblical passages. Francis Watson (Durham) studies Paul's view on the suffering of Christ and its reception in early Christianity. Among the issues that are discussed are Ignatius' interpretation of 1 Cor 15 and the way this passage from Paul was read by the author of the *Treatise on the Resurrection* (or *The Letter to Rheginos*), a work of Valentinian origin, and by Marcion. Three essays deal with the gospels. Paul Foster (Edinburgh) studies a curious phenomenon – the accounts or predictions of a revelation of the risen Lord on earth. He briefly dwells on the concept of "Christophany" and its possible connection with docetic views, and then surveys relevant passages from the gospels that have a "Christophanic potential?" such as the Infancy Stories, Jesus' baptism, nature wonders (the stilling of the storm and the walking on the water), and, obviously, the Transfiguration and the resurrection appearances. Jens Schröter (Berlin) focuses on John's gospel, but also opens up the perspective already towards the Ignatius and other second-century authors. In the first part he deals with John's understanding of the Eucharistic traditions as reflected in John 6,51c–58; in the second part Schröter takes up the same topic with regard to Ignatius, adding to it also some comments on Irenaeus and the *Gospel of Philip*. Reimund Bieringer (Leuven) stays with John, but focuses on his passion narrative, in particular John 18–19, which present Jesus with features that are utterly human, yet also such ones that lift him beyond humanity and that have often been thought to be the characteristics that reflect Jesus' true nature. Finally, Maarten Menken, who sadly left us in the meantime, follows up with an essay in which he first tries to reconstruct the theological position of the "secessionists" John was fighting in his Epistles. He then asks if these views can be labelled "docetic" and concludes that they were indeed close to Ignatius' opponents.

Three contributors have been working on Ignatius. Alistair C. Stewart surveys scholarly opinions on Ignatius' opponent; these include unidentified groups

promoting a form of angel Christology or equally unidentifiable “phantasmal” docetists, but also Basilides and Cerinth. He then explores the possibility that the so-called *Epistula Apostolorum* reflects the same concerns as Ignatius about groups or tendencies that would endanger any form of unitive Christology. He ends by situating this kind of debates about the nature of Christ within a larger context of popular philosophy informed by Platonism. Paul Hartog proposes to compare Ignatius’ views in IgnSm 1 to Paul’s in Rom 1 (and a few other passages) and how this illustrates the way Ignatius has gone beyond Paul in trying to integrate “history” into the kerygma, something his opponents apparently were not prepared to do. Dominika Kurek-Chomycz (Liverpool) studies the formula “dying for” in the letters of Ignatius and in connection with his views on Jesus’ passion and the Eucharist as demonstrated in IgnSm 7:1. For Ignatius it is not Jesus’ death, but his death-through-suffering that makes his fate truly a salvific event and that in his view cannot be ignored or diminished in any way.

The two last contributions open the perspective beyond Ignatius. Taras Khomych studies the strange episode of Jesus’ “mystic” dance in *Acts of John* 94–96 in comparison with the image of the celestial chorus Ignatius introduces in IgnEph 19. He asks more specifically if any of these two episodes, or both, could have anything to do with local cultic traditions in Ephesus, or maybe even have been used as doctrinal markers. Winrich Löhr (Heidelberg) looks into the various forms and aspects of Valentinian and Basilidian Christology, and well beyond these. The former of these two “schools” developed (at least) two variants of soteriological Christology and shows traces of still more variation, in part geographically determined. The rich documentation Löhr has collected for the latter shows the great potential of their convictions on the polymorphism of the Saviour and the transmission or survival of some of this in Manichean and even in Muslim Christology.

This all too brief survey already indicates that readers are in for a long and variegated journey, one in which they will meet strange opinions and visit some rather less well known territory. But it probably also already points out that the territory we think we are familiar with remains something of a mystery. Indeed, the earliest texts – John’s gospel, his Epistles, Ignatius’ letters – remain quite a puzzle for the questions we are addressing, even after so much efforts have spent on them. It is clear that the issue as a whole, with its many aspects – from defining the concept of “Docetism” to giving it body in an historical context –, continues to raise more questions than we would perhaps have liked it. But maybe there is some truth in the saying that the point of traveling is in the journey itself rather than in the destination. One may discover new things, or see things in a new light, even when traveling familiar roads. This is in part what this volume is about: old words, concepts, and opinions looked at afresh.

The Editors

Can There Be Degrees of Docetism?

Allen Brent

Amongst others and most recently, Markus Vinzent has described both Valentinus and Marcion as positioning “Christ’s bodily constitution between the extremes of pure Docetism, according to which Jesus and his divinity could neither drink nor eat and pure creationism, according to which Jesus was nothing but a human being of flesh and bones.”¹ But before we begin attempting a classification of views on this basis, we must address three preliminary, methodological questions.

I. Methodological Considerations

The first question whether the term “Docetism” as the doctrines of docetists were the doctrines of an at least originally distinct group to be adopted by those whom Irenaeus calls “heretics” such as Valentinus, Basilides and Marcion, or whether it is a generic term that an individual member of such groups would own in addition to the particular name of the particular group to which he is committed. Is “docetist” in other words a term like “liberal,” “radical,” “fundamentalist” or “modernist” that required also a further indication of the name and membership of one of a number of particular groups to which this term might otherwise be applied?

And closely related to the question is a second one, namely whether those who are described as “docetists” with some clearly specified features (as in the description of Ignatius of Antioch) would recognise at least some fundamental features of this description as true of their own belief system. Or would they object and if so what form would their objection take and how in detail might they outline why they have been misrepresented? There are indeed problems with the term “Docetism” that are reflected in the difference of opinion between Michael Williams and Alastair Logan in which Williams sees “gnostic” as a generic term

¹ M. VINZENT, *Christ’s Resurrection in Early Christianity and the Making of the New Testament* (Farnham UK – Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2011), 101.

that Irenaeus' heretics would not recognise, whilst Logan insists that this term named an actual, original group.²

The third question is methodologically a far more fundamental one and one that affects the construction of the interpretative model within which the term "docetic" functions. We should I think at least examine the post-European Enlightenment assumptions on which the distinction between "reality" and "appearance" rests in the language-game that we have become accustomed to play. In the Lockean empiricist tradition as well as the Cartesian, duly synthesised and popularized in the public discourse of the 21st century in which we discuss such matters, an experience of an "illusion" or "phantasy" is the product of the theatre of the mind that misrepresents the "real" world beyond the mental theatre. That "real" world is the world of sense and sight, of the apprehension of particular objects that make certain events in the theatre of the mind true because the mental events mirror the physical ones. In such a perspective the docetist who denies that a certain figure is one of flesh and blood, can truly suffer, does not eat or drink, etc. is to relegate the image of that figure to the theatre of the mind and to deny any connection with an externally real world. That is the consequence of Cartesian dualism as well as Lockean sense data: there are only two alternatives, physical and real or mental and phantasy.

But to so state our post-Enlightenment assumptions in such terms is to immediate caution us on the application of such discourse to philosophical movement within Greco-Roman culture in the early centuries. Two caveats in particular should be registered here.

The first is that the culture particularly in which what is called "Gnosticism" flourished distinguished between different levels or orders of realities. To deny that Christ lived at the level or order of reality that is *σάρξ* is not thereby to deny that his existence was real. We must beware of the snare of the culture of the European Enlightenment that we have inherited in terms of which there are two and only two orders of reality, the first that is the objective world apprehended through our sense-organs, and the second is our apprehension of the objects of the theatre of the mind, and the problem of what can be really known is the problem of where and at what points the latter conforms to the former.

The second is perhaps a parallel with the problem of creation *ex nihilo* as a concept difficult for the Hellenistic philosophical mind to comprehend before Atticus and 2nd century Middle Platonism. Our Enlightenment view of ghostly images is that they have no real existence but exist simply in the minds of certain people: their appearances are merely fabrications of the theatre of the mind – nothing corresponds to them in reality. But for Plotinus, for example, *εἶδωλα*, like

² M. A. WILLIAMS, *Rethinking "Gnosticism": An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton NJ: PUP, 1996), 23–6; A. H. B. LOGAN, *Gnostic Truth and Christian Heresy: A Study in the History of Gnosticism* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996).

φαντασία and φάντασμα for Plato and Aristotle, represented a mental distortion of what was real or true rather than an object that had no existence at all. Plotinus calls a mental impression that encapsulated a real and transcendent form a τύπος that as such did not deceive: εἰδῶλα did deceive as distortions of transcendental real objects and not as products of the theatre of the mind.³ Nonnus describes the φάντασμα that Narcissus saw of himself in the water as “the shadowy image of his shape” (σκιοειδέα φάντασμα μορφῆς) rather than an Enlightenment “phantom of the mind.” What appeared was what was real in a distorted form rather than something whose existence was purely the product of an individual mind.

Let us explore therefore our initial hypothesis, namely that the distinction that we make between reality and appearance was in Hellenistic epistemology a distinction between different orders of reality rather than the Enlightenment distinction between an external world of objects and persons and the theatre of the individual mind possibly shared or possibly enjoyed by an individual alone.

II. The Issue at Stake: Differentiation between Reality and Appearance

Let us begin with what is held to be Ignatius of Antioch’s description and critique of Docetism that come closer to appearance as the theatre of the mind as an understanding of the Docetism phenomenon. If my hypothesis is correct, it will be hardly accidental that the particular conceptual register in which references to “Docetism” are interpreted by modern scholars in Irenaeus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, and Tertullian amongst others is found in the Ignatian letters: in the acceptance by modern scholars of the Ignatian definition as central to our understanding of what most other writers claim about Docetism is their acceptance of an Enlightenment understanding of the appearance–reality distinction.

Ignatius castigates those who “say that he suffered in appearance only” (τινες λέγουσιν τὸ δοκεῖν αὐτὸ πεπονθέναι) as “without belief” (ἄπιστοι) and as “atheists” (ἄθεοι). Furthermore he claims that they are what they apparently profess Christ’s body to be, “they exist in appearance only” (αὐτοὶ ὄντες τὸ δοκεῖν, IgnTrall 10:1; IgnSm 2). But we should note what the consequence of this was. It was not that they thereby ceased to exist in the external, real world but merely in the theatre of the mind. As a result of τὸ δοκεῖν ὄντες, they became very real but bodiless entities. It will happen to them in accordance with their thoughts as they become disembodied and spirit like (καὶ καθὼς φρονοῦσιν, καὶ συμβήσεται αὐτοῖς, οὔσιν ἄσωμάτοις καὶ δαίμονικοις).⁴

³ A. BRENT, *Ignatius of Antioch and the Second Sophistic: A Study of an Early Christian Transformation of Pagan Culture*, STAC 36 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 82–6.

⁴ IgnSm 2.

As such Ignatius is acknowledging two orders of reality on which it is possible to enjoy a real existence, though he privileges as more real a level of human existence in which flesh and spirit intermingle rather than are separate. Christ could exist as a “disembodied spirit” (δαμόνιον ἀσώματον) and after the resurrection he could well have been so identified by “Peter and his company” (τοὺς περὶ Πέτρον) had not Christ specifically denied that this was the case (IgnSm 3:2).

Ernst Käsemann once notoriously defended historical criticism on the grounds that it breaks through the Docetism that allegedly permeates the Christian community and overlays the Jesus of history with the Christ of faith with the result that the conclusions of orthodox Christianity become untenable.⁵ The problem with such an approach is, in addition to the objections raised by Adam, that our sources for the resurrection appearances are far closer to Docetism in the sense that I am defining it (and in the light of historical criticism) than the orthodox response to them. What docetic historical reflection has recorded and passed on seems prior to the orthodox exegesis of the same that is admittedly not historically based, and does not claim to be, at least from an Enlightenment perspective.

1. *The Resurrection according to Ignatius of Antioch*

Let us begin with this scene of the resurrection appearance to Peter and his group in the *Letter to the Smyrnaeans* (IgnSm 3:2). The resurrection is about touching the risen Lord so that they as beings of flesh could “intermingle with his flesh and blood” (κραθέντες τῆ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῷ αἵματι). This theme of union with the divine by an intermingling that leads to incorruption runs throughout Ignatius. For instance, the Magnesians are exhorted:

ἀλλ' ἐνώθητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τοῖς προκαθημένοις εἰς τύπον καὶ διδασχὴν ἀφθαρσίας.

Be united with the bishop and with those who are pre-eminent in forming the image and teaching of incorruption!⁶

They are to be united with the bishop and presbyters because in their subjection to the bishop there “might be both a fleshly and spiritual unity” (ἔνωσις ἢ σαρκική τε καὶ πνευματική).⁷ This remedying of a corruption inherent in matter at the

⁵ E. KÄSEMANN, ‘Vom theologischen Recht historisch-kritischer Exegese’, in *ZThK* 64/3 (1967), 259–81, here: 261; criticized by A. K. M. ADAM, ‘Docetism, Käsemann and Christology: Why Historical Criticism Can’t Protect Christological Orthodoxy’, in *SJTh* 49/4 (1996), 391–410.

⁶ IgnMagn 6:2.

⁷ IgnMagn 13:2: ὑποτάγητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ ἀλλήλοις, ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρὶ καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι τῷ Χριστῷ καὶ τῷ πατρὶ ἵνα ἐνωσις ἢ σαρκική τε καὶ πνευματική. Cf. also IgnMagn 7:1. Engl. transl. by A. ROBERTS, J. DONALDSON (eds.), *The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*, ANF 1 (Buffalo NY: Christian Literature Publishing, 1885), slightly altered: Be subject to the bishop, and to one another, as Jesus Christ to the Father, according to the flesh, and the

level of reality that is the σάρξ is the object therefore of the Eucharistic gathering with the threefold order. The Ephesians are to:

... συνέρχεσθε ἐν μιᾷ πίστει καὶ ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ ... εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ὑμᾶς τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ ἀπερισπάστῳ διανοίᾳ, ἕνα ἄρτον κλώντες, ὃ ἐστὶν φάρμακον ἀθανασίας, ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν ἀλλὰ ζῆν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ διὰ παντός.

... gather together in one faith and one Jesus Christ ... in your obedience to the bishop and presbyterate with an undisturbed mind, breaking one bread which is the remedy of immortality (φάρμακον ἀθανασίας), the antidote for escaping death (ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν) and living in Jesus Christ forever.⁸

But we should observe where this unity of flesh and spirit began. For Ignatius it began in the resurrection scene with Peter and his company, and their “co-mingling” (κραθέντες) with Christ’s flesh and blood that was salvific in that Christ:

μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἀνάστασιν συνέφαγεν αὐτοῖς καὶ συνέπιεν ὡς σαρκικός, καίπερ πνευματικῶς ἠνωμένος τῷ πατρί.

After the resurrection ate and drank together with them as one composed of flesh even though spiritually he was united with the Father.⁹

For Ignatius therefore the resurrection experience transcends time, place and history. Peter and his companions, in touching the flesh of the risen Christ, enter the timeless moment that continues in the liturgy of the Sunday Eucharist whose form with its threefold ministry continues the comingling of flesh and spirit begun with Christ’s resurrection.

We have here an anti-Docetism of sorts but hardly one of the same intensity as the Lukan insistence on Christ risen in the flesh whose appearances were limited and confined to forty days of a secularly understandable history, and duly organised in time and of space. Even though the risen Christ eats and drinks with them because he exists at the order of reality that is σάρξ, Ignatius’ description reads ambiguously. The reason that he eats and drinks is “on the grounds that he exists at the fleshly level,” or even “as though he were flesh” – ὡς σαρκικός – even though (καίπερ) in fact he was πνευματικῶς ἠνωμένος τῷ πατρί. But as I have said, the event does not last for forty days but mystically translates now into a timeless, Eucharistic, liturgical present in which past, present and future are fused into one: there is no Ascension after the forty days to bring continuing earthly existence in the flesh to an end.

In the light of this account, clearly Ignatius has no interest in pressing further any account of the resurrection as an event in space and time that needs limiting with an ascension. In this respect his account seems to represent a qualified

apostles to Christ, and to the Father, and to the Spirit; that so there may be a union both fleshly and spiritual!

⁸ IgnEph 20:2.

⁹ IgnSm 3:3.

Docetism, in which the risen Christ's eating and drinking applied only to the fleshly part of a Jesus that was in process of transformation by its spiritual union with God that was about to become a timeless Eucharistic moment.

2. The Resurrection according to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark

It is interesting to contrast Ignatius in this respect with the Gospel writers who rigorously impose a spatio-temporal and therefore carnal level of understanding of Christ's existence upon material that is by no means compatible with such an empiricistically rigorous definition.

Let us begin with the Matthaean account of Christ walking on the water. In reply to the disciples cry in fear: "It is a phantom!" (φάντασμα ἔστιν) Jesus does not any more than in Mark, Luke or John assert his corporeal humanity. He simply tell them: "Be strong" (θαρσεῖτε), It is I (ἐγώ εἰμι), be not afraid (μὴ φοβεῖσθε)!" (Mt 14:26). Jesus himself does not offer here, unlike in some other Gospel scenes, evidence of his existence at the level of the σάρξ. But the writer of Matthew's Gospel does offer evidence of Jesus' humanity in a scene unique to him in the Gospel narratives. The clear message of Peter walking with Christ on the water is that a figure walking on water should not be interpreted docetically, that is to say should not be interpreted as of a different level of reality to that of the σάρξ.

A being of flesh and blood such as Peter can also walk upon the water if he has faith. If his faith fails, if he is ὀλιγόπιστος, then he sinks. It is faith that secures the ability of human flesh to behave at a given level of reality, not the laws of nature that prevent human flesh from so functioning. Note in my last phrase the Enlightenment tendency in speaking of "laws of nature" and the desire to which I have not succumbed to add reference to "behaviour within a spatio-temporal framework." So much is our thinking set in our Enlightenment distinction between what exists in reality and what is simply projected internally in the theatre of the individual mind. But the discourse describing those in the ship is the discourse of multiple levels of reality: they "worship him" (προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ) affirming that he is a divine being, a θεοῦ υἱός. They appear to be extolling something more than a strong act of faith by an ordinary human being.

3. The Resurrection according to the Gospel of John

We pass on now to the Fourth Gospel, which itself professes to give us the most rigorously antithetical picture of incarnation that goes beyond any degree of Docetism: ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. But the λόγος who in this phrase "became flesh" is not described as "enfleshed" (ἔνσαρκος) as opposed to "without flesh" (ἄσαρκος) as was to be the case with such later writers as Irenaeus and the Hippolytan corpus. Irenaeus will specifically apply these terms to his exposition of

the Johannine Prologue as he will the verb σεσαρκῶσθαι. Here the verb describes expressly not simply the taking of flesh but the process of “becoming enfleshed.” In contrast σὰρξ ἐγένετο lacks that precision of meaning: does it not mean that the λόγος existed at the level of the flesh but otherwise was unaffected by it? Certainly this was the Valentinian conclusion that Irenaeus had to resist by the introduction of these new terms.

4. Evidence for “Docetists” in Irenaeus of Lyons

Irenaeus writes of the apparently general opinions of Marcion, Valentinus, and “certain Gnostics.”¹⁰ Irenaeus claims of every “Gnostic” that:

If anyone will examine the presuppositions (τὰς ὑποθέσεις) of them all, he will discover that they are introducing the Word of God and the Christ from above as without flesh (ἄσαρκος) and without suffering (ἀπαθής).

But on closer examination, he must distinguish a second group from the charge of pure appearance that we identify with the label “docetist”:

For some think that he appeared (πεφηνέναι) as a transformed human being (ἄνθρωπον μεταμορφωθέντα), but they assert that he was neither born nor was enfleshed (μὴ γεγεννησθαι δὲ μηδὲ σεσαρκῶσθαι), but others that he did not even receive the form of a human being (μορφήν αὐτὸν ἀνεληφέναι ἀνθρώπου).¹¹

However, apart from those who asserted an unsuffering fleshless form of a human being and those who asserted even more radically that he had no human form there was a third group.

The third group asserted that though the divine being, the Saviour that descended on Jesus at his baptism “was neither enfleshed nor suffered” (μὴ σεσαρκῶσθαι μηδὲ πεπονθέναι). But there was a fourth group:

¹⁰ Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 3,11,2: κατὰ δὲ Μαρκίωνα μὲν καὶ τοὺς ὁμοίους αὐτῷ (but according to Marcion, and those like him); Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 3,11,2: κατὰ δὲ ἐνίους τῶν γνωστικῶν (and according to certain of the Gnostics); Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 3,11,2: κατὰ δὲ τοὺς ἀπὸ Οὐαλεντίνου (but according to the followers of Valentinus); Engl. transl. by ROBERTS, DONALDSON (see note 7).

¹¹ Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 3,11,3: ἐὰν γὰρ τις τὰς ὑποθέσεις αὐτῶν πάντων διερευνήσῃ, εὐρήσει ὅτι ἄσαρκος καὶ ἀπαθής ὑπὸ πάντων αὐτῶν εἰσάγεται ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος καὶ ὁ ἄνωθεν Χριστός -οἱ μὲν γὰρ δοκοῦσι πεφηνέναι αὐτὸν ὡς ἄνθρωπον μεταμορφωθέντα, μὴ γεγεννησθαι δὲ μηδὲ σεσαρκῶσθαι λέγουσιν αὐτόν, οἱ δὲ μηδὲ μὴν μορφήν αὐτὸν ἀνεληφέναι ἀνθρώπου ... πάντας οὖν ἐκείνους ψευδομάρτυρας ἀποδεικνύων, ὁ μαθητὴς τοῦ Κυρίου φησίν- καὶ ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. Engl. transl. by ROBERTS, DONALDSON (see note 7): For if anyone carefully examines the systems of them all, he will find that the Word of God is brought in by all of them as not having become incarnate and impassible, as is also the Christ from above. Others consider Him to have been manifested as a transfigured man; but they maintain Him to have been neither born nor to have become incarnate whilst others [hold] that He did not assume a human form at all ... Therefore the Lord’s disciple pointing them all out as false witnesses, says, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

Some asserted that Jesus both was enfleshed and suffered from his human constitution (ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας), whom they say passed through Mary as though he were water through a tube.¹²

Irenaeus does not identify here by name the particular heretics associated with these different degrees of Docetism. It would however I believe be to follow him in a mistake if we were to interpret the distinction between the man Jesus and the heavenly Saviour in purely adoptionist terms. In the kind of Docetism here represented the man Jesus could suffer and not be replaced by Judas Iscariot or Simon of Cyrene by the manipulation of the forms of things as allegedly represented in the *Gospel of Peter* (EvPe 4:10b).

5. Evidence of Valentinus Regarding Flesh and Spirit of the Saviour

If we take Valentinus as an example, the humanity of Jesus did not simply run in tandem with the Saviour but interacted with it organically. Clement of Alexandria comments that Valentinus, in his letter to Agathopus, asserts that Jesus did not eat as a human being naturally eats even though he “endured all things” (πάντα φησὶν ὑπομείνας):

Jesus was continent (ἐγκρατής), he fashioned his divinity: he ate and drank in an idiosyncratic manner (ιδίως), not ejecting waste food (βρώματα) from his body. Such was the power of his self-control that nourishing food (τὴν τροφήν) did not undergo decay (μὴ φθαρῆναι) inside of him, since he was not subject to the process of decay (τὸ φθειρῆσθαι).¹³

¹² Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 3,11,3: κατ’ ἐκείνους δὲ ὅτε ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγενετο οὔτε ὁ Χριστός ... τὸν δὲ Σωτῆρα μὴ σεσαρκῶσθαι μηδὲ πεπονθέναι ... σεσαρκῶσθαι δὲ καὶ πεπονθέναι τινὲς μὲν τὸν ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας λέγουσιν Ἰησοῦν ... Engl. transl. by ROBERTS, DONALDSON (see note 7): But, according to these men, neither was the Word made flesh, nor Christ ... that the Saviour, [too], never became incarnate, nor suffered ... Some, however, make the assertion, that this dispensational Jesus did become incarnate, and suffered ... Regarding the more likely translation of ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας as “from his human constitution,” cf. Irenaeus’ justification of the resurrection of the body in *Adv. Haer.* 5,3,2: ἐκ μὴ ὄντων ὀστέων τε καὶ νεύρων καὶ τῆς λοιπῆς τῆς κατὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον οἰκονομίας ποιῆσαι εἰς τὸ εἶναι καὶ ἔμψυχον καὶ λογικὸν ἀπεργάσθαι ζῶον (from non-existent bones, and nerves, and veins, and the rest of man’s organization, to bring it about that all this should be, and to make man an animated and rational creature); Engl. transl. by ROBERTS, DONALDSON (see note 7).

¹³ Clem., *Strom.* 3,7,59: Οὐαλεντίνος δὲ ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ἀγαθόποδα ἐπιστολῇ, πάντα φησὶν ὑπομείνας, ἐγκρατὴς ἦν, θεότιτα Ἰησοῦς εἰργάζετο· ἔσθιε καὶ ἐπινεν ιδίως, οὐκ ἀποδιδοὺς τὰ βρώματα. τοσαύτη ἦν αὐτῷ ἐγκρατείας δύναμις, ὥστε καὶ μὴ φθαρῆναι τὴν τροφήν ἐν αὐτῷ· ἐπεὶ τὸ φθειρῆσθαι αὐτὸς οὐκ εἶχεν. Engl. transl. by J. FERGUSON, *Clement of Alexandria: Stromateis, Books 1–3*, Fathers of the Church Series 85 (Washington DC: CUA, 1991): Valentinus in his letter to Agathopus says, “Jesus showed his self-control in all that he endured. He lived in the practice of godhead. He ate and drank in a way individual to himself without excreting his food. Such was his power of self-control that the food was not corrupted within him, since he was not subject to corruption.”

Thus for Valentinus flesh and spirit did not simply run in a dualistic tandem, but the flesh of Jesus was real but transformed. Valentinus therefore held the opinion of the third group of “docetists,” namely those who believed in an un-fleshed Saviour, incapable of suffering, who had descended on the human Jesus at his baptism: the latter could suffer and was enfleshed as a result of his human constitution (ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας). The human constitution of Jesus was changed by the indwelling Saviour, but as such was only in a limited sense “docetic.” Thus in the *Evangelium Veritatis* the Valentinian author describes the mystical book:

... the one written in the thought and mind of the Father ... which no one was able to take since it remains for the one who is to take it to be slain ... For this reason the merciful one, the faithful one, Jesus was patient in accepting sufferings until he took that book, since he knows that his death is life for many.¹⁴

Jesus for Valentinus suffered in the flesh, but that flesh died and was not raised to life. The Saviour was released, his δύναμις had forsaken him, and it was this spiritual being who was the subject of the resurrection experiences. The *Evangelium Philippi* will identify the Logos as flesh in the sense of a garment worn that can be discarded:

“He who does not eat my flesh nor drink my blood has not life in him!” What is it? His flesh is the Logos and his blood is the Holy Spirit ... It is necessary to rise in this flesh, since everything exists in it.¹⁵

Thus for the Valentinians it can be said that ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο so long as one does not see this as equivalent to σεσαρκῶσθαι.

6. A First Review of the Evidence Presented

If this is the case with a Valentinian exposition of the Fourth Gospel, it is interesting to ask whether that Gospel is more docetic than the Valentinians or far less and more in the direction that Irenaeus would like to direct the Christological discussion. Jesus according to Valentinus, as we have seen, did not digest food in the normally human way. Despite the general homiletic presentation of the Wedding at Cana in Galilee, he who turns the water into wine is not recorded as joyously drinking this himself (Jn 2:1–10). Jesus does ask the woman of Samaria to give him water to drink, but it is not recorded that he actually drank it: rather he offers her “the fountain of water springing up to eternal life” (πηγή ὕδατος ἀλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον) of which, once she has drunk, she will “never thirst

¹⁴ *Evangelium Veritatis* (NHC I,3): 19:36–20; 20:4–6,10–15.

¹⁵ *Evangelium Philippi* (NHC II,3): 57:4–6 and 18–19. Cf. also M. FRANZMANN, *Jesus in the Nag Hammadi Writings* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 35–6.

again.¹⁶ At the Last Supper Jesus dips the morsel into the common bowl and gives it to Judas but it is not recorded that Jesus ate a portion himself.

Matthew's account of the walking on the water, with the addition of Peter joining Jesus but sinking through lack of faith we have argued to be rigorously anti-docetic. But by contrast *John's* account is arguably the most docetic of the Gospels.¹⁷ As in *Matthew*, so in *Mark*, Jesus walks on the water and enters the ship and the storm abates, and suddenly and mysteriously they are on land and thus Jesus continues his journey with the disciples. *Luke* omits the scene entirely but in *John* Jesus is not received by the disciples into the ship: with their fear removed "they were willing to take him into the ship and immediately the ship came upon the land to which they were travelling" (Jn 6:21). Jesus thus did not step into the ship but suddenly the scene changed: they were on the land. Furthermore, the disciples do not describe him as a φάντασμα as in *Matthew* and *Mark*.¹⁸ They are simply described as "afraid" (ἐφοβήθησαν, Jn 6:19). But despite this, the figure appears suddenly with the disciples "upon the land to which they were travelling."

John has no focus on Jesus' suffering in his description of the events of Golgotha. The cross is the means by which Jesus who has come from the Father returns to him again by a process of ὑψωθῆναι ἀνδ. δοξασθῆναι in which he "gathers together the scattered people of God." As Charles Dodd pointed out, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29) need not and does not refer to redemptive sufferings but should be seen in the eschatological context that the ministry of John the Baptist is otherwise set in the Synoptic Gospels: the bell whether of the flock sweeps away iniquity at the coming of the kingdom of God. The death of Christ is the means by which he ascends again to the Father from whom he came.

But besides these features of the Johannine portrait, the flesh of Christ is yet to be affirmed in that blood and water flow from the Crucified's thigh, and that Christ appears to the disciples and to Thomas displaying the marks of his wounds. Mary Magdalene of course is instructed not to touch Jesus because, as he says, "I have not yet ascended to your God and my God!" We can now ask whether, if the docetic features of *John's* description are well founded, the author goes beyond the Docetism of Valentinus.

Valentinus, as we have seen, held that Jesus both was enfleshed and suffered from his human constitution (ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας). However, his body did not ingest and excrete food. Valentinus in some sense would agree that ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο without adopting what is claimed to be "full-humanity" by those who were to adopt the Irenaeian terms ἔνσαρκος or σεσαρκῶσθαι. Does not the Fourth Evangelist claim that Christ bore nail marks and those of the spear in his

¹⁶ Jn 4:1–15, especially verse 14.

¹⁷ Mt 14:23–31; Mk 6:47–51; Jn 6:16–21.

¹⁸ Mt 14:26; Mk 6:49.

hands and in his side “from his human constitution” (ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας), but was more reluctant to say as Valentinus would say that Christ actually suffered?

Is not the Fourth Evangelist in Irenaeus’ third category of gnostic who asserted that Christ “was neither enfleshed nor suffered” (μὴ σεσαρκῶσθαι μηδὲ πεπονθέναι), “though he took the form of a human being” (ἄνθρωπον μεταμορφωθέντα), whereas we might say that Valentinus was in the fourth category and claimed that rather Christ did suffer “from his human constitution” (ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας). At this point the Fourth Gospel appears more docetic than Valentinus: Christ’s human μορφή displayed the wounds in his hands and his side but had suffered nothing. John has no account of the virgin birth or indeed of any kind of human birth. Valentinus will admit to such a birth even though it is not by a normal human process: Christ “passed through Mary as though he were water through a tube” (ὄν διὰ Μαρίας ... διοδεῦσαι καθάπερ ὕδωρ διὰ σωλήνος, *Iren., Adv. Haer.* 3,11,3).

7. The Resurrection according to the Gospel of Luke

Undoubtedly Luke will go beyond the docetic assertions of the Fourth Gospel, despite the first actual resurrection appearance to Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus in which the stranger who walks with them is recognized as Christ only when he breaks the bread and gives it to them, and then “their eyes were opened and they recognized him” (αὐτῶν δὲ διηνοίχθησαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ἐπέγνωσαν αὐτόν) “and immediately he became invisible to them” (καὶ αὐτὸς ἄφαντος ἐγένετο ἀπ’ αὐτῶν, Lk 24:30–31.) Note that ἄφαντος can also mean “not appearing” and we could therefore with justification translate this phrase “and he ceased to appear to them” (ἄφαντος ἐγένετο ἀπ’ αὐτῶν). Up until the scene on the road to Emmaus, there are no resurrection appearances as opposed to the witness to an empty tomb. But we may well ask how “docetic” was that scene: was ἄφαντος as “not appearing” the precise opposite of Ignatius’ “appearance only” as a φάντασμα?

Previously the resurrection is announced to the women, by two men “in robes flashing like lightning” (ἐσθῆτι ἀστραπτούσῃ, Lk 24:4) Peter also witnesses the empty tomb, and reflects upon its significance, without the help of shinningly robed men. The two return to Jerusalem and hear that “the Lord has really risen” (ὄντως ἠγέρθη ὁ κύριος), “and has appeared to (been seen by) Simon” (καὶ ὤφθη Σίμωνι, Lk 24:34). But if the Lord’s being seen by Simon is real (ὄντως), the form previously seen is not in the form (μορφή) of a body that is σὰρξ: Peter saw the empty tomb and “wondered to himself” (πρὸς ἑαυτὸν θαυμάζων) “at what had taken place” (τὸ γεγονός). It was in that contemplation, as the text stands, that the Lord was seen by him.

Following this first appearance to Cleopas and his companion, on their return to Jerusalem and the gathered company of “the eleven and those with them,” Jesus appears. It is then that we have a parallel of sorts with the Thomas scene in the Fourth Gospel. Like the latter, Jesus shows his hands and his side, but according to Luke the disciples are troubled because “they think that they have seen a spirit” (ἐδόκουν πνεῦμα θεωρεῖν, Lk 24:37) Jesus replies:

Look at my hands and my feet that I am he (ἴδετε τὰς χεῖρας μου καὶ τοὺς πόδας μου ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι αὐτός): grope me (ψηλαφήσατέ με) and see that a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see me having (αἱ ἴδετε ὅτι πνεῦμα σάρκα καὶ ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει καθὼς ἐμὲ θεωρεῖτε ἔχοντα). And having said this, he showed them his hands and his feet (καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τοὺς πόδας).¹⁹

Neither the disciples here nor Thomas in John are recorded as actually responding to Christ’s invitation to “grope” (ψηλαφήσατε) or simply, in Thomas’ case, to place his finger into the marks of the nails and into his side: Thomas simply acknowledges “my Lord and my God” (Jn 20:25–29).

But John, as we have seen, does not directly claim that the μορφή that is seen is actually ἐν σαρκί: Valentinus for his part would claim that it is “from his human constitution” (ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας) that Christ had suffered even though Christ’s physiology was not human in that he did not excrete waste material, but John is not as clear in his paddling in such waters. But in what follows in Luke’s second appearance the author makes it absolutely clear that he will brook no degree of compromise with Docetism. Jesus proves that he is not a πνεῦμα by taking and eating in the presence of the disciples “a morsel of cooked fish” (Lk 24:41–43).

Indeed in Ignatius, as we have seen, it was the risen Christ’s spiritual unity with the Father (πνευματικῶς ἠνωμένος τῷ πατρὶ) that enabled the “co-mingling” (κραθέντες) of both spirit and flesh and blood with those in Peter’s company as they touched his flesh, and which continued timelessly in mystery in the Eucharistic assembly gathered with the threefold order. Ignatius clearly shows a higher degree of Docetism in contrast with *Luke’s* realism in his description of the resurrection scene, despite the fact that he gives a variant of the Lukan saying with the term ψηλαφήσατε:

ψηλαφήσατέ με καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι πνεῦμα σάρκα καὶ ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει (Lk 24:39).
ψηλαφήσατέ με καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι δαιμόνιον ἀσώματον (IgnSm 3:2).

Irenaeus in this regard is dependent on *Luke’s* claim regarding the Ascension rather than *John* in describing the λόγος as ἔνσαρκος or σαρκῶθηναί.

Since *Luke* has finally asserted without qualification the full fleshy nature of Christ’s risen body, then spatio-temporal restrictions cannot be lifted on the appearance of that body. It can no longer appear and disappear as in the experience of Cleopas and his companion, or merge mysteriously into a timelessly

¹⁹ Lk 24:39–40.

continuing liturgical moment as in Ignatius: it must after the forty days be bodily assumed into heaven. Thus it is to *Luke's* ascension story that Irenaeus can apply his fully developed and unambiguous version of what he attributes to John and the *λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο*. Against gnostic aeon speculation Irenaeus asserts that Christ's disciple, John, in his New Testament writings ...

... knows one and the same Jesus Christ, to whom the gates of heaven were opened on account of his reception in the flesh (*διὰ τὴν ἔνσαρκον αὐτοῦ ἀνάληψιν*): who also in the same flesh in which he suffered (*ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ σαρκὶ ἐν ἣ καὶ ἔπαθεν*) will come revealing the glory of the Father.²⁰

Irenaeus' combination of the *ἐν σαρκί* of the Johannine Epistles with the *λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο* has been almost universally followed throughout the history of exegesis.

In these epistles, those who deny that "Jesus Christ comes" or "has come in flesh" (*Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐληλυθότα ἐν σαρκί*) are denounced as "deceivers" or as "antichrists."²¹ But the customary identification of these with Docetism defined as belief in the existence of Christ "in appearance only" has been challenged. As we have seen regarding Valentinus, it would be difficult to see this categorization making sense of his views on Christ's physical body, let alone the form in which Christ's resurrection body is described by canonical Gospel writers (other than Luke) or by Ignatius. I would now suggest that the reason why the categorization does not fit is because we are reading classifications of "real" and "apparent" against the Enlightenment scheme in which what is apparent is produced by the internal theatre of the mind whereas what is real is of objects in the external world of the individual human being's sense perceptions. The universe of discourse inhabited by people in the 2nd century revealed a construction of reality that permitted degrees of existence that did not fit into the stark Enlightenment distinction between external reality and the internal theatre of the mind.

III. The Earliest Use of the Term *Δοκηταί*

We have seen that Irenaeus for his part did not use the specific term *δοκηταί* himself, and describes different Gnostic groups, at least three in number, with variations on Christ's birth and suffering, but who to some degree may be claim-

²⁰ Iren., *Adv. Haer.* 3,16,8: *ἓνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν εἰδὼς Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, ᾧ ἠνοιχθησαν αἱ πύλαι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ διὰ τὴν ἔνσαρκον αὐτοῦ ἀνάληψιν· ὅς καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ σαρκὶ ἐν ἣ καὶ ἔπαθεν ἐλεύσεται τὴν δόξαν ἀποκαλύπτων τοῦ Πατρὸς*. Engl. transl. by ROBERTS, DONALDSON (see note 7): [K]nowing Jesus Christ to be one and the same, to whom the gates of heaven were opened, because of His taking upon Him flesh: who shall also come in the same flesh in which He suffered, revealing the glory of the Father.

²¹ 1 Jn 4:1–3; 2 Jn 7–8.